



JOHN COLBY.

Born Dec. 9th 1787.

Died Nov. 28th 1817.

THE
LIFE, EXPERIENCE, AND TRAVELS,

OF

JOHN COLBY,

PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

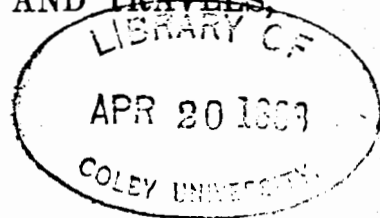
COME and hear, all ye that fear God.....and I will declare what he
hath done for my soul.....PSALMS, lxi. 16.

We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.
JOHN, iii. 11.

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P R E F A C E .

T O T H E R E A D E R .

WHEN I first began to keep a Journal of my Life and Travels, I had no intention of publishing a scroll of it in my life time. But, when I had travelled several years, and had seen many hundreds of souls converted to God, I thought it a duty which I owed to Him, and his people, to publish a brief account of the wonderful manifestations of his goodness, and displays of his power, both to myself and others: fearing, if I did not put these things to the press myself, they might, like some other valuable writings of this nature, be neglected and never be published. And being strongly solicited by many of the lovers of Jesus, of different denominations, I prepared this first volume for the press, which contains a brief account of the first twenty-seven years, (lacking a few months) of my life.—In giving this account, I have endeavored to make use of words easy to be understood, and to avoid all exaggeration; and have labored to represent those things which I have seen and heard, as they appeared to me at the time.

I have sometimes found it necessary, in great reformations, &c. to mention the particulars from day to day; while at other times, I have passed over months and years, with very few remarks.

I have also been under the necessity of mentioning the names of a great many people, and sometimes their characters; but not with a design of doing them any harm.—Where people have been kind to me, I have noted it; and where I have met with opposition, I have mentioned that, and only wish, that such may amend their ways and their doings. I do not expect that the following sheets will be very entertaining, to those who are the avowed enemies of Jesus Christ; nor to those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. And perhaps those who are built, and building, on the doctrines of men, will overlook my subject. While I humbly trust, those, who have found Him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, JESUS OF NAZARETH, will most heartily join with me, to speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power.—I, therefore, dedicate it to God and his people,—and to poor mourning, laboring, heavy-laden, penitent sinners, who are longing for an interest in Christ. Hand it, O my Saviour, to the hearts of thousands, to their eternal joy, and thine eternal praise. Amen.

J. C.

LIFE, &c. OF JOHN COLBY.

I was born in the town of Sandwich, in the county of Strafford, and State of New-Hampshire, December 9th, A. D. 1787. My father's name was THOMAS COLBY, born at Amesbury, Mass; my mother, ELIZABETH ATWOOD, born in Weare, N. H.; they now reside in Sutton Vt. formerly Billymead. I remember when I was but a child, and while in the midst of those vanities peculiar to that age, the Lord reproved me by his spirit, and manifested to my mind, that I was born to die. And being informed by my instructors, that there was a day of judgement after death, at which time all the dead, both small and great, must stand before God, and be judged according to the deeds done in the body; and that those who loved God, and were sincere christians, would be received into heaven, where God and angels resided: But, that those who were not christians, would be cast into hell, where the devil and his angels were confined.—While I thought on these things, a question like this arose in my mind, What is it to be a christian? And not being able to determine in my own mind, being only about eight years of age, my anxiety led me to enter into a conversation on the subject, with my brother, who was older than myself, in hopes to get some information from him. But the most that I can remember of his conversation is, that he told

me, that father and mother were christians; and that he and I were sinners. But, said he, "I mean to be a christian before I die." I answered, so do I. I remember I thought that he was older than I, and if he could put off these things to a future period, it might be well for me to do so too. But I can now see, how children in the morning of life, neglect seeking the Lord, by the example of those who are older. It pleased God, one night in a dream, to convince me, that I had a soul, which would exist after my body was dead. In the dead of night, while deep sleep was upon me, I dreamed, and lo! a man entered the door of the apartment where I lay, with a loaded musket in his hand; and while I lay looking at the man, to my great surprise, he took aim at me and fired! The explosion was loud as thunder; and the fatal charge pierced through my breast. An awful scene immediately presented! My body began to decay and fade like the flower of the grass, until it returned to its mother earth, and fell into a silent repose. The soul revived in proportion to the recession of the body, and appeared to be both perplexed and distressed, and in great consternation flew around the walls of the clay tenement, fluttering at each avenue, and crying for help, as if loth to leave its wonted abode; until the lungs ceased to heave, the pulse to beat, and blood to flow. The soul then was forced out. The scene then appeared eternal, and as I was about to take my flight to unknown worlds, and leave every earthly thing behind me, I immediately awoke, and behold it was a dream!

This thoroughly convinced me that the soul existed after the body was dead. Conviction now began to roll heavy on my mind: but my language was "Lord, I am young—I am but a child—spare me till such and such a time—then I will attend to thy call."—But alas! when the appointed time came, I was no less anxious, to put off these things than before. How-

ever, the alarming dream followed me; and by times, to such a degree, that I sometimes wished I had never been born.

I also recollect, that I was one day coming from meeting, and as I was contemplating on my situation, I felt such a load of sin and guilt upon my conscience, that it seemed to me, that I could not live under it. In this distress, I cried out with an audible voice, "here Lord I am, do with me as thou wilt." But notwithstanding I so cried, I soon found that I was unwilling that the will of God should be done. For when I returned home, I felt an impression (which I really think was from the Lord) to kneel down and pray to him for mercy. And had I obeyed it, I doubt not, that I should have found rest and peace to my troubled soul. But the cross appeared so great to me, that instead of obeying the Spirit of God, I immediately began to pray, like Felix, "go thy way for this time, and when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." But, alas! how shocking must have been the consequence, had he granted my wicked prayer; that is, "gone his way," and returned to me no more. I must then have taken up this doleful lamentation; "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." But mercy interposed; the golden sceptre was held out, and life and salvation offered to a guilty sinner, without money or price, but not without an hearty repentance. My attention was often called up, both by mercies and judgements; and I often felt my danger, especially in times when deaths were frequent; also in thunder storms, I was much terrified, especially if I was away from my parents: but if I could get near to them, or any other good people, I thought they would be a kind of refuge for me, and felt myself more secure, and thought I might be spared for their sake.

Here I must omit the rehearsal of a multitude of occurrences, which happened in the course of several

years, whilst a great part of the time I was travelling in pain all the day, and a dreadful sound in my ears; the devil all the while throwing the most awful temptations into my mind, and trying by all his hellish art, to lull my conscience to sleep. Telling me that "tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." Always trying to persuade me to neglect seeking the Lord for the present. But I remember when I was in my fourteenth year, I was greatly awakened, by the conversation and death of my grandmother Colby, she being fourscore and four years old; being brought upon her death bed, having a hope like an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast—her work all done, and I believe well done. I went one day to visit her, and while I was beholding her languishing situation, her body fast decaying, her soul patiently waiting for her change, and desiring to meet death, and to exchange a world of sorrow and pain, for a world of joy and pleasure; she turned her dying eyes on me and said, "John, you have been a good boy to me, and now, all I require of you is, to love the Lord." These words reached my soul, and the requirement I never forgot. When I retired from the mournful scene, and was returning home, the sorrows of my heart drowned my eyes with tears. Her words were fastened in my heart, like a nail in a sure place. My sins, like ponderous mountains, appeared to revolve upon my guilty soul. I knew not what to do. If I looked up, I saw the justice of God. If I looked down, I saw a hell, which was enlarged without measure, gaping to receive me. If I looked forward, I beheld an approaching, (endless) eternity, into which I must soon enter. If I looked back, I saw a life spent in sin, and considered that damnation must be my portion; and that forever and ever. But notwithstanding all those impressions, I was not entirely willing to deny myself, take up my cross daily, and follow the blessed Redeemer; and therefore, could not as yet be

his disciple. So I still remained in a state of condemnation, and under the power of a carnal mind. When I arrived to the age of fifteen, my father sold his possessions in Sandwich, and removed his family to Billymead, state of Vermont, county of Caledonia, where, coming into a new country, and being in new company, and beholding new objects, I found my former determinations very much frustrated; and my mind began to be filled with many things which proved detrimental to the work of regeneration. And as I advanced in years, I found my mind more strongly inclined to seek for worldly riches, honors &c. I began, also, to be much inclined to go into rude company, (which every person under conviction must bid adieu to, or the Spirit of God will surely leave them.) These things produced in me a great stupidity of mind; yet I was not entirely without conviction.

I recollect of joining a company of young people one evening, who were met for what they called civil mirth. The evening was chiefly spent in dancing, an exercise which I never practised; but being strongly persuaded, rather than be considered as separate from the company, I consented, and joined the dance. This was a dear dance to me; for as soon as I retired and had got home, I began to take a retrospective view of the scene, and to think of what I had been about; and asked myself the following questions:—Has this night's work been for the glory of that God who made me a rational creature, and has fed me, and clothed me, and blessed me with gospel privileges, afforded me a day and means of grace, and given me a space to repent, and just time enough to make my peace with him? Have I conducted this evening as one that must give an account, and as I can answer before his judgement seat? These questions were scarcely propounded in my mind, before I felt the sentence of condemnation in myself. I found that my heart condemned me; and remembered that God was greater than

my heart, and knew all things; and would bring every work into judgement. I retired to my bed for repose; but the torment of my mind was such, that I could not rest. Fearful apprehensions filled my soul, and I dared not close my eyes in sleep, lest I should awake in hell. Under this distress, I renewed my old promises to reform, which, however, I afterwards broke in many instances; but the Lord was still mindful of me, and convinced me of my errors, and reminded me of my broken promises, by laying his chastising rod upon me; for, from the time that I was ten, till I was nineteen years of age, I had a settled fever five times; and several times my life was despaired of. I had many other diseases incident to our mortal frame, which attended through the same term of time; besides many dreadful accidents, from which I did but narrowly escape with my life. And I have often thought since, that if it had not been that some ministering spirit prevented me, I must have been suddenly hurled into eternity in all my sins. And when I reflect on the dangers I have escaped, I am struck with astonishment, and am a wonder to myself, that I am out of hell, and on praying ground. But, glory to God, that his Spirit still strove with me, and called upon me in nameless ways. Yet I continued to run the dangerous road, and often grieved that tender Spirit, which so kindly reproved me.

When I was about seventeen years and nine months old, a reformation began in the town where I lived, and one of my sisters, who was peculiarly dear to me, was the first that was converted and baptized. This greatly astonished and alarmed me. An evening meeting was appointed in the neighborhood, which I attended, and I believe the Spirit of God fell on the assembly in a marvellous manner; and the very foundation of every earthly mind seemed to tremble.

My eldest brother, who had for many years before possessed religion, and had been in a backslidden

state, was alarmed of his situation, and that evening, was led to such a view of his state, that he walked the street and field in the greatest agony of soul, under a persuasion that his day of grace was over. However, it pleased God to grant him salvation before the close of the meeting. This struck me under deep conviction; and my prayer to God was, that he would redeem my soul from sin and death, and prepare me for my approaching dissolution. I returned home, and it appeared to me that my prayer in some good measure was answered. I felt very different from what I had felt before. The gloom which had so long been gathering on my mind, and seemed to veil universal nature, was all dispelled; a sweet calmness filled my soul—but I was not able to comprehend my feelings; for I thought it impossible that God had changed my state, the work was so different from what I had expected. For (like other unconverted people) I had been, all my days, drawing a plan of the whole work of regeneration, and had every feature of it painted out in my mind; but when I came to compare my then present feelings, with the picture I had drawn in my ignorance, they did not agree. "The natural man, receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In this situation, notwithstanding the peace I felt in my soul, I feared I had received nothing from the Lord. Thus, for a number of days, I passed through a scene of trials, before I obtained an unshaken hope in God. I have often thought, if my change had been as conspicuous to me as that of some, who can tell the hour, and the moment, and the very spot where they were, when their sins like mountains, were removed from them and the effulgent rays of the glory of God shined in and filled their souls; I might have thrown away many, perhaps one half, of the real christians in the world, because they could not tell such an experience as my-

self. But the Lord, foreseeing what he intended for me to do, was pleased to lead me along in this little way, for which I thank his blessed name. I believe there was as great a difference between my conversion and that of many christians, as there would be between the feelings of two men born and brought up in a dungeon; the one brought out of it at noon day, when the sun shone in its meridian glory; the other brought out first by star light, then enjoyed moonlight, then day-break, then sun-rise; yet I can bless God, that I now enjoy, the same sun beams, that all the true followers of the Lamb enjoy. But, I would not be understood to mean, that I consider regeneration a progressive work; for that change, in reality, is wrought, as soon as God can say to the soul, "son, or daughter, thy sins be forgiven thee."—But the difficulty of not considering it a change in one's self, appears to arise from not clearly understanding the true witness in the soul; or from not obtaining those corresponding evidences, which strengthen the witness in the soul, and confirm the hope of the new creature. In a little more than a month after this, I obtained this hope, and with thirteen others, followed our Lord and Saviour into the water, and were buried with him by baptism. This was on the eighth day of December, A. D. 1805. The day following, was my birth day, that is to say, the ninth day of December. On that day, I joined the church of Christ in Billymead, and endeavored to take the armor of God, and to face the field; and declared perpetual war with every darling sin. I travelled about one year, through changing scenes and had many happy hours, when I was faithful to the Lord. I felt it my duty to bear a public and living testimony for God; and in doing this, I found an exceeding great reward. Yet I often had many doubts, whether I was ever made free by the Son, or washed in the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. During this period, I thought I felt a great desire to see sin-

ners converted; but I little thought that it would ever be my lot, to go and preach the gospel to them, until I was nineteen years of age. About this time, I began to feel impressions on my mind which I knew not what to do with. These words were continually sounding in my ears—"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This voice sounded solemn, but the work was so unexpected and trying to me, that I could not consent to believe that it was from the Lord; but concluded that it must be from an enemy. I went to bed one evening, and as I lay in solemn contemplation on the subject; all at once an astonishing scene of eternal things, opened to my view. I thought the day of judgment had come, and I viewed myself standing on an extensive plain, which was so large that I could not see across it.—Universal nature seemed to be all in commotion.—The earth and seas were all in convulsion; while rattling thunders were rumbling through the vast concave, and rolling from pole to pole. I sought for an hiding place, but, to my great astonishment and horror, when I looked as far as my eye could explore, I could see neither mountain, rock, nor hill to hide me from the face of him who sat upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Neither could I see any other person but myself; I stood alone in this broad space. The vengeance of God was displayed, and such awful thunder as I never heard before, was continually bursting and rattling over my head. It seemed as if those explosions began in the third heavens, and came rolling down with increasing majesty, and every bolt was directed at me. In this situation, I clearly saw that the justice of God must have its demands, and viewed myself a lost and undone sinner; and that, "forever and ever." It appeared, that my name was not enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, and that I had no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. O! I can never express the horror of conscience which I

felt. And what still added to my horror, was, that notwithstanding the frowns of the Almighty seemed enough to sink a world, I was made capable to bear them. For it then appeared to me, that the omnipotent God had so formed me, that it would be impossible to strike me into non-existence again. In this situation, I was expecting every moment to bear my awful doom, "Depart ye cursed." In the mean time, the heavens were gathering blackness; earth's huge pillars giving away! All on a sudden, the scene was changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, I was translated, and caught up into the kingdom of heaven, where, with inexpressible admiration, and joy unspeakable, I beheld the glories of the place. O! the sweet raptures of heavenly love, which instantly filled my soul, when I heard with the greatest transport and astonishment, the shouts of victory and songs of praise, echoing through the upper world! while myriads and myriads, stood round the dazzling throne of God and the Lamb; all in sweet harmony, crying, Glory! Glory to God in the highest! Oh! how I was filled with raptures and astonishment, while I beheld John the Baptist, Stephen, Peter, Paul, John Rogers, and thousands of others, who were slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held; and sealed their testimonies with their blood; and took their happy flight from chopping-blocks, burning stakes, racking-wheels and scalding cauldrons of oil, and numerous other cruel tortures, now in the realms of glory, all clad in white robes! and in addition to these, an innumerable company, a multitude which no man could number, who had come out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. These, all joined in melodious anthems of never ceasing praises, which made all the heavenly arches ring with melody. While the angels joined to sing creating goodness; the saints all sang redeeming love. The glory of the place was in-

describable. They had no need of the light of the sun, nor of the moon; for the Lord God and the Lamb, was the light of the city. It is impossible for me, to express what I then enjoyed; neither, can I find language to describe what I there beheld. But it appeared to me, that one moment's enjoyment there, would more than compensate for all the sufferings of the whole church of God on earth. Well might the apostle say, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." It appeared to me, that eternity would just be long enough, to disclose the beauties and unfold the mysteries of heaven.

After lying in this situation I know not how long; and whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, (God knoweth,) I came to myself, and found that I was on the earth, for which I felt to mourn; and for a short time, my spirit sunk within me, until I had recollected the subject, which I was musing upon, when I lay down; namely, the impressions I had felt to go and preach the glad tidings of salvation to a lost world. I then concluded, that what I had seen, was to confirm me in my duty; and that the impressions I had felt were not imaginary, nor from an enemy, as I had before supposed; but, that the Lord was in reality calling me into his vineyard to labor. I would here observe, that I did not believe at that time, neither have I since, that I was in a natural sleep. This will doubtless seem strange to many, and indeed it does to me; but I can say, that I had never entertained such an extensive idea, and glorious view, of heaven before. Neither did I ever have such a discovery of the horrors of the damned, or of the torments and self-reflections of lost sinners.

I think I can now say, with David, Psal. lxxiii. 3 and 17: "For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end."

Since that time, the language of my soul has been like that of the poet:

“Pity the nations, O our God,
Constrain the earth to come;
Send thy victorious arm abroad,
And call the strangers home.”

After considering the vision, and the situation that I myself was in, while standing alone on the spacious plain, amidst the direful storm before described; it appeared to me, that God had by this, shewn me the shelterless state of all poor sinners. That as I stood alone, so they must each one explore the dark mountains of death *alone*; and, as single creatures, stand at the dreadful tribunal of the Most High; and after being dismissed, with hearing the heart rending sentence, “Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels,” they must forever, and ever, suffer and endure, the horrible tempest which God shall rain upon them. See Psal. xi. 6—“Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.” And Prov. ix. 12—“If thou be wise thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou *ALONE* shalt bear it.”

These things bore with solemn weight on my mind, from day to day. And as I felt the weight of the cause of God, and worth of souls increasing, and began to count the cost of being a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord; I found that such must forsake fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, wives and children, houses and lands, and be willing to lay down their lives for the sake of Christ and his gospel, or not be worthy of him. These things, (or the most of them) were so dear to me, that it was like giving up my life to leave them.

However, I began to feel more and more of the reality of my being called into a public station, and

to have striking views of the languishing state of Sion; and of the more deplorable state of poor sinners.— And when I beheld the greatness of the harvest, and how few the faithful laborers; I began to pray the Lord of the harvest, to send forth laborers. But when I thus prayed, the answer was, “Go ye into the vineyard,” &c. About the first sensible impression which I felt on my mind, to preach the gospel, was, that I must go through the southern and western climes; and in particular, that I must visit the people in the State of Ohio. But the thoughts of leaving my native land, my loving friends, and other dear enjoyments; together with a consideration of travelling so great a journey, into a strange and unknown country, and myself but a child; magnified the cross, and rendered the trial (as I thought) almost insurmountable. However, I pondered these things in my heart; for as yet I had not divulged them to any person. But about this time, many of my brethren and sisters in the Lord, began to have a feeling sense of the weight I felt on my mind, and some of them came and told me it was revealed to them that the Lord was calling me to preach the Gospel, and that I was unwilling to go. To this I made them no answer; but acted like one amazed, or as if I knew not what it meant, for I tho’t I would almost rather die, than to make known what I felt on my mind, lest I should be deceived or bring a reproach upon the cause of God; which I thought I would not knowingly do, for ten thousand worlds.— One evening, after seriously meditating upon these things, and realizing my accountability to God; and considering how willing I ought to be to obey him in all his requirements, I fell asleep; and dreamed that I was in a meeting, where a vast, an exceedingly numerous concourse of people were assembled.— Elder Becwith,* being present, was much engaged in

*A preacher who lives in Billymead.

preaching to them. \ But on a sudden, he stopped, and stood in profound silence, about the space of a minute. He then turned about and looking solemnly upon me, said "John, you must take my place." This struck me a good deal, and I began to wonder what he could mean by this strange salutation. When I awoke, and thought on my dream, I was sensible, according to the impressions I had felt for a number of months, I had to stand in a public lot, receive words at the Lord's mouth, and warn the people from him, or the blood of sinners would be found in my skirts. I strove in my little measure, from time to time, to tell sinners the danger they were in, and to speak comfortably to the saints, in our stated meetings; and flattered myself that that would do for me, and thought I might be excused from travelling abroad; especially, when I considered that I was under age, and must of necessity stay at home till I was twenty-one. My two older brethren being of age, and for themselves; my father a man of property, and a great deal of business on hand; and I being at that time, the main help which he had left; rendered my assistance so necessary to him, that I thought it put the matter beyond a doubt that it was my duty to stay with him till I was twenty-one. Upon this ground I began to settle, but found it to be a barren land indeed. Yet I continued in this situation till I arrived at the age of twenty. And although I strove to live a solemn, watchful and prayerful life, I found that my mind began to be much attached and glued to the things of time and sense — The world, with all its cares, began to crowd into my mind; also, its riches, honours, beauties, charms and fashions, in all their pomp and splendour were presented to me. And it seemed as if the devil had power over me to take me up, like as on an exceeding high mountain, and shew me all the kingdoms of the world and the glories of them; and then promise to give them all to me, if I would fall down and wor-

ship him; or, in other words, forsake religion and go back into the world again. But the thought of doing this, was worse than death to me. I now began to find it necessary to bestir myself, shake off sloth, resist the devil, and tread the world beneath my feet.— And to this end I found it necessary to go often to the throne of grace, and make known my requests to the Lord. And can say, that I found him to be a present help, in every time of trouble.

O may I ever give thanks to the Lord, for his merciful kindness to me in sparing my unprofitable life till now? O what scenes of trials, temptations, and dangers, the Lord hath led me thro'!

O for a thousand tongues to sing,
Mr dear Redeemer's praise;
The glories of my God and King,
And triumphs of his grace!

The winter after I was twenty in December, I went to school. And had Christ been my preceptor or master, I should doubtless have known more of his love, and enjoyed my mind better in the spring. But I found my studies had too much stolen my attention, and kept my mind from better enjoyments. Yet I felt some good degree of the love of God in my heart, and a sense of the worth of souls in my mind.

At the commencement of spring, I retired from school, and returned to my usual labour with my father; and as I wrought with him in the field, my mind began to enter more extensively into the field of the gospel. And upon careful examination I found I had been limiting the Holy One of Israel. For, while the Lord had been calling me, to the great and arduous work of preaching the gospel, I had been saying, "Not so Lord;" or, in other words, stop, Lord, till I am of age: "I am but a child," &c. And upon these and such like trivial excuses, I had been neglec-

ting my duty, and disobeying the voice of my heavenly father, and soul's best friend.

A sense of duty now began to revolve upon my mind, with double weight; while the world, with all its affluence and grandeur, seemed to recede and disappear. And notwithstanding my mind had been formerly much after the riches of this vain world, and the prospect had bid fair for my obtaining it; I now had a full discovery of the emptiness and fading nature of all transitory enjoyments. And under this discovery was made to cry out, in the language of the poet,

Lord what a wretched land is this,
That yields us no supply;
No cheering fruits, no wholesome tree,
Nor stream of living joy.

And prayed that God would now help me to sign a divorce to every deceitful enjoyment of this alluring world. For I now beheld through the eye of faith, the glories of that better, fairer, brighter world above. O my God! shall I be an inhabitant there, to see as I am now seen, and to know as I am now known?—but alas! I yet dwell in this dreary abode. I am yet a resident on the earth; and have a great work to do for my blessed master. And how can I live and be happy; or die in peace if I do not perform it? Under this consideration, I cried out, “Lord, prepare a worm for so important a work, which I see I must do or be condemned in the day of judgment.” I now felt a greater sense of my accountability to God, than I ever did before. Time seemed comparatively like a bubble on the water. And I said, “O how quickly shall I see the Lord himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God! O how fast the day approaches, when the Lord will be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God! And when in my meditation I look-

ed again, I saw thousands and tens of thousands of thoughtless souls, with the greatest rapidity approaching eternity's awful brink! O eternity! vast eternity! what heart can conceive, what tongue can express the duration of it! And yet Christless souls will venture on its dreadful brink, unapprehensive of danger! These alarming considerations began to call up my attention more and more; and I strove to improve every opportunity of conversing with the unconverted on the subject of religion; especially those of my companions. I also felt it my duty, and esteemed it a privilege, to exhort in public meetings; and sometimes I had particular passages of scripture impressed on my mind to explain. But the cross was so great that I generally neglected it. For I thought if I proceeded in that way the people would soon begin to say “*John Colby is setting out to be a preacher.*” And that was a sound I did not love to hear. Not because I was ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but because of my weakness and unworthiness of preaching it. For I viewed it to be a great and solemn thing to be mouth for God, and stand between the living and dead, or to have the care of souls entrusted with me. And yet I was loth to see souls perish, with a Saviour in their view; and wade through the mercies of God, by the gate of heaven down to darkness and long despair. Thus was my soul pressed, like a cart filled with sheaves, under a solemn sense of these important things, till at length it became my whole study, day and night, asleep or awake; and when I was in the field, I scarce knew what I was doing, or how the time passed away. A dismal gloom seemed again to overspread all nature, and if possible, to a greater degree than what I had experienced, when I was under conviction for my sins. Every enjoyment of life looked like nothing and vanity; and gold and silver as mean as dust. Life itself, seemed almost burdensome. My appetite failed—

"My daily bread like ashes grew
Unpleasant to my taste."

Oft times when I returned from my labour in the field, I could eat nothing. My indulgent mother often inquired the occasion of my not eating, and notwithstanding I knew, I was unwilling to tell her. She sometimes told me that I looked sick or as one in a consumption. And indeed I viewed myself, and was looked upon by others, during that summer, as one swiftly approaching the grave. I chose to spend all my leisure hours in secret prayer, in some solitary place; especially early in the mornings, and late in the evenings. The most lonely places seemed the most delightful to me. I took but little satisfaction in the company of my dearest friends. I felt like one alone; and the language of my heart was like that of the Prophet, "O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men." And at other times, "Oh! that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the daughters of my people."

The whole earth, with all its inhabitants, seemed to roll up before me; particularly the young people, and those of my class. And oh! how inexpressibly painful was the sight! To see hundreds and thousands of blooming youths spending their golden moments in parties, pleasures, and pastimes; frolicking and dancing over a burning lake! Oh! what stupendous folly, thought I, must they be guilty of, who choose sin's short and momentary pleasures, at the dear expense of suffering the vengeance of eternal fire! Sometimes, when I realized the sad condition the world of mankind was in, I asked myself the question, "Should I not be willing to wander to and fro all my days, if I were sure that I could be instrumental in the salvation of one soul?" And I thought I should, if I died in the service. But at other times,

unbelief, or a sense of my weakness, constrained me to say, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

While I thus pondered upon my duty to God and his people, and sought to know how I should best glorify him, promote his cause in the world and discharge the important duty which I felt incumbent on me, I happened to light on the following hymn:—

I hear the gospel's joyful sound,
An organ I shall be,
To sound aloud redeeming love,
And sinners' misery.

My honored parents, fare you well,
My Jesus doth me call;
I leave you here with God, until
I meet you once for all.

My dear connexions I'll forsake,
My parents and their house;
And to the wilderness betake,
To pay the Lord my vows.

And I'll forsake my chiefest mates,
That nature can afford;
And wear the shield into the field,
To wait upon the Lord.

Then through the wilderness I'll run,
Preaching the gospel free;
O be not anxious for your son,
The Lord will comfort me.

And if through preaching I should gain
True subjects to my Lord,
'Twill more than recompense my pain,
To see them love his word.

My soul doth wish Mount Zion well,
 Whate'er becomes of me;
 There my best friends and kindred dwell,
 And there I long to be.

This hymn most beautifully expressed the feelings of my heart in general, and the last verse in a particular manner. For I felt as though I wanted every one else to be happy, if I was miserable myself. And fervently wished the prosperity of Zion, which I viewed as coming out of great tribulation, and suffering the vile aspersions and persecutions of a wicked and gainsaying world.

I frequently retired into solitary places; and with a degree of delight, mingled with flowing tears, repeated the hymn.

The foregoing account, which I have given of my particular trials, under the divine impressions of the spirit of the Lord, is but a little part of what I really passed through; for time would fail me to point out every particular exercise of my mind, while under those impressions, to preach the gospel. And notwithstanding I strove to bear a public testimony for the Lord, and to tell poor unconverted sinners the danger they were in, and exposed to; yet I took but little satisfaction therein. For several months, I generally felt worse when I returned from meeting than when I went. And I am convinced that the reason of this was, because the Lord was calling me to go and preach the gospel to other cities, and I was disobedient to his call; and therefore could not be happy in disobedience. I continued in this situation until December, 1808; at which time I was twenty-one years of age.

At this time, again, I felt the impression renewed, to arise, and go to the state of Ohio, and to cry against it; and it seemed as if the Lord said, "their wickedness is come up before me." But like Jonah, I

fled from the presence of the Lord; not to *Tarshish* but to *Peacham*, and went to the Academy, where I spent the winter. And the spring following the Lord sent out, not a great tempest upon the waters, but a great sickness among the people. Men's hearts were almost broken, to see their relations on every hand dying; great fear came upon them, and, like the ancient mariners, every man cried unto his God, that he would stay his judgements, and lighten their souls of them. But alas! I was gone down, not into the sides of the ship, but had my mind so engaged and amused with literature, that I was fallen into a spiritual sleep! and it seemed as if the destroying angel came to me and said "what meanest thou, O sleeper! Arise, and go into the work of God, or thou shalt surely perish!" For I took the contagion, and was sick, as I supposed, of the fever. Then I prayed unto the Lord God out of the midst of my affliction; and he heard the voice of my supplication, removed the disease, and withheld his afflicting hand.— I returned to Billymead, and the word of the Lord came unto me again saying, "go unto Ohio, that great country, and preach in it the preaching I bid thee." But, instead of going to Ohio, I went to work to finish a gristmill, which I had begun the fall before; and by the time I had completed that, and had got it agoing, I felt like one cast down into the deep, the earth, with its bars about him; or like one grinding in a prison house; or as one confined between two keepers, (unbelief and disobedience;) one on either hand. These two soldiers or servants of the enemy, kept me close till the third day of June, 1809. On this day, I met with my brethren in conference.— When I left home I had not the least thought of revealing my mind; for I had so long been sinking under trials which I had brought upon myself by disobedience, that I never expected to rise above them; and often thought, like Jonah, that it was even better for

me to die than to live. But the spirit of the Lord being wonderfully manifest in our meeting, I felt immediately arraigned in my own mind to make public what I had so long concealed; for as yet I had not revealed my mind to any person. And I think it was the greatest cross I had ever taken up. It appeared to me as if life and death were set before me and I could have my choice, and must choose then.

Under this discovery I mentally looked to the Lord and said, "They that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercies; but I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed; salvation is of the Lord." I then had strength given me to open my mouth, and in presence of God and the Church to declare the travel of my mind.— Truly, it was a solemn, weeping time, both with myself and the brethren. When I had done speaking, the brethren and sisters, with one accord, declared that they were satisfied that the Lord, of a truth, had called me to be an ambassador for Christ, to preach the everlasting gospel; and as such they recommended me.

I felt immediately as if I was in a new world; the gloom which had so long overspread the universe, was all scattered; the intervening clouds withdrew; and my soul leaped into liberty! The next day, being Sabbath, I arose early in the morning, and walked into the field. Every thing looked delightful; every vegetable, with all the feathered songsters, seemed to be praising God; and I thought I could add my note with the rest. When the bright luminary of the day appeared, with his ten thousand dazzling rays of light darting through the world, shining on the evil and on the good, he seemed to magnify his great Creator. I really thought, I never saw the sun shine with such refulgency before. While gazing on his golden rays, I said, O how willing is the sun to perform his office and fill his place! how ready to obey the will of his

great Creator! This was to me like the beginning of days, or the day of my espousal. The change appeared as great, or greater, if possible, than when I was first brought out of nature's darkness, into God's marvellous light. At a seasonable hour I proceeded to the meeting; and found a multitude had come together (as I supposed,) to hear the new preacher!— But no one can tell how little and insufficient I looked upon myself! I thought I could really say, I was less than the least of all saints. The brethren put it upon me to preach; and I felt it from the Lord to be my duty to try. I spake from Isaiah xl. 6, 7, 8, words which had been running in my mind the preceding week; (occasioned, probably, by means of my attending a funeral in the neighborhood; and also the wedding of one of my brothers.) I preached as well as I could; the Lord knows best what I said; I believe, however, it was a solemn time.

When I recollect the many internal calls and impressions I have had from God to preach the gospel, I am astonished that there are so many in the world, who think that a college education, with a town or parish call, are sufficient to qualify a man to preach the gospel of Christ! O mistaken, deluded souls! who think that the gospel consists in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. But happy is that servant, whose preaching (like Paul's) is not with enticing words of men's wisdom; but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

From this fourth day of June, every thing unlike to God, began to sink in my view; and my mind began to rise. I practised preaching every first day of the week, at Billymead, or in one of the adjacent towns; I also attended some meetings on other days. In the intervals, I labored with my hands; and with my earnings, I purchased me a horse, saddle and bridle, &c. On the 6th day of August, being the first day of the week, I attended a meeting at Billymead. In the fore-

noon, I tried to preach from 2d Timothy, chapter iv: 7th and 8th verses, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I enjoyed but little liberty in speaking, and felt much dissatisfied in my own mind. This threw me into a trial. It seemed to me that every body thought I was out of my lot. I began to call my faith in question, to doubt the reality of my call, and I feared I was deceiving myself and my brethren. Under considerations like these, I went to the Lord in prayer, and continued in that exercise through the intermission. The substance of my petition was, that if he had called me to preach his word, he would manifest it, and stand by me in the afternoon, that I might have liberty, and enjoy the life and power of religion in my soul. The afternoon meeting began, and after singing and prayer, the brethren sat, and appeared waiting, as if they were expecting me to preach. But I felt determined not to attempt it, unless I felt something special. After sitting silent for some time, and mentally praying that the Lord would decide the doubtful case that afternoon, that is, whether he had called me to preach or not; and if I had run before I was sent of God, that he would confound me before the people if I attempted to speak in his name. I felt some impression, and thought it my duty to arise and speak from Titus ii, 11; "For the Grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men."—I repeated these words as the foundation of a discourse, and after speaking a few minutes, I quoted several passages by way of introduction, and attempted to return to my text, but behold it was gone! I had forgotten it; and had no bible with me to find it; for I had never obtained confidence enough to hold a bible in my hand while I was speaking. I then began to

conclude, that the Lord was about to answer my prayer sure enough, and chain up my mouth in silence. It seemed as if the enemy surrounded me with all his forces; my mind was immediately thrown into confusion, and almost into distraction. I ceased speaking and sat down without telling the audience the occasion of it. No one can tell, neither can I express how I then felt. What made me feel the worse, was, there were two judges present who were occasionally in the town; they loomed up before me like mountains!—When the meeting ended I withdrew from the house and returned home. I strove as much as possible to shun all company, for I neither wanted to speak with or see any person. After I got home, my father asked me the occasion of my not finishing my sermon; for, said he, I thought you had laid your work out very well. I made him little or no answer, but left the house and retired to the woods, with a strong temptation never to return again. For I thought I had rather be banished, or buried under the base of the most huge mountain, than ever be seen again upon earth. I travelled a mile or two, till I came to a river, where I stood and looked into the water for some time; and thought it would be a good time to put an end to my life. But the following words immediately occurred to my mind, "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." I obtained strength from the Lord to withdraw from the river. My next conclusion was, to stay in the woods till I died. I continued wandering about till near dark; and after looking the matter over and over, and putting up many prayers to God, I felt some more composed in my mind; and concluded that it might be possible that I had done wrong, and had tempted the Lord by asking of him a sign.

After many solitary hours in prayers and tears, I mustered all the resolution, faith and hope I could, and returned home. But as to my preaching again, I concluded the matter was decided. Yet there was

one difficulty in the way, which I knew not how to surmount. I had a meeting appointed in another town the next Sabbath, which I must of necessity attend, or forfeit my word; and that I could not bear to do. I passed the week in deep waters, till the Sabbath came. I went on to my appointment but felt an unusual gloom and a great depression of spirit. I tho't I would tell the people I was not called to preach, and that I should never try to again. After the people assembled I began to look round upon them, and souls began to look precious; and almost before I was aware I arose upon my feet and began to preach to them. The love and power of God was manifested in a blessed manner. From this I took encouragement to resist the tempter; he fled from me; and my mind, in a good measure was relieved. So I continued as usual in my feeble manner to blow the trumpet in Zion.

About this time a general solemnity began to gather on the minds of the people; and there seemed to be a sound of abundance of rain; while a few mercy drops fell. But the main cloud of *blessing* passed over, and did not return till about twelve months afterwards.

I now began to be convinced by my feelings, that my work was done for the present in that region, and that I must go and preach the gospel of the kingdom to other cities also. Trying as it was to my nature; being convinced that the time was come when I must leave all my natural friends, and journey into the western climes; I began to talk about it in earnest, and to make preparations for the journey. Yet I could not persuade my friends to be reconciled to it, nor yet to believe that I should go, until a day or two before I sat out. They all prophesied evil concerning me; they said it must be a delusion of the enemy. For if I was called to preach, I could as well preach in my native land as any where else; and, they thought, much

better. Besides, they conjectured for me to travel so far into a different climate must be very prejudicial to my health, even if I lived; but they thought most likely that I should die, and lay my bones in one of those western climes. I told them that NINEVAH was the place where God sent Jonah; and the western country was the place where he was about to send me; and if I did not go, the *sea* would be more boisterous than ever it had been.

Sabbath, 12th of November, I preached my farewell sermon in Billymead, and truly, it was with the assembly, as well as with myself, a solemn, weeping time. Thus I closed my testimony in the town for that time—Nov. 14, 1809, I sat out on my journey. But O! I cannot express the feelings of my heart, whilst giving the parting hand, and leaving my ever respected parents behind; thinking it very unlikely that I should ever see them again beneath the sun. My beloved brothers and sisters I must also leave, though dear to me. The friendly visits, the inestimable privileges we have enjoyed together, thought I, must now be at an end. And I said, "O, must I now leave, must I now be separated from all my natural connexions in life? Yes, I am constrained so to do; the worth of souls lays upon me, I cannot rest. I must bid farewell to my kind parents and their home; take my life into my hand, and go forth into the wilderness world and pay the Lord my vows."

When I gave the parting hand to my honored father, and he saw that I was going in reality, his language to me was like that of Jacob to his sons; he said, "well, if you must go; God Almighty go with you." I left the house and hastened to the door, that I might find a place to weep; and then mounted my horse and sat out on my journey. As I passed through the street I secretly said,

Farewell! farewell! farewell, ye northern climes!
To southern or western climes I now repair;
To unknown lands I know not where.

I stayed that night with Judge Fiske, in Lyndon. Next morning I started for Woodstock, (Vt.); but on account of its being stormy and uncomfortable weather, I travelled but a few miles in a day. I however the next Sabbath, got to Hartford, and attended a meeting in the evening. Monday I crossed *White River*, and attended a funeral in the other part of the town; had a very solemn time. After meeting I went down to Woodstock, where I had previously agreed to meet brother Putnam, a young preacher who had promised to travel with me into the western country. But when I came to the place, I found he had gone on to Windsor. I then pursued and overtook him and felt exceedingly joyful at meeting my beloved brother; a man whom I had highly esteemed, and with whom I had enjoyed many happy hours in the worship of God. I anticipated we should have a great deal of happiness together, on our contemplated long journey. But alas! my anticipated happiness was soon blasted. We attended meeting that evening at Windsor, and the lot fell on me to preach. I was led to direct my discourse chiefly to the young people. The hearers of all classes appeared solemn, and heard the word with candour. I continued in that place through the week, attended three meetings in Windsor; two in Hartland; visited a number of families, and received great satisfaction therein. On the sabbath, we attended at Windsor. Brother P. preached in the forenoon; and I discovered something in his preaching, which gave me very disagreeable feelings, although I believed him to be sincere in what he preached. The particular sentiment, he advanced was, that the wicked would be burned up, and cease to exist, at, or immediately after the day of judgement. This appeared so different from what I had read in the scriptures respecting the eternal state of the wicked, namely, that such are in danger of *eternal* damnation, Mark iii. 29;—that “these shall go into *everlast-*

ing punishment,” Matt. xxv. 46;—that “their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched,” Mark ix. 44, 46, and 48;—“suffering the vengeance of eternal fire,” Jude 7th verse—that “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up *forever* and *ever*,” Rev. xiv. 11—These, with many other passages which occurred to my recollection, forbade my uniting with my brother P. in the support of his new and inconsistent doctrine. I therefore preached in the afternoon from Prov. 12, “If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.” I told the wicked, if they were so senseless of their own happiness, and of their duty to their Maker, as to live in sin, wickedness and folly, in this world; they might expect condemnation, horror and suffering, would be intolerable in the next. In the evening, I attended a meeting in another part of the town. Monday, Nov. 27th, I left Windsor, went to Weathersfield, and attended a meeting with brother P. In the evening, a goodly number came out and heard attentively. The next day we went to Springfield (Vt.), met two Elders, one resided in the place, the other was from New-Hampshire. And as brother P. had pretty much given up the idea of going on to the western country with me, the two Elders, before mentioned, gave it as their opinion, that it would be for the honor and glory of God, and greatly to my advantage, as I was going so long a journey alone, to be ordained before I proceeded any further. They also said, they believed it their duty, from the Lord, to separate me to the work, whereunto the Lord had called me. I had great trials on my mind with respect to the matter. And at first objected against their proposal, for three reasons. 1. Because I was absent from home. 2. I was afraid of running too fast. 3. I was too young. They took up these objections, and concluded that neither of them ought to bear with any weight. They considered me to be in

the vineyard of the Lord, let me be where I would; and that the church of Christ was one, or ought to be so; and of course, it mattered not where I was ordained. They therefore desired me not to desist, nor be baffled by the enemy. They therefore appointed a meeting, for the purpose of performing what they thought was enjoined on them to do. I then retired to a grove where I spent many hours in prayer and meditation. I then gave the matter up and submitted myself to the Lord. I concluded if I lived to return home to Billymead, I could lay it before the church, and if they approved of the ordination, it would be well; if not, if they were disposed, they could lay hands on me a second time. [This I did at my return, and the church approved of my ordination.] The elders proceeded in my ordination, according to the example given in the New Testament; set me apart to travel, and preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and administer gospel ordinances, wherever God, in his providence should call me. They also gave me a certificate of my ordination, and a written recommendation. These, together with what I received from the church to which I belonged, I found beneficial in a strange land; but not so much so as that which I had received of the blessed Jesus. For I trust I can say the gospel which I preach I did not receive of men; neither was I taught it but by the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. My ordination was performed on the 30th day of November, A. D. 1809; a little before I was twenty-two years of age. God grant that I may ever be humble, do good in my day; and never outlive my usefulness; for his great name sake. Amen.

I continued at Springfield the residue of the week; and spent the time in visiting from place to place, and attended a few meetings. Sabbath day, I met with the elders and brethren at a school-house; nothing special took place. In the evening, we met at a private

house; and while the people were gathering, I felt an uncommon solemnity resting on my mind. I arose and began to speak; and my mind seemed to be led to address myself to a couple of proud youths, who sat near to me. I described their characters, and gave them a solemn warning to flee from the wrath to come. It was said by those who knew them, that I pointed them out exactly, although I had never seen them before. Towards the close of the meeting, one of them started to go home, and as she passed by me! I spake to her and said, "young woman! without speedy repentance, I believe death is about to make you a visit." She went to the door, and made several attempts to go home; but the spirit of God followed her. She also went as far as the road several times, and then returned, (as she afterwards informed me.) At length she came into the house again; and notwithstanding her pride she fell on her knees and cried to God for mercy, and desired the saints to pray for her. The next morning I calculated to leave the place. Brother P. started on a little first, and I sat out to follow him; but my mind seemed to be led directly the opposite way. I turned about, and went back three miles, and when he saw that I did not follow him, he returned too. I visited several families, and had a very solemn season. In the evening, we met in the same neighborhood we met in the night before; and the glory and power of the Lord was wonderfully displayed. The young woman before mentioned was brought into the liberty of the sons of God, and publicly praised the Lord in a most wonderful manner. Several backsliders returned to their Father's house, and conviction got hold of the minds of a number of those who had been careless. The next day, I attended meeting with the other elders. A goodly number collected, and one was baptized. Wednesday, I spent the day in religious visits. Thursday, (being thanksgiving day), I attended a meeting in the east part of the town

near Connecticut river. Friday, I went to Rocking-

We attended a meeting in the evening, had a comfortable season, and found a good many loving brethren in that place. Saturday, December 9th, was my birth day; I was *twenty-two* years of age.

Twenty-two years of my precious time is gone,
And I'm fast hast'ning to my long and final home;
O may my work be finished when I'm called to go,
And change this world of trouble for heaven and glory too.

Sabbath, December 10th, we attended meeting in Rockingham. Brother P. preached in the forenoon, and I preached in the afternoon; we had a comfortable meeting. Monday, we went to the south parish, and in the evening preached there. The people appeared to be hardened in sin, and shielded against the gospel. The place seemed like a *paradise lost*. The next day we went to Athens; and when I arrived, it brought to my mind old father Paul, Acts xvii. 16: "Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry." However, I hope this is not the description of this town, for we found a number, who, I believe, are worshippers of the living God and not worshippers of idols. We met with them in the evening, and towards the close of the meeting, a number came forward, kneeled down, and desired us to pray for them. The next day we spent in visiting from house to house. We called at one house, and found the family very much opposed to religion; and when they found that our conversation was on religious subjects, they desired us to quit the house. We informed them that we did not come in to do them any harm. But when I perceived that they were in a great rage, and it was not in our power to calm them I asked them if they were willing that I should pray with them before I left the house;—they answered, no. We

then, in the presence of them all, shook off the dust of our feet for a testimony against them, and departed. O that the Lord might have mercy on that family, and prepare them to meet us another day.

In the evening, we attended another meeting at the school house, where we met the evening before; we then took our leave of the brethren and the next day went to Putney. In the evening of that day, brother P. manifested that he had great trials on his mind, whether it was duty for him to go any further with me or not. However, the next morning, he mustered what resolution he had, and concluded to pursue the journey with me. Accordingly we sat off, and went through Dummerston, and thence through Brattleborough, where we attended an evening meeting.

I had now been in company with brother P. about three weeks; and had expected, when I left home, (as well as all my friends) to have enjoyed his company, and travelled as companions; to have borne each other's burdens, and so to have fulfilled the law of Christ. But he now concluded that it was not the will of God, that he should go any further; and in consequence of this conclusion, the next morning, December 16th, he bade me farewell, and went back. My trials appeared too great for me to bear; but I repaired to the throne of grace, and gave myself anew to the Lord.

I had now no earthly friend with me; no one to speak to, that I had ever seen before. I was now a stranger in a strange land, with a lame horse, and but a few dollars with me, to bear my expenses; and for the good of others, (not for myself,) I had to face cold winds and snow. And what was still worse, I had to face a frowning world; and my contemplated journey, consisting of hundreds and hundreds of miles, was into a strange country, where I had neither relative nor acquaintance; and not knowing what might befall me, save, as Paul said, "that the Holy Ghost

witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." Acts xx: 23. Under these conflicts, I prayed that I might have grace to be able to say, as Paul said, in the 24th verse: "but none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."— Thus I left Marlborough, travelled through Wilmington, and crossed the Green Mountain; passing through Reedsborough and Woodford, and thence to Bennington, where I tarried Saturday night, with a member of the presbyterian or congregational church. Sabbath-day morning, the old gentleman desired me to go with him to visit his grand-daughter, who lay sick with a fever. I accordingly went, conversed with, and prayed for her. She appeared to be much concerned about her lost situation, (while the weeping family stood around,) soon expecting to close her eyes in death. We returned, and it being meeting time, we repaired to the meeting house, where a multitude of the rich and most popular people of Bennington, were assembled to hear the Rev. Mr Marsh, minister of the town. He delivered a discourse in the forenoon. In the intermission, I was invited to the house where he quartered, and introduced by General Safford, the gentleman with whom I stayed the night before. The Parson very politely received me, and kindly invited me to preach in the afternoon. This was so much to my astonishment, I hardly knew what answer to return him. I had been looking so much at my own inability, the popularity of the place, and, I had become almost blind to the glory of God, and the fulness which is in Christ. But I immediately retired by myself, and asked wisdom of God, who knew my situation. I soon found as the door was open, I must step in, or be condemned for neglect, which I thought I could not endure. I therefore returned and told Mr

Marsh, I would try to preach. The time having now come for exercise to begin, we repaired to the place of worship; and Mr Marsh, in a very polite manner, led me up into the pulpit. Here I was much tried and tempted of the devil, on many accounts. This I considered was about the first and oldest town in the State; and was formerly the capital. A place where governors, generals, judges, great men, mighty men, chief captains, &c. resided. The meeting house was the finest and most elegant I had ever preached in.— However, I prayed to the Lord that the fear of man might be taken from me, and my prayer was answered. After singing and prayer, I read Isaiah iii, 10, 11; "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." The fear of man, pride and unbelief, being immediately taken from me and hid from mine eyes, the spirit of the Lord God was upon me, and the word, I believe, not only reached the ears, but the hearts, of many of the hearers. After meeting, I was invited to take tea with Mr Marsh, at the house of Elijah Dewey, the same house where we dined. After supper I started; and as I was going out of the door the woman of the house put a dollar into my hand. This seemed a wonder to me as she was an utter stranger. But I found afterwards she was acquainted with my master; I think it likely that she gave it to me for his sake.

In the evening, I attended meeting at a private house, where one of the members of the church lay sick and supposed to be nigh unto death. I enjoyed good freedom in speaking to the youth, (for there were many present who heard me with candour.)— After meeting I was strongly invited by Mr Marsh, and several of the church members, to tarry with them several days. But as I did not feel a *thus saith the Lord*, I told them I must pursue my journey. Mon-