

**A CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE
DELIVERED ON THE ONE HUNDREDTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION
OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, NEWTON,
N. H., OCTOBER 18, 1855**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649336289

A Centennial Discourse Delivered on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Formation of the Baptist Church, Newton, N. H., October 18, 1855 by William Lamson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM LAMSON

**A CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE
DELIVERED ON THE ONE HUNDREDTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION
OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, NEWTON,
N. H., OCTOBER 18, 1855**

Centennial Discourse,

DELIVERED ON THE

ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

FORMATION

OF THE

BAPTIST CHURCH, NEWTON, N.H.

OCTOBER 18, 1856.

BY WILLIAM LAMSON,
PASTOR OF MIDDLEBURY CHURCH, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

PORTSMOUTH:
C. W. BRADWATER & SON, PRINTERS
1856.

US 11874.70.5

1860, Sept. 18.

Gift of Rev.

Andrew P. Peabody,
of Cambridge.
Plays of 1820.

The Baptist Church in Newton, the oldest of the denomination in New-Hampshire, was constituted in 1755. At the meeting of the Baptist State Convention in 1854, it was resolved that the next meeting of the Convention be held at Newton, and that there be special exercises in connection with this meeting, as a centennial celebration. Rev. W. Lamson was appointed to preach a historical sermon on the occasion. The sermon was preached at 10 A. M., Oct. 18, 1855. At 2 P. M. an impressive discourse was delivered by Baron Stow, D.D. of Boston, which was followed by a free conference, in which many interesting reminiscences were related. Before the Convention adjourned, it was voted—

“ That the thanks of the Convention be presented to Bro. William Lamson for his Centennial Discourse delivered this day, and that he be requested to furnish a copy for the press.”

DISCOURSE.

"Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—1 SAMUEL, VII, 12.

It did not occur to me, my brethren, at the time of my appointment to the present duty, how much more fitting it would have been that the appointment should fall elsewhere. The native of another State, and but recently come among you, it seems hardly proper that I should be called to address you on an occasion which carries you back over the entire history of our denomination in the State. I cannot therefore enter upon the duty without just stating the simple fact which, I suppose, led to my election for this service, and thus accounting, partially at least, for what might otherwise seem exceedingly strange. It happened that

the thought of observing this anniversary, by some special service, was first suggested, at least in public, by me, and thus, as the mover of a resolution for the appointment of a committee in a deliberative body usually finds himself on that committee, so I have found myself under this appointment, and waked up to the consciousness that I was not the man only when it was too late to effect a change.

I regard with favor and interest the increasing disposition in families and towns, and states and religious bodies, to mark by some suitable service these centennial anniversaries. We are a young nation—still in our youth. As with the individual, so with the nation, at that period of life, the disposition is to live wholly amid the activities of the present or the visions of the future, seldom or never turning the eye backward. But brief as our national life has been, we have a history—a past, as well as a present and a future; and that past is worthy of being studied. And from the rapidity with which society now advances, it does not require the lapse of centuries to create a distant past. The individual may live more in the brief

term to which human life is now shortened, than the antediluvian lived in his life of centuries. A nation may have a richer history crowded into a single century of the present, than was created by the longest term to which the life of older nations was prolonged. Measured then by the changes wrought, the progress made, rather than by years, we already have a history extending far into the past, one that invites us to explore it, and richly repays the toil. Let then the disposition to look back be cultivated. Let families gather around the spot where the first of their name found a home in this new world; and as the scattered branches come gathering to the festival, let them raise their Ebenezer, saying—Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. Let towns and states mark with suitable observances, the anniversaries of their earliest settlement, and go back from their crowded streets, and beautiful dwellings, and cultivated fields, and abounding conveniences and even indulgences—go back in thought from all these to the time when a single family or a little cluster of families were on that very spot looking about them for shelter from the storm

and protection from the wild beasts of the forest—and there let them raise their Ebenezer. It is well that the friends of missions, after the lapse of half a century, should contemplate a gathering on the spot sacred as the place where the first desire of personal consecration to this work was nurtured; till it grew into a fixed purpose, by believing prayer—and let them there set up their stone of help. It is with a similar intention that we, my brethren of the Baptist Churches of New-Hampshire, have gathered with this ancient church—believed to be the oldest of our name in the State—and the century of whose history closes this year. It would certainly have been a culpable omission not to mark a period so fraught with interest. Our denominational sympathies, our reverence for the past, and every sentiment of piety combined to urge upon us this observance.

It has been truly said—“ No period of time has a separate being; no public opinion can escape the influence of previous intelligence. We are cheered by rays from former centuries, and live in the sunny reflection of all their

light. What though thought is invisible, and even when effective, seems as transient as the wind that raised the cloud? It is yet free and indestructible; can as little be bound in chains as the aspiring flame; and when once generated, takes eternity for its guardian. We are the children, and the heirs of the past, with which, as with the future, we are indissolubly linked together; and he that truly has sympathy with every thing belonging to man, will with his toils for posterity, blend affection for the times that are gone by, and seek to live in the vast life of the ages. It is by thankfully recognizing those ages as a part of the great existence in which we share, that history wins power to move the soul. She comes to us with tidings of that which for us still lives, of that which has become the life of our life. She embalms and preserves for us the life-blood, not of master-spirits only, but of generations, of the race."

The truth of these thoughts, thus eloquently expressed, this intimate and vital connection between the past and the present, must be acknowledged and felt by men of all profes-