

**A RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS IN
THE NORTH CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, NEWBURYPORT,
JANUARY 24, 1868**

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A Record of Proceedings in the North Congregational Church, Newburyport, January 24, 1868
by William Anderson McGinley

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WILLIAM ANDERSON MCGINLEY

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THE NORTH CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, NEWBURYPORT,
JANUARY 24, 1868**

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE

North Congregational Church,

NEWBURYPORT, JANUARY 24, 1868,

ON THE OCCASION OF ITS ONE HUNDRETH ANNIVERSARY,

CONSISTING OF

A DISCOURSE, ADDRESSES, AND LETTERS.

EDITED BY THE PASTOR,

REV. WILLIAM ANDERSON McGINLEY.

NEWBURYPORT :
PUBLISHED BY GEORGE W. CLARK.
1868.



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PREFACE.

THE one hundredth anniversary of the church properly fell on Saturday, January 18; but at a meeting of the church and society it was voted, that, in consequence of the inconvenience which would attend the observance of a day immediately preceding the Sabbath, in the manner intended, and also the impropriety of so doing, the observance of the anniversary should be postponed to the following Wednesday, January 22; when, in consequence of a violent snow-storm, it was again postponed until the following Friday, January 24. The Committee of Arrangements was composed of the pastor, deacons, and parish committee, viz. :—

REV. WILLIAM ANDERSON MCGINLEY, *Pastor.*

Deacons.

THOMAS FOSTER,
WINTHROP O. EVENS,
ALBERT CURRIER.

Parish Committee.

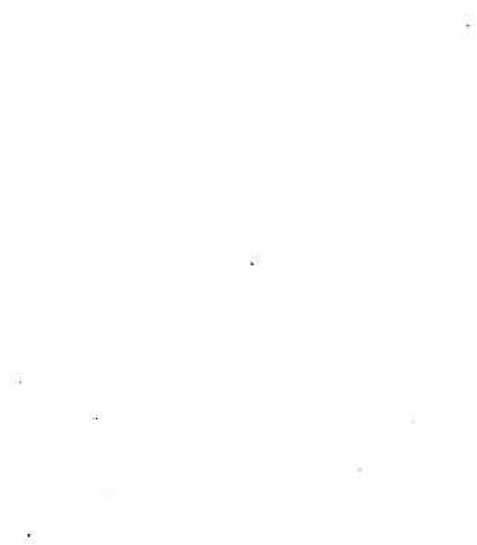
CHARLES R. SARGENT,
AMOS COFFIN,
JOHN H. BALCH.

Invitations were extended to the ministers of the Essex North Conference, the evangelical clergy of the city, and to clergymen in various places, who either originated in this church, or had been in some peculiar manner associated with it.

These proceedings are published at the request and upon the personal responsibility of Messrs. Charles R. Sargent and Amos Coffin.

W. A. M.

NEWBURYPORT, Feb. 25, 1868.



ANNIVERSARY PROCEEDINGS.



DISCOURSE at half-past ten o'clock, A. M., by Rev. WILLIAM ANDERSON MCGINLEY, Pastor of the Church.

DISCOURSE.

"FOR INQUIRE, I PRAY THEE, OF THE FORMER AGE, AND PREPARE THYSELF TO THE SEARCH OF THEIR FATHERS (FOR WE ARE BUT OF YESTERDAY, AND KNOW NOTHING; BECAUSE OUR DAYS UPON EARTH ARE A SHADOW): SHALL NOT THEY TEACH THEE, AND TELL THEE, AND UTTER WORDS OUT OF THEIR HEART?" — *Job* viii. 8, 9, 10.

ONE of the chief occasions, both of speculative and practical error, is the brevity of human life. Elishu was right when he said, "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." The operations of truth are long, but man's observation of their progress is brief. We look at great principles, in their present operation, very much as men observe large bodies through narrow crevices; their opinion of them depends very much upon where the crevice happens to lie,— whether it is the beginning, middle, or end of the object it permits them to see. The man that dies when Liberty is prostrating commerce, cutting throats, and shaking empires, regards her in a different light from him who beholds her amid the toil and privation of rearing a new fabric; or when she is cleansing the state; or when she sits a queen, with an olive-branch in her hand, and a prosperous nation at her feet. So, in the longest life, we see but "parts of the ways" of Him that "teacheth man knowledge." When men lived a

thousand years, their children might well regard them as oracles; but we, who "are but of yesterday," whose "days upon earth are a shadow," if we would learn wisdom, we must sit at the feet of many generations; for it is only from the history of long periods that true principles are surely learned.

We stand to-day at the close of a century,—a century in the history of this church, planted in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to look back over its record, to mark the themes for thanksgiving, and to appropriate some of its lessons of instruction. It is not my purpose to enter to-day into a minute detail of the events in its history. Only eight years ago, Dr. Dimmick one of its most honored pastors, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of his pastorate, delivered a discourse which was printed and circulated, which I find upon examination of all the records, to contain a complete detail of all the facts worthy of notice in the history of this church. The recentness and completeness of this performance, and the fact that it is in possession of nearly all the families interested in the subject, deter me from pursuing the same path. It is my purpose, rather, to sketch briefly some of the principal actors, and their connection with the movements of the times in which they lived, with some of the lessons of the century, suggested thereby.

1. The historic relation of this church to those by which it is surrounded.

The first sermon ever preached in Newbury was preached by Rev. Thomas Parker, in the shade of an oak-tree, on the banks of Parker River, during the spring of 1635, when the township was incorporated, and when the first

church in Newbury was organized, two hundred and thirty-three years ago.

Fifty-four years later, in 1689, a second parish was formed, and a church built, in what was then called the "West Precincts," on the ground now occupied by the Bellville Cemetery. Of this, the church organization now lives in the First Church of West Newbury, where it was subsequently removed. The parish in the Bellville parish, and a portion who were disaffected at the time of the removal, in the present Episcopal Church.

Thirty-six years later, in 1725, the First Congregational Church in Newburyport was organized. This was the same organization as that now known as the Pleasant-street Church.

Eleven years afterwards, in 1746, at the time of the Whitfield excitement, the Federal-street Church came off from the First, or Old Town Church. Their incorporation being strenuously opposed by the mother church, they succeeded in gaining it under the Presbyterian name; thus establishing their denominational existence, under a similar pressure to that which gave rise to the Episcopal Church, and also to many other churches, of different denominations, throughout New England during the same period; as when from disaffection, or other cause, a church wished to organize within the boundaries of an old parish, and failed to gain from the legislature an act of incorporation as a Congregational Church, by applying in another name they were enabled both to get an act of incorporation, and to be relieved from a taxation, which would have otherwise been very oppressive. From the Federal-street