

**FIFTY YEARS A PASTOR: A
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF DR. EDMUND
DOWSE, WITH A HISTORY
OF HIS CHURCH, AND A REPORT OF THE
CELEBRATION IN HIS HONOR, OCTOBER
10TH, 1888**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649582754

Fifty Years a Pastor: A Biographical Sketch of Dr. Edmund Dowse, with a History of His Church, and a Report of the Celebration in His Honor, October 10th, 1888 by Charles F. Adams

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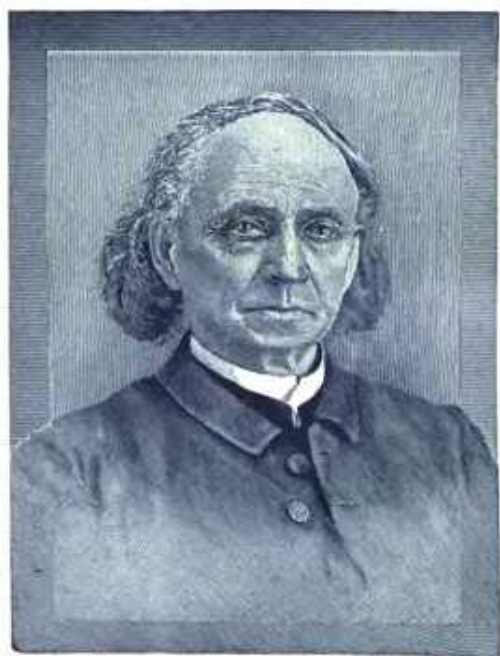
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SHERBORN:
CHARLES F. ADAMS,
1888.

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NATICK, MASS.



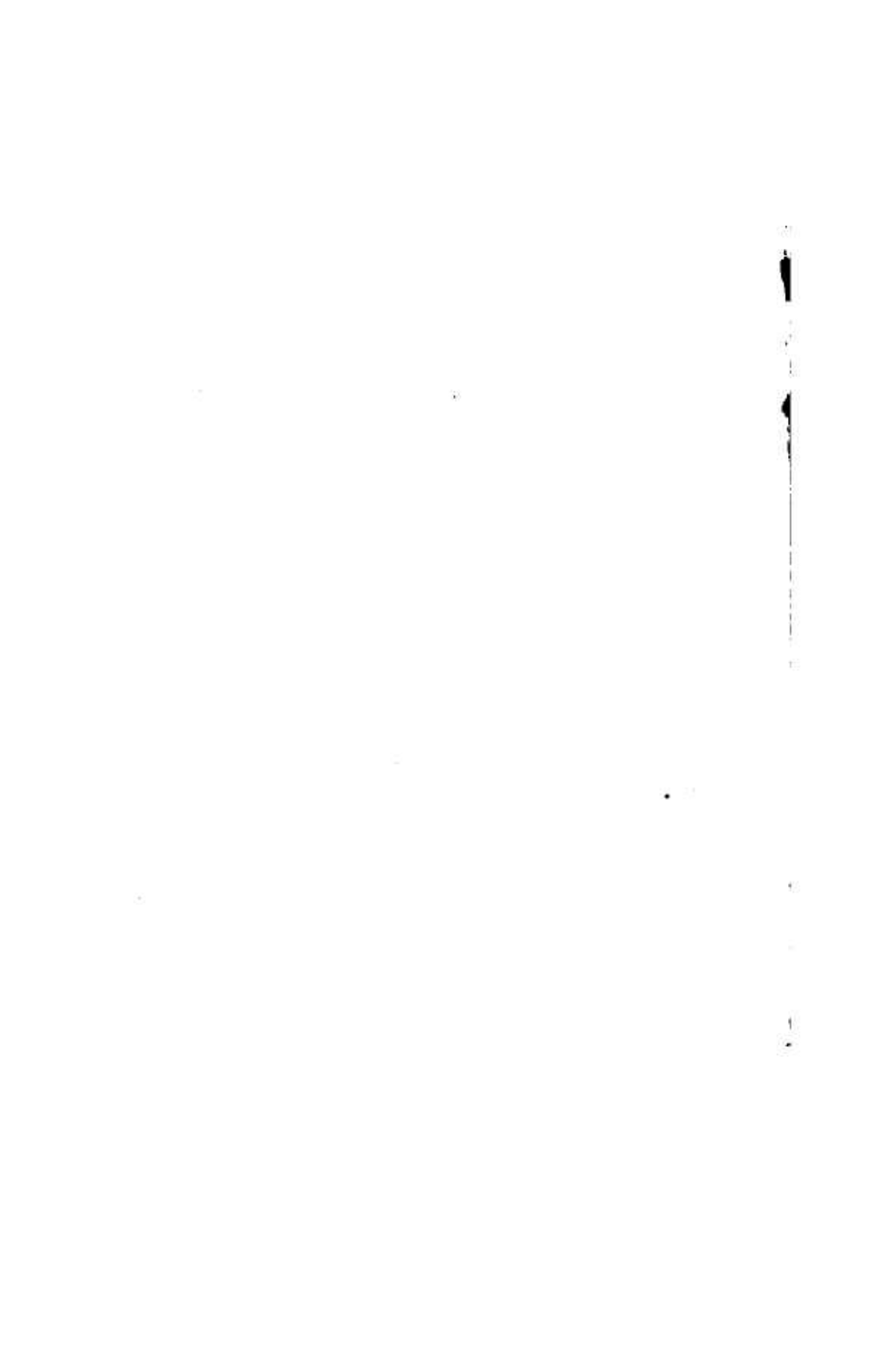
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PREFACE.

This little work is intended, more especially, for the preservation of a correct, carefully prepared record of the grand celebration in honor of Dr. Edmund Dowse, the senior pastor of Eastern Massachusetts, held October 10, 1888, giving the speeches, poems, and other exercises of the day.

Yet a report of the celebration without a word in regard to its subject, or of the church over which he has presided for so many years, would make an as incomplete a work as would be the play of Hamlet with Hamlet omitted.

The author has, therefore, with the generous and important aid of the Pastor, Dr. A. H. Blanchard and Mrs. D. P. D. Coolidge of Sherborn, Revs. Dr. Sturgis and Norton of Natick, Wm. B. H. Dowse of Boston, Nathaniel Allen, M. D., of Lowell, and Rev. John Woods of Fitchburg, compiled brief historical and biographical sketches of church and pastor.



The Church.

CHAPTER I.

1685-1830.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY in Sherborn begins at an early date. The town was incorporated in 1674, and for several years following the attention of the people was more or less concentrated upon secular matters. In 1677, however, the affairs of the town were in a more settled state and the inhabitants began to turn their thoughts to the spiritual needs of the community. Public worship was first set up at the house of Captain Joseph Morse and there continued until a meeting house was built in 1685. The church was organized on March 26, 1685, but its doings were not officially recorded until 1734. We find, however, an account of the formation of the church and **ordaining** of their first pastor in a diary kept by **Judge Sewall, one** of the early inhabitants of the town, which reads as follows: "Thursday, March 26, 1685. Went to ye gathering of ye Chh. in Sherburne and ordaining of Mr. Daniel Gookin, their pastor. But 6 brethren, and 3 of the name of Mors, Mr. Wilson (of Boston), Mr. Adams (of Dedham), and Mr. Nathnl. Gookin (of Cambridge),

managed the work. Mr. Nathl. Gookin, the younger, introduced the elder; a happy type of the calling of ye Jews." Twelve other clergymen were present, and "twelve fellows of the college. Only Maj. Genll. (Gookin) and self of Magistrates. No revelations were made, but I hope God was with them."

Rev. Daniel Gookin was the eldest son of Hon. Daniel Gookin, Esq., and was born in 1750. He was a good scholar and noted divine, and was for many years a Fellow of Harvard College, where he graduated in 1669. The degree of A. M. was conferred upon him in 1673. He was a friend of John Eliot, whom he greatly assisted in Indian missionary work at Natick, and it is probable that it was while engaged in this work that he became acquainted with the inhabitants of Sherborn. He was pastor of the church for thirty-four years, and, as a colleague said of him, was "diligent in his studies, tender of his flock and exemplary in his life." His death occurred on January 8, 1717-18, and his remains were laid in the Central burying-ground. A head-stone bearing the following inscription marked the spot: Here lyes ye Body of ye Rev. Daniel Gookin, Pastor of ye Church of Christ at Sherburne, who died January ye 8th, 1717-18, in ye 68th year of his age."

In 1710, owing to the ill health of Rev. Daniel Gookin, Rev. Wm. Baker, a colleague, was formally engaged as an assistant. On the death of Rev.