

**PLEA FOR THE OLD FOUNDATIONS: A
SERMON DOCTRINAL AND HISTORICAL,
DELIVERED AT THE REDEDICATION OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLOOMFIELD,
N. J., ON SABBATH MORNING AND
AFTERNOON, DEC. 18, 1853**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649743858

Plea for the Old Foundations: A Sermon Doctrinal and Historical, Delivered at the Rededication of the Presbyterian Church of Bloomfield, N. J., on Sabbath Morning and Afternoon, Dec. 18, 1853 by Rev. James Manning Sherwood & Rev. Stephen Dodd

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Cover @ 2017

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REV. JAMES MANNING SHERWOOD & REV. STEPHEN DODD

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A SERMON,

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DELIVERED AT THE RE-DEDICATION
OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OF BLOOMFIELD, N. J.,

On Sabbath Morning and Afternoon, Dec. 18, 1853.

BY

REV. JAMES MANNING SHERWOOD,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

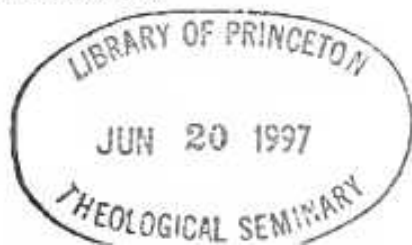
With an Appendix of Historical Reminiscences,

BY THE

REV. STEPHEN DODD.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY M. W. DODD,
COR. SPRUCE ST. AND CITY HALL SQUARE.
1854.



Bloomfield, Dec. 22, 1853.

REV. J. M. SHERWOOD :

RESPECTED AND BELOVED PASTOR:—The undersigned beg leave respectfully to request for publication a copy of your discourse, delivered Sabbath, Dec. 18th, on the occasion of the re-dedication of our Sanctuary. The very unusual interest which it excited in our minds, the value of it as a matter of history, and the good which we believe it cannot fail to accomplish, if given to the public in a permanent form, seem to be reasons conclusive to justify us in making this request.

With assurances of our highest regard,

We are yours, &c.,

Z. D. DODD,
ELIPHALET HALL,
CALEB BALDWIN,
DANIEL DODD,
STEPHEN MORRIS,
IRA DODD,
SIMEON BALDWIN,
BETHUEL WARD,
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WM. JINKINS,
E. M. DODD,

NOTE.

It is due to the Author to say, that the following Discourse was one of his ordinary pulpit preparations, and is indebted for any special interest it may have or claim to publication, to the occasion, and the history which it contains. Faulty as he knows it to be as a composition, it could not be materially changed without recasting it entire, and is therefore published just as it was delivered, adding a few notes to supply in part its defects, and amplifying one or two thoughts somewhat. As some exception was taken to the language used on a point or two, in giving it a more public and permanent form, such language has been chosen as he thinks can justly offend no one, while it retains the essential facts of impartial history. Greatly interested and instructed himself by the history of God's dealings with this people, it is his hope and prayer that this imperfect sketch may be blessed to the edification and encouragement of his people.

Bloomfield, January, 1854.

Sermon.

PART I.—DOCTRINAL.

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”—
PSALM xi. 3.

A WISE *Builder* will look well to the foundations of the edifice which he has undertaken to erect. The vaster and weightier that edifice is to be, the deeper and broader will he seek to lay the foundations. If he means that building to stand and to perpetuate his fame as a mechanic, he will regard no amount of time and pains and money expended to secure a solid and enduring basis, as wasted. For, he knows that in vain is the massive superstructure carried up; in vain are costly and durable materials employed; in vain is the skill

of the architect and all the appliances of the most finished art in adorning and beautifying it, if the foundations be frail, or of decaying material.

A wise *Statesman*, anxious to achieve and perpetuate the prosperity of a nation, will look well to the "foundations" of the thing. He is too sagacious to suppose for a moment that such a condition can be secured by artificial causes—by a happy hit—or by sleight of hand in turning the wheel of Fortune—or by spreading his sails to the popular breeze. He knows the fallacy of all such hopes; that all success gained in this way is at best uncertain and short-lived. He is too shrewd an observer of "men and things" to risk his reputation and aims on a policy so blind and precarious. He knows that to reach such an end, his policy must be an enlightened, liberal, substantial, and comprehensive policy, based on sound principles of political economy, and on a thorough knowledge and appreciation of the times in which he lives, and of the genius and institutions of the people whom he seeks to guide and serve. He knows that the foundations of all real and permanent prosperity must be laid in truth and justice—in wise and wholesome laws—in the

eternal principles of morality and virtue—in the intelligence, the patriotism, the thrift, the order and contentment of the people. The foundations once carefully and thoroughly laid, and the achievement will be easy, and the work will stand.

The *Military Commander* also, going to make war with an enemy, is apt to be wise on this point. He looks to his "foundations." He sits first down and counts the cost. He augments and makes available his resources. He thoroughly disciplines and equips his soldiers. He seeks to make the war popular with the people. He secures a broad and advantageous base for his operations. He risks as little as possible to the hazards of battle. He knows that his strength lies not in the number of his soldiers, so much as in their discipline, in the spirit which animates them, in the plan and skill of his movements, in the thoroughness of his knowledge of the science of warfare, and in his ability to concentrate his strength and employ it with effect at the favorable moment.

We read, indeed, of "soldiers of *fortune*;" but sure I am that the great and successful Generals

immortalized in History, were any thing but apes, or the children of a blind and stupid Fortune. They were gifted with genius, with penetration, with the power of commanding; and they made their way to victory and conquest and fame, by a sagacious and worldly-wise use of their gifts and opportunities. They took care of the "foundations," and success followed, and History monuments their exploits.

Napoleon has been thought by many to be a splendid exception to this rule. He is called *par excellence* "the soldier of fortune," "the man of destiny." But such a view of him is superficial. It was any thing but a "blind god" that led him forth to victory. It was not the confluence of favoring tides, nor fortuitous adventures, nor the genius of the age, nor a contracted, superficial, or indolent policy, which raised him to the highest pitch of earthly greatness, and made him an overmatch for combined Europe, but it was the intensified action of commanding qualities. His genius was of the very highest order. His mastery of knowledge, and his power of endurance and of application, were almost superhuman. No man ever so thoroughly understood that strange people, the French;