

THE NEW MEETING-HOUSE.

In the latter part of the period the town took measures to erect a new meeting-house. In 1789, " chose a committee to look out a place suitable for a new meeting house, for drafting a plan, and receiving proposals from individuals in relation to building the same." They subsequently decided upon the shape and dimensions, but, different opinions prevailing relative to the location, the construction of the building was deferred for some years.

Oct. 5, 1795, the town again voted " to build a new Meeting House, that it should be erected on the common land near to the present meeting house, and that the south and west cells of sd house should occupy the ground on which the south and west cells of the present meeting house now stand upon, and that the enlargement of the meeting house should extend North and East. Voted to accept a plan drawn by Capt Thomson which plan is 60 feet by 52 with a porch at one end with a steeple or spear on the top of sd porch. Voted that the Committee for building the house should consist of nine persons, and that they should receive nothing for their services." In 1796, it was voted that a bell should be purchased for the meeting-house. October, 1798, the building committee presented to the town the summary of receipts and expenditures which was six thousand twenty-five dollars and ninety-three cents. The town granted three hundred dollars for the purpose of grading the ground around the new meeting-house. Those who desired it were granted the privilege of working out their proportionate share of the expense; the price of labor being nine pence per hour for a man and nine pence per hour for a good yoke of oxen and cart. November, 1796, it was " voted to request the Rev. M. Bigelow to preach a sermon at the dedication of the meeting house." At the same meeting it was " voted that the Pew Holders in the body of the Meeting House as soon as Divine Service is over fling their pew Doors wide open so as not to obstruct the passage of

the people in the allies that the Speaker pass out first, then the pew holders to pass on after as fast as Conveniently may be out at the front Door, then those who sit in the seats next also voted that as soon as they are out they move off from the door steps so as to let the people have liberty to come out without Crowding also voted that the pew holders in the galleries fling their pew doors wide open that they empty their pews, together with the fore seats first, the 2ⁱ and o[^] seats to follow in course also voted that those who come down the West pair of stairs pass out at the West Door those who come down the East stairs pass out at the East Door, and to move from the door steps so as to give Liberty to empty the house as soon as conveniently may be. It was then voted to Choose a Committee for the purpose of Regulating the Assembling of the people at the Dedication of the Meeting House, to keep good order on said day and prevent damage being done to said House. Said Committee to consist of 12." At the same meeting " voted to appropriate to the use of the Singing Society in Said Town the front gallery and so much of the side galleries next the front as shall be necessary for their accommodation."

May, 1799, the town-meeting adjourned to allow its committee on building stables to go out and view the land ; on their return they reported that they had "set up a stake and stone at the south east corner of Lt Willis stables to the North east corner of the meeting house. Sd line being about 35 ft back of sd meeting house." "Report was accepted."

In 1796, the town-meetings were held at the house of Col. Benjamin Sawin, innholder. This was during the building of the new meeting-house. The same year the town appointed Coh Sawin's new barn and yard adjoining the same for a pound for a year.

October, 1797, " The Committee previously appointed to select a suitable place whereon to erect a pound reported that said pound be erected upon the East end of the Burying yard, the south side to be erected about ten feet north of Jj[^] Reuben Rices Stone wall, the wall of said pound to be 5 ft in Height with a Hewn stick of chestnut, or white pine Timber 10

inches in Height upon the top thereof, the Burying yard wall to form one side. Said pound to be thirty feet square within the walls." The report was accepted, and twenty dollars was granted for the purpose. The committee appointed for letting out the building of the pound were to " have the privilege of all the stones on the common round the meeting house, excepting so many as shall be necessary for horse blocks." At the same meeting forty dollars was granted for rebuilding Lanham Bridge.