



ENGRAVED BY J. SARTAIN — THE ORIGINAL BY J. NEALE

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Alexander

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Miscellaneous Articles.

THE RECIPROCAL INFLUENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL
DENOMINATIONS.

It may seem to be quite a discovery to find a subject on which no book has been yet written, and it may also seem that one lays the world under no obligation to him for suggesting a new topic. But would not the world be the better for a volume that should skilfully trace the providential design of permitting so many diversities as are found in the creeds and forms of the Christian Church? Might not a McCosh add "Ecclesiastical" to the title, "The Method of the Divine Government, Physical and Moral?"

At least one chapter of such a work should be headed as the present article is. The general influence of the variety of denominations in provoking one another's zeal, and thus multiplying the means of grace for the world, is plain enough. But it would be curious and instructive, and promotive of Christian harmony, could we see that there is a mutual action and reaction going on through all the existing diversities of the Church, the final end of which is to preserve and vivify the substantial and essential faith.

In thinking how our own section of the great family would stand in such a review, both as to the influence imparted and received, our position strikes me so favourably, that I could scarcely trust my impartiality to write the first part of that chapter. But I have made a few notes on the latter branch of the inquiry, which are at any body's service.

I suppose that Presbyterianism receives both a favourable and unfavourable effect from each of the other forms of Christianity with which it comes into association—that is, wherever any or all of the other forms exist in the same place with itself.

His death was a becoming termination of a remarkable life. "He knew in whom he had believed." On his sick bed he was calmly triumphant, and a holy serenity beamed around. His faculties were *literally* unimpaired, and he seemed—rather than to die—to be translated, not in a chariot of fire, but in a tranquil "taking of God." His death occurred at 6, A. M., October 22d, 1851.* The Synod of New Jersey, which was in session at Princeton, attended his funeral, with a large multitude of mourning friends; and his beloved and loving co-Presbyters were allowed the last privilege of carrying his body to the grave. "The souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection." "Because I live, ye shall live also."

HISTORY OF A LICENSURE AND ORDINATION SIXTY YEARS AGO.

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER LICENSED AND ORDAINED.

[We have obtained, by permission of the Rev. *William Brown*, Stated Clerk of the *Presbytery of Lexington*, the following extracts from the Minutes of that Presbytery, referring to Dr. Alexander's introduction into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterial books being temporarily in the hands of the Rev. Dr. *Wm. H. Foote*, we are indebted to him for his kindness in transcribing.

These extracts are interesting, not only in their relation to Dr. Alexander, but as illustrating the care of our Church in sifting the qualifications of candidates.]—Ed.

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER TAKEN UNDER THE CARE OF PRESBYTERY.

At Brown's Church in Augusta. Vol. I., p. 67, *Wednesday, Oct. 27th, 1790*.—Information was made by a member that Mr. Archibald Alexander, of Lexington, desired to be taken under the care of this Presbytery as a candidate for the gospel ministry; and Presbytery having a favourable account of his moral and religious character, and literary accomplishments, introduced him to a conference, in which, having given a narrative of his religious exercises, and of his evidences of faith in Christ and repentance towards God, together with his call and motives to the gospel ministry, and a specimen of his skill in cases of conscience—Presbytery having considered the same, do approve thereof, and agree to take him under their care as a candidate for the gospel ministry. Mr. Alexander is appointed as parts of trial an Exegesis on the following theme, *An fide sola Justificamur?*—and a homily on this theme, *What is the difference between a dead and living faith?*—to be delivered at our next.

PROGRESS OF HIS TRIALS FOR LICENSURE.

Page 79. Sessions at Hall's Meeting-house, Rockbridge county. *Wednesday, April 27th, 1791*.—On motion, Messrs. Lyle and Alexander were introduced and examined on the Latin and Greek languages. Mr. Alexander also read an Exegesis.

* For a number of interesting particulars of his death and burial, see the December number of *The Home and Foreign Record*, 1851, which contains extracts of a sermon by the Rev. *S. Irenaus Prime*, originally published in the *New York Observer*.

Thursday morning, April 28th.—On motion from the chair, Mr. Alexander was introduced and read his homily appointed in our last. Mr. Lyle was also introduced, and read a lecture as appointed in our last. Presbytery had an interloquitur to consider Mr. Lyle's popular sermon, lecture, and skill in the languages, and to consider Mr. Alexander's exegesis and homily, and also of his skill in the languages; and after due deliberation, Presbytery agreed to sustain them as parts of trial.

On motion, Mr. Lyle and Mr. Alexander were introduced and examined in Geography, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Criticism and Moral Philosophy.

P. 82. *Friday morning, April 29th.*—Presbytery had an interloquitur to consider Mr. John Lyle's and Mr. Archibald Alexander's examination on Geography, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Criticism, and Moral Philosophy, and agreed to sustain them as parts of trial. Presbytery appointed Mr. Alexander a lecture on Heb. vi., from the 1st to the 7th verse, to be read at our next, and a popular sermon from Jeremiah 1st, 7th, to be delivered at the same time.

P. 90. *September 20th, 1791.*—Sessions at Augusta Church. Mr. Archibald Alexander, a candidate for the gospel ministry, opened Presbytery with a popular sermon from Jeremiah, 1st chap. 7th verse, the last being assigned to him at our last stated meeting.

Thursday, Sept. 23d.—Mr. Alexander read a lecture assigned him at our last stated Presbytery, on the 6th chapter of Heb., from the 1st to the 7th verse inclusive. Mr. Grigsby also read a homily, &c. Both the foregoing pieces were sustained as parts of trial by Presbytery. Mr. Alexander's popular discourse was also sustained as part of trial.

On Saturday the Presbytery adjourned to meet in Winchester on the following Wednesday, Sept. 28th.

P. 112. *Thursday, Sept. 29th, 1791, 7 o'clock, evening, at James Holleday's, Winchester.* Presbytery proceeded to examine Mr. Alexander on Divinity, and having had sufficient specimen of his knowledge therein, agreed to sustain it as part of trial.

HIS LICENSURE.

Winchester, Friday, Oct 1st, 1791.—Presbytery having attended to the examination of Mr. Archibald Alexander on Divinity, were well satisfied with the specimen they had of his knowledge and ability therein.

The Presbytery having now gone through the usual course of examination with Mr. Archibald Alexander, having had sufficient evidence of his moral and religious character, and of his being in full communion with the Church, of his knowledge in the languages and sciences, of Geography, Astronomy, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Criticism, &c., and of his knowledge in Divinity, and a satisfactory specimen of his ability in sermonizing and expounding the Scriptures; and his having adopted the Confession of Faith of this Church, and satisfactorily answered the questions appointed to be put to candidates to be licensed, the Presbytery therefore licensed him to preach the everlasting gospel of Christ, as a probationer of the holy ministry, within the bounds of the Presbytery, or wherever he may be orderly called.

BEGINNING OF HIS MINISTERIAL LIFE.

It is recommended to Mr. Archibald Alexander, to supply in the neighbourhood of Winchester, and other vacancies within the bounds of this Presbytery, until our next stated meeting.

IS PUT UNDER THE COMMISSION OF SYNOD.

P. 129. *Saturday, April 28th, 1792.*—Session at Lexington, Rock-bridge County, Va. On motion, Presbytery agreed to recommend to the commission of Synod, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Lyle, and Mr. Grigsby, to act as missionaries under their direction

[The following extracts from the Minutes of the *Presbytery of Hanover*, to which Mr. Alexander was dismissed on Oct. 5th, 1793, have been transmitted by Dr. Foote.]

RECEIVES A CALL.

P. 74. *Cumberland, Nov. 8th, 1793.*—A dismission of Mr. Archibald Alexander from the Presbytery of Lexington, in order to join this, was presented, whereupon it was resolved, that Mr. Alexander be received and recorded as a probationer under our particular charge.

Calls having been put into the hands of Mr. Alexander, through Lexington Presbytery, from the united congregations of Cumberland, Briery, Buffalo, and Cub Creek, to engage in the pastoral care of said congregations as a colleague with Mr. Lacy, and Mr. Alexander having obtained a dismission from Lexington, and come under the care of this Presbytery, the Moderator called upon him to know whether he accepted of the said calls; but he desiring longer time to consider the matter, the Presbytery granted it.

HIS ORDINATION.

P. 86. *At Doctor Waddel's, May 2d, 1794.*—It was represented to the Presbytery, that from Mr. Alexander's connection with the congregations where he had for some time resided, it was expedient for him to be ordained. This the Presbytery thought reasonable, although he had not formally accepted the calls which he had under consideration. Wherefore, upon a motion, it was resolved that a Presbytery be appointed at Briery, on Saturday the 7th of June, for the purpose of Mr. Alexander's ordination. Mr. Lacy was accordingly appointed to preach the ordination sermon, Mr. Mahon to preside, and Mr. McRobert to give the charge. Mr. Alexander was left at liberty to preach on whatever subject he should choose, previously to his ordination.

P. 90, 91. *Briery, June 7th, 1794.*—Agreeably to an order of Presbytery, dated May 2d, 1794, appointing a Presbytery to meet at Briery meeting house, on this 7th day of June, for the purpose of ordaining Mr. Archibald Alexander, the Rev. Messrs. [Archibald] McRobert, [William] Mahon, and [Drury] Lacy, together with John Morton, Elder, met in Presbytery, and was constituted with prayer. Mr. Mahon presided as Moderator, and Mr. Lacy acted as Clerk. The order for Mr. Alexander's ordination was read. The Presbytery then proceeded to hear the sermon which Mr. Alexander preached previous to his ordination, from John xvii. 17.* This was considered as a sufficient specimen of Mr. Alexander's ability to preach the gospel, and sustained by the Presbytery. Mr. Lacy then preached an ordination sermon from Colossians iv. 17,† after which, Mr. Alexander having declared his acceptance of the Confession of Faith, as received by the Presbyterian Church in America, and promised subjection to the brethren in the Lord, was solemnly set apart to the whole work of the gospel ministry, by fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands. A solemn charge was then delivered by Mr. McRobert, and Mr. Alexander took his seat as a member of Presbytery.

* "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

† "And say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."