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ANNALS

OF THE

AMERICAN PULPIT;

OR

COMMEMORATIVE NOTICES

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN CLERGYMEN

OF

VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS,

FROM THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR  
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE.

WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS.

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BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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VOLUME IV.  
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By ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern  
District of New York.

rector for forty years, and this is his first and only charge. Of the third the Rev. Dr. McCarroll has been pastor a little more than thirty years, and this too is *his* first and only charge. I question if any town can give a more striking example of pastoral permanence. During this long period, these excellent ministers of Christ, though belonging to different branches of the Church, laboured side by side, without a quarrel, without a jar, or I should rather say, in most cordial and unbroken friendship.

Believe me to remain

Very affectionately yours,

JOHN FORSYTH.

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### JOHN CHESTER, D. D.\*

1807—1829.

JOHN CHESTER was born at Wethersfield, Conn., in August, 1785. His father was Col. John Chester, an officer in the Revolutionary army, and a gentleman of great respectability and influence. His mother, who was a Miss Huntington of Norwich, was a lady of fine talents and accomplishments, and of eminent piety. The son, in his earlier years, seems to have been distinguished rather for uncommon buoyancy of spirits, and an exuberance of good-nature, than for any strongly marked intellectual developments. At an early period, he was placed under the care of the Rev. Dr. Backus of Bethlem, (afterwards President of Hamilton College,) with a view to his preparation for a collegiate course; and, though he became greatly endeared to his instructor by his amiable and social qualities, he had a fondness for sport, that was hardly compatible with any high degree of literary improvement. In the year 1800, he was admitted a member of Yale College; and up to the period of his graduation in 1804,—though he was greatly beloved by all who knew him, he had given no indications of the vigour of mind, or the amount of usefulness, which he was destined to attain.

At one period of his college life, he betrayed some erratic tendencies, which occasioned considerable solicitude to some of his friends, and especially to his Tutor, the late President Davis of Hamilton College. Mr. D. called him to his room, and addressed him substantially as follows:—"College is a place of trial and danger, where some rise and others sink. The Faculty have noticed the course of a member of your class with no little concern and grief. He is a young gentleman of highly respectable connections, and good talents, and at the beginning of his college course promised well; but they fear that a sad change is coming over him,—they observe particularly that he seems to be forming some new associations, which they regard as ominous of evil. I have resolved upon reclaiming that young man, if I can. But unless I can have some one to second my endeavours, I have no hope of success. And now, Chester, you and I together can save him; and will you help me in the matter?" Chester, by this time,

\* Obituary Notices of Dr. Chester.—MSS. from his family, Rev. Dr. T. M. Cooley, and Hon. B. F. Butler.

perceived the drift of the Tutor's remarks, and, bursting into tears, said,—“I will try.” Many years after this, the Tutor and his pupil met in a pulpit in Philadelphia, where the latter preached. At the close of the service, Dr. Chester took President Davis by the hand, and, referring to their former relations, thanked him most affectionately for the influence he had exerted in College to save him from ruin.

Soon after his graduation, he seems to have been deeply impressed with the idea that his college life had been passed to little purpose, and to have formed resolutions that gave quite a different complexion to his future course. His mind came gradually under the influence of religious truth, until he believed that he had felt its renovating power; and the result was that he determined to give himself to the Christian ministry. Having engaged temporarily as teacher of a school in Hatfield, Mass., he prosecuted his theological studies, at the same time, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Lyman; and in 1807, was licensed to preach by the Association of Hartford County, Conn. After preaching for a short time successively at Marblehead and Springfield, Mass., and receiving calls to settle in Middletown, Conn., and in Cooperstown, N. Y., he was ordained and installed on the 21st of November, 1810, as Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Hudson, N. Y.

The field to which he was now introduced, was, in some respects, a difficult one. Besides the ordinary disadvantages growing out of the division of a comparatively small population into several denominations, with their several places of worship to sustain, the Presbyterian Church had been for some time before Dr. Chester's accession, without a Pastor; and the congregation, never large, had very much dwindled away. He had, therefore, in fact, to gather a congregation, as well as to stir up the feeble church; and he was eminently successful in each of these duties. He remained at Hudson, labouring with great acceptance, till his removal to Albany in the autumn of 1815.

The Presbyterian church edifice in Albany having become too strait for the congregation, it was resolved to erect a new one, and form a new religious Society; and some of the most influential individuals connected with the enterprise, had their eye upon Mr. Chester, from the beginning, as a suitable person to become its Pastor. In due time a call was actually made out for him, of which he signified his acceptance; and his installation by the Presbytery of Albany took place on the 3d of November. From this period till 1828, he devoted himself with untiring assiduity to the best interests of his flock, and indeed to all the temporal and spiritual interests of humanity within his reach.

On the 1st of June, 1818, Mr. Chester was married to Rebecca, daughter of that eminent philanthropist, Robert Ralston, of Philadelphia.

The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Union College in 1821. He was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1823.

Toward the close of the year 1827, Dr. Chester began to develop symptoms of disease, which awakened serious apprehensions in his friends that his usefulness, and even his life, might be drawing to a close. For some time, he resisted their earnest requests that he should temporarily suspend his labours, and give himself to relaxation, if not use more positive measures for his relief; but in the spring of 1828, he found his health so

much impaired that he reluctantly yielded to their wishes, and journeyed South as far as the White Sulphur Springs in Virginia. He remained there three weeks, during which time he was not a little encouraged to hope that the waters might be instrumental of his complete restoration; and this hope he expressed in a touching letter addressed to the Trustees of his congregation, coupled, however, with a sentiment of entire resignation to the will of an overruling Providence.

But the hope which this letter expressed, as well as that which it awakened among his anxious charge, was destined to be but the harbinger of disappointment. He returned indeed; but it was only to stand for the last time before his beloved flock, and bid his friends what proved a final farewell. His last meeting with them in public was a scene of the deepest interest. Before the close of the morning service, he requested the congregation to join him in the singing of that inimitable hymn,—“Jesus, lover of my soul;” and his rich and melodious voice, mingling with the voices of many of his charge, in the utterance of sentiments which, in the uncertainty of his earthly prospects, had become more dear to him than ever, produced an effect from which the most insensible could not escape. After the singing, he addressed the congregation for a few moments with deep emotion, and on his pronouncing the benediction, requested the male members to remain after the rest had retired. He then read to them a brief but most touching communication, which fortunately is still preserved, in which he expressed his apprehensions that the interests of his congregation might suffer by reason of his protracted separation from them consequent upon his illness, and begged permission to resign his pastoral charge. No sooner had he retired to give them opportunity to act on the subject of his resignation, than they declined the acceptance of it in the most grateful spirit, at the same time conveying to him, with their affectionate wishes, leave of absence for one year.

After this, Dr. Chester contemplated a voyage across the ocean, and was actually making his arrangements for it, when his disease took on a more alarming type, and seemed to betoken the near approach of death. At this time he was in Philadelphia, at the residence of his venerable father-in-law, and here he remained till the 12th of January, 1829, when death released him from his sufferings. In his last days and hours, Christianity breathed continually from his lips, in expressions of submission and thanksgiving; of good-will to his friends and of confidence in his Redeemer. Though the people of his charge were not unprepared for the sad intelligence, yet they were deeply affected by it, and it drew from them the warmest demonstrations of gratitude for his services, and of respect for his memory. The Trustees of his Church immediately sent a request to his nearest relatives, that, if it should be consistent with their feelings, they would allow his remains to find their final resting place in the midst of his devoted people. An answer, however, was at once returned, evincing indeed the most tender and delicate respect for the request, but intimating that it would be more grateful to his bereaved family that the body should not be removed from Philadelphia. Of course the Trustees readily yielded to their prior claim, though they did not fail to testify their regard for his memory by erecting, shortly after, a suitable monument in their own burying place.

On the morning of the Sabbath immediately succeeding his death, an affecting and eloquent Discourse was delivered with reference to the event, by the Rev. A. T. Hopkins, (the late Dr. Hopkins of Buffalo,) who was then engaged as a temporary supply; and, on the second Sabbath morning, the Rev. Dr. Nott, President of Union College, administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and at the close of his discourse, pronounced a eulogy on Dr. Chester, and incidentally on that immortal statesman, Dewitt Clinton also, who had been a member of the congregation, and had died but a few months before,—in a strain of the most pathetic and lofty eloquence. In the evening of the same day, the Rev. Dr. Tucker, then of Troy, delivered a Funeral Sermon, in which he presented a just and faithful sketch of his lamented friend, the materials for which had been supplied to him by a long and familiar acquaintance. These several tributes, with the exception of that by Mr. Hopkins, are included in a small volume of obituary notices of Dr. Chester, published shortly after his death.

Dr. Chester's publications consisted of a Sermon before the Columbia Missionary Society, 1813; a Sermon in commemoration of the Landing of the Pilgrims, 1820; a Sermon before the Albany Moral Society, 1821; and a Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Azel Backus, D. D., prefixed to a volume of his Sermons, 1824. He was also a liberal contributor to the *Columbian Magazine*, a periodical published in Hudson during his residence there.

Dr. Chester was the father of seven children,—two of whom died in infancy. Mrs. Chester died at the house of her son-in-law, Martin B. Inches, in Dedham, Mass, October 28, 1856, aged sixty-six years.

Dr. Chester and myself were natives of the same State, and passed our early years at no great distance from each other. He was, however, so much my senior as to be in the ministry before I had passed my boyhood; and though I had long heard of him as a popular preacher, I never happened to see him till a short time before I entered the ministry myself. The interest which I felt in him had been not a little increased, from the fact that a near relative of mine, a young man, had sat under his ministry for some time at Hudson, and used to speak not only of his popularity as a preacher, but of his generosity as a man, in terms of no measured praise. While I was in Yale College, he delivered one year the address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, which, owing to some circumstances that I could not control, I failed of hearing. The subject of it, however, I remember, was the connection between science and religion; and the critics about old Yale pronounced it an excellent performance.

The first time that I remember to have seen Dr. Chester was while I was a student at Princeton, when he preached the Annual Sermon before the Board of Directors of the Seminary. He had by that time become very corpulent, insomuch that, when he entered the church, I thought I had rarely seen a larger man. He moved, however, with an elastic, graceful step, and passed into the pulpit in a way that betokened any thing but infirmity. When he opened his lips, I was struck with the remarkable shrillness of his voice, as contrasted with his imposing personal appearance; but his voice was uncommonly distinct, as well as sweet—far more penetrating than many voices that I have heard, of much larger compass. His sermon did not seem to have been written specially for the occasion, and if my memory serves me, he officiated in the place of some one who had unex-

pectedly failed; nevertheless, the whole service was highly edifying and acceptable. The discourse was strongly evangelical in its tone, and somewhat ornate in its style; and the manner was simple and graceful, earnest and impressive. I remember one or two of his figures to this day, which I then thought, and still think, exceedingly beautiful.

My first introduction to the Doctor was in the autumn of 1820, when I met him at Norwalk, Conn., at the ordination of Mr. Sylvester Eaton.\* He had long been intimate with Mr. Eaton, and had looked upon him, I believe, during his education, as a sort of protege, and hence had consented to make the journey from Albany to preach his ordination sermon. The two men were in some respects alike, both in appearance and character—both were of a fine portly habit—both had countenances beaming with good-nature—both had warm and generous hearts; and both, by their great frankness and uncommon social qualities, kept every body around them in bright sunshine. Dr. Chester, though a Presbyterian by adoption, was a Congregationalist by birth and education; and he was evidently quite at home in meeting his Congregational brethren, as they were delighted with the opportunity of welcoming *him*. His sermon on the occasion was less imaginative, and apparently more elaborate, than the one I heard at Princeton; it was full of evangelical thought, well digested and felicitously expressed—in short, it was well fitted to the taste of a cultivated New England audience, and was received with many expressions of favour. But the most remarkable thing about it was the address to the pastor elect; for, in conformity with the New England style, it included such an address; and I doubt not, also, that it was prompted by the peculiar relations which the preacher and pastor elect sustained to each other. He introduced his address with “My dear Eaton;” and as he proceeded, his emotions became so strong as almost to impede his utterance. It seemed as if the fountains of feeling in his great heart were about to be broken up; and it is hardly necessary to say to any body who ever knew Sylvester Eaton, that *his* kind spirit too was stirred to its lowest depths. It awakened the sympathy of the audience in a high degree, and every body felt that even if there had been less of instruction and solid thought in the body of the discourse than there really was, the deficiency would have been made up by the extraordinary pathos and power of the close. Though I had never spoken with Dr. Chester before, and my acquaintance with him then was limited to a few hours, I felt, on taking leave of him, that I could never think of him but as a friend, and that I would never needlessly forego any opportunity of renewing my intercourse with him.

My next meeting with him, I think, was in the summer of 1821. I had just experienced a heavy domestic affliction, and reached Albany on Saturday, on a journey to Niagara Falls, which I had taken to recruit my health and spirits. I met him in the street, soon after my arrival, and he greeted

\* SYLVESTER EATON, a son of Abel Eaton, was born in Chatham, Columbia County, N. Y., August 12, 1790; was fitted for College partly under his brother, Professor Amos Eaton, and partly under the Rev. Dr. Porter of Catskill; was graduated at Williams College in 1816; studied Theology at the Princeton Theological Seminary; was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Albany in 1818; was ordained Pastor of the Congregational Church in Norwalk, Conn., in the autumn of 1820, and was dismissed in 1827; was settled as Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Buffalo in April, 1829, and was dismissed in September, 1834; was settled as Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Patterson, N. J., in 1834, and was dismissed about 1837; was settled shortly after in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., where he remained about four years. He spent the last year of his life mostly at Patterson, but died at Troy, where two of his brothers resided, May 14, 1844, aged fifty-three years.

me in his usually cheerful and animated tone, which led me to suppose, for the moment, that perhaps he was not aware of the affliction which had overtaken me; and I thought it no more than proper that I should advert to it. "Yes," said he, "I know all about it; the paper has been sent to me; but I shall talk with you more about it by and by." He subsequently referred to it with great tenderness. I had, during the Sabbath, much delightful conversation with him, that showed that his heart was full of tender Christian feeling. I did not hear him preach, but he offered a prayer at the close of the afternoon service that was remarkable for its appropriateness, fervour, and pathos. I recollect the interest which he expressed to me in behalf of some poor, suffering woman in his congregation; and he apologized for not waiting to see me off in the morning, on the ground that her case was an urgent one, and must immediately be looked after.

In the spring of 1827, I passed a few hours in Albany, and had another interview with Dr. Chester. It was just at the time when the new measure dispensation was opening upon the Churches, with all its thunderings and lightnings, and other appalling demonstrations. Many churches in Western New York were already convulsed, others were beginning to tremble, and no church might feel too confident of its own stability. Many excellent people stood aghast at what was doing,—fearing, on the one hand, to help forward the work lest they should lend an influence in aid of delusion; and fearing, on the other, to oppose it, lest they should be found fighting against God. Dr. Chester seemed to me to feel little embarrassment on the subject. He doubted not that some good was accomplished; but, on the whole, he regarded the excitement, especially in its remoter bearings, as adverse to the interests of genuine religion. He was not without serious apprehension that the influence might reach his own congregation; and though he seemed to have made up his mind to admit and cherish whatever of good might come, he was firmly determined to set his face as a flint against the peculiarities of the new system. His conduct subsequently was in full accordance with this determination. He never could be otherwise than gentle and kind, even in opposing what he considered error and delusion; but though the current set in against him with tremendous power, he always remained steadfast to his own convictions.

My only remaining interview with Dr. Chester, to which I think proper to advert, was the last that I ever had with him. I had heard of his declining health through the summer of 1829, and was surprised one day to receive a message from him that he had arrived at the house of one of his friends, who lived in my parish, (my residence was then in Massachusetts,) with a request that I would not wait for him to call upon me, as he wished, on account of his feeble health, to avoid all unnecessary exertion. I immediately called, agreeably to his suggestion, and was not a little shocked to observe the change that had come over him from the time of my seeing him before. I doubt not that my countenance revealed my surprise; and I could not help telling him that he looked very ill. But he answered me with his usual cheerfulness and buoyancy, assuring me that he was much better than he had been, and pleasantly intimating that I had a sharp eye for seeing the dark side. He was then making his arrangements to go to Europe, whence I had just returned; and he promised to let me know more specifically when he should sail, that I might send him letters of introduction to some of my friends. But notwithstanding his spirits were so good,



I could not but feel sad misgivings in regard to his prospects; nor was I at all disappointed that it turned out that I never saw him again. I heard from time to time that his disease seemed to be rapidly gaining upon him, until at length the intelligence met my eye, in the New York Observer, that both his labours and sufferings were closed by death.

As I succeeded Dr. Chester in the pastorate a few months after his decease, I had of course the best opportunity of judging of the estimate in which he was held by his own people, and by the community generally in which he lived; and I found everything as my personal knowledge of him would have led me to expect. His congregation all seem to have looked up to him, not merely as a pastor, but as an affectionate friend, to whom it was their privilege to confide everything. Perhaps I should be justified in saying that, while he never intentionally neglected any body belonging to his pastoral charge, he was more frequently to be heard of at the extremes of society than among the middle class; for while his early associations, as well as cultivated taste, naturally attracted him to the higher circles, his humane and sympathizing spirit rendered him at home in the habitations of the poor and wretched. It was no uncommon thing for him, as I have often heard, to be seen going, with his basket of provisions on his arm, to minister to the wants of some needy family. Some who used to be the sharers of his bounty, I have heard pour blessings upon his memory, with floods of tears, declaring with the same breath, that whatever their attachment to me might be, I could never fill the place in their hearts which had been allotted to *him*. Though more than a quarter of a century has passed since he was taken to his rest, his memory is still cherished in the congregation with undiminished gratitude and reverence; and though comparatively few remain who were actually embraced in his charge, or have intelligent recollections of his ministry, yet the parents have taught their children to reverence him, and more than one generation must pass away before his name will cease to be among them as a household word.

I cannot forbear to record an incident which occurred a few years ago, as illustrative of the affectionate remembrance in which Dr. Chester is still held by his former flock. A married daughter of his, passing the winter in Albany, expressed a wish that her child should be baptized in the church which is so intimately associated with the memory of her father. Her wish was, of course, cordially responded to, and, on a Sabbath afternoon, the baptism took place. I have not often witnessed a scene more tender and interesting in its associations. The name of her child was John Chester. The service was performed on the spot where she had herself been baptized, some twenty-five years before. The young mother maintained a dignified composure while the ordinance was administered, though she was evidently struggling with strong emotions. And I believe the whole congregation sympathized with her. The name of her venerable father, pronounced over one of his grandchildren, where he had himself baptized not a small number who were then present, I doubt not, quickened the pulsations of many a heart. Almost every eye seemed to wander after the child as it was carried from the church, as if it had been some bright little creature dropped down from the skies. The whole scene was a beautiful but involuntary tribute to the memory of one who had long since passed away, but whose exalted virtues gratitude still keeps in fresh remembrance.

## FROM THE HON. MARTIN VAN BUREN.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

LINDENWALD, April 13, 1848.

My dear Sir: I am much gratified that your kind letter has afforded me an opportunity to express my opinion of the late Dr. Chester.

I was well acquainted with him at Hudson, and subsequently at Albany. My deceased wife joined his church at Hudson, and continued a member until her death. It is now many years since his decease; but his many and sterling virtues are yet fresh in my recollection; and I can truly say that it has not been my fortune to make the acquaintance of any minister of the Gospel, with whose sincerity as a Christian, or goodness as a man, I was more strongly impressed.

Accept, Rev. Sir, assurances of my great respect and sincere regard.

M. VAN BUREN.

## FROM THE HON. B. F. BUTLER,

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

NEW YORK, May 18, 1856.

My dear Sir: My knowledge of Dr. John Chester began, while I was a law-student in the city of Hudson. I attended on his ministry in that place for two or three years; but I was then a mere youth, and had very little personal intercourse with him.

Early in 1815, I became a resident of Albany, and on his settlement there in the latter part of the same year, I again became a member of his congregation, and so remained (except for a short period, while residing in another place,) until his death in 1829. I was for about a twelvemonth, in the early part of his residence in Albany, and while we were both unmarried, a member of the same family with him, as a fellow-boarder. I had thus, as you perceive, good opportunity for becoming acquainted with his personal and public character, and in compliance with your request I will proceed to sketch its prominent traits.

Speaking first of his natural endowments, I should say that, in addition to a large stock of common sense, he was blessed with a kindly and genial disposition; with quick perceptions; with much facility in acquiring knowledge—more especially by his own observation of men and things; and with more than common aptness in communicating to others whatever he himself knew. These qualities, enlarged and hallowed by an earnest and elevated piety, and united to a sincere love of souls, made him a judicious, acceptable and useful minister of the Gospel. In regard to his professional learning and attainments, I am ill-qualified to judge; but I do not suppose that they were remarkable. The provisions for extended theological study in his youth were, as is doubtless well known to you, very scanty, and I believe that the advantages enjoyed by him, in this respect, were not peculiar. But he was a diligent student and true lover of the Bible; was fond of reading; was familiar with the standard literature of our language, and kept pace with the general advance in theological and other science.

Without being a great pulpit orator, he was a popular and successful preacher. His sermons for the Sabbath were carefully composed and written out, and were read from his manuscript, but freely and with a good deal of action. His voice was clear and musical; his elocution, naturally animated and pleasing, was rendered the more impressive by a noble presence; and he always commanded the attention of his audience during his entire discourse. In his weekly lectures he used only brief notes, trusting chiefly to the inspiration of the moment, always

speaking with fluency, and often with great earnestness and power. His extemporaneous addresses were usually felicitous; and at Funerals especially, were touchingly appropriate. His heart was full of sympathy with the joys and the sorrows of others; and in this fact lay much of his influence for good with his own people and in the community.

While his teaching distinctly and always conformed to the leading doctrines of the Church to which he belonged, he did not often preach purely doctrinal sermons. In the selection of topics for the pulpit, he preferred those which set forth the grace and love of God in the gift of the Saviour, the fulness and freedom of the Gospel offer, the duty and blessedness of receiving it with gratitude and love, and of honouring it by a holy and beneficent life. He was fond of preaching what Blair calls "characteristical sermons," and succeeded in making them interesting and instructive. He also frequently discoursed on the precepts of the Decalogue, and on the moral duties inculcated in the New Testament, though he was very far from being, in any sense of the word, a legalist. He held, with all his heart, to the great Protestant doctrine of justification by faith; but he thought the Epistle of James, and the preceptive parts of Paul's Epistles, not less a part of the Sacred Canon than the dogmatic portions of the writings of the great Apostle, and their inculcation, from the desk, equally important.

His style of composition, more especially in the early part of his ministry, was often too florid to bear the test of a severe criticism. But it was always pleasing to a general audience, and, as he advanced in age and experience, it improved in simplicity and good taste.

He was exceedingly fond of music, and possessed, I suppose, a good knowledge of the science. He paid, as I know, great attention to its culture in the congregation, and his clear and melodious voice was always blended with theirs in this part of Divine worship. Soon after his settlement in Albany, he prevailed on his people to introduce into their service the use of the organ,—a thing not then common in the churches of our denomination.

Dr. Chester was truly a Christian gentleman. He possessed a native dignity and elegance of manners; was perfectly at ease himself on all occasions; and had the happy faculty of putting others, of whatever condition, at ease in his presence. In entering the pulpit, and in his behaviour there, he was entirely free from anything like awkwardness or embarrassment. He studied so to adapt to each other the various parts of the service, as to render them throughout harmonious and interesting. Each part would be performed by him with readiness and freedom—and this on special occasions as well as in matters of ordinary routine. In administering the Lord's Supper, the warm sensibilities of his nature were particularly displayed; and when the time came for presenting the elements to the members of the Church Session, he always addressed to them a few words of tender and respectful exhortation and encouragement, and without any affectation of humility, so deported himself as to make it evident that he esteemed them co-workers with him in the service of the Great Master. In the baptism of children, the way in which he took them in his arms, sprinkled on them the pure element, and returned them to their parents, will never be forgotten by those whose offspring were by him initiated into the Church of God.

He manifested his discretion and tact in readily availing himself of any public event or extraordinary circumstance, in the religious exercises of the day, and in accommodating them to the exigencies of the occasion. On very warm days in summer, or very cold ones in winter, he would so abridge each of the exercises as to dismiss the congregation at the earliest appropriate hour.

He was remarkable for his attention to the smallest courtesies of life, and for the kindness and grace with which he performed them. Not only his personal manners, but his official duties, were distinguished by this characteristic. He treated all persons with a frank civility—aged persons and women with marked

deference. After his marriage, it was his habit, whenever Mrs. Chester attended public worship, to accompany her to the church; to conduct her to the pew; to open the pew door; and to see her duly seated; before taking his own place in the pulpit. I mention this, because it illustrates the point to which I refer, and may help those who did not know him, to understand the character of the man.

He was a large-hearted and public-spirited man. He was an early and efficient promoter of all the great schemes of Christian philanthropy set on foot during his time. Nor were his efforts in this way confined to objects of a religious nature. Every measure intended to encourage the diffusion of useful knowledge, received his ready support.

He was a man of active habits; had a natural talent for business; and was capable of influencing, and of combining in united effort, other minds. In every enterprise with which he was associated, he was, therefore, a leader—and this, rather from the qualities of his mind and his genial temper, than from any ambition of leadership.

He was fond of society; and being every where a welcome guest, must have found it difficult, especially after he came to reside in Albany, to command the time needful for pulpit preparations and pastoral duties. Yet these were never neglected by him.

In logical power and in effective oratory, Dr. Chester was doubtless surpassed by many of his contemporaries. But in the happy combination of the several qualities, which, in our country, are best adapted to make a competent and useful minister of the Gospel, he had, I apprehend, few superiors in his day and generation.

I cannot close these slight notices of his character, without adding to them for myself, my heartfelt thanks to Him who "holds the Stars in his right hand," that He was pleased to raise up and send forth John Chester, and to make me one of those to whom he ministered.

I am, dear Sir,

With sincere respect and affection,

Very truly yours,

B. F. BUTLER.

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## EDWARD LUTWYCHE PARKER.\*

1807—1850.

EDWARD LUTWYCHE PARKER was born in Litchfield, N. H., July 28, 1785. He was named for Edward Goldstone Lutwyche, an English gentleman of education and fortune, and a particular friend of his father. He was a grandson of the Rev. Thomas Parker, who was born at Cambridge, December 7, 1700; was graduated at Harvard College in 1718; was ordained Pastor of the Church at Dracut, Mass., probably in 1721; and died March 18, 1765, aged sixty-five. He was the son of Dr. Jonathan Parker an eminent physician, who was graduated at Harvard in 1762, and died in September, 1791, leaving a family of ten children, of whom Edward, then six years old, was the youngest but one. His mother was a lady of much more than ordinary culture, and possessed great firmness of purpose, besides being a consistent and devout Christian.

\* Memoir prefixed to the History of Londonderry.