

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.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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ing, with a graceful facility of communication on every subject, and a most happy talent at adapting himself to every variety of character and condition, he seemed to me one of the finest specimens of intellectual and moral nobility which I had ever seen. He has impressed himself indelibly on the character of his denomination.

Very truly and affectionately,

J. M. MATHEWS

THOMAS CLARK, M. D.

1764—1793.

FROM THE REV. JOHN B. DALES, D.D.

PHILADELPHIA, June 24, 1849.

Reverend and Dear Sir: The position which the Rev. Dr. Clark long and usefully occupied in some of the most interesting portions of our country, I think, justly entitles his name to a place in your proposed work on the American Ministry. He was a faithful Minister of the Gospel, and a far-seeing and indefatigable labourer on behalf of the best interests of the community at large.

Of the particular time or place of his birth I have no certain information. That he was a native of Scotland, however, there can be no doubt; and that he early enjoyed the instructions and prayers of godly parents may be inferred from the fact that he always venerated the pious advantages of his youth, evinced a remarkable tenderness of conscience, and laboured in the ministry as if he had been thoroughly taught how to redeem the time by discovering and improving opportunities of doing good.

After a thorough course of study, he graduated at the University of Glasgow, and, during the War against the Pretender, in 1745 and 1746, did faithful service in the army.

According to a practice which was common with the young men preparing for the ministry a century since, Mr. Clark pursued a thorough course of Medical study also in the University, and took the degree of Doctor of Medicine. In this way he was often afterwards able to minister to the wants of the body, and thus more effectually reach the soul with his spiritual medicines. It was from this he obtained his usual epithet in this country,—“Dr. Clark.”

The earliest public mention made of him is in connection with the first meeting of the Associate Burgher Synod at Stirling, Scotland, on the 16th of June, 1747. At this meeting Congregations and Societies in various parts of the country made application to the Synod for advice “in their present circumstances,” and for a supply of preaching. In the unsettled state of things, and in the painful destitution of ministerial help, the Synod could give no immediate reply to these applications, but directed the Presbytery of Glasgow to take Thomas Clark and two other students of Theology, whom they also named, on trial for licensure. This the Presbytery did, and after pursuing his studies at Stirling, the next winter, under the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, who was the first that had charge of the Burgher students, he was licensed in the following April, (1748,) to preach the Gospel.

At that time frequent and urgent petitions were sent from Ireland for ministerial aid. Three Congregations, Killeney, Ballymoney and Ballybay adhered to the Burgher Synod, and were deeply anxious for supplies and for Pastors. On the 27th of the following June, therefore, Mr. Clark was appointed by the Presbytery to supply these vacancies, and immediately set out on his mission. His preaching was highly acceptable, and at a subsequent meeting of Synod in Stirling, a unanimous call was presented to him from this congregation, and also one from Clanannus and Scoon, near Perth, in Scotland. The former was accepted, and three members of the Presbytery of Glasgow having been appointed to fix the pastoral relation, he was ordained by them to the work of the Gospel Ministry, and installed over the Congregation of Ballybay, in the County of Monaghan, Ireland, on the 23d of July, 1751.

During the summer of 1751 he and two other ministers were formed into a Presbytery, styled the "Associate Presbytery of Down;" and now a wide field was opened before him. He loved it and his labours were abundant. But his very fitness for it soon threatened to be the occasion of his removal; for deeming him happily qualified for supplying the Institute, and having pressing calls from the Colonies of North America for ministerial help, the Synod appointed him, in 1754, to sail for Pennsylvania in the following August, and labour in the ministry there until the next April. To this he consented, for, having received a commission to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," he held himself ready for any indication of the Divine will. Providence, however, interposed difficulties, and, by a new direction of Synod, he continued his labours at Ballybay. But while it was not yet the will of God that he should make known the riches of grace abroad, it *was* the Divine will that he should be a witness for his Master's cause at home. He lifted up his voice, with great earnestness, against what he considered defections from the purity of Christian doctrine and practice, and hereby brought upon himself a torrent of opposition. At length, as he refused to swear by kissing the book, which he believed was a Popish superstition, to which no Protestant could with propriety submit, and as he also would never consent to take the abjuration oath, in which the swearer bound himself to own the King as Head of the Church, and to help Bishops dethrone the King if ever he should become a Presbyterian; he was pursued by the hand of the civil law, and, as he was about to moderate a call in New-Bliss congregation, was arrested just as he closed his sermon. The people would have immediately rescued him, but he mildly bade them be calm and do no harm. All that night he was kept under guard in a tavern, and the next day was taken, amidst the tears of multitudes, along the road to Monaghan, and thrown into jail to await his trial. Thence he wrote letters of instruction and comfort to his people, and they came freely to him. Besides preaching to them while he was in prison, he baptized there thirteen of their children, and married one couple, who were afterwards under his pastoral care on the Catawba River in South Carolina. At length the day of trial came, but his commitment being found to have been erroneous, and his imprisonment false, he was immediately discharged; and, when he was urged to prosecute his persecutors, and had every assurance of a verdict in his favour, he gently lifted his eyes to Heaven with the exclamation,—'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.'"

From that time, though often troubled, he was unfettered, and faithfully pursued his work. But his long imprisonment had served to wean him, in a great

measure, from attachment to his country, which induced him to think of a field of labour in the wilds of America, where he could enjoy his religious sentiments free from the stringent arm of civil authority, which had been so powerfully thrown around him. In this feeling his people largely participated, and the Providence of God gradually made his duty clear to him. On the 18th of December, 1762, he was bereaved of his wife, who was an eminently godly woman, and not long afterwards two calls were addressed to him from America;—one from a small settlement in the Province of Rhode Island, and the other from a people near Albany, in New York. To these calls he felt disposed to listen, and the more so, as he observed a diminished attention in public worship among his people; a weariness among the youth in repeating the Scriptures and Catechism between sermons, as had been their custom under his ministry; a neglect of secret prayer by some in the intervals of public worship, and an engaging in unprofitable conversation by others; and “some,” he said, “appeared in practice to adopt the Quaker’s opinion, that very little or no salary should be paid to ministers, though it be God’s express ordinance, saying 1 Cor. ix, 14,—‘The Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.’” In view of these things, and particularly of the fact more painful to him than all others,—that “he had not heard of any person alarmed or edified by any of the public ordinances for a great while,”—he was led sorrowfully to suppose that his usefulness was at an end in that place, and to ask,—“What dost thou here, Elijah?” When, therefore, the above calls came, he concluded it was his duty to lay the matter before the Presbytery, and, on their acceding to his wish, and appointing him to supply in America for one year, he at once prepared to take his departure. On the last Sabbath of his ministry in Ballybay, he preached from 1 Cor. ii, 3,—“I was with you in weakness, in fear and in much trembling,”—a passage which “contains,” said he, in a letter to them long afterwards, “the history of my sixteen years’ sojourning with you.”

Previous to this important step being taken, Dr. Clark opened a correspondence with the late Hon. Robert Harpur, of King’s (now Columbia) College, in the city of New York, furnishing him with the names of one hundred families in the North of Ireland, that were desirous of migrating to America; and, on the 23d of November, 1763, Mr. Harpur obtained a warrant from the Government to survey a tract of forty thousand acres of land, North of the present towns of Kingsbury and Queensbury, Warren County, N. Y., for their location. Thus encouraged, Dr. Clark set sail from Newry, Ireland, on the 16th of May, 1764; but he was not alone—nearly three hundred of his people and their neighbours accompanied him. Not an untoward event occurred during the passage, and on the 28th of July they safely reached New York. Here the company divided, one portion proceeding South, and settling in the neighbourhoods of Long Cane and Cedar Spring, in North Carolina, and the other passing up the Hudson River to Stillwater, above Albany, N. Y., where they were to remain until the place of their permanent residence should be more definitely determined. To both of these companies Dr. Clark was drawn by the strongest ties of Christian sympathy and love, but his first choice was to labour with those that went North, and he was of the utmost service to them in various ways. A few of the families went on immediately to the tract in Warren County, for which Mr. Harpur had applied; but, after spending the next winter there, they were so disheartened by the dreary appearance of the country, as well as the deep

snows and pinching cold, that, although Mr. Harpur obtained, on the 15th of May, 1765, a grant of four hundred acres for each family, they preferred abandoning all, if a more favourable location could be elsewhere secured, and returned to their friends at Stillwater. As the Pastor and friend of the Colony, Dr. Clark felt anxious for their best interests, and directed his attention especially to Washington County. In his exploration of that region, he visited what is now the town of Salem in the spring of 1765, and preached the first sermon ever heard there. It was in the house of Mr. James Turner,—the only house then erected on the plain where that beautiful village now stands; and the congregation was made up of a few individuals, who gathered in from the isolated dwellings in the surrounding region. To attend this service some females walked seven miles through the woods, having no other guide than marked trees.

At that time the entire township was providentially in a most favourable state for Dr. Clark's undertaking. On the 5th of January, 1763, Alexander Turner, James, his son, and twenty-two of their neighbours in Massachusetts, presented a petition to the Governor of the Province of New York for a patent, which was obtained on the 7th of August, 1764, conveying to them twenty-five thousand acres of land, which embraced the principal portion of the present town. Immediately afterwards, they conveyed twelve thousand acres of this tract to Oliver De Lancey and Peter Dubois, in the city of New York, and in the same year the patent was surveyed and divided into eighty-eight acre lots. All the parties then made divisions of their land by ballot,—De Lancey and Dubois drawing lots to the amount of twelve thousand acres; and all entered into mutual stipulations that three particular lots, situated near the centre of the town, which had been drawn by the "gentlemen," and three intervening ones, belonging to the "patentee," should be devoted to the support of a Minister and School-master. Just after these arrangements were completed Dr. Clark arrived, and, having examined the different tracts of land in that region, and ascertained the terms of their titles, he selected Salem as the most eligible spot for his Colony, and, in September, 1765, obtained from De Lancey and Dubois a grant of all the lands belonging to them in the township; they reserving a perpetual yearly rent of one shilling per acre when settled, and stipulating to pay the grantee a reasonable remuneration for procuring their speedy settlement. The way thus being prepared, the Colony removed from Stillwater, and every person who desired it received from Dr. Clark a farm, subject only to the annual rent just specified. Not long afterwards a church and school-house were erected on one of the church and school lots already described. This church was the first in the County, and, at that time, the only one in the State North of Albany. The name which the emigrants gave to the town was "New Perth," and the original tract was long known as "Turner's Patent."

In this place, which appeared so providentially prepared in the wilderness, the benevolent and devoted Pastor gathered his flock around him, and, corresponding with his friends in Scotland and Ireland, and even causing one of his people to revisit them, and lay before them the condition and prospects of this new home, he was instrumental in bringing out a number of emigrants during the following year. Nor was he unmindful of the spiritual interests of his people. With increasing diligence he gave himself to his ministerial work, and, mingling the religion of an intelligent and fruitful faith with all the affairs of the settlement, he was eminently useful, and, to this day, the savour of his name is precious

throughout that region. His works do follow him, and many have risen to call him blessed.

As has been stated, Dr. Clark was a member of the Burgher Synod in Scotland, and was the first Burgher Minister who came to this country. None of his denomination were around him, and an isolated position was inconsistent alike with his feelings, his principles and his usefulness. Early in 1765, therefore, he applied to the Anti-Burgher Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania,—the only Associate Presbytery in this country, for admission to its membership; and, after considerable delay, during which certain articles explanatory of the terms upon which he would join the Presbytery, and would be received by that Body, were drawn up and duly signed, he was admitted on the 2d of September, 1765, and thenceforward devoted himself with renewed zeal to his work. From the singular circumstance that the pastoral relation between him and the Church in Ballybay, Ireland, had never been formally dissolved by the Presbytery, that Church having risen up from Ballybay, and quietly settled down in Salem, there was never any formal organization of the Church, or installation of the Pastor, in this country; and in that situation he remained until his removal about fifteen years afterwards.

In May, 1776, the members of the Presbytery having increased to thirteen in number, and its bounds being now very extensive, it was agreed to form two Presbyteries,—the Presbytery of Pennsylvania and the Presbytery of New York. In the latter of these Dr. Clark was placed, with Rev. Messrs. John Mason, D.D., of New York city, and Robert Annan, of Walkkill, N. Y., and with them and men of kindred spirit in the cause of Christ, he laboured in making the Gospel known, and in prayerfully and anxiously seeking the unity and the prosperity of the Church. In this he was in his congenial element; and hence it was that, though his natural dislike for debate, and his multiplied labours throughout the missionary field as well as in the pastoral charge, prevented his attending the preliminary meetings of the Presbyteries, yet he was most cordially desirous of the union, which was effected between the Associate and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches, at Pequea, Pa., on the 13th of June, 1782; and by which the Associate Reformed Church was called into existence.

Thus he was at length permitted to see the church of his anxieties and prayers established, his people happily settled in their temporal concerns, and himself and them united in an ecclesiastical connection which he approved, and with brethren whom he loved, and in this situation he zealously watched for the good of the community. In various ways he planned and laboured for the public good, and a foundation was thus laid for a community which has been eminent to this day, for its intelligence, enterprize and high moral and religious character. Nor were his people ungrateful for his devotion to their interests—they loved him as the best of benefactors and friends, and their profiting under his ministry appears in their descendants to this day.

At length, however, the Head of the Church signified that he had work for him in another sphere. After several years, a few persons in his congregation conceived a prejudice against him, and, as he was at that time on a visit to the former members of his charge, who had settled in the South, and whom he found "fainting and scattered abroad, as sheep without a shepherd," he was overcome with their entreaties for the bread and water of life; and, concluding to demit his charge at Salem, he shortly after became the Pastor of the Uni-

ted Congregations of Cedar Spring and Long Cane, in South Carolina. Yet he never ceased to be deeply concerned for the people of Salem. He visited them several times and baptized some of their children. His last visit was in 1787, when he lectured in the church on the Thirteenth chapter of the Book of Judges, and, in a most affectionate and solemn manner, committed them all to the grace of God, until Pastor and people would meet in the Heavenly Sanctuary.

In his Southern field he gave himself to the most arduous labours. At first he preached in a rough log church, about two miles South of the present place of worship in that charge. Not long afterwards a commodious house was erected for him, and he was remarkably successful in gathering a congregation. In every place he had a message, and every incident and object furnished him with an occasion or a means of setting forth the Gospel. On one of his missionary excursions, he was overtaken, on a Saturday evening, at a tavern, in a place of great moral destitution, and not being willing to do the evil of travelling on the Sabbath, even that he might do the good of preaching, he was compelled to remain. In his closet he enquired what work the Lord would have him do in that place; and, without making himself known, waited until the Sabbath morning, when, finding there was no place of worship in the neighbourhood, and that multitudes of persons were to attend a horse-race near by, he mingled in the crowd, and at length raising himself in an elevated position, just before the race was to begin, called out, with a loud voice. "There is danger, my friends, there is danger here—let us ask God to take care of us and bless us;" and immediately commenced a prayer, which produced a very general and powerful impression. This he followed with preaching, and that with such effect that the race was broken up, and the Gospel was effectually planted in that place.

In the discharge of his duty he was eminently faithful, and though his manner was oftentimes singular, it was generally most effective. One of his Irish members was in the habit of using minced oaths in her conversation. Having, at one time, a distressingly sore mouth, she asked him for a remedy. He gravely told her the disease probably came from the "faiths" and the "troths" and the "feign-a-bits" which she had brought over the sea, and that she could not expect to be better until she had sent them all back again.

He was remarkably attentive to the young. Catechizing was his delight, and even on a casual visit he would make some remark, or use some illustration, which would almost indelibly fix important principles in the tender mind. A venerable mother, recently deceased, in Newburgh, N. Y., could never divest herself of the impression made on her mind by his conversation, when, stopping at her father's one day for some refreshment, on one of his long missionary tours, he took her on his knee, (at that time about three or four years of age,) and in his broad dialect, and searching, but kind manner, said,—“My bonny gude girl, do you ever steal ony thing?” “No, Sir,” she lisped. “Never take a pin, or a wee bit o’ riband or ony thing?” “No, Sir.” “Och, ye ha’e a bad heart, and must pray to God to tak it away for the love o’ Christ, or the de’il will whop ye for ever.” His letters to his different flocks were particularly instructive and impressive. He also wrote an able defence of the Scripture Psalm for the worship of God, and gave a solemn warning that a departure from what he regarded the Scripture plan would, in this, as well as in other things, be followed with the saddest results to the purity and the peace of the Church.

But the time of his departure came—it was sudden, but he was at his post. On the 25th of December, 1793, he had been sitting for some time in his study by himself, when a servant, on passing the door, heard a singular noise in the room, and, on entering, found him expiring. He was calmly sitting in his chair, apparently smitten with an apoplectic stroke. He died instantly. Before him was a letter, dated “Long Cane, South Carolina, March 15th, 1791,” and addressed “to the members of his former charge at Ballybay, Ireland,” as his “dearly beloved and longed for, whose great salvation from the power and practice of sin,” says he, in the opening of the letter, “I have much longed for these forty years past. Some of you I still claim as my joy, even as my crown of joy.” The last words were, “What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter;” and the pen fell from his hand forever. He was buried amid universal regrets in the grave-yard of Cedar Spring. His resting place is near the church, and is enclosed by a brick wall and arch, while over the whole a sycamore and oak gently wave their sheltering boughs. His life was an eminently active and useful one; his death was peaceful; and there is no reason to doubt that “his rest is glorious.”

I am, my dear Sir, truly yours,

JOHN B. DALES.

FROM THE REV. THOMAS BEVERIDGE, D.D.

XENIA, O., December 4, 1858.

Rev. and dear Sir: I have in my possession a very old and mutilated book of pamphlets, among which are two works published by Dr. Clark; and as one of them sheds some light upon his early history, it has occurred to me that some account of it might not be unacceptable to you.

The first (the title of which is lost) appears to be a republication of “The Last and Heavenly Speeches and Glorious Departure of John Viscount Kenmuir.” There is a Preface to it, signed “Thomas Clark, Edinburgh, January 31st, 1749.” The second is the one from which the statements in the “Church Memorial” were formed. The full title (and you will no doubt judge it sufficiently ample) is as follows:—“Some Letters from the Rev. Thomas Clark, Minister of the Gospel, to his Congregation at the New Meeting-house in Ballybay, while Prisoner in Monaghan Jail, on account of his scruples of Conscience at some forms of expression in the Abjuration Oath, and the manner of Swearing by Kissing the Book. In regard it’s judged that, as the Scotch and English Churches are, in many points, of very opposite principles, so it is inconsistent for any Presbyterian to be sworn by said oath, reduplicating in a clause of an Act therein mentioned to support the English Church principles, being formerly bound by his baptismal vows to support the principles of the Church of Scotland. Besides, it is certain that, as Kissing the Book is a superstitious form of swearing nowhere warranted in Scripture, lifting up the right hand being the form observed by God and his saints in swearing oaths, so all Christians are commanded to ‘be followers of God as dear children,’ *i. e.* in his imitable examples, Eph. vi, 1. ‘And I have given you an example that ye do as I have done,’ saith our Lord, John xiii, 15. Likewise a ministerial Warning and Charge to said Congregation against Sabbath-breaking, Profane-swearing, and other Vices too common in these times. ‘Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake * * * rejoice and be exceeding glad, for so persecuted they the prophets,’ Matt. xi, 12. Dublin: Printed for Robert Johnston, Bookseller, 1754.” On the back of

the title-page is the following: "N. B. Several of Mr. Clark's Elders, hearing of his arrestment, met him at a house on the road to jail, where they halted and agreed that the congregation should be warned to assemble, and observe the next day in Fasting and Prayer—wherefore he sent this first letter from jail to them the morning of said Fast day; and Mr. Thompson read it when public worship was over, having preached from Lam. ii, 19, "Arise, cry out in the night, &c." The congregation being very much moved, were mostly in tears that day. The "Preface to the reader" is as follows:—

'The Rev. Mr. Clark was educated in the principles of the Scotch Church from his infancy. He appeared in arms, a volunteer with the militia raised against the Pretender, Anno 1745 and 1746; having studied Divinity several years, was licensed by the Presbytery of Glasgow, 1748. Near two hundred families of Presbyterians in and about Ballybay did, about that time, leave their former teachers, because they could not find themselves edified by them, nor believe some things they taught; therefore applied to said Presbytery of Glasgow for supplies; who, considering their complaint and petitions, granted their request at last, and sent among others Mr. Clark to preach among them. Afterwards said families joined and sent commissioners to the Associate Synod in Scotland with a petition and call for said Mr. Clark being settled among them; whereupon the Synod laid aside another call that came before them for him, and appointed the Presbytery of Glasgow to ordain him at Ballybay, which, accordingly, they did, near the new meeting house, July 23d, 1751, in conformity to the rules of the Scotch Church in the like case. As the people had, for the above reasons, left their former teachers, so it is generally reckoned that spite and envy on that account moved them, particularly Mr. James Jackson of Ballybay and Mr. D. Hutchison of Monaghan, and their friends privately to be the instigators of procuring that warrant which was granted against him April 18th, 1753. Because they knew that Mr. Clark, as well as many other useful ministers, and very loyal subjects in Scotland, had, in conscience, scrupled at said oath, and kissing the Book, for the reasons foresaid; and so as the law is strong in that case, they no doubt hoped, by putting it in force, to ruin him; and so disappoint the people of his ministry, that they might be obliged to return with their stipends to their said former teachers, and be forced to take from them any sort of preaching they might be pleased to give them. Whereupon, one George Kerr, a hearer of said Mr. Jackson's, together with some others of his elders and hearers, did, on January 23d, 1754, at New Bliss, in the very time of public service, arrest Mr. Clark and carried him about fourteen miles to Monaghan Jail, escorted under a strong guard of horse and foot, raised by said Kerr for that purpose. He patiently remained prisoner in said jail until the 8th of April last, when the Right Hon. and Hon. the Lords Judges of Assize, finding the committal insufficient to detain him (Blessed be God) gave orders for his release. During his said imprisonment the following letters were sent by him to his congregation, and read publicly to them by Mr. John Thompson, probationer. Upon the people's frequent and earnest requests, Mr. Clark gave allowance to print these letters, with the Warning, which was only done in short-hand the week before his release, and extended since. He could not well refuse them to the people, seeing said letters and Warning are all the people have, instead of all those ministerial labours they had a prospect of, in case he had been at liberty of conscience which all others of his Majesty's subjects, under the name of Ministers in Ireland, yea, and the Popish priests also, enjoy, except himself only. There was again a new summons or writ issued against Mr. Clark, on or about the 24th of April last, notwithstanding what the judges had done, and is also presumed to be done chiefly at the instigation of the aforesaid New-light

teachers and their friends, in a private way, and what the end will be the Lord only knows."

After this Preface there follow four letters, dated January 24th, February 3d, March 16th and April 5th, 1754. The last is the Warning referred to in the Preface. The whole extends to fifty-two pages.

The only other publication of Dr. Clark, of which I have any knowledge, is a pamphlet entitled "Plain Reasons." It was in defence of the use of the Psalms in praise.

I will add a few anecdotes in respect to Dr. Clark, which used to be current, and which may possibly help to illustrate some of his characteristics.

On one occasion, when preaching, he took for his text Phil. iv, 13. He began by reading the first half of the verse,—“I can do all things;” and then abruptly added, “What’s that you say, Paul, ‘I can do all things’? I’ll had ye a guinea o’ that. But stop, let me see, ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’—Oh, yes, if that’s all, I can do that, too, and I’ll keep my guinea to mysel’.” At another time, when preaching out of doors, having said something very pointed, he observed,—“How ye’ll be all saying, ‘That’s very right, but it don’t apply to me.’ There’s a man who thinks it don’t suit him at all, but exactly suits that other,” pointing to some individual in the Assembly; “that other man thinks it don’t apply to him, but to another sitting behind him, and he thinks it don’t suit him, but suits exactly that man sitting upon the fence,” pointing to one in that position. On another occasion, when preaching with a brother behind him, who thought him rather tedious, and was about to give him a hint of this by pulling his coat-tail, he, very unexpectedly to the brother, remarked that, whenever Christ gave his servants any thing good to say, Satan was already behind them to pluck them by the coat-tail and get them to sit down. It is hardly necessary to add that the impatient brother did not think proper, in this way, to officiate for the Adversary. When travelling (I think in Vermont) he fell in company with a stranger with whom he rode a good part of the day. Coming at last to a place where their roads parted, they bade each other farewell, and rode each on his own way a short distance. The Doctor then halted and called to his fellow traveller to come back, saying that they had forgotten something. When met again at the forks of the road, the Doctor said to him,—“Sir, we have been travelling together some hours, enjoying each other’s company, and may never meet again in this world. I think it would be well, before parting, to have a word of prayer.” The stranger, though much surprised, made no objection. They dismounted, and, kneeling by the road side, the Doctor offered an appropriate and fervent prayer. He then proposed to the other that he should pray. The man declined this, and, being much importuned, at last acknowledged that he had never prayed in his life. The Doctor, however, would take no denial. He told him, if he had never prayed hitherto, it was high time to begin. The man, finding that there was no escape for him, at last kneeled down, and said,—“O Lord, thou knowest I can’t pray at all.” “That,” said the Doctor, “is an excellent beginning—only persevere and you will do well.” Many years afterwards, a minister, in his travels through Vermont, happened at a house where he lodged for the night, and finding himself in a praying family, made some inquiries, in reply to which the gentleman of the house related the above story as the history of his first attempt at prayer. Dr. Clark, having set out with an Elder to fulfil an appointment, passed a night at a house some eight or ten miles from the place where he was to preach the next day. During the night their horses had wandered away, and in the morning the Elder insisted on setting out forthwith to hunt them. The Doctor, however, would not consent to his going till after worship, assuring him that nothing would be lost by prayer. The Elder, with great reluctance,

yielded, and, much to his surprise, as soon as worship was ended, the horses were found coming up leisurely to the house. An old gentleman in Tennessee, who remembered having met Dr. Clark in one of the Carolinas, told me that, being at the time a small boy, the Doctor had taken him between his knees to talk to him. He said he had never forgotten the first question asked him:—"John, have the cats got any souls?" The above, I suppose, will suffice in the way of illustrative anecdotes.

I will only add that

I am sincerely yours.

T. BEVERIDGE.

ALEXANDER DOBBIN.

1774—1809.

FROM THE REV. JOHN McJIMSEY, D.D.

MONTGOMERY, N. Y., November 28, 1848.

Rev. and dear Sir: It gives me pleasure to comply with your request in furnishing you with some brief sketches of my excellent friend, long since departed, the Rev. Alexander Dobbin; and, in doing so, I shall avail myself of some notices of his life and character which I had occasion to prepare several years ago.

ALEXANDER DOBBIN was born in Londonderry, Ireland, February 4, (O. S.) 1742. Little is known of his parentage, or of his early religious education or exercises, excepting that his father was a sailor by profession, and probably a religious man; as it has been stated on good authority, that it was on account of the early piety of his son that he directed his studies with a view to the Ministry; and the purpose of the son to devote himself to this work was formed at the early age of seventeen. With this in view, he studied Latin and Greek in Londonderry, and then became a student in Glasgow, where he pursued his literary and theological course for seven years. On leaving College he was soon licensed to preach the Gospel, and was ordained by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland, commonly known by the name of the Covenanters, on account of their attachment to the principles of the Covenanted Reformation in Scotland. He never had a pastoral charge in Ireland, and was ordained with the express design of leaving his native country, and preaching the Gospel in North America. From his early piety and the devotedness of his subsequent life to the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, there can be no doubt that he was influenced in the choice of the Gospel ministry, and of his ecclesiastical relations, by a deep sense of religious obligation. He was licensed, ordained, and married, and sailed for America,—all in the short period of six weeks. The Rev. Matthew Lind, a senior minister of the same denomination, accompanied him in his voyage, and they arrived in safety at New Castle in the year 1774. Both these excellent men were sent out by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland to preach the Gospel in this country, in consequence of urgent solicitations for a supply of ministers, made by emigrants from Scotland and Ireland, who either had belonged to or preferred that denomination. These two ministers, soon after their arrival, with the Rev. John Cuthbertson, who had been sent to this country by the Reformed