

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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preaching was at once evangelical and practical; and many of his discourses were singularly direct, pungent and effective. His published sermons are, I believe, a fair specimen of his efforts in the pulpit.

Sincerely your brother, in the best of bonds,

J. J. JANEWAY.

IRA CONDUCT, D.D.*

1786—1811.

IRA CONDUCT, a son of Daniel and Ruth (Harrison) Conduct, was born at Orange, N. J., February 21, 1764. His father was a farmer, in comfortable circumstances, and was much esteemed for his piety, prudence and patriotism.

Young Conduct was fitted for College, partly by the Rev. Jedediah Chapman, the minister of his native place, and partly by the Rev. Dr. McWhorter, of Newark. He became a member of Princeton College towards the close of the Revolutionary War, and graduated in the year 1784. After leaving College, he taught a school for several years at Freehold, Monmouth Comty, N. J., and, at the same time, prosecuted a course of theological study under the direction of the Rev. Dr. John Woodhull, the Minister of the congregation in which he resided. He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, in April, 1786. He was ordained to the work of the Ministry, and installed Pastor of the Churches of Newton, Hardwick, and Shappanack, N. J., by the same Presbytery, in November, 1787, on which occasion Dr. Witherspoon preached. In the autumn of 1793 he accepted a call from the Reformed Dutch Church in New Brunswick, N. J., and was installed as its Pastor early in 1794. At the revival of Queens (now Rutgers) College in 1808, (in effecting which he had an important agency,) he was chosen Vice President of that institution. Dr. Livingston was chosen President; but the office was virtually nominal in him, as he confined himself to his Theological Professorate; and Mr. (then Dr.) Conduct (for the degree of Doctor of Divinity had, in the mean time, been conferred upon him by Princeton College) was really the acting President until his death, which occurred on the 1st of June, 1811. He preached the last sermon in the Old Dutch Church in New Brunswick on a Sabbath afternoon in May; on the following day (Monday) the demolition of the old structure began; and on the second Sabbath after his preaching that last sermon he was buried.

He was married to Sarah Perrine, daughter of Henry Perrine, a farmer of Freehold, N. J. They had eight children—one son, *Daniel Harrison*, graduated at Princeton in 1807, and became a Tutor in the College at New Brunswick in 1809. He was a young man of great promise, and died the same year with his father. Mrs. Conduct died at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Harrison, in Newark, January, 1846.

* MSS. from Rev. Drs. Thomas Dewitt, W. H. Campbell, and R. K. Rodgers.

FROM THE REV. JAMES S. CANNON, D.D.

PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

NEW BRUNSWICK, June 11, 1852.

Dear Sir: I am willing to give you, so far as my feeble health will permit, my recollections of the Rev. Dr. Condict, formerly Pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church in this city. My acquaintance with him commenced in the year 1797, when I came to live in this neighbourhood, and continued till his death, a period of about fourteen years. I knew him well and esteemed him highly.

Dr. Condict had a strong athletic frame, was considerably above the medium height, had dark hair and eyes, with an expression of countenance that indicated what he really possessed,—a masculine, vigorous intellect. The portrait of Dr. Bates, the celebrated English Nonconformist minister, as it is given in his works, is so much like Dr. Condict that you would suppose he might have been Bates' son.

In his general intercourse with society he was more than commonly reserved. One of the first things in respect to him that would have struck you, was his remarkable gravity; but, with his intimate friends, he would often unbend in cheerful conversation; though even with them he never condescended to anything that even seemed to offend against the strictest Christian and ministerial decorum. I think he was naturally an amiable man, and was always glad to confer a favour whenever it was in his power.

As a Preacher, Dr. Condict never had, so far as I know, any remarkable popularity in the sense of being run after by the multitude; but he had what was far better,—a testimony in the consciences of his hearers to the fidelity and fearlessness with which he delivered his message. He was not the man to daub with untempered mortar. Though his preaching embraced all the great truths of the Gospel, it had perhaps more to do with the law and its penalty, than with those themes which may be considered as peculiarly evangelical. He was rather an awakening than a comforting preacher. He dwelt much on the importance of a deep religious experience; though I do not think that he was accustomed in the pulpit to go into any very rigid analysis of those operations of the mind in which Christian experience especially consists. His sermons, and indeed all his public exercises, were remarkable for terseness of expression and condensation of thought. He was not distinguished either for taste or imagination; but the turn of his mind was naturally rather mathematical and metaphysical—this gave to his preaching an argumentative cast, though it did not render it obscure. In his manner in the pulpit he was rather stiff and awkward, and used but little gesture; but there was an honesty and an earnestness, fitted alike to arrest the attention and open a way to the conscience. He left the impression on your mind that he was aiming at a single object,—namely, the glory of his Master in the salvation of his fellow men.

As a Pastor, Dr. Condict was eminently laborious and faithful. Though not remarkably free in his intercourse with his people, he was, in the best sense, their friend; and their spiritual interests especially were identified with the great object for which he lived. In Ecclesiastical Courts, and in all Public Bodies of which he was a member, he was discreet, energetic and influential. His general influence in the community was extensive and salutary.

I saw Dr. Condict a short time before his death, and had an opportunity of hearing him bear his dying testimony to the value of the Gospel; or, perhaps I should rather say, express his confident conviction that he was a child of God. The old nervous fever (now called the Typhus Major) prevailed

here, and one of his own sons had fallen a victim to it. The Doctor at length took it; but, as it usually operates stealthily in its earlier stages, he was not very ill for some little time, and no particular apprehension was awakened concerning him. But at length the disease assumed an alarming aspect, and his mind sunk gradually into a delirium. I visited him when he was in this state: he threw his large limbs about, and his whole appearance indicated that his mind was bewildered and unstrung. I was alone with him, and I waited at his bedside in the hope that there might be some gleam of returning reason. And I was not disappointed. Presently he lay still, and conversed with me for a short time intelligently and calmly, in respect to his approaching change. Among other things, he said with great emphasis,—"I do feel that I love God above all." His mind then wandered again, and again it had a moment of composure, when he repeated the same declaration. It was my last interview with him—he died shortly after

Yours in Christian bonds,
JAMES S. CANNON.

JOHN M. VAN HARLINGEN.

1786—1813.

FROM THE REV. ISAAC N. WYCKOFF, D.D.

ALBANY, December 20, 1854.

My dear Sir: I regret to say that I find but the most meagre material for a sketch of the life of the late Rev. John M. Van Harlingen, as not only have most of his contemporaries passed away, but scarcely any records of him have survived. I have had some knowledge of him from my earliest recollection, as I was born and spent the first years of my life within two miles of his residence, and was baptized by his successor, the Rev. Dr. Cannon, in the same church where Mr. Van Harlingen had been Pastor.

JOHN M. VAN HARLINGEN, a son of Ernestus Van Harlingen, was born at Milstone, N. J., in the year 1761. Of his earliest developments and history even tradition is silent. He graduated at Queen's College, New Brunswick, in the year 1783. He is believed to have prosecuted his theological course partly under his uncle, the Rev. Johannes Martinus Van Harlingen, and partly under the Rev. Dr. Meyer, of Pompton. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Classis of New Brunswick, in 1786; and the next year became Pastor of the United Churches of Six-Mile-Run and Milstone. In 1794, (one authority has it 1797,) he resigned his charge, but continued to reside with his father at Milstone, devoting himself, with great assiduity, to theological research, and having under his care several students in Divinity. In June, 1812, he was called to the Professorship of the Hebrew Language and Ecclesiastical History in the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick. He accepted the appointment, but had discharged the duties of the place for one year only, when he was removed by death. He died at Milstone, of bilious colic, after a few hours of intense agony, on the 16th of June, 1813, aged fifty-two years. He lived and died a bachelor. His only publication was a Translation from the Dutch of Van Der Kemp's Sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism, in two volumes, 8vo. 1810.

I remember Mr. Van Harlingen as a tall, thin man, somewhat stooping in his attitude, with what would be termed a downcast look, seldom turning his eyes to the right or left, as he deliberately proceeded on his way. From the fact that