

HISTORY

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OF

JEFFERSON COLLEGE:

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE

EARLY "LOG-CABIN" SCHOOLS,

AND THE

CANONSBURG ACADEMY:

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF

REV. MATTHEW BROWN, D. D., REV. SAMUEL RALSTON, D. D.,
REV. MATTHEW HENDERSON, REV. JAMES RAM-
SEY, D. D., REV. JOHN H. KENNEDY, AND
REV. ABR'M. ANDERSON, D. D.

BY JOSEPH SMITH, D. D.

Author of "OLD REDSTONE."

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JOHN WILKINS, ESQ. F.R.S. &c.

can altogether approve, forbid our insertion of it here. It is possible that with such alterations as we think it requires, it may hereafter be given to the public. This able, and, we think, conclusive document, furnishes several items that would be of special service to us *now*. But to extract or withdraw them for this purpose, would be doing injustice to the whole paper and diminish its value, should it be hereafter published. We will only add that we are now satisfied that some of the statements about the early *classical* school at Ten Mile are doubtful; and that an egregious anacronism pervades the whole testimony of the Rev. Dr. Lindley—doubtless altogether unintentional on his part. It will be observed that Dr. Cephas Dodd's account of his father's school rests almost exclusively upon what he got from Dr. Lindley.

DR. M'MILLAN'S MANUSCRIPT.

The following is a carefully copied transcript of the manuscript referred to in the previous review of Prof. Patterson's paper. It was apparently prepared with great care by Dr. M'Millan, and left along with his journal, which he had kept of his early missionary tours. When, some two months after he wrote it, he wrote his celebrated letter to Dr. Carnahan, he appears to have placed this manuscript before him; and while he omitted several portions of it, altered some passages and enlarged upon others, especially about the revivals, he copied somewhat closely a considerable part of it. It is altogether a precious document. The Rev. L. F. Leake, it will be seen, drew from it much of his interesting biographical sketch. We are not aware that it has ever been heretofore published. It will be seen that it completely vindicates all that we have heretofore said about it.

“My father's name was William M'Millan; my mother's maiden name was Margaret Rea; they were both born and lived in the parish of Carmony, in the county of Antrim, Ireland. They emigrated to America, about the year 1742, and settled in Fagg's manor, in Chester county, Pennsylvania. My mother died in the year 1768. My father married again, and during the time of the Revolutionary war he sold his

property in Chester county and removed to the western country, where he died on the 2d of July, 1792, aged seventy-five years. His remains were buried at Chartiers. My parents had but six children, who grew up to be men and women, viz: three sons and three daughters; all of whom are now dead, except myself, who was the youngest but one of the family. I was born in Fagg's manor, on the 11th of November, 1752. Before my birth, my parents had some children, I think two sons, who died while they were young. My father told me that he had promised to God, that if he would give him another son, he would call his name John, and devote him to his service in the ministry of the gospel: accordingly as soon as I had acquired a sufficient degree of English literature, I was sent to a grammar school, kept by the Rev. Mr. John Blair, in Fagg's manor; where I continued until Mr. Blair was removed to Princeton, to superintend the college there. I was then sent to Pequea to a grammar school, kept by the Rev. Robert Smith. While there, the Lord poured out his Spirit upon the students; and I believe there were but few who were not brought under serious concern about their immortal souls: some of whom became blessings in their day, and were eminently useful in the Church of Christ; but they are all now gone to rest. It was here that I received my first religious impressions; though as long as I can remember, I had at times some checks of conscience, and was frequently terrified by dreams and visions in the night, which made me cry to God for mercy: but these seasons were of short duration; like the morning cloud and the early dew, they quickly passed away. I now saw that I was a lost, undone sinner, exposed to the wrath of a justly offended God, and could do nothing for my own relief. My convictions were not attended with much horror; though I felt that I deserved hell, and that in all probability that must be my portion: yet I could not feel that distress which I ought to feel, and which I thought I must feel before I could expect to obtain relief. I felt also much pride and legality, mingled with all the duties which I attempted to perform. In this situation I continued until I went to college, in the spring of 1770. I had not been long there until a revival of religion took place among the students; and I believe at one time there were not more than two or three, but what were under serious impressions. On a day which had been set apart by a number of the

students to be observed as a day of fasting and prayer, while the others were at dinner, I retired into my study; and while trying to pray I got some discoveries of divine things, which I had never had before: I saw that the divine law was not only holy, just and spiritual, but also that it was good, and that conformity to it would make me happy. I felt no disposition to quarrel with the law; but with myself, because I was not conformed to it. I felt it now easy to submit to the gospel plan of salvation, and felt a calm and serenity of mind, to which I had hitherto been a stranger. And this was followed by a delight in contemplating the divine glory in all his works, and in meditating on the divine perfections. I thought that I could see God in every thing around me.

“I continued at college until the fall of 1772, when I returned to Pequea, and began the study of Theology under the direction of the Rev. Robert Smith, D. D. I had great difficulties in my own mind about undertaking the work of the gospel ministry. However, I at last came to this determination, to leave the matter wholly with God; if he opened the way, I would go on; if he shut it, I would be satisfied; and I think if ever I knew what it was to have no will of my own about any matter, it was about this. I passed through my trials in the Presbytery of New Castle, and was licensed by them to preach the gospel, October the 26th, 1774, at East Nottingham. The first winter I spent in itinerating in the vacant congregations of New Castle and Donegal Presbyteries. In the summer of '75, I took a tour through the settlements in Virginia, between the North and South mountains. In July I crossed the mountains between Staunton and the head of Tygart's Valley, preached in the various settlements which I passed through, until I came to Chartiers; preached there on the fourth Sabbath of August, and on the Tuesday following at Pigeon Creek. I then turned my course eastward, preached in the different settlements as I passed along, and came to my father's about the last of October. In the winter I again visited Augusta county in Virginia, crossed the mountains in January, and preached at Pigeon Creek and Chartiers until the latter end of March, 1776, when I returned home; and at a meeting of the Presbytery, on the 23d of April, I accepted a call, and was dismissed to join the Presbytery of Donegal, and on the 19th of June, at Chambersburg, was ordained.

“Having now determined to remove to the Western country and take charge of the congregations of Chartiers and Pigeon Creek, I thought it my duty to take with me a female companion. Accordingly, on the 6th of August, 1776, I was married to Catharine Brown, a young woman with whom I had been long acquainted, and who, I believed, was a dear child of God. She was the youngest child of Mr. William Brown, a ruling elder in the congregation of Upper Brandywine, Chester county, Pennsylvania. He was a very pious man, and lived to a great age, being about ninety when he died. It being in the time of the Revolutionary war, and the Indians being very troublesome on the frontiers, I was prevented from removing my family to my congregations until November, 1778. I however visited them as often as I could, ordained elders, baptized their children, and took as much care of them as circumstances would permit. When I came to this country, the cabin in which I was to live was raised, but there was no roof on it, nor chimney, nor floor in it. The people, however, were very kind, assisted me in preparing my house, and on the 15th of December I removed into it. But we had neither bedstead, nor table, nor chair, nor stool, nor pail, nor bucket. All these things we had to leave behind us; there being no wagon road at that time over the mountains; we could bring nothing with us but what was carried on pack-horses. We placed two boxes on each other, which served us for a table, and two kegs served us for seats; and having committed ourselves to God in family worship, we spread a bed on the floor, and slept soundly until morning. The next day, a neighbor coming to my assistance, we made a table and a stool, and in a little time had everything comfortable about us. Sometimes, indeed, we had no bread for weeks together; but we had plenty of pumpkins and potatoes, and all the necessaries of life, and as for luxuries, we were not much concerned about them. We enjoyed health, the gospel and its ordinances, and pious friends. We were in the place where we believe God would have us to be; and we did not doubt he would provide every thing necessary; and glory to his name, we were not disappointed. My wife and I lived comfortably together more than forty-three years; and on the 24th of November, 1819, she departed triumphantly to take possession of her house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When I determined to come to this country, Dr. Smith enjoined it upon me to look out for some

pious young men, and educate them for the ministry; for, said he, though some men of piety and talents may go to a new country at first, yet if they are not careful to raise up others, the country will not be well supplied. Accordingly I collected a few who gave evidence of piety, and instructed them in the knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, some of whom became useful, and others eminent, ministers of the gospel, viz: James Hughs, John Brice, James M'Gready, William Swan, Samuel Porter, and Thomas Marquis. All these I boarded and taught without any compensation, except about forty dollars, which Mr. Swan gave to my wife after he was settled in the ministry. I had still a few with me when the Academy was opened in Canonsburg, and finding that I could not teach and do justice to my congregation, I immediately gave it up and sent them there.

“For an account of the revivals of religion which took place in the congregation, I must refer you to the Western Missionary Magazine, vol. 2d, page 353. After the close of the revival which began in 1802, though upon every sacramental occasion some joined the church, yet nothing remarkable took place until the fall of 1823, when God again visited this dry and parched congregation with a shower of divine influences. About sixty joined the church as the fruits of this revival; a number of whom were students in the college, and are now preaching the Gospel of Christ to their fellow dying men. Since that time religion has rather been on the decline, though still we are not left without some tokens of the Divine presence; at every sacramental occasion, some have come out from the world and professed to take the Lord for their portion.

“J. M'MILLAN.

“January, 1832.”

[*Added by another, but unknown hand.*]

“In April, May and June, he took what he supposed to be his last visit amongst some of the old churches in the West, which he had been instrumental in gathering from the wilderness and supplying with pastors. On the last Sabbath of April, and first Sabbath of May, he assisted in dispensing the Lord's Supper at Cross Creek and Cross Roads, and preached six Sabbaths in Racoon congregation, where he assisted in administering the Lord's Supper on the third Sabbath of June. During this journey he preached seventeen sermons, with

more than usual fervency; and it has been since found that his labors during this journey were blessed to the spiritual quickening and edification of God's people, and the awakening of not less than — careless sinners, who have since joined themselves to the Lord. During the year 1832, he assisted in administering the Lord's Supper fourteen times, and preached about fifty times, on occasions leaning on his crutch, and in the eightieth year of his age. During the year 1833, up to the 16th of November, the time of his death, he assisted in administering the Lord's Supper seventeen times, and preached on these occasions about seventy-five times, frequently twice on the same day, besides attending to exhortations, &c."

IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGES AND OF CLASSICAL EDUCATION

EARLY HISTORY OF COLLEGIATE INSTITUTIONS.

It is one of the most auspicious signs of the times that the subject of education is beginning to awaken a deeper and more pervading interest throughout the civilized world. Great as has been the progress of improvement in the various methods of promoting the commerce, wealth and luxury of the nations, this progress would afford but little satisfaction to the philanthropist, did not the cause of general instruction keep pace with the other onward movements of the age. It must be acknowledged, however, that it requires more effort to sustain the interests of education before the public mind, than it does to uphold the cause of public improvements, and the various methods of accumulating dollars and cents. Yet the importance of every judicious method of diffusing science and literature is so obvious to every reflecting man, that those who have been concerned in devising and rearing to maturity, institutions of learning in our country, during its earlier life, have strong claims, even now, amidst the din of slitting mills, and cotton factories, and locomotives, to be remembered with gratitude. The attempt has been made, in the foregoing pages, to erect an humble monument to the memory of those good men, who, nearly seventy years ago, constructed the first home of classical learning and science west of the mountains—the first College in the Valley of the Mississippi. We are