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THE CENTENARY OF THE TOWN STEEPLE OF FREDERICK, MARYLAND.

A HISTORICAL SERMON.

BY REV. E. R. ESCHBACH, D. D.¹

The interest of this day's services clusters around the tower and spire of what is now Trinity Chapel. The vane of that spire carries the date 1807, which indicates the year it was completed and set to indicate the currents of the upper air, and thereby to furnish the chief basis to prognosticate the coming weather in those earlier days. Since then a century has been rounded out, a period marked by marvelous growth and development. The erection of yonder spire was made possible by reason of what had preceded it in the history of this congregation, a history crowded with events no less distinctive and important than those of the years in which we are now living. The date 1807 may therefore be regarded as a pivotal period in our present consideration of congregational history. If we adopt this view, then our reflections will naturally fall into three parts: First, events pertaining to the earliest records of this congregation, some of which may seem shadowy in outline, but

¹ Preached on Sunday, October 27th, 1907, in the Evangelical Reformed Church, Frederick, Md.

Dr. James Price gave a short address on the "Record and Hope of Our Board of Ministerial Relief," and Dr. John A. Henderson spoke of "The Publications of the Church and Their Relation to Christian Life."

Friday was the closing day of the Semi-Centennial celebration proper. From ten in the morning until ten at night, with but two short recesses, the past achievement and the present opportunity of the Church were held up by earnest speakers. It was their common purpose to awaken in the people of the United Presbyterian Church a pride in its past and a spirit that would seriously consider and gravely meet the responsibilities of the coming years.

DR. JAMES BROWN SCOULLER, THE HISTORIAN OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY THOMAS E. TURNBULL, D. D.

The place occupied by the subject of this sketch among the fathers whose names and deeds we love to recount as we look back over the first half century of the history of the United Presbyterian Church is unique. Our Church has produced a goodly number of preachers and professors and editors, but only one historian. Others have rendered valuable aid in supplementing his unfinished work and have enriched our denominational history by their writings, but it fell to the lot of Dr. J. B. Scouller to perform a work the value of which it is very difficult to estimate. By his painstaking research and careful writings, he has saved from oblivion much that will grow in value as the years roll around, which would otherwise have been lost.

It is not the purpose of the writer to attempt a review of the various publications of Dr. Scouller. To mention them even would require more space than could be properly claimed for this brief sketch. In his *Manual of the United Presbyterian Church of North America*, issued in 1881, he provided the Church with a condensed history of all the ecclesiastical bodies which have been included in her organization, together with a biographical notice of every ordained minister ever connected with her or any of these antecedent churches; also a sketch of the beneficent agencies through which she operates; her Boards, Colleges, Theological Seminaries and periodicals. In 1887 this work was revised and enlarged and a historical register of all the congregations was added. Histories of the Argyle Presbytery and the Presbytery of Big Spring were prepared by him with great care. These histories are highly prized in these localities. The article on the Associate and Associate Reformed Churches in the American edition of *Encyclopædia Britannica* was prepared by Dr. Scouller. At one time he was editor of the *Christian Instructor*, a position which he soon gave up on account of ill health. During the later years of his life he

wrote upon a great variety of subjects for the Church papers. It is safe to say that no one else has ever done so much to acquaint the United Presbyterian Church with itself as did he.

It seemed like a strange providence that led Dr. Scouller into writing the history of his Church. When he was pastor of the Argyle congregation, at that time one of the strongest in the body, he became incapacitated for preaching by a serious nervous disorder from which he never fully recovered. The earliest manifestations of this trouble came in his inability to face an audience. He was not able to conduct a funeral service in a home, or to lead in the devotions of a prayer-meeting without extreme pain. He was given a year's vacation by his congregation and sent abroad for his health. All that could be done for his recovery was unavailing. It was strange that he who possessed such ability and so great love for preaching should be laid aside from it when in the prime of life, and when his ministry seemed to be so acceptable and so greatly blessed. It was not a matter of choice that led Dr. Scouller to give up the ministry of the word and take up the somewhat thankless task of writing history. He loved to preach. He was loved and revered by his people, whom he served for ten years. It has fallen to the lot of few men to leave a deeper impress upon a congregation than did he. Yet we believe that the Lord God of our fathers had a greater work for him to do than to preach to a congregation of some four or five hundred members. Here comes another strange thing in his affliction; while unable to look into the faces of men and speak to them, he found rest and recreation in writing.

Prior to his being laid aside from preaching, Dr. Scouller was a great student of history. This was often spoken of by those who had been his hearers. He dealt largely in historical subjects and greatly enriched his preaching by illustrations from history, both sacred and profane.

While it was never my privilege to see Dr. Scouller, it was my privilege, as one of his successors in the pastorate, to receive from him from time to time most interesting letters showing his continued interest in the flock to which he once ministered, and in these letters he repeatedly referred to the fact that he was never so comfortable as when he was engaged in writing. [From *The United Presbyterian* of June 4th, 1908.]

PHILADELPHIA PRESBYTERIANISM: THE STRENGTH OF PARTIES IN 1839.

[Reprinted from *The Religious Telegraph and Observer*,
January 31st, 1839.]

The following correction of a misstatement, is from a member of the Third Presbytery, who has for years had favorable opportunities to know the comparative strength of parties in this city. If any