

✓
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.

—
VOLUME IV.
—

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,
530 BROADWAY.
1858.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856.

By ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,

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

Decision was a marked trait in his character. It appeared in pastoral duties, in Ecclesiastical Courts, and in his general intercourse with his fellow-men.

Mr. Arnell was settled with only one people. For many years he broke unto them the bread of life. Seldom absent from home, his labours were confined principally to that one flock. The reputation that he has gained, is what was acquired by influence, not exerted abroad by personal contact, but radiating chiefly from a single point.

He was a good man. Death found him calm, resigned and ready. From time to time, he quietly inquired of his physician respecting the progress of his disease. And though nature put forth a few struggles, the last moments of life were like the spent wave dying away upon the shore.

Respectfully yours,

WILLIAM MACK.

REUBEN TINKER.*

1830—1854.

REUBEN TINKER, a son of Rufus Tinker, was born in Chester, Mass., on the 6th of August, 1799. As his physical constitution was not robust, and he evinced a more than ordinary aptitude for business, it was determined, when he was in his fourteenth year, that, instead of following the occupation of his father, who was a farmer, he should become a merchant; and, accordingly, a clerkship was obtained for him in a store in his native town. Having been thus employed from February, 1813, to August, 1817, and wishing for some better advantages of education than he had hitherto enjoyed, he gave up his clerkship, and became a member of Westfield Academy. After remaining there for only a single term, he was again employed as clerk in a store at Westfield; and in the autumn of 1818, he removed to Winsted, Conn., where he continued till the latter part of the following year, acting as accountant and book-keeper to a merchant.

It was in the spring of 1819, and during an extensive revival of religion in Winsted, that his mind took a permanently serious direction. Though his exercises do not seem to have been of a very strongly marked character, they were such as to inspire him and others with the hope that he had been the subject of a gracious renovation. It does not appear that he had at this time any purpose of devoting himself to the ministry; for the same autumn he removed to Hartford, and engaged in another mercantile clerkship. Here, on the 6th of August, 1820,—his twenty-first birthday, he united with the Church under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Hawes. About this time he became a teacher in the Sunday School, and rejoiced greatly in the opportunity of usefulness thus afforded him.

He began now seriously to meditate the purpose of acquiring a liberal education, with a view to becoming a minister of the Gospel; and what seems to have contributed much to fix the purpose, was the reflection that he should thereby meet the most ardent wish of a pious mother. In January, 1821, he commenced the study of Latin under the instruction of Jeremiah Humphrey, still retaining his position as a clerk, and maintaining

* Memoir prefixed to his Sermons.

himself by his own earnings. In April following, he went to Amherst, Mass., to prosecute his studies at the preparatory school; and, having continued in connection with that school till the autumn of 1823, he entered Amherst College. Here he maintained an excellent standing, both as a scholar and a Christian, through his whole course, and was graduated with honour in 1827. He supported himself during this period, partly by teaching a school, and partly by performing some humble services in connection with the College; and, on one occasion, he threw his last quarter of a dollar into the missionary box, "wondering," as he said, "if it would not prove a good investment, and bear him a round interest."

In October after his graduation, he became a member of the Auburn Theological Seminary, where he continued till the close of his course in 1830. In November of that year, he was ordained to the Gospel ministry, at Chester, his native place, by the Mountain Association, with a view to his becoming a missionary of the American Board at the Sandwich Islands. He seems to have cherished the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the Heathen, almost from the time that he resolved to devote himself to the ministry.

On the 14th of November, 1830, he was married to Mary S., eldest daughter of Nathan Wood, formerly of Chester, but then residing in Madison, O. The ceremony took place in Chester, in the Congregational Church, at the close of the afternoon service,—Mr. Tinker having preached on the occasion a Farewell Sermon to his numerous friends and acquaintances, who had come to hear him, as they supposed, for the last time.

Mr. Tinker and his wife embarked for the Sandwich Islands in the ship *New England*, Captain Parker, which sailed from New Bedford on the 28th of December, 1830, and cast anchor in the bay of Honolulu on the 5th of June, 1831. They were accompanied by several other missionaries, and all received a cordial welcome, not only from those who had preceded them in the missionary work, but especially from the Queen, who took an early opportunity to testify her gratitude in a letter to Mr. Everts, then Secretary of the Board under whose auspices they had been sent out.

Mr. Tinker reached the Islands at a somewhat critical period. It was just at the time when the Queen and the Christian Chiefs were making a most vigorous effort to suppress intemperance; when the question of the expulsion of the Jesuit priests had become one of absorbing interest; and when there were serious political troubles growing out of the jealousies of rival Chiefs, aggravated by a strong dislike still felt in many quarters, of the influence of the missionaries. In spite of all the existing difficulties, the cause of the Gospel was rapidly advancing, and so encouraging on the whole was the state of things, that the next year a large reinforcement was sent to the aid of the mission.

It was determined, shortly after Mr. Tinker's arrival, that he should reside temporarily at Honolulu,—the reason of which was, that he had been sent out with some special reference to the establishment of a new mission at Marquesas, in regard to which there was still some uncertainty; and it was thought desirable that he should remain at Honolulu, that he might be at hand, if an opportunity should offer for him to embark on that enterprise. He, therefore, with his wife, took board in the family of the Rev. Mr. Bingham, and was occupied in studying the language, and preaching to the foreign residents and seamen for four months. At the end of this time,

despairing of any opportunity to go to the Marquesas, he removed to Lahaina, and laboured there as Chaplain for seamen until June, 1832. Here he preached his first sermon to the natives in their own language, in just about seven months after his arrival in the country. At the annual meeting of the missionaries in 1832, the project of the Marquesian mission was again considered, and three missionaries, of whom Mr. Tinker was one, were sent out on an exploring voyage. After an absence of about four months, during which time they visited the Society, Georgian, and one of the Marquesian, Islands, they returned to Honolulu,—the result of their observation having been to satisfy Mr. Tinker of the utter inexpediency of the proposed mission, while the other members of the deputation were disposed to look upon it with more favour, though not without much doubt.

Mr. Tinker remained at Honolulu after his return, preaching in English, and performing other services, until the next annual meeting of the mission, when, notwithstanding the unfavourable report that was made, it was resolved to carry out the resolution of the preceding year in the establishment of a mission at Nubiwa, one of the Marquesian Islands. Mr. Tinker was, by his own urgent request, excused from going; and those who actually went, found such a state of things that they remained but a short time, and at last barely escaped with their lives.

Mr. Tinker was now stationed at Wailuku, on Maui, as the associate of the Rev. Jonathan S. Green; where he continued in the performance of various kinds of missionary labour for one year.

At the general meeting in 1834, it was resolved to publish in the native language a semi-monthly newspaper, devoted to the interests of religion; and Mr. Tinker was appointed to conduct it. In this service he was occupied till 1838; at the same time preaching constantly on the Sabbath, and maintaining a weekly lecture. Some difference of opinion in regard to certain matters having arisen between him and the Prudential Committee at Boston, he dissolved his relations with the Board about this time, and established himself, with the approval of his brethren, at Koloa, on the Island of Kauai, where he laboured at his own charges until he returned to this country.

After residing on this Island about two years, he resolved to come to America, partly to make provision for the education of his children, and partly in the hope that a change of residence might remove an affection of his eyes which had been of long standing, and sometimes almost disqualified him for attending to his duties,—fully intending, however, after a short visit, to return to the Islands and resume his missionary labours. He embarked with his family in October, 1840, and landed at Falmouth the next May.

Mr. Tinker remained in the New England States and in New York about three months, and then went with his family to visit his father-in-law, at Madison, O. After spending some time in visiting friends in that region, he was engaged for six months in supplying two destitute congregations in Madison. He then made another short visit to New York and New England, after which he returned to Madison, and resumed his labours there, still hoping that Providence might open the way for his return to the missionary field. But the difficulties seemed to increase rather than diminish; and he finally came, though not without great reluctance, to abandon the idea altogether.

Having laboured very acceptably for four years in Madison, he accepted a call from the First Presbyterian Church in Westfield, Chautauque County, N. Y., where he was installed as Pastor in September, 1845, and continued to labour till near the close of his life.

In the summer of 1853, he began to be somewhat troubled with a stiffness and swelling in his left leg. As the difficulty increased, and seemed not to be well understood, he went in December following to the Hydro-pathic Institution at Clifton Springs, in the hope of being benefitted by the treatment; but it was without any good effect. On his way home, his limb was examined by a physician in Buffalo, who pronounced the disease to be *fungus hæmatodes*,—the most malignant form of tumour. Shortly after this, he went to Boston to consult Dr. Warren and other eminent surgeons; but scarcely had he arrived there, when he was violently attacked with malignant erysipelas, which brought him to the borders of the grave. He recovered from that, but the disease in his limb constantly advanced until the 1st of March, 1854, when it became manifest that nothing but amputation could save his life. The operation was therefore performed, and, as was supposed, with eminent success. He was able to return home the latter part of April, and on the first Sabbath in May he preached to his people from the text—"O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive that I should not go down to the pit."

For some time after his return from Boston, confident hopes were entertained by himself and his friends that his malady was completely eradicated; but before the close of summer there began to be signs of its reappearance; and, on visiting Cleveland, O., and consulting some eminent physicians there, he felt obliged to resign himself to the prospect of a speedy death. His last sermon was preached on the third Sabbath in October; but he continued to ride out almost to the last. He had anticipated a lingering death, and a painful struggle; but his Heavenly Father disappointed his fears. He died with the utmost calmness on the 26th of October, 1854. His Funeral Sermon was preached by the Rev. D. D. Gregory, a former Pastor of the Westfield Church. He left a widow and seven children.

In 1855, there was a duodecimo volume of Mr. Tinker's Sermons published, in connection with a Memoir of his life, by the Rev. Dr. Thompson of Buffalo. One or two of his Sermons were printed, previous to his death, in the National Preacher.

FROM THE REV. M. L. P. THOMPSON, D. D.

BUFFALO, February 5, 1857.

Dear Sir: It affords me pleasure to learn that you propose to give a place in the "Annals" to some notice of the late Rev. Reuben Tinker. All who knew him will judge the compliment to be worthily bestowed. In complying with your request to give you some of my personal recollections of him, and my estimate of his character, I can do no otherwise than to avail myself of what I have before written and published, in a biographical sketch accompanying a volume of his sermons.

My own particular and personal acquaintance with him began about three years after the date of his settlement at Westfield; and I can truly say that never, in the entire course of my life, did I make the acquaintance of a man in whom I found more to admire and love, with less to censure and reprove. He was my co-presbyter, took part in the services of my own installation in this

city, and, Westfield being only sixty miles away, or rather by the rail road computation of distances, ninety or one hundred minutes, he was often at my house, and I was often at his. I knew him through and through. He was a man to be so known, for he was frank, open and sincere; his soul spoke through his face, and his heart he carried in his hand. He was loving, trustful and true; full of genial humour; full of rich and racy thought; and generally where the circumstances did not excite his constitutional and habitual diffidence, conversational and communicative. I always found him prudent, sagacious, wise; not high-minded; not heady; not a man who delighted in by-paths and cross-ways, ambitious of signalizing himself by original speculations and novel theories and unusual modes of acting, but modest, quiet, unassuming; choosing to follow rather than to lead; patient to listen, rather than eager to speak; easily persuaded, yet clear in his own convictions, and once convinced, immovable as Gibraltar, rejoicing only in the truth. There was never a doubt, and never could be a doubt, that conscience and the fear of God governed him. To be useful, to do good, to promote Christ's Kingdom,—these, with him, were the ends to which all other ends were subordinate. I do not thus write as a mere eulogist, but because what I say is the *truth*. Mr. Tinker was just such a man, and so every one who knew him will confess—"An Israelite indeed in whom was no guile."

Go to Westfield; ask the elders of the church; ask the private members of the church; ask the men, ask the women, ask the children; ask the first person you meet, old or young, rich or poor, black or white, professor of religion or not professor of religion, blacksmith or whitesmith, believer or unbeliever,—ask him and he will tell you that he knew no ill of Mr. Tinker. You will get nothing to contradict, but every thing to confirm, the character I have given of him.

Mr. Tinker had been in Westfield but a very short time, when the house of worship belonging to his congregation, which had abundantly served them before, was found to be too small by far to accommodate the people who desired to profit by his ministry, and a great enlargement was made upon it; yet, in its enlarged state, it was always full and overflowing. In all ways, his ministry was successful. The church rapidly increased in numbers, by conversions from the world. It increased in intelligence, in liberality, in moral power, in all good qualities, till, from being small and feeble, it became large and strong: out of Buffalo, the largest and strongest, and incomparably the most influential, within the bounds of the Presbytery.

Mr. Tinker's influence was not confined to his own parish. He was equally beloved and equally desired in all the surrounding country. No man's judgment had greater weight with the churches than his. No man's advice was more sought in times of difficulty. There was not a place in which a peculiar interest was not excited, if it was announced that he was going to preach; and no man in the Presbytery was likely to draw a larger audience. In my own pulpit, I know none was welcomed with a livelier satisfaction. As a preacher, he was bold, original, weighty. There was a freshness, a racy humour, a keen vivacity, a sprightliness and a depth of thought, in his sermons, which never failed to entertain, and delight, and edify his hearers; withal, an unction and an earnestness that carried to every heart a conviction of his sincerity, and gave a peculiar power and pungency to the truths which he delivered.

In his *manner*, there was something which, at first, to a stranger, was fitted to excite a smile. I do not know how to describe his manner. It was quick, nervous, angular and jerking. His motions were awkward, apparently from diffidence. His inflexions were generally inverted and reversed. The whole man seemed to be out of order. A friend of mine, who has a keen perception of oddities, said that when Mr. Tinker was under full headway in the delivery of a discourse, he was always reminded of a rickety old steamboat, impelled by a great power of steam, on a high-pressure engine. Yet with all this, a stranger could

scarcely listen to him, and not feel, after the first surprise was over, that he was listening to an extraordinary preacher; and, however much offended at the outset, he was sure to be delighted at the end.

Eloquent, every body thought him. His people at Westfield regarded him as both eloquent and elegant. In their eyes, his very defects of manner had come to be attractive graces; and it will be long before, even in this respect, they will find his equal. I do not know but they will be offended with me for saying that he had defects at all; for although I know very well that, when he first came among them, there were some who doubted whether they ever could be reconciled to his odd and uncouth ways in the pulpit, yet I am persuaded that all that has long since been forgotten; and I doubt if the most fastidious of them can now recall it. When he returned from Boston, not long before his death, having left a limb behind him, one of them said,—“Well, Mr. Tinker in the pulpit, with one leg or no leg at all, is better than any body else with two.” So they all felt. If he *was* a *Tinker*, they said he *tinkered* to some purpose, and they reckoned him no mean successor of the great tinker of Bedford Jail. I do not think I have ever known an instance of more perfect unanimity in a congregation in loving and honouring a pastor. There was positively no exception, in this respect, among them. I do not know how often I have heard them say—“*every body* loves Mr. Tinker.”

What was true of the Westfield people, was true universally, throughout this entire region, of all that knew him. While he was in Boston for the amputation of his limb, and we were daily, for a short period, expecting intelligence of his death, I scarcely met an acquaintance in the street, who did not arrest me with some affectionate inquiry concerning him; and in our prayer-meetings, scarcely a prayer was offered that did not include some tender and earnest petition for his welfare.

In the Presbytery, no man was more beloved by his brethren or more respected. He was punctual in his attendance on all Presbyterian meetings, exemplifying in his own practice the charge which he delivered to me at the time of my installation. He said, on that occasion—“Whoever else may be absent from any meeting of the Presbytery, let it be known, for a certainty, that brother Thompson will be there. Bad as the roads may be, though there should be mud to the horses’ bridles, let your fixed habits be such, that when one who does not know you well, shall ask of another who does,—‘Will brother Thompson be present?’—the answer will be—‘*Of course* he will—Brother Thompson is *always* in his place.’”

While his health continued firm, *Brother Tinker* was always in his place. I do not remember of his being absent but from a single meeting, and that meeting occurred while he was sick in Boston.

He did not ordinarily participate largely in Presbyterian debates. He never spoke on questions of mere order and form. He had a cordial loathing of that *cacoethes loquendi* whereby some men render themselves nuisances in all public bodies. He spoke rarely on any subject; but when he did speak, always spoke well, tersely, compactly, intelligently and exactly to the point. When he was done, he sat down, and his speeches *told*. He was a true son of Issachar—a man “that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do;” and we always listened to him as to one of our best, wisest, most prudent and sagacious counsellors. There was not a particle of what is called *ultraism* in his whole composition. In no sense whatever was he a *radical*, but rather, temperately conservative,—disposed on all subjects to stand by the old ways, and to urge his brethren to do the same. He was staid, sober, deliberate and grave; just the man to gain and hold the confidence of other men, and to wield the influence which he always did wield in our ecclesiastical assemblies.

He was an eminently *modest* man. If ever the apostolic injunction to *think other men better than ourselves* was obeyed by any man in this world, it was obeyed by him. This trait of his character was really in excess; and if we could, we would gladly have modified it. He often remained silent in public meetings when he should have spoken; and I do not think he ever did rise to speak, except under the pressure of a deep sense of duty. When every eye was turned upon him, and others were evidently waiting to hear what he had to say, then and always with marked embarrassment, he would get upon his feet and speak so well, so lucidly, so satisfactorily to all, that we could only wonder at his diffidence, and regret that it so often deprived us of the pleasure and advantage of hearing him. When expostulated with, he would seriously defend himself on the ground that others could speak better, and that he ought not to occupy the brethren's time. This modesty of his was not assumed, but real. It appeared always, in all places and in all relations, except where he felt himself particularly and personally called, in the providence of God, to stand up for the defence of truth and righteousness. Then, he was bold as a lion, and the last man to flinch. No one could be firmer or more fearless than he, whenever he realized the clear voice of duty leading him on. In such a case, he was ready to face the world, and no amount of opposition, no dread of shame or loss, could daunt him.

Of his piety, self-distrust was an eminent characteristic. He doubted himself. He hoped in God, yet always with much fear and trembling. The strongest expression of confidence in his own good estate that I ever heard from him, or ever heard of his using, was one which I have noticed in some of his letters—"I am a poor sinner, and God is merciful to me." A sense of unworthiness overwhelmed him; and if he hoped at all, it was only because he had a deeper sense of the compassion and grace of Christ.

His piety expressed itself, not in great emotions of joy; not in the raptures of hope, nor in any strong declarations of love and devotion to God; but in a steadfast determination to do God's will, and in consistent and earnest Christian living. He was remarkably ecumenical in his Christian zeal. His charity was expansive and took in every thing human. "We must not live," he would say, "for our own parishes or for our own country. The field is the *world*. We must think, and care, and pray, and toil, for *all mankind*. We must have hearts, like Christ's, to take in the whole human race."

Said a young man to me recently, now a practising lawyer in this city, who once boarded for a year in Mr. Tinker's family—"No one knew Mr. Tinker who did not know him in *his own house*." It was really in his own house, surrounded by his wife and children, that he appeared to the greatest advantage. There all restraint was thrown off, and he was *all* Tinker. The whole richness of the man was laid open. His intercourse with his family was of the easiest and pleasantest kind. He was instructive, and, at the same time, amusing. The deep and rich vein of wit, of piquant and mirthful humour, which remarkably characterized him everywhere, cropped out there, in the midst of his solid conversation, more frequently and largely than any where else. His wife and children almost worshipped him. He was the light of their eyes, and the joy of their hearts. Yet, like a true Bishop, "he ruled well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." In allowable things, his indulgence knew no limits. There was nothing that he would not do, to promote the innocent enjoyment of any members of his household; yet no father was ever more stern and unyielding, when parental duty and Christian principle required him to assume this character. He knew how to say "no" as well as to say "yes;" and when he said "no," the largest and the smallest understood him. His *nay* was *nay*, and no entreaties or tears could make any thing else of it.

He was abundant and untiring in the religious instruction of his family, and exact in his maintenance of family religion and worship. In this respect I con

sider him to have been a model worthy of all imitation; and the results of his faithfulness appear in the consistent piety of each of his grown up children, and in the religious intelligence and conscientiousness of all of them.

He was very fond of music. He played well himself on the violin, and, in family worship, often accompanied the singing with that instrument. Sometimes a daughter accompanied the singing on the piano forte. All joined in that exercise; and one could not avoid feeling that the melody which they made, was melody in their hearts, unto the Lord.

Mr. Tinker was a fast and firm friend. Of this, I had a personal experience; and the volumes of his correspondence, maintained with various persons, through many years, with some from his young manhood to the day of his death, abundantly and strongly illustrate it. In this relation, he but exemplified the general steadiness and reliableness of his character.

Much might be added to the above; but what I have written is probably sufficient for your purpose.

I am, very truly and sincerely,

Your friend,

M. L. P. THOMPSON.



WILLIAM MAYO ATKINSON, D. D.*

1833—1849.

WILLIAM MAYO ATKINSON, the son of Robert and Mary (Mayo) Atkinson, was born at Powhatan, on James River, two miles below Richmond, Va., on the 22d of April, 1796. His father was of Quaker descent, and by his mother he was connected with some of the ancient and most respectable families of Virginia. He was the eldest of eleven children. His early years were distinguished by fondness for books, and by great gentleness, docility, and loveliness. At the age of sixteen, he entered the Junior class in the College of New Jersey, and graduated in 1814. He then returned to Virginia, studied Law under David Robertson of Petersburg, and in due time was admitted to the Bar. He settled in the practice of the Law at Petersburg, and continued in it until the year 1833. He was married on the 10th of July, 1821, to Rebecca Bassett Marsden, of Norfolk, Va.,—a lady of fine intellectual endowments and moral qualities.

In the summer of 1822, during a revival of religion at Petersburg, he became hopefully the subject of a spiritual renovation, and joined the Presbyterian Church then under the pastoral care of the Rev. B. H. Rice. Shortly after, he was chosen an elder in the Church, in which capacity he officiated for some time, with great fidelity, and to much acceptance. After some years,—during which much of his leisure was occupied in theological reading,—it became a question of duty with him whether he should not relinquish the profession of Law, and enter the ministry; and, though he saw that the proposed change must involve a great pecuniary sacrifice, he quickly resolved to make it, in obedience to what he believed to be the higher claims of the cause of Christ. Accordingly, after a few months of preparatory study, which was carried on principally in his Law office, he was

* MS. from his daughter.—Foote's Sketches of Va., 2d Series.