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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.

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BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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VOLUME IV.
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By ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,

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

fruitless search to find a Saviour, he sunk despairingly into a profound slumber; and awoke, praising God for his great salvation. I state the fact without comment.

Regretting to send you so meagre a notice of my venerated friend and pastor, when my feelings would dictate a fuller and worthier tribute to his memory,

I am, Sir, very truly, your obedient servant,

JOSEPH H. LUMPKIN.

WILLIAM ANDERSON McDOWELL, D. D.*

1813—1851.

The paternal grandfather of WILLIAM ANDERSON McDOWELL, was Ephraim McDowell, who emigrated from Ireland about the year 1746, and purchased four hundred acres of wilderness in Lamington, Somerset County, N. J. Here he settled, and here was born his son *Matthew*, the father of William A., about two years after the family arrived in the country. Here too, was born another son, *Benjamin*, who was fitted for College at a Latin school taught by a Mr. Hanna, of Hunterdon County, N. J., and afterwards studied for a considerable time at the University of Glasgow. He settled in the ministry in Ireland, first at Linnavady, in the County of Londonderry, and afterwards at Dublin, where he exercised a wide and important influence, and died at the age of about eighty.

The mother of the subject of this notice was Elizabeth Anderson, whose parents were both emigrants from Ireland. Both his parents were exemplary members of the Presbyterian Church, and his mother particularly was distinguished as a devout and earnest Christian. His father was a farmer in only moderate circumstances. William A. was born at Lamington, in May, 1789. He spent his earliest years at home, acquiring the rudiments of learning, and occasionally working a little on the farm. At the age of about thirteen or fourteen, he went to a grammar school in the neighbourhood, and subsequently attended a school at Elizabethtown, taught by Mr. Henry Mills, now (1852) the Rev. Dr. Mills, Professor in the Theological Seminary at Auburn. In 1807, he entered the Junior class in Princeton College, and, having maintained an excellent standing for both behaviour and scholarship, graduated in 1809. In the spring of 1810, he commenced the study of Theology under the direction of the Rev. Dr. John Woodhull of Freehold, in whose family he boarded. In June of that year, he put himself under the care of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, as a candidate for the ministry. In November following, he became a Tutor in Princeton College, and continued there till September, 1811, pursuing his theological studies, at the same time, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, President of the College. His health having become delicate, he resolved to try for a while the effect of a Southern climate; and, accordingly, in November, he sailed for Savannah, where his brother-in-law, Dr. Henry Kollock, resided, and under his direction pursued his studies during the ensuing winter. In April, 1812, he returned to the

* Presbyterian for 1851.—MSS. from his widow, and Rev. John McDowell, D. D.

North, and continued his studies at Elizabethtown, under the guidance of his brother, the Rev. John McDowell, now Dr. McDowell of Philadelphia. The Theological Seminary at Princeton having commenced its operations in August 1812, he became a member of it in November following, and continued his studies there till May, 1813,—about six months. He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, April 28, 1813; and having been invited to take charge of the Church at Bound Brook, N. J., was ordained and installed Pastor of the said Church, by the same Presbytery, on the 22d of December following. On the 19th of October, 1814, his connection with the Church at Bound Brook was dissolved, and on the 15th of the next December, he was installed Pastor of the Church at Morristown, N. J.

His ministry at Morristown was characterized by great acceptableness and usefulness. But serious inroads began at length to be made upon his health. He suffered severely from small pox at the age of twelve, and from that time never enjoyed vigorous health; but, in the autumn of 1822, he was so much threatened with a pulmonary complaint, that he thought it necessary to try the effect of a milder climate. Accordingly, having obtained leave of absence from his congregation, he travelled as far South as South Carolina, and passed the winter in Charleston. The effect upon his health was most favourable; and when he returned in the spring, he seemed to have regained his accustomed vigour. He resumed his labours, but very soon sunk back into the feeble state from which he had emerged. At this juncture, a call came to him from a Presbyterian Church in Charleston, S. C., and, after having made a successful trial of that climate, he thought it his duty to avail himself of it permanently, and therefore to accept the call. He did accept it; and his pastoral relation at Morristown was dissolved on the 8th of October, 1823.

He was installed by the Charleston Union Presbytery on the 3d of December, 1823. Here he continued occupying a wide sphere of ministerial usefulness, about ten years. In 1832, he was Moderator of the General Assembly. At the meeting of the Assembly the next year, (1833,) he came on to Philadelphia to preach the opening sermon; and, at the close of the meeting, was appointed Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions of the Presbyterian Church. He returned to Charleston, but, in due time, accepted the appointment, and came back to Philadelphia, and entered on the duties of his office in the autumn of that year.

In 1827, he was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Franklin College, Ga.

Dr. McDowell had suffered for many years from a disease of the throat, which rendered speaking, especially in public, a very difficult exercise to him. He was, however, most laborious, in the discharge of his duties, both at home and abroad, and no doubt often taxed himself beyond the reasonable measure of endurance. In 1847, he was desirous, on account of his feeble health, of retiring from his office, but, in consequence of urgent solicitations, he remained till the spring of 1850, and then tendered his resignation.

Shortly after this, he removed from Philadelphia to Lamington, his native place, with a view to spend there the residue of his days. The winter of 1850–51 he passed at the South, and the greater part of it with his friends at Charleston. At first, the change of climate seemed favourable to him;

but, before leaving Charleston, he was attacked with a chronic affection of the bowels, which greatly reduced his strength, and threatened a fatal issue. He returned to New Jersey in May; and, though he was feeble during the summer, he preached occasionally, and officiated in laying the corner-stone of a new church. About the first of September, he went to Morristown, with a view to place himself under the care of his former physician, Dr. Johnes, in whom he had special confidence. But he died very suddenly, after being there a few days. His death took place on the 17th of September, 1851. His remains were taken to Lamington and interred there, the Funeral Sermon being preached by the Rev. William W. Blauvelt.

He was married, at the close of the year 1813, to Jane H., daughter of Shepard Kollock, of Elizabethtown. They had two sons, both of whom were graduated at Princeton College, and one of whom survives, a medical practitioner in New Jersey.

I first became acquainted with Dr. McDowell in the autumn of 1830, at his house in Charleston, S. C. I was impressed at once with his great kindness of manner, and his excellent judgment and common sense. After he came to the North, I had frequent opportunities of seeing him, and was even privileged to reckon him among my intimate friends. And I can truly say that the more I knew of him, the more I admired his whole character. I always found him uncommonly amiable, obliging, disinterested. I remember well his working nearly a whole day, when he happened to be at leisure, to gratify an individual in respect to a comparatively small matter, who had not the least claim upon his kindness. He preached in my pulpit several times; and though, when he begun, owing to his bronchial affection, it was with great difficulty that he could articulate a word, and the effort was painful to his hearers as well as himself, yet his vocal powers gradually came as he proceeded, and after a few minutes he spoke with a good degree of freedom. I never heard him preach a sermon that was not well planned, thoroughly digested, and rich in evangelical instruction. His manner, though not graceful, was characterized by a fervour and unction that gave it very considerable effect. In his social intercourse during the latter part of his life, he laboured under the disadvantage of extreme deafness; but he always seemed cheerful and, sociable, and, by means of artificial helps, could converse without much difficulty. He was from conviction a thorough Presbyterian,—by nature a liberal and large hearted man. Many, I am sure, besides myself, anticipated his visits as an Agent with pleasure, and felt, in the review, that they had been truly profitable.

FROM THE REV. WILLIAM M. ENGLES, D. D.

PHILADELPHIA, January 15, 1852.

Rev. and dear Sir: I cheerfully comply with your request to give you my impressions of the character of the late Rev. Dr. William A. McDowell; although I should have preferred that the service had been performed by one better able to do justice to the subject. My opportunities for knowing him were chiefly confined to the period during which he was connected, as Corresponding Secretary, with the Board of Domestic Missions in our Church. I had frequent friendly intercourse with him, and, for many years, as a member of the Board, weekly opportunities of witnessing the spirit and temper with which he fulfilled his official duties.

Dr. McDowell, in his intercourse with his fellow-men, exhibited many engaging traits of character. I have seldom met with a man who had as few weaknesses, and as many strong points, as he. There was in him a fine and harmonious blending of attributes, in which each one occupied its proper place, in its due proportions, and with its symmetrical adjustments. His heart was full of kindly feelings, which his tongue, naturally and without ostentation, expressed on every fitting occasion. In all my intercourse with him, I never saw his good temper interrupted by an outburst of petulance or passion; and I have seen him in circumstances which would have tried the temper of one less rigidly schooled. For his friends he always had a smile and a pleasant remark, however unseasonable may have been their intrusion on his busy hours. He loved the society of Christians; and his intercourse with them was uniformly enlivened by a conversation bland, genial and cordial. Few could be in his company for any length of time, who would not be disposed to say of him that he was a truly good man, who had endeavoured to imbibe the spirit and follow the example of his Master. Never imperious, never personally offensive, with a heart full of benevolence, and with a childlike simplicity, he won many friends; and if he had enemies, it was not likely to have been from any fault in him. He knew what a Christian ought to be, not only in devotional habits, but in all the practical duties of life; and few perhaps were more careful or more successful in the personal application of such knowledge. He was truly a Christian in his views of Divine truth, in his intercourse with God, and in the eminent prudence, circumspection, and consistency, of his public and private walk.

As a Minister of the Gospel, he cheerfully consecrated himself to his work. With as little selfishness as we may expect to find in connection with a fallen nature, it was the glory of his Master, and not honours or emoluments, that he sought. He was well qualified for his office, not only by the graces of the Spirit, but by natural powers well cultivated. If his talents were not distinguished for brilliancy, they were for solidity—if he never displayed an excursive imagination, he exhibited a logical acumen. His sermons were well prepared. They never aimed to present a particular truth, without exhibiting it fully and clearly; and they were uniformly characterized by a lucid order and apt expressions. It was their praise that they were intelligible to all, and full of instruction. If any man ever really loved to preach, it was Dr. McDowell. He was always ready and always willing. In prayer he was eminently gifted. As a Pastor, the testimony of those who knew him well in this relation, is uniform in regard to his diligence and faithfulness in family visitation, in personal dealings with the consciences of his people, and in all public services. The several positions which he occupied as a settled minister were prominent and important, and the spiritual fruits of his ministry are believed to have been considerable. It was only through a strong and urgent call of the Church that he was induced to sunder his relation to his last pastoral charge, that he might enter a new and still more arduous field of labour.

The Board of Missions for the Domestic field was, at the time of his accession as its chief officer, in a comparatively low and crippled condition. It needed to have new energy infused into it, to make it in any degree commensurate with the increasing destitutions of our country. Dr. McDowell, in accepting the appointment, was fully aware that the office was to be no sinecure; and, with a determination to devote to it his best energies, he entered upon his duties. Under his administration, the Board assumed a higher position, the sphere of its influence was enlarged, its importance was more fully appreciated by the Church, and its efficiency became visible in many hundred places which before were literally spiritual desolations. During the seventeen years in which he filled this post, he was most untiring in his labours, earnest in his public appeals, and willing to make any sacrifice to provide destitute places with the preaching of

the Gospel. He regarded every missionary as a personal friend, and followed him with his prayers and kindest wishes.

The interests of Domestic Missions fully absorbed his attention, and to make provision for the increasing expenditures of the Board caused him much anxious concern and labour. When his vocal organs became so enfeebled as to render it extremely difficult for him to speak, and when his hearing was so nearly gone that he could not even hear the sound of his own voice, his excellent appeals from the pulpit, and his remarkably clear extemporaneous addresses before Synods and the General Assembly, were listened to with great interest and respect.

Seldom indeed has the Church been called to venerate more highly, and with profounder gratitude to God, the memory of any of its departed servants. Being dead, he yet speaks, and will for generations continue to speak, in the churches planted by his instrumentality, the missionaries encouraged by his sympathies, and the souls brought under the enlightening influences of the Gospel by his unwearied exertions.

I am, my dear Sir,

Truly and fraternally yours,

WILLIAM M. ENGLES.



PHILIP MELANCTHON WHELPLEY.*

1814—1824.

PHILIP MELANCTHON WHELPLEY was born in Stockbridge, Mass., in December, 1794. He was a son of the Rev. Samuel Whelpley, who had been ordained a few months before as Pastor of a Baptist Church in that place. While he was yet a small boy, his father removed with his family to Morristown, and for a number of years was engaged there in teaching a school. He early discovered great precocity of mind, and an unusual thirst for knowledge; and he was particularly distinguished for a graceful and impressive elocution. In 1809, his father left Morristown, and opened a school at Newark; but by that time Melancthon's mind had become so well furnished and matured, that he became associated with his father as assistant teacher. When his father, shortly after the opening of his school at Newark, was obliged, on account of a hemorrhage of the lungs, to seek a milder climate, and went to Savannah, Melancthon accompanied him; and there too he became associated with him in teaching a small school, by means of which they were enabled to meet their current expenses.

Notwithstanding young Whelpley was uncommonly amiable and moral as well as attractive, from his earliest developments, it was not till he was about eighteen years of age, that his mind became deeply, and as he believed savingly, impressed with Divine truth. During a revival of religion in Newark, and under the ministry of Dr. Richards, he was brought to entertain new views of his relations to God and eternity, and soon after to make a public profession of his faith. As he had been thoroughly educated by his father, who was one of the most accomplished teachers of his day, he was prepared

* Dr. Spring's Fun. Sermon.—MSS. from Rev. Doctors Cox, Ludlow, Skinner, and Mills, Rev John Ford, and Hon. Lewis Condict.