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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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views of Scripture doctrine or ecclesiastical polity. On such occasions, his reasonings were plausible, if not conclusive; and his manner furnished the evidence of his deep sincerity. His skill in managing controversy was generally conceded, and his efforts in this way were often successful. He could lay no claim to the graces of oratory, yet his words were weighty and often irresistible.

Dr. Frøeligh was placed in circumstances of painful antagonism with some of his brethren, which gave to him no inconsiderable notoriety; but as this pertains rather to the history of his life than the delineation of his character, I shall pass it over without observation. It cannot be questioned, by his greatest admirers, that he had some marked imperfections; but I confess it is more grateful to me to think of his many substantial good qualities, and especially to think of him, as I believe he now is, with his imperfections all gone, and his excellencies magnified into the symmetry and purity and beauty of the Third Heavens.

Yours truly,

HENRY OSTRANDER.



WILLIAM LINN, D.D.*

1775—1808.

The ancestors of WILLIAM LINN were inhabitants of the British Islands. At an early period in the settlement of this country, his grandfather emigrated from Ireland to the Western parts of Pennsylvania. His father, William Linn, was a respectable farmer, and had a numerous family of children, of whom the subject of this sketch was the eldest. He was born on the 27th of February, 1752, near Shippensburg, Cumberland County, Pa. He received the rudiments of his education at a school near his father's, and afterwards was sent to Grammar schools, first under the instruction of the Rev. George Duffield, of Carlisle, (afterwards Dr. Duffield, of Philadelphia), and next of the Rev. Robert Smith, of Pequea. During his residence at the latter place, an unusual attention to religion prevailed in the school, and several who afterwards became respectable and useful in the Gospel ministry, dated their entrance on the religious life to that period. Though he had been educated in the great principles of Christianity, it was here that his mind first became thoroughly awakened to his higher interests, and the purpose originated of devoting himself ultimately to the Christian Ministry. He entered Princeton College, one year in advance, in the autumn of 1769, and graduated in 1772. He held a high standing in his class, and was distinguished alike for exemplary deportment and thorough scholarship. After his graduation he returned to his father's and spent six or eight months in the study of Divinity, under the instruction of the Rev. Dr. Robert Cooper, minister of Middlespring Congregation, of whose church his father was a member. He then accepted an invitation to take charge of a Select School in Philadelphia; but, at the expiration of a year, returned and resumed his theological studies, under the same teacher. In April, 1775, he was licensed by the Donnegal (afterwards Carlisle) Presbytery, being then twenty-three years of age.

* Ref. D. Ch. Mag. IV,—Dr. Bradford's Fun. Sum,—MS. from Miss Linn.

His future scenes of service were various. Entering zealously into the cause of our country's Independence, in the spring of 1776 he accepted a Chaplaincy in General Thompson's regiment, which was raised in the neighbourhood of Carlisle; and, about this time, was ordained by the Presbytery by which he had been licensed. This regiment, however, being soon ordered to Canada, and the situation of his family not permitting him to accompany it, he resigned his Chaplaincy, and shortly after was settled at Big Spring. Here he remained for about six years; and, though the field of his labour was a retired one, it was highly favourable to his preparation for the more important places he was destined to occupy. In the year 1784 he was placed at the head of a respectable Academy in Somerset County, Md. Here he laboured with assiduity and honourable success till the spring of 1786, when he accepted an invitation to the Pastorship of the Presbyterian Church in Elizabethtown, N. J. His Installation there took place on the 14th of June of that year; but, as his popularity soon became known in the neighbouring metropolis, he was called, within a few months, to be one of the Associate Pastors of the Reformed Dutch Church in New York. Here, for more than twenty years, he laboured with much diligence, and enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most attractive and impressive preachers of his day. But his health at length began to decay, and his constitution gradually failed, so that, in the last years of his ministry, he was frequently obliged to forego his public duties. In 1804 he received a severe shock from the death of his highly gifted and accomplished son, the Rev. Dr. John Blair Linn, of Philadelphia, from which he never recovered. Finding himself now incapable of performing the duties of the ministry, he resigned his charge in New York, and removed, with his family, to Albany. Desirous of turning to some account in his Master's service the little strength that remained to him, he engaged, for a year, to perform half the public duties in the Reformed Dutch Church in the city of which he had now become a resident; and, though he laboured in great bodily weakness, his preaching awakened no inconsiderable attention and admiration. Notwithstanding his protracted indisposition, he died at last suddenly. On the 6th of January, while sitting with his family, he sunk down apparently lifeless. When revived, he complained of darkness and pain, which proved to be the harbingers of his dissolution. When he became aware of his situation, he expressed a desire to live a little longer for the sake of his family; but submissively and cheerfully referred it to the determination of Heaven; and, when the hour of his departure actually came, he passed away with the utmost calmness, as if falling into a gentle slumber. He died on the 8th of January, 1808, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-second of his ministry. A Sermon, with reference to his death, was subsequently preached, by the Rev. John M. Bradford, D.D., from Proverbs, x, 7.

Dr. Linn was thrice married. His first wife was Rebecca Blair; his second was Mrs. Catharine Moore, the widow of an eminent physician in New York; and his third was a Mrs. Hanson, of Greenbush. By the first marriage he had twelve children, five of whom died in infancy; by the second he had two; and by the third one. One of his sons, by the first marriage, *John Blair*, became a distinguished clergyman in Philadelphia; and one of his daughters, by the same marriage, was married to Charles Brockden Brown, of Philadelphia, and another to Simeon Dewitt of Albany.

The following is a list of Dr. Linn's publications:—

The Blessings of America: A Sermon preached in the Middle Dutch Church, New York, on the Fourth of July, - - - - -	1791
Sermons Historical and Characteristical, [a duodecimo volume,] - - - - -	1791
A Sermon on the Spiritual Death and Life of the Believer, [published in the 1st volume of the American Preacher,] - - - - -	1791
A Sermon on the Christian Warfare, [published in the 3d volume of the American Preacher,] - - - - -	1791
The character of Simon the Sorcerer: A Sermon designed to prove that Baptism is not Regeneration, - - - - -	1793
Remarks on Dr. Moore's Address to the Members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the City of New York, - - - - -	1793
Discourses on the Signs of the Times, [an octavo volume,] - - - - -	1794
A Discourse delivered on a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer, on account of the removal of an Epidemic Fever, and for other National Blessings, - - - - -	1795
A Discourse delivered at Hackensack, on occasion of the meeting of a Commission of Synod to Compose certain Differences in the Congregations of Hackensack and Schraalenbergh, - - - - -	1796
A Discourse on National Sins, delivered on a National Fast, - - - - -	1798
A Eulogy on Washington, delivered before the New York State Society of the Cincinnati, - - - - -	1800
A Sermon before the New York Missionary Society, - - - - -	1800

In addition to the above, there was published a few years ago, in the New York Advertiser, a Sermon which Dr. Linn preached at Carlisle, on the 17th of March, 1776, before a Regiment of Soldiers, who were about leaving their homes to join the Army. I am unable to ascertain whether this sermon, as it appears in the Advertiser, was a reprint, or whether it was then published for the first time.

The following is an extract from Dr. Bradford's (unpublished) Funeral Sermon

"Dr. Linn was early distinguished for genius and eloquence. His Creator bestowed those qualifications which peculiarly fitted him for a public speaker. These he cultivated with care and success, and devoted them to the Church. Impressed with the importance of his office as the Ambassador of Heaven to guilty men, he made others feel its importance and solemnity. His compositions for the pulpit were neat, plain and perspicuous, adapted to the capacities of his hearers, and calculated to do them good. His manner, almost always agreeable, was sometimes deeply impressive and powerful. By him 'the violated law indeed spoke out its thunders,' and 'fools who came to scoff remained to pray.' He was a son of consolation, too who knew how to bind up the broken heart, and lead the penitent to the Saviour's blood. Ever a zealous advocate of the doctrines of grace, the scope of his preaching was to exalt God, to humble the sinner, and prostrate him with self-condemnation at the foot of the Cross, there to accept of salvation as a free gift through the merits of Christ. Earnest, pathetic, persuasive and alarming in his addresses, he peculiarly excelled in awakening sinners, and urging them to the refuge of the Gospel. On special occasions he shone with conspicuous lustre, and rose above himself, leading captive the feelings, and swaying the hearts of his auditors. Though his natural vehemence led him, at times, when his health was decayed, beyond the bounds of strict propriety, in his manner, yet, in pulpit eloquence, he has rarely, if ever, been excelled in the American churches. Though enjoying an almost unbounded popularity, and assailed by adulation, he frequently expressed his sense of its insignificance and vanity. He was engaged in the service of God, and aimed at the attainment of whatever might promote this service. He, therefore, rejoiced in that fame which extended his sphere of usefulness, but he took it not as his reward—for this he looked to God alone. He loved the cause of Christ in which he laboured, and viewed with peculiar delight all extraordinary talents which were devoted to the Church. A stranger to envy, and

profuse in his justice to the merits of others, in the decline of his own health and usefulness he employed his character, standing and age in assisting those who were coming forward in the ministry, still endeavouring to promote by others the cause he had early espoused, and in which he had spent his life.

"As a Citizen, he disinterestedly loved his country, esteemed its laws and government, and desired to see them obeyed and revered. He warmly entered into the interests of his native land, and constantly endeavoured to promote what he thought its true honour and prosperity.

"As a Man, in his intercourse with society, which he loved, and in which he shone, he was at first somewhat reserved; but his heart was the seat of sensibility and affection. His friendships were not numerous, but they were ardent; his attachments were formed with caution, but they were strong and lasting. A sincere friend, a tender husband, parent and head of a family,—if he failed in the duties of these characters, it was in being almost incapable of reproving those whom he loved. If he had enemies, he did not escape the common lot of worthy and excellent men. If he had failings, let us remember that he was a sharer in our poor, depraved, perverted humanity. If there were any which did not lean to virtue's side, and spring from the tenderness of his heart, any which did not arise from the nature of the complaints under which he laboured and lingered, and which many considered as ideal, let us spread over them the mantle of oblivion, and commit them to the mercies of our Heavenly Father, remembering our own faults, and that there is not a just man on earth that liveth and sinneth not. Our business is with his virtues and services, which demand our love and imitation. They were great, conspicuous and noble; and, while the reward of them is with his God, the memorial of them shall remain on earth. While the name of the wicked shall rot,—while the enemies of truth shall perish,—his name, his works and usefulness, shall be embalmed in the affectionate remembrance of the friends and relatives whom he loved, of the lost sinners whom he reclaimed and led to Jesus, of the numerous Christians whom he edified, of the various churches which he served. For the memory of the just is blessed, and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

FROM THE REV. JACOB J. JANEWAY, D.D.

NEW BRUNSWICK, March 11, 1848.

Rev. and dear Sir: Your request for my recollections of the elder Dr. Linn carries me back to an early period of my life. I knew him quite well, and often heard him preach; but, as forty years have now passed since his death, I cannot recall much that will be illustrative of his peculiar characteristics. Indeed, I can do nothing more than communicate very briefly the most general impressions.

Dr. Linn possessed much more than ordinary talents, had enjoyed the advantages of an excellent education, and was of a naturally ingenuous and amiable temper. Though, at first, he seemed somewhat distant and reserved in his manner, you had only to become acquainted with him to find that he had excellent powers of conversation, and withal a truly genial spirit. But it was in the pulpit that he rendered himself at once the most attractive and the most useful. He had undoubtedly the reputation of being one of the most eloquent preachers of his time. He wrote his sermons and committed them to memory; and, with the mature preparation which he generally made, he appeared to great advantage. His delivery was natural and graceful, and withal highly animated; though I sometimes thought that he was too exuberant in his gesture. I remember once to have seen him sink down into the pulpit, so as to leave visible little more of his person than his head, and then rise up suddenly into an erect posture. He was particularly celebrated for his Charity Sermons. He was accustomed annually to preach a sermon in behalf of a Charity School connected with his church; and these discourses, both by the appropriateness of their matter, and the impressive manner in which they were delivered, attracted great attention, and were listened to by crowded audiences. His appeals to the feelings of his hearers on these occasions were quite irresistible; as was proved by the large contributions which were made in response to them. The general tone of his

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 County, 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.