

A
HISTORY
OF THE
Presbyterian Church in America,

FROM ITS ORIGIN UNTIL THE YEAR 1760.

WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF ITS EARLY MINISTERS.

BY THE
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WITH
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AND
An Historical Introduction,
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bereavement in a close and awful succession. Scarce had we time to dry our weeping eyes for the loss of one of eminent character and usefulness, (Burr,) but the streams of grief were called to flow down afresh for the loss of another, (Davenport,) whose zeal for God and the conversion of men was scarce to be paralleled. And yet, for all this, the anger of Jehovah was not turned away, but his hand was soon lifted up again, and, with a dreadful aim and resistless stroke, has brought down to the dust perhaps the greatest pillar in this part of Zion's buildings, (Edwards.) Oh, how does the whole fabric shake and totter! and what a gloomy aspect do these providences wear! as if God, by calling home his ambassadors, were about to quit the affair of negotiating peace with mankind any more."

DANIEL LAWRENCE

Was born on Long Island in 1718, and is said to have been a blacksmith. He studied at the Log College, and was taken on trials by New Brunswick Presbytery, September 11, 1744, and was licensed at Philadelphia, May 28, 1745.

The original organization at Newtown, in Bucks county, seems to have died away; for Beatty was sent, in the spring of 1745, to "settle a church there." In the fall, Newtown and Bensalem asked for Lawrence; so did Upper and Lower Bethlehem, and Hopewell and Maidenhead. At the request of the Forks of Delaware, he was sent, May 24, 1746, to supply them for a year, with a view to settlement; and, in October, a call was presented to him. He was ordained, April 2, 1747, and installed on the third Sabbath in June. Treat, of Abingdon, presided and preached.

The Forks North and the Forks West had been favoured with a portion of Brainerd's labours, and were by no means an unpromising field, having many excellent pious families. But it was a laborious field,—a wide, dreary, uninhabited tract of fifteen miles lying between the two meeting-houses. Lawrence was not robust; and, for his health, he was directed to spend the winter and spring of 1751 at Cape May, then in very necessitous circumstances. Chesnut supplied the Forks in his absence.

His health still continuing feeble, and there being no prospect of his being able to fulfil his pastoral office in the Forks, he was dismissed. He removed to Cape May. This was one of our oldest congregations, and was among the first that had a pastor,

and then remained vacant nearly thirty years. The Revival was felt there, but the congregation was feeble in numbers and resources. Beatty visited the people, and laid before the synod their distressed state. Davenport passed some time there, but with no effect till the last Sabbath. Lawrence was called; but a long delay occurred before his installation, which was not till June 20, 1754. Of his ministry little is known. The records mention him as a frequent supply of Forks, and as going to preach, in 1755, at "New England over the mountains."

A meeting-house was built in 1762, the frame of which remained in use till 1824.

"It appears* to be my duty, considering the relict of my old disorder, to take and use the counsel which, I have heard, the Rev. Samuel Blair gave, not long before his exit, to the Rev. John Rodgers:—in preaching, to speak low, to speak slow, and to be short."

He died April 13, 1766.

SAMUEL SACKETT

WAS a native† of Newtown, Long Island, and was married, April 6, 1732, to Hannah, daughter of Nathaniel Hazard, an elder in New York. He was probably engaged in business in West Chester county, New York; and having, during the Revival, determined to devote himself to the ministry, he was taken on trials by New Brunswick Presbytery, August 3, 1741. The minutes of the meeting at which he was licensed are not recorded. He was ordained October 13.

In May, he was sent to the Highlands, to White Plains, to Cronpond, in West Chester county, and to Cortland Manor. Cronpond (Crumpond) is now Yorktown, and Cortland Manor is Peekskill. The old advertisements all name the locality John Peek's Kill. He was installed, October 12, 1743, at Bedford, and was directed again to visit the Highlands. He was sent as a supply to the Presbyterian Society in Milford, Connecticut, and preached there.

Crumpond obtained, May 19, 1747, the half of his time,—Bedford being weakened by the Separates. He was charged with the occasional supply of Salem and Cortland Manor.‡ In December,

* MS. note to his Sermons, in the hands of his descendants.

† Riker's History of Newtown.

‡ Samuel Bayard advertises, in 1733, that thirty or forty new settlements had