

A
HISTORY
OF THE
Presbyterian Church in America,

FROM ITS ORIGIN UNTIL THE YEAR 1760.

WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF ITS EARLY MINISTERS.

BY THE
REV. RICHARD WEBSTER,
LATE PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MAUCH CHUNK, PA.

WITH
A Memoir of the Author,
BY THE REV. C. VAN RENSSELAER, D.D.

AND
An Historical Introduction,
BY THE REV. WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, D.D.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PHILADELPHIA:
JOSEPH M. WILSON,
No. 27 SOUTH TENTH STREET, BELOW CHESTNUT ST.
1857.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by
JOSEPH M. WILSON,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Eastern District of
Pennsylvania.

STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON & CO.
PHILADELPHIA.

JACOB GREEN

WAS born* at Malden, Massachusetts, Jan. 22, 1722, (O.S.) and, losing his father in his second year, removed when a child with his step-father to Killingly, Conn. He had a good mother, who carefully trained him in the fear of God: many were his serious impressions in boyhood, but especially at the age of seventeen, during the dreadful prevalence of the throat-distemper in 1738. He returned to Massachusetts soon after, and began to study the languages. Falling into the society of some young men who met for prayer, he joined with them; and, to his surprise, the minister propounded him for admission to the Lord's table, though he had no comfortable sense of pardon. Entering Harvard College in July, 1740, he devoted himself assiduously to study; he was charmed with Whitefield, and followed him to Leicester, approving all he did, yet not awakened to any feeling of his lost condition, and buoyed up with favourable judgment of his state. Gilbert Tennent preached in the college hall at the close of January, 1741, on a false hope: he was overcome with a view of his lost condition, and, retiring to the woods, heard a man in distress, praying for mercy. The next day Tennent preached three times in Cambridge, and his mind was deeply exercised. About two months after, he began to obtain clear views of Christ and the gospel; nothing seeming so much to relieve his troubled spirit as the words, "Who of God is made unto us righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption." On graduating, in 1744, he taught school at Sutton, Mass., and, at the solicitation of Whitefield, consented to go to the Orphan House in Georgia. At Elizabethtown, being released from his engagement, he put himself, by the advice of Dickinson, under the care of New York Presbytery, and was licensed, Sept. 1745. He was soon called to Hanover, and was ordained in November, 1746.

He married Anna Strong, of Brookhaven, Long Island, in the next year. On her death, in 1757, he was much "stirred up" to perform his work more zealously and faithfully. His second wife was Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. John Pierson, of Woodbridge.

In 1750, the congregation of South Hanover, formerly called Bottle Hill, now Madison, was erected; and a new meeting-house was erected on Hanover Neck, and another at Parsippany. He confined his labours to Hanover in 1757. At this time he was elected Vice-President of the College, and for a few months was at the head of the institution. The support of a large family led

* Account of himself, published by his son in the Christian Advocate.

him to engage in the practice of medicine, and he continued it for thirty years, conceiving that less than any other worldly business it took him off from his appropriate work.

He was diligent in catechizing, in endeavouring to promote piety in the young, and to encourage heads of families to guide their households in the good old way. He had been led by Dickinson and Burr to adopt the method of admitting to the sacraments all who seemed desirous of leading a godly life: the reading of Watts and Edwards on the Terms of Communion changed his views, and he,* first of all our ministers, took his stand that only those who were hopefully pious should be received into church-membership. The Presbytery of New York asked him to give them in a sermon his views on Covenanting. He published a "View of the Constitution of the Jewish Church," embodying his opinions on that point.

His labours were without much remarkable success till 1764: he "shared in his own soul a small part of that blessing," and was unwearied in efforts to promote the good work. In 1774, he was again honoured to win many souls.

On the breaking out of the war of Independence, he was foremost in his country's cause, and, against his will, was elected to the Provincial Congress. He was chairman of the committee which drafted the State Constitution. A series of articles from his pen, signed Eumenes, against a paper currency, drew on him much obloquy; and his sermon at the Continental fast, on "The Acceptable Fast," roused the slave-holders of Morris county to come to his house with threats and insults.

About this time he grew dissatisfied with the hinderances in the way of supplying our vacancies:—"first† we make them gentlemen, and then ministers:" he proposed to Bellamy to establish two schools, one in New Jersey, and one in Connecticut, for educating men up to a certain point in languages and philosophy, and then licensing them. He wished to imitate the Baptist way, that our growing country might not be left unblest with sound doctrine and firm discipline. Dissatisfied‡ with the requirement of the synod that students should study divinity two years after obtaining a diploma, and that ministers should keep a register of births, baptisms, &c., and with their practice of dissolving pastoral relations to place men at the head of the college, he withdrew from the Presbytery of New York. Grover, of Parsippany, Lewis, of Warwick, Orange county, New York, and Bradford, who married Elizabeth Green, also withdrew; and, May 3, 1780, they formed Morris County Presbytery, "as we consider ourselves, in a scriptural

* Macwhorter and Caldwell: in Bellamy Papers. † Letter to Bellamy, 1774.

‡ Letter to New York Presbytery, on withdrawing: MS. records.

sense, Presbyterians." He disliked the Congregationalism of New England as much as the Scottish mode of Presbyterianism.

His people adhered to the presbytery, and retained, by the advice of that body, their aged, honoured pastor. He published, in a quarto pamphlet, "A View of a Christian Church, and Church Government, representing the Case of the New Presbytery." He died of influenza, after a short illness, May 24, 1790. A revival of religion* was then in progress, but so noiseless that the neighbouring ministers did not know of it till they came to his funeral. Thirty persons, the gleanings of the harvest, came after his death to his son, Dr. Green, to seek spiritual direction, and to lament that they had not turned at his reproof while he was yet with them.

He published sermons on "The Nature of Natural and Moral Inability," "The Sins of Youth Visited with Punishment in Subsequent Life," and "A Help to Heads of Families." An active, devout man, he did much to enstamp on the community a high moral and religious character. "An instructive, plain, searching, practical preacher, a watchful, laborious pastor, he was ever intent on some plan for the glory of God and the salvation of his people, and, by the divine blessing, was happily and eminently successful."

NATHANAEL TUCKER,

BORN in Milton, Massachusetts, and graduated at Harvard in 1744. Brainerd was present at his ordination by New York Presbytery, April 9, 1747. Edwards† speaks of him as a worthy, pious young gentleman, having made his acquaintance shortly after Brainerd's death. Returning from a visit to his friends at Milton, he was taken sick at Stratfield, Connecticut, and died there in December, 1747. *Come Farms, d. 1747-48 d. '48 at Com +*

DAVID BROWN,

"A MINISTER of the gospel from North Britain, being admitted a member of the Presbytery of Newcastle, took his place among us" in the Synod of Philadelphia in May, 1748. He returned to Scotland during the year.

* Dr. Green, in Sprague's Lectures on Revivals.

† Life of Brainerd.