

AMERICAN
PRESBYTERIANISM

ITS ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

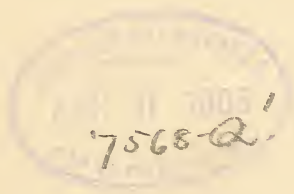
TOGETHER WITH AN APPENDIX OF LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS, MANY OF WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN DISCOVERED

BY

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WITH MAPS



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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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EDWARD O. JENKINS' SONS.

all. Mr. Pollock, as I have been credibly informed, has made some, that came to hear him, who were formerly pretended churchmen, to sign a paper, by which they bound themselves never to return to the communion of the church of England."

XX.

LETTERS OF JAMES ANDERSON.

These five letters were discovered by the author, in the summer of 1884, in the Wodrow MSS. in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. The Librarian, Mr. J. T. Clark, kindly had them copied for him by an experienced copyist. They are now published for the first time, and shed a considerable light on the early history of the Presbyterian Church in America. We have also a copy of a letter of James Anderson of a more private character, from the same collection of manuscripts, dated New York, October 29, 1725, but it does not contain anything of importance for the purposes of our history, and we have concluded not to publish it.

(1.)

Newcastle upon Delaware Augst 1716.Right Revnd Sr.

About seven years ago when I first came into these American Regions I remember I did myself ye honour to wait upon yow, and was favoured with many very savory and religious advices from yow, Some of q^{ch} I shall never forget for they've been of very great use to me in this remote house of my pilgrimage: When I left yow, yow desired me to write & let yow have an account of our affairs here; In q^{ch} I acknowledge I've hitherto been very defective, not, I am sure, out of any desregard to yow but only from a conceit of my own weaknesse insignificancy & so unfitnesse to take upon me to write to a person of your character & worth; q^{ch} barr I've now att last brake through & have adventured to trouble yow with these lines, which I know will be no trouble to yow, when I consider, that I design to write nothing but what has a relation to the interest of our dearest Mediator's Kingdom.

When I came from Scotland, perhaps yow may remember, y^t I was ordained (worthlesse as I was & yet am) to the Sacred

office of y^e ministry with a view of coming to Virginia, where I, in y^e good providence of God, arived; but meeting with unaccountable dissapointments there, after half a year stay, I came over to these parts, q^{re} I understood there were some min^{rs} of my perswasion, & have ever since remained in this place. In this county where I am there are, since I came here, settled, three other presbyterian min^{rs}, two of q^{ch} are from your city of Glasgow.

There are in all, of min^{rs}, who meet, in a presbytry once a year, sometimes att Philadelphia, sometimes here att Newcastle, seventeen, & two probationers from y^e north of Irland whom we have under tryall for ordination, twelve of q^{ch}, I think, have had the most & best of their education at your famous University of Glasgow; We are mostly but young raw heads, yet glory to our God he magnifies & perfects his strength in our weaknesse, and makes it evident y^t he can work wonders of grace by poor mean & insignificant instruments. As to our proceedings in matters of publick worship & discipline, we make it our businesse to follow y^e directory of y^e Church of Scotland, q^{ch} (as well we may) we own as our moyr church. We make it our businesse to settle & to make settlements, for min^{rs} of our perswasion y^t join with us, in places where y^e Gospell has either never att all been preached, or else in places where there are wicked, prophane, debauched, carelesse creatures of the bishop of London of q^{ch} there has been not a few, & yet are some, within y^e bounds of these provinces, where some of our brethren meet, which is y^e reason of our meeting with pritty many hardships & difficulties both from y^e inconveniences of our congregations & y^e opposition of inveterate enemies.

In some of our places y^e hearers, by reason of their poverty & paucity, are scarce att all able, tho' never so willing, to allow a competent creditable subsistance for their min^{rs}, which is the reason of some contempt amongst some; which I humbly think might be, in some measure, easily remedied by our moyr y^e Church of Scotland and her adherants in Brittain. And I doubt not but she readily would use her care & endeavors this way, if she were but sensible of the inconveniences y^t her poor children in this remote corner lye under upon this account.

I have heard it proposed here, by some who have come from your parts & pretend to know y^e pulse of some persons of estate, especially merch^{ts} this way, y^t if any such thing were set about

zealously there might soon be raised as much mony as, if sent over to the care & manag^t of our presbytry might be a very great help to these places & min^{rs} amongst us which labor under the forementioned inconveniencies. I doubt not but one Sabbath day's generall collection for this use with some other help we might have from our brethren in old England, would amount to as much as if right manag'd would be necessary & as we should in haste want, for this purpose; This would not be much felt with yow & would be greatly beneficiall here, and am confident would, through Gods blessing, have a mighty tendency towards the advancement of the Mediators Kingdom in this new growing country.

This Dear Sr I have been bold to propose to yow, knowing yow to be a person truly zealous for the promotion of the interest of our dearest common Lord, & also by reason of your high character & station very capable of doing us & y^e interest of Religion here, as much service this way, as any other I know. I know it will be, or perhaps already it has been, objected that such a thing as this would give some reasons of jealousie to the Church of England y^t yow thereby would inroach too much upon their precincts & liberties. But I can't see what ground or reason they can have for such a thought. The Church of Scotland is established in Great Brittain as well as y^t of England, & no doubt have liberty of sending forth missionaries (& supplying them too) to these places especially within the dominions of Great Brittain, where the Church of England is no more established than y^e Church of Scotland, which is the case of these places I am pleading for; for in Pensylvania & y^e Jersies y^e is no one church established more than anoy^r & none are obliged to pay or contribute towards y^e mantinance of any min^r more than another but what they please.

There is one thing more, for the abovs^d reasons, I would, if I might be allowed, also propose to yow; There are a great many young men merch^{ts} who come from your parts, soberly (I believe) educated & brought up att home, who, when they arive here, are meer rakes, stap or stand att no sin or vice almost that falls in their way, swearing whoring Sabbath breaking drunkenesse are as common vices, with a great many of them, as if they tho't there wos no evil in the commission of any of these; and as to their countenance of min^{ts} y^t are of y^e principles of y^e church of Scotland, they are so far from y^t, y^t they carry as if

they were ashamed of their moy^r Church her principles & wayes, whatever is the religion of their pot & lascivious companions y^t is theirs. So y^t really a great many of them (y^r are some, tho' very few, exceptions) are a perfect scandall to all religion & a disgrace to y^t part of y^e world from whence they come, from which other & better things has been here expected; I am sure if y^e parents & principals of some of y^m knew their carriage & behavior in these parts it would be matter of very great sorrow & greif to them. I propose this not out of any disregard I have to y^m, I am sure it is out of love to their souls. I am glad to see my countrymen in these parts, neither do I speak so because of any particular affront or incivility received. I never mett with any such. from any of them, but on y^e contrary, with very much civility & respect, But I propose it, y^t some method might be fallen upon whereby this dreadfull & offensive greivance might be rectified. Query whither or not their parents & imployers could not oblige them to bring certificates of their inafensive beheavor during their abode in these parts from ministers here to their own min^{rs} &c. att home. forgive my pralixity &c.: I am R R Sr

Your truly affectionate Serv^t

JA: ANDERSON

P: S: I beg your p^{rs} in publick & private for us in these parts & y^t yow would write us.

Addressed "For The Right Revnd Mr John Stirling Principall of the College of Glasgow Scotland"

(2.)

Newcastle on Delaware August 8. 1717.

Right Rev^d Sr

About a year agoe, after some appollogie for my not writing before, I adventured to write to yow concerning some things I tho't of considerable concern & moment towards the advancement of the interest of the Mediators Kingdom in these parts, which I'm affrayed has nat come to your hands. Therein I gave yow a small account of my arivall & progresse in this American world, of the number of min^{rs} who in these parts meet in a presbytry: As to our proceedings in matters of publick worship & discipline, (as I then acquainted yow) we make it our businesse to follow the directory of our moy^r y^e church of Scotland as near as the circumstances of these parts will allow. We

settle & make Settlements for min^{rs} of our perswasion, in places where the Gospell has never att all been preached; or else where there are wicked prophane debauched carelesse creatures of the bishop of London. of q^{ch} y^{re} has been not a few, & yet are some, wtⁱⁿ the bounds of these provences whence some of our brethren meet: which is y^e reason of our meeting with pritty many hardships & difficulties, both from the inconveniencies of our congregations & the opposition of inveterate enemies. In some of our places, the hearers by reason of their poverty and paucity, are scarce att all able, tho' never so willing, to allow a competent creditable subsistance for their min^{rs}, q^{ch} is the occasion of some contempt amongst some, which I, with submission, think might be in some measure easily remedied, by our moy^r The Church of Scotland and her adhereants in Great Brittain, & I doubt not but she readily would use her care and endeavor this way, if she were but sensible of the inconvenience y^t her poor children, in this remote corner ly under upon this account; I have heard it proposed here, by some who have come from your parts, & pretended to know the pulse of some persons of estate this way, that if any such thing were set about zealously, there might soon be raised as much mony, as if sent over to y^e care and managm^t of our presbytry, might be a very great help to these places & min^{rs} amongst us y^t labour under the formentioned inconveniencies; I doubt not but one Sabbath days generall collection for this use, with some other help we might have from our brethren in Old England, would amount to, as much, as, if right managed, would be necessary & as we should in haste want, for this purpose. This would not be much felt with yow, & would be greatly beneficiall & I'm confident would, through Gods blessing, mightily tend to y^e growth advancem^t & encouragm^t of religion, in these parts. I know it will be, or has been objected, y^t such a thing as this would give the Established church of England reason to suspect y^t yow thereby would inroach too much upon their precincts & liberties, but I can't see q^t ground they can have for such a thought. The Church of Scotland is established in Great Brittain as well as y^t of England, & no doubt have liberty of Sending forth missionaries (& supplying y^m too) to these places, especially, within the dominions of Great Brittain, where the Church of England is no more established than the Church of Scotland q^{ch} is the case of these places we are cheifly concerned in. In Pensylvania & the New Jersies there is no one

Church established more than another, & none are obliged to pay or contribute towards the maintenance of any minister more than another, but what he pleases.

There is another thing I also proposed in my last, ther are a great many young men merch^{ts} that come from your parts, who, tho' soberly educated & brought up att home, when they arive here, are meer rakes, stap att no sin or vice y^t falls in their way, monstrous Swearing whoring Sabbath breaking drunkenesse &c are as common with a great many of them as if they tho't there was no evil in any of these sins. And as to their countenancing of min^{rs} y^t are of the principles of the church of Scotland, from that they are so far, that they carry as if they were ashamed of their mother church principles & wayes, whatever is the religion of their pot & lascivious companions that is their's, so y^t realy a great many of them (whose names I yet forbear to mention) are a perfect scandal to all religion, & a disgrace to that part of the world from whence they come. Sure I am, if the parents & principals of some of them knew their carriage & beheavour in these parts, it would be matter of very great sorrow & greif to them. This I propose & speak of not out of disregard I have to them but out of love to their souls, for I've been glad to see my countrymen in these parts, neither do I speak so, because of any particular affront or incivility received of any of them, I never mett with any such, from any of them, but on the contrary with very much externall civility & respect, but I propose it that some method might be fallen upon q^{ry} to rectifie this dreadfull greivance, querie whither or not their parents & others concerned in them, could not oblidge y^m to bring certificates of their good behaviour, during their abode in these parts, from min^{rs} in these parts, to their oun att home ?

Dear S^r My knowledge of your noted zeal, for y^e promotion of the publick interest of our dearest common Lord, & also your capacity, by reason of your high character & station, of doing us & the interest of religion here, as much service this way, as any other I know, engaged me att first to adventure to propose these things unto yow, even without the advice of my brethren, whom, when last mett, I acqwainted therewith, who instead of dissaproving, encouraged me to back with another letter, what I had before said, which, with my not hearing any thing of the last, is the reason of this now.

Pray S^r use your endeavors y^t we in this American wilderness,

especially we who are ourselves children of that mother church whereof yow are an eminent member, may not be forgot, not only in private but in the publick prayers of your churches, Our relation we stand in to yow, as also our poor practise this way with respect to yow, is what makes us put in for a claim to this as our due from yow, I assure yow the church of Scotland is not forgot amongst us in these parts.

I conclude praying peace be wthin her walls, prosperity within her palaces ; peace peace be be w^t & in thee O Scotland.

I am R^d S^r

Your realy affectionate
tho' worthlesse serv^t

J A : ANDERSON

P : S : This, I design shall come, att least to England by ye hands of the Revnd Mr. John Hampton one of our brethren here, whose necessary businesse & exegencies calls him home to Brittain for some time, who, if yow see or hear from him, can acquaint yow more fully of these & other things relating to us.

Pray remember my love heartily to The R Rev^{and} Professor Simpson
J. A.

(3.)

New York December 3 1717.

R R & D S^r

Your very usefull & acceptable letter of the 12 of Augst last I received 9^{ber} 9th via Boston and communicated to this our presbytry of New York & Long Island & severall other of my brethren in whose name & att whose desire, I do hereby return yow hearty thanks, for y^e care diligence & pains yow have taken & been att, in & about the affairs therein containd ; and am assured y^t your Synod shall have y^e hearty sentiments & expressions of the gratitude of our's, when it meets att Philadelphia 7^{ber} next, Doubt not but what shall be, or is raised, even within the bounds of your Synod, will be of very remarkable benefit to Some poor places & people amongst us, for which I'm confident yow & your worthy brethren can't miss of your comfortable reward & in the mean time yow have of y^e blessings & prayers of a great many poor serious souls scattered up & down here, who in due time expect to be sharers in y^e fruits of your care & bounty towards them. Dear S^r I know your concern & endeavors for the advancement of the publick interest of religion, The progresse and prosperity of our Mediators Kingdom both

att home & abroad are such as need no exceetment from anything I can say, The inward joy comfort & satisfaction arising in your own breast, on the tho'ts & reflections of doing good & being any way servicable to your great Lord & Master, together with y^e hopes of the gracious but yet glorious reward which follow on such Services, are motives, which it but poorly becomes me to be so much as a remembrancer to yow of for exceeting yow to goe on & continue (as yow have to our great satisfaction & comfort begun) to agent our cause & plead with our mother, that she may be prevailed upon yet further to extend her bowels of care & compassion toward us her poor Scattered children in these remote corners, y^t we may be, Some way, putt in a better capacity, not only of enlarging the bounds of our Lords dominions in these wild heathenish wildernesses, but also advancing the credite & reputation of our dear mother the Church of Scotland in places & amongst people here, where great pains & diligence have been & yet are taken to bring her under ignominie & disgrace.

Since I writ first to yow, your ans^r to which I have now before me, I writ again much to the same purpose, about 3 or 4 months agoe, by the Revnd Mr John Hampton, one of our min^{rs}, who, for his health & other necessary businesse, is oblidged for some time to goe to his native country. If I mistake not, I therein gave yow an account of our presbytrie's being constituted a Synod, consisting of four presbytries Viz. y^e presbytry of Philadelphia wherein are 7 min^{rs}. The presbytry of Newcastle 6 min^{rs}. The presbytry of Snow Hill 5 congregations. The presbytry of New York & Long Island 5. in each of which presbytries there are either some vacancies of places where ministers have been settled, or places we expect in a little time shall be settled.

This place, the City of New York, where I now am, is a place of considerable moment & very poplous consisting as I'm informed of about 3000 families or housekeepers. Its a place of as great trade & businesse, if not more now, as any in North America. In it are two min^{rs} of y^e established church of England, two Dutch min^{rs}, one French min^r, a Lutheran minister, an Anabaptist & also a Qwaker meeting. The place did att first intirly belong to the Dutch; After the English had it endeavours were used by y^e cheif of y^e people who then understood English towards the Settlement of an English dissenting minister in it, & accordingly one was called from New England, who after he

had preached sometime here, having a prospect & promise of more money than what he had among the dissenters, went to old England, took orders from y^e B. of London & came back here as minister of the established church of E: Here he yet is, has done, & still is doing what he can, to ruin the dissenting interest in the place & verifying y^e old saying *Omnis apostata est sectae sua osor*; Afterwards endeavours were used again & again by the famous Mr Francis McKemie, Mr Hampton, Mr McNish & others towards the Settlement of a Scots church in this city, but by y^e arbitrary management & influence of a wicked high flying governour, who preceeded his excellency Brigadeer Hunter, our present governour (may y^e Lord blesse & long preserve him) that businesse has been hitherto impeded, & could never be brought in a likly way to bear.

The last summer, I being providentially here, & being obliged to stay here about businesse the matter of a month, att the desire of a few especially Scots people, preached each Sabbath. Tho' there were a pretty many hearers, yet there were but few y^t were able & willing to do anything towards the setting forward such a work. a few there were who were willing to do their uttermost, but so few that I had then but small grounds to suppose that any thing effectually could be done. Some time before our last Synod, a call from this small handfull with some few others y^t had joyn'd them, came to the presbytry of Newcastle desiring a transportation of me from Newcastle to New York, which the presbytry referred to y^e Synod then in a little time to sit. The Synod, having a prospect of getting Newcastle supplied by a young man one Mr Crosse, lately come from the North of Irland, transported me hither. The people here who are favorors of our church & perswasion, as I've told yow, are yet but few & none of the richest, yet for all, I am not without hopes y^t with Gods blessing, they shall in a little time encrease. Some are already come to live in the city & more are expected whose language would not allow them to joyn with y^e Dutch or French churches. & whose consciences would not allow them to joyn in the service of the English Church. The cheif thing in all appearance, now wanting, with Gods blessing & concurrence to render us a growing flourishing congregation, is a good large convenient house or church to congregate in; Some proposalls are now sett on foot towards the building of one, but building being here very coastly, & convenient ground to build such a house upon; being yet

more coastly, & the handfull of people y^t are having their hands full to doe towards the necessary Support of their minister we shall not be able to goe through with the building of such a house as the place requires, without the assistance of our friends; The crying necessity of having the Gospell & Gospell ordinances dispensed purly in our langwage here, This seeming to be the time for carrying on such a work, while things are So moderate att home, & while we have such a wise moderate governour here, Together with y^e hopes of the growing of our interest, & the hopes of some assistance from our friends & brethren att home, att least in building, were cheif considerations moving the Synod to transport me hither, & begetting a willingnesse in me to comply with the Synods act.

I believe by this time yow smell my drift. I don't know how to begin to beg any more att your door least I should be reckoned (to use our own Scots word) missleard. But if any of your Substantiall Merch^{ts} or some other Synod could be prevailed upon to contribute towards the building of a Scots church here oh! how acceptable would it be to us & how Servicable would it be to religion & our interest in the place! Severall of our Scots merchants trade hither, & I doubt not, more will, when before now they have come, they understanding neither Dutch nor French were obliged either to stay att home or goe to y^e church of E: or worse which has been y^e occasion of some mischeifs wickednesse & inconveniencies, which I hope, in a great measure, if this work of God succeed here, shall hereafter be prevented, I am affrayid I have wearied yow. May the choisest blessings both of the upper & nether springs be plentifully poured out on yow & yours, May The Church of Scotland be ever preserved from antichristian superstitious drosse in doctrine, discipline & worship; May practical Godlinesse be had more & more in esteem & renoun amongst all ranks & degrees of persons. May your famous Universities, especially that whereof yow are the principall, flourish, & prove real nurseries for God. These are & shall be the petitions & prayers of one who desires an intrest in yours & att present remains

Very Reverend & dear Sr

Your truly affectionate & obliged tho' worthless

Broy^r & Serv^t

JA: ANDERSON

P: S: Pray Sr do not forget the businesse of y^e young men

merch^{ts} I wrote before of I would gladly be rembered to professor Simpsono a letter from yow now & then would wonderfully revive me. This place lyes clear midway betwixt Boston & Philadelphia, the post from both these places comes here every week.

Addressed: "To the Right Reverend Mr John Stirling principal of the Colledge of Glasgow."

(4.)

Newcastle July 13. 1719.

R R Sr

The favour of yours dated Dec^r 5. 1718 I receivd June 20. 1719 which for any thing that I can find, was, in obedience to the Appointm^t of our Synod, ansuered last fall by broyr McNish & myself in a letter to yow, with one therein inclosed to the Moderator of your Synod both which come from New York along with Mr Patrick McKnight merch^t there.

Since I received your letter I have communicated it to severall of my brethren here, all aggree that the sending of that mony in goods well bought, will tend to greatest advantage here, only on the account of the now war, that so we may not run the risque of loosing all, it is desired that, if the goods are not sent of before this comes to hand, they may be ensured.

I tho't to have ansrd your letter more particularly & with greater deliberation, but being here providentially on the occasion of the death of my fay^r in law & so from home & pretty much in a hurry of businesse & the bearer Mr Alexander (of whose savory conversation since he came into these American parts I am glad to hear so good a report as I have since I came here heard) being also in haste from this, I could not write as I would, but yet the opportunity being so good I could not, I think, without coming short in my duty but write something, if any other opportunity after this offer I resolve to be more particular.

According to your desire I remembred yow to our governour B. Hunter who was very glad to hear of yow. & desired me, when I writt to yow, to remember his respects to yow. He designs as I understand to sail for G. Brittain tomorrow the 14th instant. which with my hearty respect to yow & other inquiring freinds is all that can be said att this time by

R R Sr

Your oun

JA: ANDERSON

Addressed: "For The Right Rev^d Mr John Stirling principall
of the colledge of Glasgow"

"p^r Mr Alexandr."

(Dorso) Ia: And: New York 1719 July 13.

(5.)

New York 9^{ber} 25 1723.

Right Reverend & much Honoured Sr

We in this congregation are now, by burthen of debt and other unnatural oppositions, brought to the uttmost pinch of necessity, so that if we meet not with speedy releif, we shall, in all humane probability, be oblidged to quitt striving, and give up our interest in this place. We have now no probable mean of extrication from our difficulties left under God, but by betaking ourselves to, and laying our case plainly open before our friends & brethren in the Church of Scotland, to see if she can be prevailed upon to extend her pity and compassion in consulting some way for the releif of us her distant & distress'd children here. We therfor, and our presbytry for us have as the only expedient that now can be tho't of by us, addressed our freinds and Brethren with yow, and that this mean may not prove ineffectuall, as our attempts this way have hitherto proven, we have therewith sent home, as our messenger, our Beloved and trustie freind and Brother Dr John Nichols, one of our cheif members and representatives, that no lawfull pains or care may be wanting in us for the supporting the interest of religion and of our profession here, where it is so much needed, and upon the standing of which the presbyterian interest in this province does so much depend.

R^d Sr The frouns of providence and the strange opposition that we have mett with here in this wicked place, are, and have been, such, that we do not know well what to do, but yet praise to our God, our eyes are towards him, we know that it is his frequent way with his own church and people, to make their extremitie his opportunity of appearing & shewing himself for them and their releif.

Amongst other crosse disspensations it has pleased the Lord in his sovereign providence to remove, from amongst us by death, his eminent Serv^t The Reverend Mr George McNi:h who hath been, for these 16 or 17 years past, a remarkable instrument under God for the support and defence of the Gospell, and of the presbyterian

interest in these parts, and particularly exerted himself in the behalf of the poor distressed infant congregation here. Our losse in him, we are ready to be affray'd, is truly irreparable. But what shall we say. It is the Lord who both gives and takes att his pleasure. Blessed be his name: If that excellent man had lived, He would have effectually by his Epistles, back'd our present addresses, but he is gone, and we have now none near us, equally likeminded for us, who can do any thing by their acquaintance in your parts, it is true we might have had letters to yow from Messrs Gillespie, Stewart and Hutcheson, but they living att such a distance from this, the project of sending home Dr Nichols in this manner, being so latly, to any purpose, tho't upon, and the ship in which he is ingadged to goe, being to sail sooner than was expected, time has prevented.

Your last letter to me of the 14th of Febr'y ult. was like to have crushed us utterly, but being now driven to the outmost difficulties, and application to yow being the only expedient left us for releif, and not being able to hold it much longer we resolved to make a bold attempt, and over the bellie of all difficulties to trust providence, as with the Lepers att the gate of Samaria &c, in throwing our selves upon our charitably disposed freinds with yow for releif, leaving the event to God, if we perish we perish.

Dear Sr plead with our mother the church for us: for the Lords sake for the sake of the intrest of his K.dom, which is, we fear, here ready to perish, use, as yow give us ground to think yow will, your outmost indeavours to prevent & dissapate our fears. Be pleased Sr to let the bearer Dr Nichols have your countenance and incouragment, with your best advices and directions how to manage himself so as his errand may be render'd most successfull, He can give yow a more particular and full account of all our affairs here than is proper to be here inserted, and He being a gentleman of such noted piety integrity and zeal for the interests of our Mediators Kingdom in these parts, I can with freedom recomend him as a person worthy of regard whose information may be depended on as true and certain; Mr Hutcheson is ordaind a considerable distance from this place, Thus praying that the God of all grace & peace may be with yow, and earnestly desiring an interest in your prayers, I remain, with great regard,

Very Revend Sr Your own

Ja: Anderson.

Addressed: " To The Right Rev^d and Honorable Mr John Stir-

ling principall of the Colledge of Glasgow " pr Dr Nichols
This "

(Dorso) New York Nov. 25, 1723.

XXI.

LETTER OF GEORGE McNISH, 1718.

This letter is No. 118 in Vol. XXII. of the Wodrow *MSS.*

Jamaica on Long Island Nov: 15: 1718

Rt Rd & hond Sr

I am by order of our Synod appointed to write yow a letter of thanks, for the many singular favours your exemplary piety has mov'd yow to do for the interest of God & godliness in these American parts: I am to tell yow Sr, our Synod are extreme sensible of the great hand yow have had both in projecting & bringing to beare several excellent things for encouraging the ministry here, beare with the expression, your commendation & praise is truly among the ministers of Christ in our bounds, reflect, Sr, what pleasure it must be to us to see that we are in the thoughts & pious affections of a man of your station & character in the church of God & that at so great a distance yow have heart and goodness as well as ability to be aiding to a few mean instruments seeking to recover poor, lost sheep in this vast wilderness.

It's many times a wonder to my thoughts, how many great & pious men in Brittain can beare with themselves, in living in so narrow a capacity as they do, do they not miss it in expounding or applying the 2d petition of our Lords prayer, men to whom the Lord has given riches learning piety great interest yet want largeness of heart to communicate to the spreading the doctrine of Christianity among men, humanly speaking, I see not what considerable progress christianity will obtain in these plantations of America, 'till the antient settlements in Brittain & Ireland shall put on a true generous christian spirit & lay themselves out to seek the good of the disperst of these nations in America. May the desireable time come when the Lord shall claim America for his own & blessed be they who have a hand in ministring to so great a work.

I shall conclude with my hearty desires to the Lord of all goodness for favours of his right hand on yow & all yours, in-