

LANCASTER IN 1772.

The Lancaster County Historical Society is indebted to the courtesy of Prof. Jacob N. Beam, of the Department of French, at Princeton University, for the following extract from a notable pre-revolutionary diary, which will be found below.

It has been deemed proper to give a brief sketch of the life of Dr. McClure, who is unknown to most modern readers.

David McClure, from whose diary the following extract was taken, was born in Newport, R. I., on the 18th of November, 1748. He was graduated from Yale College in the class of 1769. After graduating he taught school for a time, studying theology between times. He was ordained to the ministry at Dartmouth College on May 20, 1772, and was immediately thereafter appointed a Missionary to the Delaware tribe of Indians, west of Pittsburg, Pa. He kept a diary, and it is from that that the following remarks concerning Lancaster and her people are taken.

He remained in the west only a few years as we find him installed as the pastor of a Congregational Church at North Hampton, N. H., on November 13, 1776. He remained there until August, 1785, when he was dismissed at his own request. In 1786 he was called to a church at East Windsor, Conn., where he remained until his death, a period of thirty-four years.

He was a trustee of Dartmouth College from 1777 until 1800, and received the degree of D.D. from that institution in 1803. In addition to eleven occasional discourses, Dr. McClure

also published "An Oration at the Opening of Exeter Phillips Academy," in 1783; "Sermons on the Moral Law," in 1795, and a new edition in 1818; "Oration on the Death of General Washington," in 1800; and also in connection with the Rev. Dr. Parish, "Memoirs of the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, D.D.," in 1810. He died at East Windsor, Conn, on June 25, 1820.

F. R. D.

There has recently come to the light of publication the diary of the Rev. Dr. David McClure, which contains a passage of interest to citizens of Lancaster, giving, as it does, a brief glimpse at the life in this city before the Revolution. David McClure was a graduate of Yale College in 1769, and in 1772 he was ordained as a missionary to the Delaware Indians on the Muskingum River, in Ohio. He made the journey with many hardships during the following two years, being sent out by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge. Though the enterprise was not altogether successful, Dr. McClure's record of his travels is of the utmost importance. It contains descriptions of the territory through which he and his companion (Mr. Levi Frisbee) passed, and of the customs of the Indians whom they visited. The diary is printed by the Knickerbocker Press, of New York, for William Richmond Peters and John Punnett Peters, descendants of the author. The extract relating to Lancaster follows:

Diary of David McClure. Page 31, et segg. July 16, 1772:

Having received Letters of introduction to sundry gentlemen on the way, from Dr. Allison, Dr. Sproat & others, & a passport and recommendation from his honor, Governor Richard Penn, we left Philadelphia with an expectation of proceeding up the Susquehanna. We arrived at the Rev. Dr.

Smith's, at Paqua, who had an academy of pupils, preparing for College, for preachers. Was much pleased with his amiable piety, zeal & hospitality. He had a son, at that time a Tutor in New Jersey College, now (1805) the celebrated President of that respectable institution, from whom we had letters. We proceeded on to Lacock & lodged at the Rev. Mr. Woodhull's. His situation was pleasant; he was much respected and a useful Minister. He occasionally preached to a small congregation of Presbyterians in Lancaster, to which place (9 miles) he accompanied us, & introduced us to his friends. We spent the Sabbath at Lancaster and preached. An occurrence happened which shows the strict observance which the Jews pay to their Sabbath.

We had an order for a sum of money from a gentleman in Philada., on Mr. Abraham Simons, a Jew merchant in Lancaster. We arrived on Friday & intending to leave the town on Monday, we waited on him Saturday Morning & presented the order. He said, "Gentlemen, to-day is my Sabbath, & I do not do business in it; if you will please to call to-morrow, I will wait on you. We observed that the same reasons which prevented his payment of the order on that day would prevent our troubling him the day following. We apologized for our intruding on his Sabbath, & told him we would wait until Monday. He replied, you are on a journey, & it may be inconvenient to you to wait. He went to call in his neighbor, Dr. Boyd, & took from his Desk a bag, laid it on the table, & presented the order to the Dr. The Doctor counted out the money and we gave a receipt. The Jew sat looking on, to see that all was rightly transacted, but said nothing, & thus quieted his conscience against the rebuke of a violation of his Sabbath; but

I thought he might as well have done the business himself as by an agent.

The Jews in general are said to be very strict & punctual in the observance of some of the traditional ceremonies of their law, (but hesitate not to defraud, when opportunity presents. Like their predecessors, the Pharisees, they tythe mint, annis & Cummin, & neglect the weightier matters of the Law, as Judgement, mercy and faith. They strain at a gnat and swallow a Camel).

Lancaster is the largest inland town on the Continent. It is situated in the center of an extensive valley, & is an excellent soil for wheat. Limestone abounds in this State, & some farmers begin to manure the ground that has long produced that golden grain, with this invigorating stone. They have kilns on their farms, in which they burn it.

The people of Lancaster are principally emigrants from Germany, & talk their native language. There are houses of public worship for the Lutherans, the German Calvinites, the Presbyterians, the Episcopalians, the Roman Catholics, each one. The Lutherans the largest. Some Moravians & Jews.

In this place we became acquainted with the minister of the Lutheran Church, Mr. Henry Helmutz. He spake English very intelligibly & sustains the character of a pious, laborious & zealous preacher.

He was a young man, had a wife & one child. Was educated in the famous Orphan House of Halle, in Saxony, as I was informed, on the charitable funds of that Institution, founded by the great and good Augustus Francke. He informed me that the motives of his coming to America were the following: The Rev. Mr. Whitefield, famous for his wonderful zeal & labours, both in Europe and America,

wrote to Mr. Francke, informing him that there were numerous settlements of Germans in Pennsylvania, who were destitute of learned & pious teachers, & requesting that he would send to him, in England, two pious persons, & he would introduce them into a field of useful labour, in that part of the Vineyard. He (Mr. Helmutz) & another offered to go. They arrived in England & waited on Mr. Whitefield. His first address a little alarmed them. He said: "Young men, are you going to America to preach the Gospel? Ah! you will find that the Devil has got there before you;" but he immediately added, "Jesus Christ is there, too." "We found it so," said Mr. Helmutz. Soon after his arrival at Lancaster, it pleased God to pour out a spirit of awakening among the people, particularly the large congregation of Lutherans, of whom he was minister. It was a new & strange thing, among a people seemingly altogether absorbed in worldly pursuits and pleasures. They daily resorted to him, inquiring what they should do to be saved. The work spread, & was deep and genuine. The principal men of his Congregation came to him, & told him that it was the work of the Devil, & he must suppress it. He told them that it was the work of God, & he must encourage and promote it. Their rage was incensed against him, & they threatened to dismiss him. He was constant in his attention to souls under conviction, in preaching, prayer & conversation. The opposition grew more violent as the work of God increased in the town. In the freedom of conversation, he mentioned that in the troubles which he met with from enraged opposers, he used to go to God in prayer for light & fortitude, & found it at times hard to say, "Thy will be done."

Mr. Helmutz proposed to the gentle-

man in opposition, that they should meet & confer on the important subject. They accordingly met at the School House. The leaders were filled with rage against him. With Christian meekness, he said, that they needed divine light & direction from heaven, in the momentous business on which they had met, & that if it was agreeable, he would address the throne of grace; & wonderful was the effect! The spirit of God came down upon them & they who had nashed upon him with their teeth, when prayer was ended, with tears cried out, Sir, what must we do to be saved? Then, he observed that the works of God in the town went on gloriously. Some effects of it were very visible while we were there. I heard him preach on Sunday, a third sermon (in German) to a very numerous audience, in his large Brick church. They were solemn & attentive. From the affinity of languages, I found his text was in Jeremiah 23:29—"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord: & like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" His manner was pathetic, affectionate & impressive. The music was solemn. With the Organ & other instruments of music, the voices of the whole congregation seemed to unite. The minister's salaries in this place are collected by contribution. The mode of collecting was new to me.

At the close of public worship about 6 men, each with a small black velvet bag fastened to the end of a long staff presented the bag which had a small bell suspended at the bottom to each person in the long pews or slips. The tinkling of the bell gave warn'g of the approach of the little purse. The contribution was speedily finished.

At Lancaster we put up at the house of Mr. Hall, Goldsmith, his wife was a Switser, a pious and sensible woman.

August 3. Monday morning we left

Lancaster & arrived at the house of the Rev. Mr. Roan, of Donnegall, to whom we had letters. A worthy sensible man. Some years ago, itinerant preachers were prohibited from preaching in Virginia. There was in some parts of it, a serious concern among the people, & Mr. Roan, who has the character of a zealous Boanerges, ventured to go & preach in the fields. to numerous audiences. Officers were sent to apprehend him, in the midst of his preaching; they were struck with his undaunted countenance & the majesty of his subject, & returned without executing their commission.

We left Donnegall, & coming to the Susquehanna could find no boat to cross it, nor house nigh. The River was low, & about half a mile wide. It was a long & dangerous ride. In the evening we arrived at the Rev. Mr. Duffield's, 6 miles from Carlisle.

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