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

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1885
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.

(i.)

Newcastle upon Delaware Augst 1716.

Right Rev'd Sr.

About seven years agoe 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 qch 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 qch 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 insignificany & so unfitnesse to take upon me to write to a person of your character & worth; qch 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, yt I was ordained (worthlesse as I was & yet am) to the Sacred
office of ye ministry with a view of coming to Virginia, where I, in ye good providence of God, arived; but meeting with unaccountable dissapointments there, after half a year stay, I came over to these parts, & I understood there were some minrs 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 minrs, two of qch are from your city of Glasgow.

There are in all, of minrs, who meet, in a presbytry once a year, sometimes att Philadelphia, sometimes here att Newcastle, seventeen, & two probationers from ye north of Irland whom we have under tryall for ordination, twelve of qch, 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 yt 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 ye directory of ye Church of Scotland, qch (as well we may) we oune as our moyr church. We make it our businesse to settle & to make settlements, for minrs of our perswasion yt join with us, in places where ye 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 qch there has been not a few, & yet are some, within ye bounds of these provinces, where some of our brethren meet, which is ye reason of our meeting with pritty many hardships & diffi-
culties both from ye inconveniences of our congregations & ye opposition of inveterate enemies.

In some of our places ye hearers, by reason of their poverty & paucity, are scarce att all able, tho' never so willing, to allow a competent creditable subsistance for their minrs, which is the reason of some contempt amongst some; which I humbly think might be, in some measure, easily remedied by our moyr ye 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 yt 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 ye pulse of some persons of estate, especially merchts this way, yt if any such thing were set about
zealously there might soon be raised as much mony as, if sent over to the care & managm' of our presbytery might be a very great help to these places & min's amongst us which labor under the forementioned inconveniencies. I doubt not but one Sabbath day's general 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 blissing, 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 & ye 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 jealouisie to the Church of England yt yow thereby would incroach 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 yt 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 ye Church of Scotland, which is the case of these places I am pleading for; for in Pensylvania & ye Jersies ye is no one church established more than any' & none are obliged to pay or contribute towards ye mantinance of any min' more then 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 arrive here, are meer rakes, stap or stand att no sin or vice almost that falls in their way, swearing whoring Sabbath breaking drunkennesse are as common vices, with a great many of them, as if they tho't there was no evil in the commission of any of these; and as to their countenance of min's yt are of ye principles of ye church of Scotland, they are so far from yt, yt they carry as if
they were ashamed of their myr Church her principles & wayes, whatever is the religion of their pot & lascivious companions yt is theirs. So yt really a great many of them (yr are some, tho' very few, exceptions) are a perfect scandall to all religion & a disgrace to yt part of ye world from whence they come, from which other & better things has been here expected; I am sure if ye parents & principals of some of ym knew their carriage & beheavor 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 ym, 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 incivelity received. I never mett with any such from any of them, but on ye contrary, with very much civility & respect. But I propose it, yt some method might be fallen upon whereby this dreadfull & offensive greivance might be rectified. Query whither or not their parents & employers could not oblige them to bring certificates of their inafensive beheavor during their abode in these parts from ministers here to their own minrs &c. att home. forgive my pralixity &c.: I am R R Sr.

Your truly affectionate Servt

Ja: Anderson

P: S: I beg your prs in publick & private for us in these parts & yt 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 Revd 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 minrs 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 moyr ye church of Scotland as near as the circumstances of these parts will allow. We
settle & make Settlements for min\textsuperscript{rs} of our perswasion, in places where the Gospell has never att all been preached; or else where there are wicked prophane debauched carelessse creatures of the bishop of London. of q\textsuperscript{ch} y\textsuperscript{re} has been not a few, & yet are some, w\textsuperscript{in} the bounds of these provences whence some of our brethren meet: which is y\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{rs}, q\textsuperscript{ch} is the occasion of some contempt amongst some, which I, with submission, think might be in some measure easily remedied, by our moy\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{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, & pretend\textsuperscript{ed} 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\textsuperscript{e} care and managm\textsuperscript{t} of our presbytry, might be a very great help to these places & min\textsuperscript{rs} amongst us y\textsuperscript{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 ye growth advancement & encouragm\textsuperscript{t} of religion, in these parts. I know it will be, or has been objected, y\textsuperscript{t} such a thing as this would give the Established church of England rea\textsuperscript{son} to suspect y\textsuperscript{t} yow thereby would incroach too much upon their precints & liberties, but I can't see qt ground they can have for such a thought. The Church of Scotland is established in Great Brittain as well as y\textsuperscript{t} of England, & no doubt have liberty of Sending forth missionaries (\& supplying y\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{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'rs that come from your parts, who, tho' soberly educated & brought up att home, when they arrive here, are meer rakes, stap att no sin or vice yt 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 yt 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 yt 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 & behavour 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'bly to rectifie this dreadful greivance, querie whither or not their parents & others concerned in them, could not oblige yt to bring certificates of their good behavour, during their abode in these parts, from min'rs in these parts, to their own att home?

Dear Sr My knowledge of your noted zeal, for ye 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 acquainted therewith, who instead of dissaproveing, 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 Sr use your endeavors yt we in this American wildernesse,
especially we who are ourselves children of that mother church whereof you 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 you, as also our poor practise this way with respect to you, is what makes us put in for a claim to this as our due from you, I assure you the church of Scotland is not forgot amongst us in these parts.

I conclude praying peace be within her walls, prosperity within her palaces; peace peace be within thee O Scotland.

I am R<sup>r</sup> S<sup>r</sup>

Your really affectionate

tho' worthlesse servt

Ja: Anderson

P: S: This, I design shall come, att least to England by ye hands of the Rev<sup>nd</sup> Mr. John Hampton one of our brethren here, whose necessary businesse & exigencies calls him home to Britain for some time, who, if you see or hear from him, can acquaint you more fully of these & other things relating to us.

Pray remember my love heartily to The R<sup>rev</sup> and Professor Simpson

J. A.

(3.) New York December 3 1717.

R R & D S<sup>r</sup>

Your very usefull & acceptable letter of the 12 of Aug<sup>st</sup> last I received 9<sup>th</sup> via Boston and communicated to this our pre<sup>bytry</sup> of New York & Long Island & several other of my brethren in whose name & att whose desire, I do hereby return you hearty thanks, for ye care diligence & pains you have taken & been att, in & about the affairs therein containd; and am assured ye your Synod shall have ye hearty sentiments & expressions of the gratitude of our's, when it meets att Philadelphia 7<sup>ber</sup> 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 you & your worthy brethren can't miss of your comfortable reward & in the mean time you have of ye blessings & prayers of a great many poor serious souls scattered up & doun here, who in due time expect to be sharers in ye fruits of your care & bounty towards them. Dear S<sup>r</sup> 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 excetiment 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 ye 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 exceeding 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, yt 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 ansr 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 minions, who, for his health & other necessary businesse, is obliged 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. ye presbytry of Philadelphiia wherein are 7 minions. The presbyry of Newcastle 6 minions. 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 populous 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 minions of ye established church of England, two Dutch minions, one French mini, a Lutheran minister, an Anabaptist & also a Quaker meeting. The place did att first intirly belong to the Dutch; After the English had it endeavours were used by ye cheif of ye 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
APPENDIX.

had preached sometime here, having a prospect & promise of more mony then what he had among the dissenters, went to old England, took orders from ye 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 ye 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 ye arbitrary managment & influence of a wicked high flying governour, who preceeded his excellency Brigadeer Hunter, our present governour (may ye 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 yt 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 yt had joyn'd them, came to the presbytry of Newcastle desiring a transportation of me from Newcastle to New York, which the presbytery referred to ye 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 yt with Gods blessing, they shall in a little time encrease. Some are already come to live in the city & more are expected whose langwage would not allow them to joyn with ye 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 grow- ing 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 handful of people yt 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 language 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 ye 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 oune Scots word) missleard. But if any of your Substantiall Merchts 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! Several of our Scots merchants trade hither, & I doubt not, more will, when before now they have come, they understanding neither Dutch nor French were oblidged either to stay att home or goe to ye church of E: or worse which has been ye occasion of some mischeifs wickednesse & inconvieniencies, 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 practicall Godlinessse 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 & oblidged tho' worthlesse
Broyr & Servt
Ja: Anderson

P: S: Pray Sr do not forget the businesse of ye young men
merch'ts I wrote before of I would gladly be rembered to professor Simpsoe 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 Decr 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, answered last fall by broy'r 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 lossing 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 ans'ed 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 inquiering freinds is all that can be said att this time by

R R Sr
Your own

JA: ANDERSON
LETTERS OF JAMES ANDERSON.

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

"pr Mr Alexandr."


(5.) New York 9ber 25 1723.

Right Reverend & much Honoured Sr

We in this congregation are now, by burthen of debt and other unnatural oppositions, brought to the utmost pinch of necessity, so that if we meet not with speedy releif, we shall, in all humane probability, be obliged to quit 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 D' 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 dispensations it has pleased the Lord in his soveraign 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 behal-
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 ad-
dresses, 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 Feb’r ult. was like to have crushed us utterly, but being now driven to the outmost difficul-
ties, 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 interst of his K.dom, which is, we fear, here ready to perish, use, as yow give us ground to think yow will, your outmost endeavours to prevent & dissapate our fears. Be pleased Sr to let the bearer Dr Nichols have your countenance and incouragment, with your best advices and direc-
tions 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 Hutches-
son is ordain’d 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-
LETTER OF GEORGE McNISH, 1718.

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 & hon'd 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 sen-
sible of the great hand yow have had both in projecting & bring-
ing to beare several excellent things for encouraging the minis-
try 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 instru-
ments 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 planta-
tions of America, ’till the antient settlements in Brittain & Ire-
land shall put on a true generous christian spirit & lay them-
selves 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-