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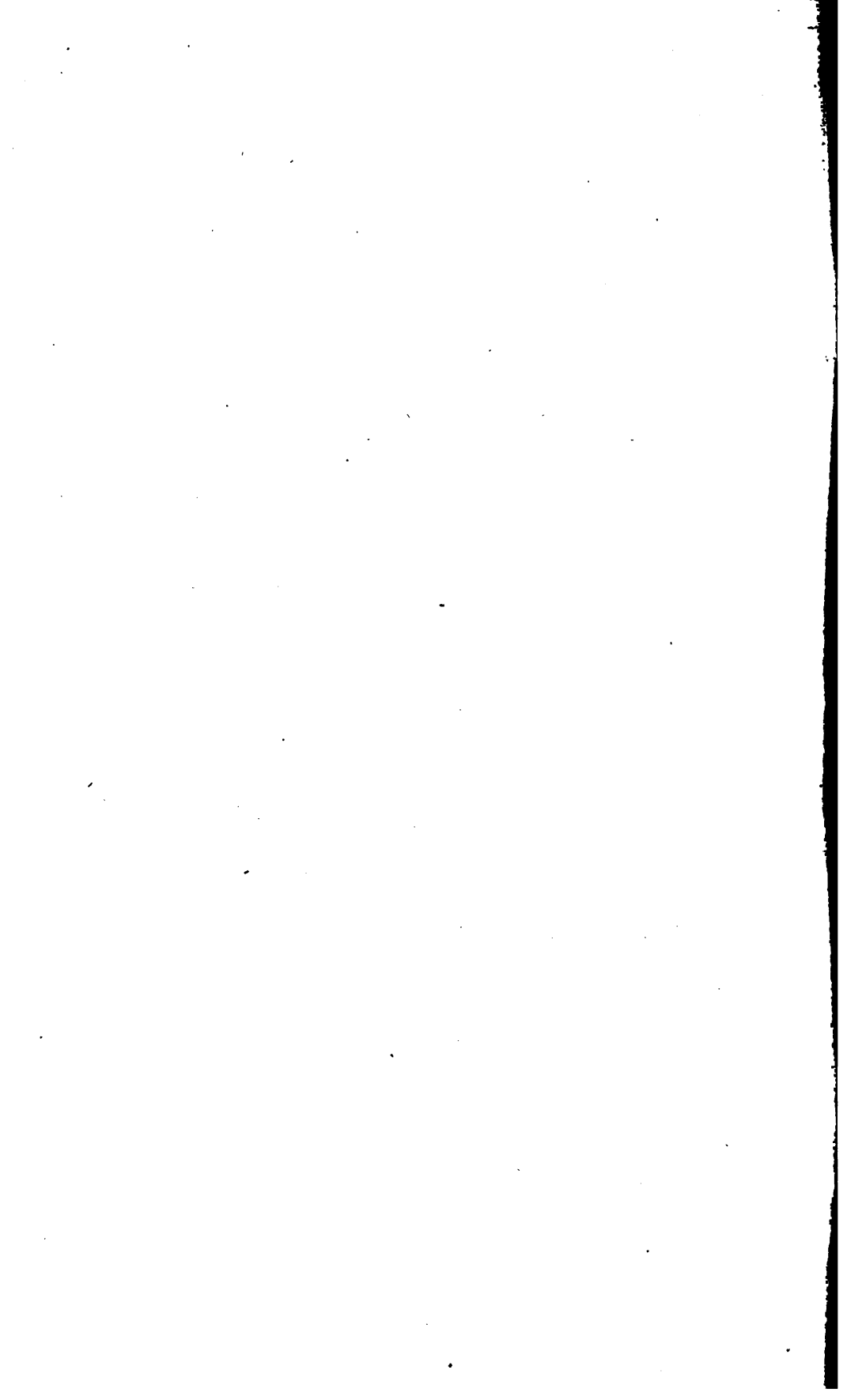
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THE

REV. JEREMIAH LEAMING, D.D.

HIS LIFE AND SERVICES

BY

E. EDWARDS BEARDSLEY, D.D., LL.D.

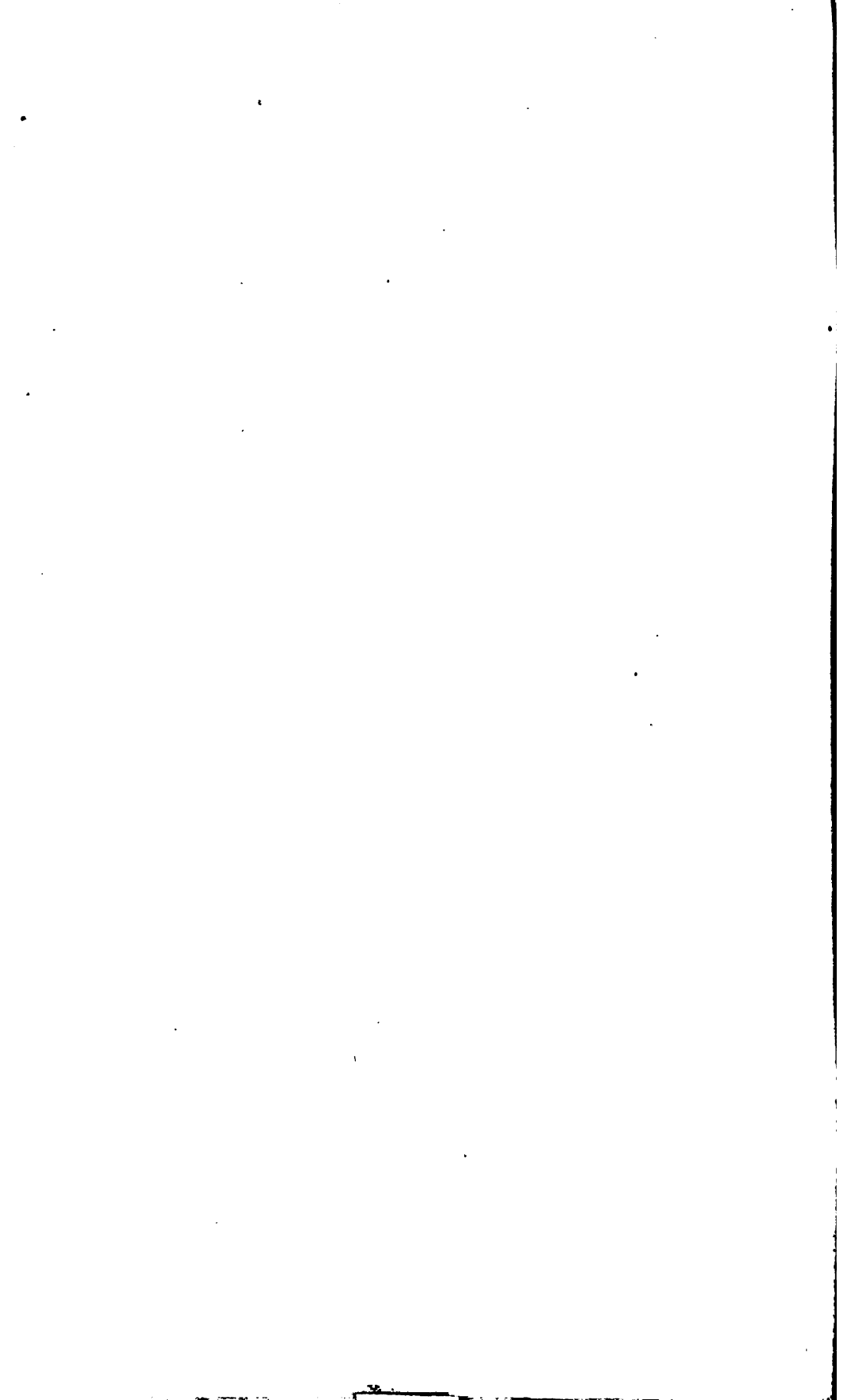
Rector of St. Thomas's Church, New Haven.

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THE REV. JEREMIAH LEAMING, D.D.

This name belongs to one of the most learned and distinguished clergymen associated with the early history and organization of the Church in Connecticut. His birthplace has been assigned to Middletown, Conn., but Fowler, in his history of the adjoining town of Durham, claims him as a native of that place, and cites, to prove it, the record of his baptism, May 12th, 1717, by "Nathaniel Chauncey, pastor of the first Church in Durham." The infant received the baptismal name of his father, who was married to Abigail Turner, by a Justice of the Peace, July 4th, 1716, as appears from an entry in the "Proprietors' Record" of Durham, printed in this history. Whether the parents afterwards removed into the city on the river, or lived within its bounds so much nearer to Durham as to make that their place of worship, has not been ascertained, but it is evident they were Congregationalists, and educated the son in the tenets of their own order.

He graduated from Yale College in 1745, when he was twenty-eight years of age, and was in the same class with Thomas Bradbury Chandler, another conspicuous figure in the early history of the American Church. His next step, after graduation, was to declare for episcopacy, and under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Johnson of Stratford, he acted as lay-reader, at Norwalk, Conn., for two years or more, and then at the instance of Trinity church, Newport, R. I., he was sent to England to receive Holy Orders, that he might be qualified to teach the parochial school established in that place in accord-

ance with the will of Mr. Nathaniel Kay, an English gentleman, and a liberal Churchman, who had been a collector of the king's customs for the colony of Rhode Island. He devised a portion of his estate after the decease of his widow to found the school, and provided that "ten poor boys" should be taught "their grammar and the mathematics, gratis," and that the "master at all times" should "be episcopally ordained, and assist the minister, Episcopal, of the town of Newport in some proper office."

Mr. Leaming returned in September, 1748, and assumed this position, with the sanction of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The death of the missionary, the Rev. James Honyman, occurred in midsummer, 1750, and then he was put in new relations to the parish, and received a temporary appointment to fill the vacancy.

It was some time before another missionary was settled over the Church, owing partly to disagreements among the people; and Mr. Leaming remained in charge, and performed the additional duties of school-master and catechist. Upon the death of Dr. McSparran the people of Narragansett sought his services as a missionary, but failed to obtain them. When a successor to Mr. Honyman was finally secured he confined himself to the work of his original appointment at Newport until the autumn of 1758; when, with the approval of the venerable society, he removed to Norwalk, where he had formerly acted as a lay-reader. Here, not so far from his fast friend Dr. Johnson but that he could have frequent communication with him, he spent twenty-one of the best years of his life, and served most acceptably the Church in Norwalk and its neighborhood, acting for a time as the missionary at Ridgefield, where the Episcopalians had previously erected a house of public worship. He soon began to use his pen vigorously in "defence of the episcopal government of the Church," and published two pamphlets with this title, one in 1766, and the other in 1770, which formed a part of the religious controversy of the day. His location was between two great champions of Congregationalism—Noah Hobart at Fairfield, and Noah Welles at Stamford; and these divines left unnoticed

divisions among themselves, arising from sharp attacks upon Calvinism, to assail episcopacy and support the divine right of presbyterian ordination, and the primitive equality of ministers of the Gospel. Mr. Welles in a discourse of seventy-eight closely printed pages, published in 1763, "at the desire of the hearers, with some enlargements," said, in his preface: "As it is probable that few of you are possessed of any books heretofore published in vindication of our ministerial power, while your Episcopal neighbors, perhaps, are generally supplied with arguments commonly offered on the other side of the question, and so are better prepared to discourse upon the subject, the same reasons which induced me to preach upon it have at length prevailed upon me to consent to its publication."

Mr. Leaming measured lances with this bold antagonist of episcopacy, and his two pamphlets, referred to above, were the outcome of the contest. He was not only a fair and good-tempered controversialist, but a man of strong intellectual power and a scholar who well understood how to defend the authority, doctrines, and worship of the Church of England. His publications show that his sole desire was to make those committed to his care comprehend his teachings, and be Christians indeed. While he could and did overturn the arguments of his Congregational neighbors, he was compelled, in common with his brethren, to lament the dangers which surrounded the Church from its want of complete internal organization. In a letter to the venerable society, September, 1763, he said: "I hope there will be means found out to support the Church in this government, otherwise I fear there will be no religion here in the next generation. In order that it might be supported in the purity of it, there is great need of a bishop to confirm, ordain, and govern. Every body wants a head."

The plea for the episcopacy was urged very strongly about this time by Dr. Chandler of Elizabethtown, in his "Appeals to the Public in Behalf of the Church of England in America," and Dr. Johnson who had relinquished the Presidency of King's College, New York, and returned to the charge of his old parish in Stratford, was promoting, by his counsels, an effort which he could not himself undertake, because of a

“tremor in the hand” that prevented him from writing, except with the utmost difficulty.

The clergy of Connecticut assembled in voluntary convention, May 29th, 1771. Mr. Leaming, being the secretary, addressed the bishop of London and said: “At home it seems the divisions are greatly subsided, and here the plan upon which bishops are desired to be sent has been fully explained, and is universally approved, so that none oppose it but those who do it out of malice or mere wantonness. What, then, can now hinder so good a design from being carried into effect?”

The passage of the Stamp Act had produced much disturbance in the Colonies, and especially in Connecticut, and its repeal, though welcomed with great joy, was accompanied by the assertion of a parliamentary right which rankled in the popular mind, and foreboded new troubles. The missionaries of the Church were loyal to the home government, and aimed to steady their flocks and guide them to the performance of their religious duties under the aspect of more perilous times.

The death of Dr. Johnson, on Epiphany, 1772, left the burden of heavy responsibilities upon Beach of Newtown and Leaming, now the two senior presbyters in the colony, and the ablest and sturdiest defenders of the Church. The clergy from the neighboring towns assembled at the funeral in Stratford two days after his decease, and Mr. Leaming, in the absence of Mr. Beach, who had been selected for this duty, but was prevented from fulfilling it by temporary illness, preached a sermon commemorative of the attainments and Christian character of Dr. Johnson, which was afterward printed.*

The times became more critical, and the disasters of the Revolution approached. Among the causes which led to it were the fear of bishops and the establishment in this country of a “complete Church hierarchy after the pattern of that at home.” In vain was this fear shown to be groundless. Those who had raised the standard of liberty and independence were ready to use any argument, however weak and unworthy, to support them in their attempts to throw off the jurisdiction of Great Britain.

* Mr. Beach, several days later, preached a commemorative sermon in Stratford which was also printed.

The clergy of the Church, having taken at their ordination the oaths of allegiance to the Crown, stood aloof, for the most part everywhere, from the political disorders, and confined themselves in their sermons to the doctrines of the Gospel and the duties of the Christian life. The Book of Common Prayer, according to the use of the Church of England, compelled them to pray for the king and all the royal family, and hence in their public services, as long as they were allowed to continue them in full, they put themselves on the side of the old government and in favor of its perpetuation. When the colonies resorted to arms, and firmly resolved to establish their independence, these clergymen could neither be silent nor speak their sentiments without being suspected and having their movements constantly watched. Some of them were arrested and subjected to a rigid scrutiny, and Leaming, for his political principles and attachments, was cast into prison, where he was refused the comfort of a bed—a painful condition, which produced a rheumatic trouble that made him lame for the rest of his life.

The late Dr. Jarvis says: “he was taken from his bed by the Americans in an inclement wintry night, hurried off to the Fairfield County gaol, deprived of his wife, who was not allowed to accompany him, and denied even the comfort of a bed. The consequence was a severe cold which settled in his hip, and made him a cripple for life.” On one occasion an enraged mob, not daring to offer him personal violence, took his picture from his dwelling, mutilated it, and nailed it to a sign-post with the head downward. He was in comparatively affluent circumstances, and suffered in the loss of property from the depredations and destruction of the two opposing parties. His landed estate in Connecticut was confiscated.

In July, 1779, an expedition was fitted out from New York, under the command of General Tryon, and sent to harass and subdue the principal shore towns in Connecticut as far as New Haven. A few days after burning Fairfield, the troops of this expedition landed at Norwalk, and set fire to that town, marching through it and applying the torch in such a way as to spare neither friends nor foes, loyalists nor patriots.

Leaming, in common with his parishioners, suffered at this time great loss of property. A party of Hessian soldiers carried him, against his inclination, to the British commander, and, fearing that this circumstance might be misunderstood and lead to ill-treatment if he returned, he prevailed upon General Tryon to move his family on board, and so they accompanied the expedition back to New York. But let him tell the story of his trials in his own brief and uncomplaining way, as communicated in a letter to the Venerable Society, written from New York, July 29th, 1779 :

“It is a long time since I have been able to convey a letter to the society, and now I must give a disagreeable account of my affairs.

“On the 11th instant, by the unavoidable event of the operation of his majesty’s troops, under the command of General Tryon, my church and a great part of my parish were laid in ashes, by which I have lost everything I had there—my furniture, books, and all my papers, even all my apparel except what was on my back. My loss on that fatal day was not less than £1,200 or £1,300 sterling. Although in great danger, my life has been preserved, and I hope I shall never forget the kind providence of God in that trying hour. In this situation I was brought by his majesty’s troops to this city, at which I shall, with the greatest pleasure, obey the society’s commands.”

New York was held by the British army until the close of the Revolutionary war and the acknowledgment of American independence, and then there was nothing for Mr. Leaming to return to in Norwalk but ruins. On the outbreak of hostilities he had about one hundred and seventy communicants, many of whom were afterwards scattered, and thirty or more families of his flock, having suffered so much for their loyalty, yielded to inducements offered by the British Government to emigrate to Nova Scotia and other provinces on the northern frontiers.

Leaming remained with his family in the city, and had scarcely recovered from the shock and turn of events when the clergy of Connecticut held a voluntary convention at Woodbury to take steps for reorganizing and perpetuating in America what had been the Church of England, but which

was now broken up and left in a disordered and headless condition. The convention was in session on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1783—four months after the treaty of peace had been signed at Paris—and *ten* of the fourteen clergymen then remaining in Connecticut were in attendance. The Rev. Isaac Jones, in his centennial discourse, delivered at Litchfield in 1846, says that Ashbel Baldwin, though only a candidate for orders, was also present; but as no minutes of the meeting were kept, or if kept, they have not been discovered, the names of some of the ten clergymen must be inferred from circumstances.*

The Rev. Abraham Jarvis was the secretary, and signed by order of the convention, a letter dated "Woodbury, March 25th, 1783," addressed to the Rev. William White of Philadelphia, in which the views of the Connecticut clergy were very ably expressed concerning the pamphlet that he had recently published, "proposing a new form of government in the Episcopal Church"—a scheme considered by them to be of "mistaken and dangerous tendency."

The object of the convention was to secure the episcopacy before anything was done in the way of settling and restoring the Church or changing the Book of Common Prayer. The clergy came together under entirely new circumstances. There were no constitutional or canonical regulations, such as we have in these days to guide them to the formal election of a bishop. In their earnestness to obtain one they appear to have followed the light of their own judgment, which providentially in this case was wise, for they fixed upon two persons,

*The air was filled with rumors about the meeting, which appears not to have been publicly known. Dr. Stiles of Yale College caught something that was floating, and entered in his MS. diary, under date of August 16th, 1783: "Messrs. Hubbard and Andrews, two Church ministers here in Connecticut, returned from New York this week. I believe they went delegates from the Connecticut clergy to consult the New York clergy, as all the Church ministers convened at Darby a few weeks since to confer on the subject of a bishop, and to oppose the Rev. Mr. White, an Episcopal minister at Philadelphia and chaplain to Congress, who thinks a bishop unnecessary, and proposes that the Church of England clergy here should assume the power of ordination, and yet the service be according to the Liturgy."

the Rev. Jeremiah Leaming and the Rev. Samuel Seabury as suitable, either of them, to go to England and seek episcopal consecration.

Their first choice was Mr. Leaming, and though not attended with the formality of a canonical election at the present day, yet it was a deliberate and valid choice by the clergy alone, who had a right to make it. The two presbyters selected were both in New York at the time, and the secretary was commissioned and sent to that city to confer with the clergy there, and to submit the papers which had been prepared and adopted for their examination, and, if approved, to request their concurrence and aid in the proposed undertaking. In the letter to the Archbishop of York, after introducing Dr. Seabury, it is stated: "He goes to England at the request of the Episcopal clergy of Connecticut, on business highly interesting and important. They have written on the subject to your Grace, and also to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. But, as they were pleased to consult us on the occasion, and to submit what they had written to our inspection, requesting our concurrence in their application, their letters are dated at New York and signed only by the Rev. Mr. Jarvis, the Secretary to their Convention, whom they commissioned and sent here for that purpose." The letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, as appears from the original draught, was framed with express reference to Leaming, but when he declined to assume responsibilities and burdens so great, it was changed in New York to suit the personality of Dr. Seabury, "whom we have prevailed upon," says Mr. Jarvis, the secretary, "to offer himself to your grace" for consecration.

That Leaming was the first choice of the clergy is not only verified by this change, but by Mr. Jarvis, who if any one, knew whereof he wrote, and who in his sermon before the convention of the Diocese of Connecticut after the death of Bishop Seabury *positively* stated the fact (Sermon, p. 18); by the oral testimony of men who lived at that period, and by Seabury himself, who in his letter to the secretary of the Venerable Society after his consecration said: "Mr. Leaming declined on account of his age and infirmities, and the clergy

who were consulted by Mr. Jarvis gave it as their decided opinion that I ought, in duty to the Church, to comply with the request of the Connecticut clergy. Though I foresaw many and great difficulties in the way, yet as I hoped they might all be overcome, and as Mr. Jarvis had no instruction to make the proposal to any one besides, and was, with the other clergy, of opinion the design would drop if I declined it, I gave my consent."*

Mr. Leaming urged on the design and put his name at the head of others to all documents and credentials which the candidate took with him to London. He was back again in Connecticut before the autumn of this year, and was the leading spirit among the clergy in shaping their movements and conducting their correspondence during the pendency of Seabury's application in England. He was the president of their conventions, and at Easter, 1784, was chosen rector of the venerable parish in Stratford, the oldest in the State, which his friend the lately deceased Dr. Johnson, served for about forty years, and where he as one of his successors faithfully ministered until 1790.

After the long agony of suspense was over, and Dr. Seabury

*The Bishop of Iowa (Dr. Perry) set up a theory some three years since, denying that Mr. Leaming was the "first choice" or that the "appointment was first offered especially to him." He claimed that Dr. Seabury never "would have crossed the ocean as an applicant for the episcopate if he had been but the second choice and last resort." We fail to discover in the action of the Connecticut clergy at Woodbury, the slightest disrespect to Seabury; and he was not the man to stand upon the trifle of a "second choice" when such a great interest was at stake as securing the episcopacy for America. He was magnanimous enough to write home to the clergy while his case was still undecided in London, and tell them that if there were objections to him personally, he was ready to give up his pretensions to any one whom they might select, and who would be less exceptionable to the State. "The point is," said he, "to get the episcopal authority into that country." Bishop Perry has renewed his theory in a recent pamphlet, "The Election of the First Bishop of Connecticut at Woodbury, An Historical Review," wherein he makes the broad assertion and labors to prove it that "every fact points to the conclusion that Leaming and not Seabury, was considered in the light of the alternate." This pamphlet ought to have been entitled, "An Attempt to set Aside the Truth of History." See Appendix.

had reached Connecticut, clothed with the office of a bishop in the Church of God, the 2d of August, 1785, was fixed upon for a meeting of the clergy at Middletown, and Mr. Leaming, as usual, was chosen president at that meeting, and Mr. Jarvis secretary. The first business was to present to Bishop Seabury an address of congratulation and formal recognition in which occurs this passage: "As you are now, by our voluntary and united suffrages (signified to you, first at New York in April, 1783, by the Rev. Mr. Jarvis, and now ratified and confirmed in this present convention), elected bishop of that branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church to which we belong; we, in the presence of Almighty God, declare to the world, that we do unanimously and voluntarily accept, receive, and recognize you to be *our bishop*, supreme in the government of the Church, and in the administration of all ecclesiastical affairs."

To this address stands first the name of Jeremiah Leaming, followed by those of Mansfield, Jarvis, Hubbard, Marshall and others, and a suitable reply was returned. Mr. Leaming also preached a sermon before the convention which, with the addresses, the charge of the bishop and a list of the Scottish succession from 1688, was printed in New Haven and Edinburgh, and a copy of each edition lies on my table as I write. One or two brief extracts from the sermon will show the spirit and mind of the writer. "I have the pleasure to see the day when there is a bishop here, to act as a true father towards his clergy, supporting their dignity, as well as his own; to govern them with impartiality, as well as lenity; and to admit none to the altar, by ordination, but the worthy; to uphold a Church beaten with storms on every side; to support a Church that has been a bulwark against infidelity on the one hand, and Romish superstition on the other. But by the Divine Providence it has continued to this day. And upon this auspicious day, I cannot forbear to mention (and I do it with pleasure) the conduct of the Civil Rulers of this State, respecting our Church; they have not only manifested a spirit of benevolence, but an exalted Christian charity; for which our gratitude is due, and shall be paid in obeying all their just demands." And again when he came to make an application to the laity he said: "The principal part of the religion we teach is love.

For the soul which animates societies, civil or sacred, is the great and generous spirit of charity ; that violates no compacts, that raises no commotions, that interrupts no good man's peace, that assaults no innocent man's person, that invades no man's property, that grinds no poor man's face, that envies no man, that supplants no man, that submits private convenience to public utility, and recommends those duties to your practice that will receive an infinite reward."

Mr. Leaming was foremost in extending courtesies to the Southern clergy and projecting measures tending to the union and organization of the Church in the thirteen States. He wrote a great many letters on the subject, but not one of them contains a word of unkindness towards those who kept aloof from the Bishop of Connecticut, and hesitated to recognize the validity of his Scottish consecration. Writing to Bishop White four months after his return from Lambeth, and pleading with him for union he said : "I hope you will not esteem me over officious in this business ; if you do, my apology is this : I have been forty years in the service of the Church, and I believe I am the oldest clergyman in America, and I am very desirous to see it complete before I die."

Prior to this he had tried to have the convention in Philadelphia shape its action so as to avoid mistakes and errors, and as early as 1786, had written to the Rev. Abraham Beach of New Jersey, disapproving, among other things, of the title which had been assumed. "There is another thing," said he in that letter, "your General Convention ought to take into consideration, that is, the style they have given to the Church, which is this : *the Protestant Episcopal Church*. The Church of England is not called a Protestant Church, but a reformed Church ; they never entered any protest against the civil powers ; they reformed as a nation ; it never had the title of *Protestant* given to it by any sensible writer, unless he was a Scotchman. . . . Perhaps this may be little thought of, but if we commit any mistakes now, we must bear the blame forever."*

When the Bishop of Connecticut observed the measures deliberately "taken by the clergy and laity to the south" of

* MS. Letter.

New England, and the little desire evinced for the union of the whole Church in the United States, he became alarmed, and fearing if his own See should become vacant by his death that new troubles and complications might arise, he convoked his clergy at Wallingford on the 27th of February, 1787, and a resolution was adopted that another presbyter be sent to Scotland for consecration as coadjutor-bishop. And who was again first asked to go but the venerable Leaming, tried and faithful in the service of the Church! Age and infirmities, however—he was now just passed three-score years and ten—were in the way, and he declined with stronger reasons than when the appointment was before first offered to him. Happily this scheme was not carried into effect, for the “English consecrate” soon arrived, and in due time a reconciliation was accomplished, and the Church in all the States united under one general constitution, and in the adoption and use of our Book of Common Prayer.

Dr. Leaming—he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Columbia College, New York, in 1789—had thus lived to witness the fulfillment of his long-cherished hopes—an end for which he had unceasingly labored and prayed. His intellect was still vigorous and bright, and he published about this time a sermon with an appendix, entitled, “The Evidences for the Truth of Christianity,” and also a small treatise upon various subjects, “that the common people might understand the nature of the Christian Church and some of its leading doctrines.” He continued his parochial duties at Stratford, and bore his share in the councils of the Church in Connecticut until the new ecclesiastical constitution and the revised Prayer Book had been generally approved and adopted as proposed to the different dioceses; and then he retired from his charge, and sought the quiet and repose of private life. The parish at Stratford refused afterward, under the guidance of a less calm and judicious rector, to accept the new constitution and Liturgy, and so fell into strifes and perversities, which threatened for a time schism and a separation from the Church in Connecticut. But the good seed of the Word, sown by Leaming and Johnson, finally sprang up, and produced the wholesome fruit of obedience, peace and righteousness of life.

The last days of Dr. Leaming were passed in New Haven. His infirmities increased upon him, and he could do no more than patiently wait the time for his change to come. His wife had gone before him, and he requested, as a favor, a friend of her's, on the score of old friendship, to receive him into her house, "where he said little, spent much of his time in his own room, and never entertained his younger auditors with stirring tales of his earlier manhood."

A lady of New Haven, in a letter to Dr. Sprague, printed in his "Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit," said: "I knew Dr. Leaming in the last stages of life. He rises to my mind, the very ideal of age and decrepitude—a small emaciated old man, very lame, his ashen and withered features surmounted sometimes by a cap, and sometimes by a small wig—always quiet and gentle in his manner, and uniformly kind and inoffensive. His mind had evidently suffered an eclipse before I knew him. His wife had been a friend of my Aunt Hillhouse, and was one of the heirs of the Peck Slip estate in the city of New York. The wife of Bishop Jarvis was a niece of Mrs. Leaming, and the fortune, at the decease of Dr. Leaming, went to her son, the late Dr. Samuel Farmar Jarvis."

The epitaph upon his monument in the old city burying ground of New Haven tells no untruth when it says: "Here rest the remains of the Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, D.D., long a faithful minister of the Gospel in the Episcopal Church; well instructed, especially in his holy office; unremitting in his labors; charitably patient, and of primitive meekness. His public discourses forcibly inculcated the faith illustrated by his practice. Respected, revered, and beloved in life, and lamented in death, he departed hence, September 15, 1804. Aet. 87."

APPENDIX.

It may be of little concern to the public at large whether Dr. Leaming or Dr. Seabury was the first choice of the clergy of Connecticut for Bishop. It concerns me, however, as the author of the "Life and Correspondence of Bishop Seabury," and of the "History of the Connecticut Church," that a statement which I have made on the authority of printed documents and contemporaneous testimony should be properly defended when sharply assailed and denied by another. It concerns the Diocese of Connecticut, also, whether a portion of its history shall be re-constructed on a basis that sets aside plain and well-supported facts. Hence in re-printing the sketch of Dr. Leaming, I have added this Appendix and placed in parallel columns proofs of my statement and words and quotations by Bishop Perry. His chapters on *the Early American Bishops*, almost wholly made up of letters and documents, were commenced in *the Living Church*, shortly after the publication of my Life of Seabury, in January, 1881. To the 16th chapter was put a foot-note beginning thus :

"The letters of the Rev. Daniel Fogg, of Brooklyn, Conn., to the Rev. Samuel Parker, of Boston, first published in Hawks and Perry's Connecticut Church Documents, together with the remainder of the Bishop Parker Correspondence, are the *private property* of the writer of these sketches, of which he holds the *copyright*. He is compelled to make this statement in view of their repeated use by another without any acknowledgment of the source whence they are derived. The importance of the Fogg Letters may be understood from the fact that but for them many erroneous representations respecting the choice of the first Bishop of Connecticut, could never have been corrected, nor could the true history of this important measure have been known."

This paragraph and the entire note were promptly answered at the time in the paper where the "sketches" appeared, and the injustice and discourtesy of the writer fully exposed. The answer, with a couple of pages added to support it, was privately printed in pamphlet form two years and a half ago, and if the subject had not been revived at this late day by the Bishop of

Iowa, I should not have been compelled to take my pen in hand again, and defend what he has been pleased to call "many erroneous representations respecting the choice of the first Bishop of Connecticut."

BISHOP PERRY.

"The hurried letters addressed by the Rev. Daniel Fogg, of Pomfret, to his correspondent at Boston, the Rev. Samuel Parker, evidently written in reply to queries occasioned by rumors then rife, afford us the only contemporary account of the proceedings at Woodbury, so far as the choice of the first American Bishop is concerned."—*Historical Review*, p. 7.

They "give the particulars of the Seabury election, and make clear that which was not known at all before, and correct some gross mistakes which had been for years received as history."—*The Iowa Churchman*, February, 1885.

The long article under the title of "a Momentous Rescue," from which the above is extracted, recites very graphically how the Fogg letters came into the possession of Bishop Perry and how much it was to be "regretted that he could not respond to the invitation" to preach at the Centenary in Aberdeen, being "the one through whom the important facts relative to Seabury's choice, and also the further particulars of his Episcopate, were brought to light."

CONTRA.

The three short letters of Fogg were all written with a knowledge of what had been done in New York as a sequel to the action in Connecticut. The New York clergy were not consulted *before*, but *after* the voluntary Convention at Woodbury. Hence Fogg had no occasion to speak of Leaming—but as he declined the mission; Seabury was "pitched upon" to undertake it, and these letters were all written after he had sailed, and two of them after his arrival in London.

The late Dr. S. F. Jarvis, son of the Bishop, was in the priesthood and twenty-seven years old when his father died. He must have learned from paternal lips the true action at Woodbury, and it is not to be supposed that he spoke at random when in the *Memoir of Bishop Jarvis*, (Evergreen, 1846) he said, referring to the clergy of Connecticut convening to select a Bishop: "All eyes were turned to the venerable Jeremiah Leaming, who had defended the Church with his pen, and had suffered in mind, body and estate. * * * * Having declined from the idea that his lameness would prevent the proper exercise of his Episcopal duties, the *next* choice of the clergy was the Rev. Dr. Samuel Seabury."

Is there any thing in the Fogg letters to disprove this?

"The existence of a discarded draft of a letter prepared by the provident Jarvis for use in the event of Seabury's unwillingness or inability to accept the appointment, is no proof of the priority of Mr. Leaming's choice at Woodbury. Its reference to his age and infirmities as confessed objections on his part, to his considering such an enterprise and its acknowledgment of the force of these objections, are sufficiently deprecatory to prove that his recommendation to England could have been considered solely in the light of a forlorn hope."—*Historical Review*, p. 10.

It is very extraordinary if "the provident Jarvis" departed from the uniform custom of officials and prepared a document for signature in behalf of a substitute, without regard to the claim of the principal. And the theory of Bishop Perry amounts to this. Other passages in the original draught were omitted or made void when it came to be used, besides the one that described Leaming. In a letter to the Secretary of the Venerable Society, after his consecration, Bishop Seabury thus settled the question: Mr. Jarvis "was also directed to try to prevail on Rev. Mr. Leaming or me, to undertake a voyage to England, and endeavor to obtain Episcopal Consecration for Connecticut. Mr. Leaming declined on account of his age and infirmities, and the clergy, who were consulted by Mr. Jarvis, gave it as their decided opinion, that I ought, in duty to the Church, to comply with the request of the Connecticut clergy. Though I foresaw many and great difficulties in the way, yet as I hoped they might all be overcome, and as Mr. Jarvis had no instruction to make the proposal to any one besides, and was with the other clergy of the opinion the design would drop if I declined it, I gave my consent, and arrived in England the beginning of July, 1788."—*Life of Seabury*, p. 172.

"While the certainty of Leaming's inability in any event to undertake the enterprise may have quickened Seabury's resolution to accept his election, every fact points to the conclusion that Leaming and not Seabury, was considered in the light of the 'alternate.'"—*Id.*, p. 11.

Bishop Seabury died February, 1796, and at a special Convention held in New Haven the following May, the Rev. Mr. Jarvis preached a commemorative sermon which was published by request of the Convention. On page 18 of this sermon we read: "In the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty

three, as the war with Great Britain was drawing to a close ; while we were unable to confer with our brethren in the other States, but anxious to take the earliest and most effectual measures our best discernment could suggest, to procure a valid Episcopate, on which under God the continuance and enjoyment of our religious profession would probably depend; the clergy of this State agreed to elect some person to be invested with that important office. Two persons occurred to our minds, Doctor Leaming and Doctor Seabury. The former, by his amiable life among us and excellent services, merited our affections, esteem and confidence. He had a just claim to our attention and was our first choice. Debility and the many bodily infirmities under which he then labored, caused him to decline."

"We do not believe, from a careful study both of the man, the documents, and the times, that Dr. Seabury would ever have crossed the ocean as an applicant for the Episcopate, if he had been but the second choice and last resort."—*Id.*, p. 14.

Dr. Seabury, writing to Mr. Leaming from Wardour Street, London, Sept. 3, 1783, said : "The State of Connecticut may consent that a Bishop should reside among them, though they may not consent that I should be the man. In that case, the sooner I shall know it, the better ; and should that be the case, I beg that no clergyman in Connecticut will hesitate a moment on my account. *The point is to get the Episcopal authority into that country*; and he shall have every assistance in my power."

What a noble spirit? how free from selfishness and vain ambition!

It "is sacrificing too much merely to sustain an unnecessary and unwarranted inference drawn from Jarvis's use years afterwards, of the phrase 'our first choice,' or the traditional statements to the same effect made by Ashbel Baldwin and Reuben Ives, to the Historian of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, neither of these excellent clergymen being at Woodbury, or even in orders at the time of these occurrences."—*Id.*, p. 12.

Ives was in College when the clergy met in Woodbury, and was ordained in 1786, the year of his graduation, becoming at once an assistant of Bishop Seabury at New London. He married on St. Paul's day, 1789—four days after the death of her father—a daughter of the Rev. John R. Marshall, and thus had good opportunities of obtaining correct information. The Rev. Isaac Jones, in his Centennial Discourse delivered at Litchfield in 1846, says: (p. 48) Ashbel Baldwin, "though but a candidate" for orders, was present at the meeting in Woodbury.

"The language of the clergy in officially addressing their Diocesan on his return from Scotland, invested with the Episcopal office, explicitly speaks of Seabury as their 'elected Bishop,' 'by their voluntary and united suffrages;' and this choice, appointment, election, or whatever these words imply, they state was 'signified' to him 'by Mr. Jarvis first at New York, in April, 1783.'"—*Historical Review*, p. 11.

The whole passage when exactly quoted, reads: "as you are now, by our voluntary and united suffrages, (signified to you first at New York in April, 1783, by the Rev. Mr. Jarvis, and now ratified and confirmed in this present convention), elected Bishop of that branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church to which we belong; we in the presence of Almighty God, declare to the world that we do unanimously and voluntarily accept, receive and recognize you to be our Bishop, supreme in the government of the Church, and in the administration of all ecclesiastical affairs."—*Address*, Edinburgh ed., p. 4.

From these parallels and others might be run, it is easy to see that there is no necessity to reconstruct the history of the Church in Connecticut on the basis of "a Momentous Rescue" which leads Bishop Perry to affirm "we have in fact, no *direct contemporary evidence* whatever may be said to the contrary," that Mr. Leaming was the first choice of the clergy of Connecticut at the voluntary Convention in Woodbury.

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