

SERMONS

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Sermons by John Wilde

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JOHN WILDE

SERMONS

SERMONS
BY THE
REV. JOHN WILDE.



NEW YORK:
SAMUEL WILDE,
—
1869.

TO THE MEMORY OF MY UNCLE,

REV. JOHN WILDE,

THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

SAMUEL WILDE.

ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1869, by
SAMUEL WILDE,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern
District of New York.

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P R E F A C E.

The sermons of the late Rev. John Wilde, herewith presented, are selected chiefly from those written and preached during the middle and later part of his ministry. And it is feared that this collection does not include all best remembered by his former parishioners. Some, which were, perhaps, most acceptable and impressive, were so imperfectly represented by the manuscript, that they were necessarily omitted; while others were entirely lost. Indeed, he had himself destroyed his earlier sermons, as well as a large number of those written in his maturer years.

The volume is intended as a memorial of him, to recall to his friends and former parishioners, by a substantial speaking presence, the pleasant memories of his ministrations and social intercourse; that in these printed sentences they may hear again, what, in former years, from the familiar pulpit, in joys or sorrows, they heard of comfort or counsel or encouragement. He ministered to them in his life in no formal manner, but with unselfish interest and a large-hearted love which appreciated the highest, and included the lowest, and which made him always ready to rejoice with the rejoicing, and weep with those who wept. And if this volume shall recall him to the minds of his former parishioners and friends, associated with those whom they have loved best, with their deepest experiences, their cherished remembrances and best resolutions, he will, indeed, though dead, yet speak.

His sermons are not the full fruit of his life. That was himself, his daily act, his large generous heart only dimly shown in these recorded utterances, but grown and trained by labors, trials, aspirations and disappointments, heart sorrows and joys, through years of which only the briefest record can be given here.

He was born in Dorchester, Mass., in 1803, and graduated at Middlebury, Vt., in 1827. After finishing his collegiate course, he taught in the Valley of the Shenandoah. Here a severe and protracted fever laid the foundation for disease, with which he struggled all through his life, and which, while it led him to shrink from any great responsibility, fitted him in a peculiar manner to sympathize with the suffering. He graduated from the Theological Seminary at Andover, in 1831, and was ordained over the Congregationalist Church, in Grafton, Mass., in 1832. Soon after this he married Miss Julia M. Forbes, daughter of Dea. Jonas Forbes, of Westboro', Mass. He labored in Grafton pleasantly and acceptably until 1839, when he resigned this charge and removed to Conway, N. H., in the hope, (afterwards happily fulfilled,) that the climate would be beneficial to the health of his wife. In 1849 he removed to West Falmouth, Maine, and for eight years preached in that place—with the interruption of one winter spent in St. Louis. In 1853, he went to Topsham, Maine, and continued there his ministerial duties until 1855, when by reason of failing health, he was compelled to discontinue pastoral labor. He travelled six months in California, but returned with his health only temporarily improved, and resided several years in Brunswick, engaging in only occasional labors. While at Falmouth, he had been elected member of the Board of Overseers of Bowdoin College, in which he felt great interest. He took charge of Laurel Bank Seminary, at Deposit, New York, from '59 to '61, when he purchased in Stamford, at the source of the Delaware, an institution, better suited to his views, and established a boarding school. His residence at Deposit was saddened by the death of his youngest daughter Lyle, who died soon after his removal to that place. His grief was renewed at Stamford, by the death of his daughter, Mary, next in years. He partially supplied the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church in this place, for several years, in addition to the care of his school, although his health had never been sufficient since his residence at Topsham, to justify him in his own feeling in taking the entire care of a parish. Sensible of the uncertainty of his health, and feeling the weight of increasing years, he sold in