

THE LATE REV. JAMES MUNROE OF ANTIGONISH.

The Rev James Munroe was born at Orkiston, near the banks of the Spey, about seven miles from Elgin, about the year 1748. Of his parentage and early life we know nothing, and it is impossible at this date to gain any information regarding them. On the 18th June 1781 he was ordained minister of Pluscarden chapel of ease in connexion with the Church of Scotland. In that charge he continued three or four years, when, induced by the representations of Dr Witherspoon, who was a relative of his, he left Scotland for the United States. At a meeting of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, held at Philadelphia 18th May 1785, the Newcastle Presbytery in the State of Delaware, reported that they had employed the Rev James Munroe, an ordained minister from Scotland, within their bounds. The minutes add, "Mr Munroe's credentials, agreeably to a former order respecting foreign ministers and probationers, were laid before the Synod and approved, in consequence whereof, Mr Munroe being present took his seat in Synod as a member of that Presbytery." We find his name in the records of Synod as present at one subsequent meeting viz. in 1787.

We have scarcely any information regarding him during his stay in the U. States, but we know that in June 1786 he was inducted at a place called Nottingham on the borders of Maryland and Pennsylvania and continued to minister there for a few years. The expectations which he had formed on going to that country, were not realized, one disappointment after another met him, and he became dissatisfied and perhaps soured in temper. The climate did not agree with his health, so that after a few years, he removed to New Brunswick, and thence to Nova Scotia. At that time the only Presbytery in the Province was the Presbytery of Truro, in connexion with the Associate or Burgher Synod of Scotland. There were one or two other ministers, who from what they considered faithful adherence to the principles for which their friends in Scotland were contending, or from other circumstances refused to unite with them, but Mr.

Munroe though originally of the Church of Scotland, had learned the folly of introducing into this country the divisions which have arisen in Scotland from merely local causes, and had no difficulty in at once uniting with sound Presbyterians of other names, on the basis of their common principles. Accordingly soon after his arrival in the Province he became a member of the Truro Presbytery. The Rev Hugh Graham, writing on the 14th Nov. 1793 says, "About two years ago we had a member added to our Presbytery, a Mr Munroe, originally from Elgin, lately from the Presbytery of Newcastle, Delaware State, a sound serious laborer, and able helper in the work." Soon after his arrival in the Province, he made an arrangement to supply Onslow, Middle Musquodoboit, and Upper Stewiacke preaching one fourth of his time in each of these places. He was not regularly inducted, but engaged by the year. In this charge he continued two years, and during that time discharged diligently all the duties of the ministerial office. He held diets of examination regularly, which were well attended. He ordained the first elders that were ordained both in Stewiacke and Musquodoboit. Old persons in these settlements, with whom we have conversed, have described him as a free social man, attentive to the young, but sometimes manifesting a warmth of temper which excited ill will.

He was not however inclined to a stationary life, and about the beginning of the year 1794 he commenced the life of an itinerant missionary, particularly through the various settlements in the western part of the Province. To this sort of life he is represented as inclined, so long as his health enabled him to follow it. He was never married and had no family ties to bind him to any single place. He seems to have become easily dissatisfied with the state of things in any place, where he was settled any time, and inclined to change. He readily adapted himself to an itinerant life. There were no doubt great hardships and privations in traversing a country with few roads or bridges, and among a people most of whom were still contending with the difficulties of a new settlement. The work had also