

FA59

C8S8



Class _____

Book _____

AN
ADDRESS,
DELIVERED AT THE CONSECRATION
OF THE
LINDEN GROVE CEMETERY,

COVINGTON, KENTUCKY,

September 11, 1843.

BY
BELLAMY STORER, ESQ.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE TRUSTEES.

CINCINNATI:

E. MORGAN AND COMPANY.

.....
1843.

F459

.C833

DESCRIPTION OF LINDEN GROVE CEMETERY.

THE LINDEN GROVE CEMETERY is situated in the environs of Covington, Kentucky, directly opposite to the City of Cincinnati, and a mile distant from the Ohio river. It is laid out by the "Trustees of the Western Baptist Theological Institute," and is a part of the estate originally purchased for the purposes of their association.

EXTENT OF GROUND AND STATE OF IMPROVEMENT.

The area appropriated by the Trustees for the use of this cemetery embraces about SIXTY ACRES of high table land, overlooking the City of Cincinnati, and situated in the midst of the most quiet and romantic scenery, being surrounded on three sides by lofty hills and dark luxuriant forests. Nearly one half of the grounds have been strongly and handsomely enclosed by a close board picketed fence seven feet in height, and intersected with a great variety of avenues and foot-paths, all handsomely excavated, forming a continuous promenade, within that portion of the ground already enclosed, of upwards of three miles in extent.

All the main avenues in the cemetery are already adorned on either side with native and other forest trees, among which are the linden, locust, elm, ash, sycamore, oak, maple, tulip, white walnut, mulberry, catalpa, ailanthus, larch, &c. together with *six or seven hundred evergreens*, consisting of cedar, silver fir and hemlock.

Descending from the avenues and paths which skirt the margins of the dells and deep glens, you enter the ravines, along whose serpentine windings grass paths have been formed by an embankment of sod excavated from either side of the paths. These grassy paths, as they are traversed, lead to various interesting improvements on the way, such as a large clear fountain of water, handsomely walled, embanked and sodded, the waste water from which, winding its silent way down the glen along the path side, discharges itself into a circular artificial pond, which constantly, as it receives fresh supplies from the spring above, discharges itself into the glen beyond. The descent to these grassy walks is not only through the natu-

ral entrance to the ravines, but by numerous flights of grass steps constructed at appropriate points. The green banks along the depth of the ravines are most appropriately formed for the erection of tombs, and many most desirable locations may be selected for that purpose.

PORTER'S LODGE.

The gardener's or porter's lodge commands the entrance to the cemetery. The building has an imposing brick front of forty feet in width, two stories high, with an arched gateway in its centre, on either side of which, in the rear, is a wing constructed for the permanent residence of the porter and his family. Immediately over the arch, at the entrance of the gate, is inserted in the brick work a large stone tablet, on which is cut the inscription "LINDEN GROVE CEMETERY," and beneath it are the words of the Saviour as he stood at the tomb of Lazarus, "*I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that believeth on me shall never die.*"

PUBLIC VAULT.

Embosomed in the circular bower, formed of locust trees, near the middle of the cemetery, is a neat and commodious public vault, for the temporary deposit of bodies in cases where it is desired to delay their final burial for a limited time,

CONSECRATION.

This beautiful spot was consecrated on the 11th September, 1843. The ceremonies were as follows:

I. Hymn, sung by the choir—

"Sweet is the scene when christians die,
When holy souls retire to rest;
How mildly beams the closing eye,
How gently heaves th' expiring breast!

So fades a summer cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So, gently, shuts the eye of day;
So dies a wave along the shore.

Triumphant smiles the Victor's brow,
Fann'd by some guardian angel's wing;
O grave! where is thy vict'ry now,
And where, O death! where is thy sting!"

II. Selections from the Scriptures by the Rev. Mr. MOORE, of the Episcopal Church. John, xi, v. 22 to 44; 1 Cor. xv, v. 34 to 68.

III. Prayer by the Rev. Mr. CRESSY, of the Baptist Church.

IV. Addresses by B. STORER, Esq. of the Episcopal, and Rev. Dr. STOWE, of the Presbyterian Church.

V. Music by the choir.

VI. Benediction by the Rev. Dr. LYND, of the Baptist Church.

A D D R E S S .

WE are assembled to consecrate this beautiful spot, a pious offering from the living to the dead; to set apart from all other uses a portion of our mother earth, where dust may mingle with dust, and affection, in the countless forms the heart may dictate, erect her memorials to departed worth. And it is just that we should hallow this city of the dead, before the humble slab or the lofty column bespeak its tenanted graves—while yet the green earth is fresh from the hand of Nature, and yon majestic trees tower in their strength, it is in delightful harmony with the moral feelings to dedicate a place like this, where generations yet to come may slumber in peace until the final consummation.

We do not, in the scene before us, behold an enclosure where pomp and pride have, in their exclusive spirit, designated that none but the noble and the great shall be sepultured, and the privilege of appropriating, for a few years, a narrow habitation, is to be alone the right of wealth and rank, but, with a feeling at once elevated and chastened, we are assured that in these avenues all of humanity will be permitted to assemble, and, throughout this wide cemetery, the wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, may lie down together. If distinctions exist in life, they are effectually levelled here. Accident may have separated us into classes, but the common destiny of our race breaks up all divisions, and, beneath the clods of the valley, silences, forever, every exclusive claim—

“For, none but the worm is a reveler here.”

From the earliest ages, the fondest wishes, the most anxious fears, of our race have been indulged for the sepulture of those they have loved. The first estate that was claimed by purchase was the cave of the Patriarch; of that favored possession, he was invested with all the formalities of primitive tenure: and

when the venerable man, in the beautifully pathetic relation of scripture, stood up from before his dead, saying, in the sorrow of his heart, to the sons of Heth, "I am a stranger and sojourner with you; give me a possession of a burying place, where I can bury my dead out of my sight," he struck a cord in the sympathies of those he addressed, which responded at once to his appeal, "In the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead." Here, in the comparative infancy of the world's history, that mysterious element of our being was developed, which, through all subsequent time, among the most barbarous as well as civilized, has given to the dead a habitation and protected it from insult.

The field of Machpelah, in one of the romantic valleys of Judea, near to Hebron, which became the burial place of Abraham and his descendants, must have been selected for its beauty. He had traversed the whole land of Canaan, with an eye quickened to the perception of the lovely in nature, from his oriental education, and when, in his purchase from its proprietors, he stipulated for all "the trees of the field, and the borders round about," we are impressed with his delicate sensibility and pure taste, to say nothing of the high moral and religious purpose, he hoped to accomplish by this public act of regard for the dead, in its influence on the living. From the era of their great ancestor to our own time, the sentiment he exhibited has ever been indulged by the Jews: whatever may have been their condition, the last offices to the dead have claimed their peculiar regard. Beneath the soil of Judea it has ever been their hope finally to be deposited; and, when buried in a foreign land, a portion of the dust of Palestine has often mingled with their ashes, while their graves have been so arranged that, on the morning of the resurrection, to use the touching expression of a late writer, "the eye of Jehovah's chosen people might rest upon their beloved Jerusalem."

With the exception of occasional instances to be met with among the ancients, when the funeral pile was substituted for inhumation, or the process of embalming was connected with peculiar religious opinions, the custom of interring the dead has been universal. Then the place of sepulture was without the walls of cities, in some secluded, silent region. The Romans, we are told, had their burying places, not in their temples or fanes, nor yet within any enclosure, reputed to be sacred, within the

limits of their towns, but in the adjoining country. The Israelites had theirs in gardens, in fields, and the sides of mountains. A Turkish cemetery covers a great extent of ground, each family having its particular portion walled in like a garden, where the bones of their ancestors have remained for many generations. There the graves are all distinct; a stone is placed at the head and the feet, and the intermediate space planted with flowers; once a year those stones are whitened and these flowers renewed.

We can readily trace to its origin the practice of interring in churches and church yards. In pagan times it was forbidden to bury in the temple or its enclosures. In the fourth century, however, superstition, among her countless ceremonies, introduced the custom, and it obtained extensively, until the Emperor Theodosius renewed the prohibition, on the ground that graves within cities were detrimental to health, and monuments by the way side presented salutary memorials to the traveler. But the innovation, once commenced, gained such strength, that it could not be checked. The bodies of martyrs were first deposited in christian churches, and their hallowed remains gave additional veneration to the edifice. To lie beside the canonized saint became the ambition of Emperors and Kings; and, in the sixth century, the people indiscriminately were allowed places in the church yard, as well as under the walls of the church. In the time of Charlemagne they were found in the church itself, and, at a council held in his reign, a restriction was for the future laid upon all but the clergy. This rule was changed in the tenth century, and no distinction permitted. From that period the evils consequent upon the repeal of the prohibition have existed throughout christendom; evils often boldly depicted, but never fully appreciated.

The annals of every large city are full of evidence that the living and the dead ought not to be grouped within the same enclosure. A truth so important, we would have thought, must have had, ere this, an abiding influence upon public sentiment, and produced an all-pervading opinion in favor of rural cemeteries; yet the prejudice, weak as it is, that would confine interments within populous cities, still exerts a powerful sway over the sympathies of the living.

There are many arguments against the practice that might be urged with appropriate force; a few must suffice. To say

nothing of the baneful effect upon the public health, which has been so fully established by medical statistics, we feel that the rest of the departed may soon be rudely broken by what, in our day, is too often misnamed the march of improvement, but in reality is no other spirit than innovating experiment or reckless associated avarice. The moss-covered stone is seldom found in the city burying place. Before decay has done its work, the hand of man interrupts it, and, in one common desecration, mingles together the graves of its inmates. Over the resting-place of the wise and the good, as well as the vile, the ploughshare is driven, and the splendid residence, or the capacious business mart, is reared over their ashes. If, perchance, for some favored enclosure, there is veneration enough to save it for a few years from desolation, yet, even then, the earth has been upturned so often that the hallowed spot has become a charnel-house: its surface is fearfully raised above the level of the adjacent grounds, where a few stunted trees extend their feeble branches, and the rank grass grows profusely. Here the heart can find no sympathy; all is cold, selfish, artificial. The simplicity of nature is rejected—the claims of our common humanity postponed—and, forgetting that they, too, must soon claim kindred with the dust, the living are unmindful of the dead—the dead! who alone can be said, in the fine Hebrew sentiment, “to live truly.”

How far the modern practice of converting places of burial to other uses, can be justified by any of the causes that have produced it, is a subject for serious consideration, and addresses the conscience as well as the heart, in no unmeaning language. But we cannot now discuss the question; we leave it, with the many kindred innovations upon the moral feelings which have distinguished our age, to the enlightened judgment of our audience. We might, however, receive instruction from the monuments of that noble race who once inhabited our valley. Those mounds, gigantic in structure and regular in form, bespeak not only the affection but the reverence of their builders, for the remains of their dead; and, casting our memories back into past ages, we cannot but admire the regard paid by the warlike people of the east to the field of Shechem, where, after a lapse of four hundred years, untouched and undesecrated, the descendants of its first proprietor deposited the bones of Joseph.

There is another objection to the city burial place, which, to every well regulated mind, must address itself with peculiar force; we mean the tendency that constant contact has to produce indifference to the high and solemn associations which should be connected with the dead. There is no train of reflection more subdued, nor more instructive, than that which is induced by the contemplation of a grave yard. We gather around us, while we wander among its monuments, the past, the present, and the future. All of life and of death, and the life to come, are grouped in the brief hour! We are dissociated from our fellows! We become individualized, in the truest sense of the term, and understand, if we never did before, the meaning of personal accountability, our relation to the world, and to Him who made the world! Immortality is, then, no abstract opinion—no ordinary sentiment—but it comes to us with the force of conviction, and responds to the delicately beautiful thought of Gray—

“E’en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries—
E’en in our ashes live their wonted fires!”

But, who can meditate thus in the thronged city, when, in immediate contact with the home of the dead, are the fashionable follies, the gilded vices of the living—when the theatre, the ball room, the gaming house, perchance, surround it, and no lesson is taught by their proximity that can cheer the crushed or sinking spirit, or guide the wanderer to duty and to Heaven?

Who has not heard, along the wide avenues of our older cities, which bound the ancient cemeteries that still remain within their limits, the coarse jest, the unmeaning laugh, the bold defiance, the horrid blasphemy—and all these when the tolling bell announced the reception of a new inmate to its narrow house, or the minister of God was engaged in the solemn duties of his office? Such is the effect of daily intercourse with objects that should ever be disconnected. Blend them together, and their influence is to harden the heart—to chill the affections. Separate them, and the toils of busy life will seek, in the peaceful harmonies of a rural burial place, a spot for meditation and repose! The mourner can there hold communion with the departed objects of her love, and deck, with pious care, the sod that covers them! She knows that, in this silent abode, the noise of the profane multitude is unheard! The vulgar intrusions of the curious break not her

ministry with kindred spirits! Here may be collected the whole family of the affections—and, purified by that spiritual intercourse which faith holds with those who are already stars in yon firmament, we may go forth to the duties of life better prepared to serve our God and love our fellows.

We allude to one more consideration to sustain our position. Even if the city grave yard should be spared from the public use, and common feeling protect it from direct desecration, it is still a serious question whether it is a safe depository. The elements of which large cities are made up, have been developed, within the few past years, with appalling energy. Property and life have equally been the sport of their lawless power. As yet, these popular outbreaks have assumed no definite form, and Heaven grant they never may; but if, in the course of our national progress—if, in the great moral and political process which is now at work throughout our land, as well as the world, our populous communities should become factious, reckless, infidel—if the restraints of good order are cast off, and that fearful epoch should arrive when anarchy shall stalk abroad like death in the Apocalypse, who can say whether churches or grave yards will be spared? A few years only have gone by since such scenes were enacted in the metropolis of France, the very remembrance of which freezes the soul. And further back, in the annals of Britain, we may read that the translator of the Bible, the holy Wickliffe, was pronounced heretic when in his grave, his body disinterred and burned,

“And to the earth, the sea, the sky,
They hurl’d his flaming dust !”

Perhaps we have hazarded a remark that some may think partakes more of foreboding than our present happy condition can justify. Be it so;—it is a difference of opinion only. We would not measure the strength of our institutions to bear the pressure that will, ere long, we fear, fall upon them with tremendous force; nor would we calculate the value of our now powerful republic, nor yet the chances of its perpetuity. All such questions we would avoid, believing and hoping, at all times, for the best; but it becomes us to rely, with unshaken confidence, upon Him who is above all mutation, and alone controls the destiny of men and of governments.

We have said, that, while the soil of this quiet spot is yet unbroken, it is just that we should set it apart as an habitation for the dead; and our reflections, since we used the expression, have confirmed its truth. An old writer quaintly observes, "He that lies under the herse of Heaven is convertible into sweet herbs and flowers"—a beautiful tribute to the feelings that would dedicate a region like this to the departed; for here, under the open canopy of Heaven—shaded by no mouldering piles of human architecture—pent up by no crowded masses—polluted by no indiscriminate use, and yet not made exclusive by any gorgeous monuments, set up to pride or title—here we would commit our dead to the green earth, upon which our taste may plant its own flowery emblems, and our affection bedew them with her tears!

Let us, then, with all appropriate solemnity, consecrate this cemetery. It is truly an occasion calculated to produce, and retain in our hearts, the most elevated sentiments—to open upon our vision, by the light of faith, the ultimate destiny of man! These are the teachings of eternity! We are here carried back to the infancy of our race. We enter, imperfect as we are, the early Eden of our progenitor! We wander among the unveiled glories of Paradise, and learn what was the origin of man—what his capacity—what his privileges! We are then led to the scene of his guilt—read the punishment it demanded, and mark with what certainty it has, from that period until our day, been executed! Death—the scourge of Jehovah, and the just penalty of transgression—did not enter the garden! It was not until its helpless inmates were without the gate, that the destroyer could claim his victims!

And now, in this rural spot—so sweet for the eye to rest upon, so rich in its verdure—here, where Death will be permitted still to reign, we feel the holy assurance that He, who has taken from the destroyer his sting, will call up, at his appointed hour, from their long slumbers, his humble followers, to life and immortality!

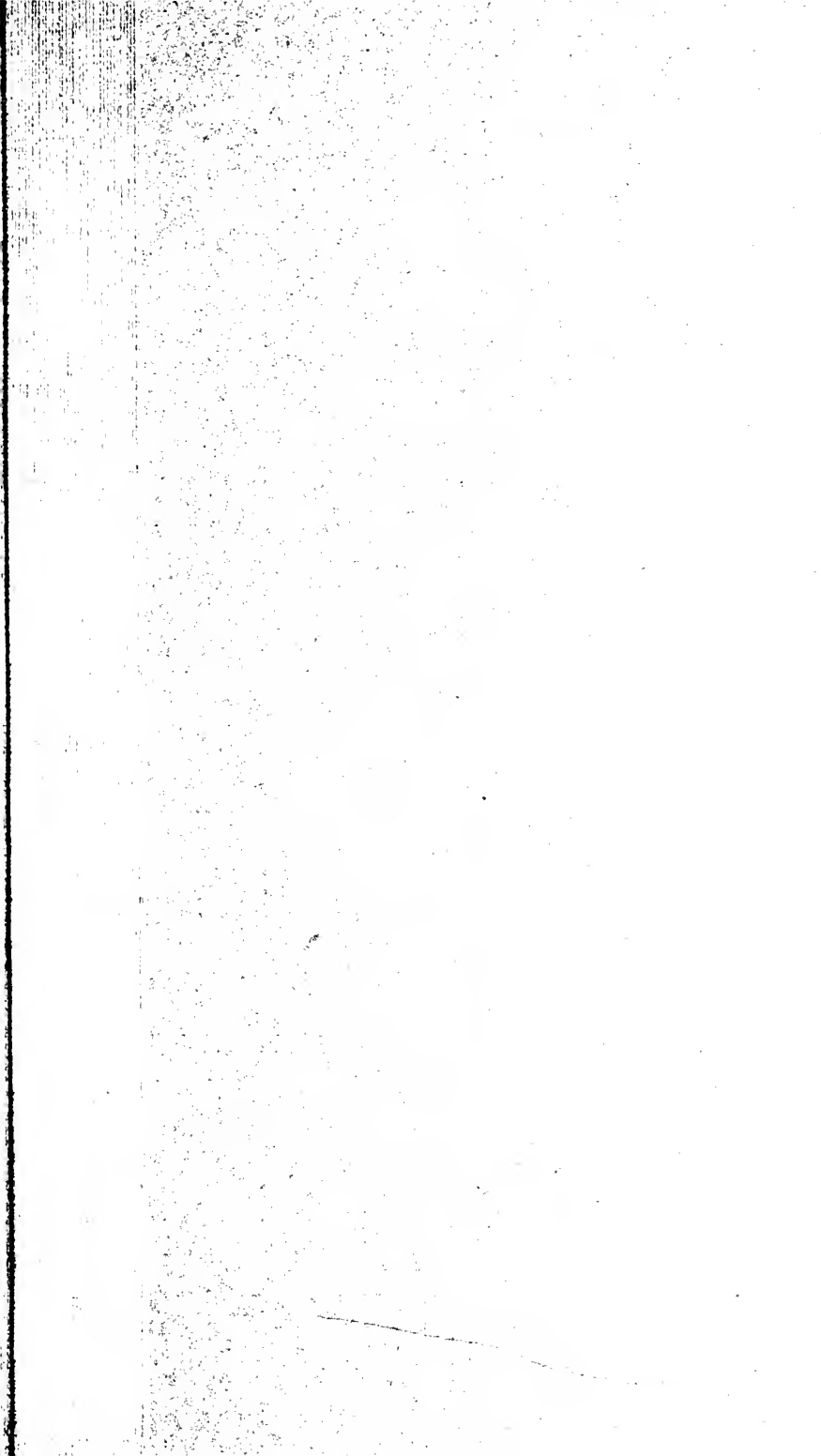
While standing amid this living multitude, collected here, not to lay the foundation of a mighty edifice, where art and genius are to exert their power—nor yet to commence the settlement of a community, with whose future prospects our hopes and our fears may be mingled—but rather to pause, in the course of time,

and bestow an hour to higher purposes—what a flood of feeling bursts upon the heart! What a volume of deep and abiding instruction is opened before us! That populous city, over which we cast our eye—that placid river, bold and beautiful, that intervenes—that structure, which is soon to be dedicated to religious education—the evidences around us, that industry and energy are intent upon high achievement—all these remind us that we are but the actors in the drama of to-day! The flood and the ebb of that river are our monitors! We have seen its many changes; and our change must come at last! The current of our existence becomes more rapid as we approach its close! Soon the hum of that busy community will be stilled, and the thousands who inhabit it disappear! The grave will claim its tenant, as generation after generation shall succeed each other in the swift march of time! Yes, we, too, must die!—and it is the part of true philosophy to fulfil the end of our being, as Heaven has ordained it.

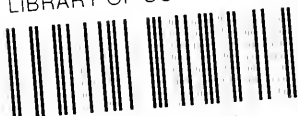
“The number of the dead,” says Sir Thomas Brown, “long exceedeth all who shall live! The night of time far surpasseth the day!—and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto the current arithmetic, which scarce stands one moment!—and yet, were the happiness of the next world as clearly apprehended as the felicities of this, it were a martyrdom to live!” We leave with you the *application*.

In the Catacombs of Paris, set apart for the bodies disinterred from the cemetery of the Innocents, over the principal gateway was inscribed, “*Death is eternal sleep.*” This was the boast of Infidelity—the proud blasphemy of an age of Atheists. Upon your entrance, so simple and yet in such fine keeping with the whole economy of this wide enclosure, is written, “*I am the resurrection and the life: If any man believe in me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and he that believeth on me shall never die.*” That sentiment was uttered by Him who spake as never man spake; who calmed the tempest and raised the dead! It was spoken by Him whose body was once sepulchred, but rose again, triumphant over Death and the Grave!

In the spirit of this animating assurance, we may joyfully resign our mortal remains to the tomb; for it then becomes no other than the house of God—the very gate of Heaven!



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 571 233 6