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MEMOIRS

OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN DISTINGUISHED

BY THEIR

WRITINGS, CHARACTER, AND EFFORTS

IN THE CAUSE OF

LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY.

EDITED BY

WILLIAM WARE.

VOL. II.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE present volume of these collected memoirs will be found, it is believed, to be a very valuable accession to our religious reading. Various causes, necessary and unnecessary, have contributed to delay its appearance to the present time.

As was stated in the preface to the first volume, the intention was simply to gather from various quarters, and reprint, biographies already published, and for the most part well known. The memoir of Dr. Tuckerman by Miss Mary Carpenter of Bristol, England, (a daughter of the late Dr. Lant Carpenter,) though for some time widely read and circulated abroad, has not till now been republished in America, and will be new to most readers here. It has been corrected, wherever it was thought necessary, by Mrs. Becker, the daughter of Dr. Tuckerman.

The memoir of Dr. Channing has been prepared for the work by Dr. W. H. Furness of Philadelphia.

Whatever errors may be observed in preceding volumes will be noticed in the "errata" at the close of the last.

CAMBRIDGE, Dec. 8th, 1850.



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MEMOIR  
OF  
JOHN PIERCE.



## JOHN PIERCE.

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DR. PIERCE was born in Dorchester, Mass., about four miles from Boston, July 14th, 1773. He was the oldest of ten children, six of whom still survive. His father, a shoemaker, and an honest, intelligent, religious man, died December 11th, 1833, aged ninety-one years, two months, and eight days. From earliest childhood, he cherished the desire to go to college and to become a minister — this desire being awakened, as he used to say, by hearing his parents, uncles, and aunts, talk so incessantly of their brother, James Blake, a promising young clergyman, who died just after he began to preach. On leaving the school of the same maiden woman who taught his mother to read, he commenced the study of Latin, and in 1789 entered Harvard College. He took a high rank in his class, and at graduating (1793) delivered the second English oration — the first being assigned to Judge (Charles) Jackson, the eminent jurist, still living. His whole college expenses amounted to \$296.06 — of which he had credit as a beneficiary, for \$102.56.

On taking his second degree he pronounced the

Latin valedictory oration. After quitting Cambridge, he was for two years assistant preceptor of the Academy in Leicester, Mass. He commenced (July, 1795) the study of theology, with Rev. Thaddeus Mason Harris, then recently settled in his native town; was "approved" by the "Boston Association," Feb. 22d, 1796, and preached for the first time at Dorchester, March 6th, 1796. Having preached in several places, and filled for nearly four months a tutorship in Harvard College, he received and accepted a unanimous invitation to become the Pastor of the First Church in Brookline, Mass., as the successor of the Rev. Joseph Jackson, and was ordained March 15th, 1797. October 31st, 1798, he was married to Abigail Lovel, of Medway, one of his pupils at the Academy. She died July 2d, 1800, leaving an infant son, who survived his mother only two years. Dr. Pierce was married again, May 6th, 1802, to Lucy Tappan, of Northampton, who is now left his widow, after a union of the utmost harmony and affection extending through forty-seven years. They have had ten children, all but one of whom — a son — are still living. Dr. Pierce was the sole pastor of his church for half a century; and the interesting "Jubilee," when he completed the fiftieth year from the day of his ordination — celebrated March 15th, 1847 — will be remembered by the many whose privilege it was to be present and listen to the hale, hearty, and cheerful clergyman, showing in his seventy-fourth year the vigor of youth. For thirty-one years of his ministry, the First Church was the only church in Brookline, and he was pastor of the whole town. Dr. Pierce

was for fifty-two years a member of the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers, and for ten years its scribe. For thirty years he belonged to the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society, and, of course, during the whole of his ministerial career, one of the "Boston Association," whose meetings he rarely missed. For thirty-three years he was Secretary to the Board of Overseers of Harvard College. For several years he was President of the Massachusetts Bible Society; and also a faithful officer or active member of numerous other associations of a literary or philanthropic character. He served on the School Committee during his whole ministry. He was among the very earliest advocates of temperance, and to the last of his days of activity, known of all for the zeal and courage with which, in public and in private, he maintained, by speech and example, the doctrine of "total abstinence." He officiated on various public occasions; and in January of the current year, he delivered the "Election Sermon," as it is called, before the Executive and the Legislature of the State. This discourse, with several other of his addresses, mostly statistical and historical, has been published.

The Rev. FREDERIC N. KNAPP was ordained as his colleague, Oct. 6th, 1847. But though thus relieved in a great measure from the care of his own pulpit, he continued to preach, with unabated strength, for many of his brethren, and to take part in various meetings, until the last spring.

Dr. Pierce was a tall, large framed man, with a mild, open countenance, beaming with cheerfulness and benignity. His hair very early became almost

white, and gave him an appearance of venerableness long before he numbered years sufficient to justify the epithet. He enjoyed in youth and manhood, notwithstanding in infancy he was a feeble child, almost uninterrupted health; he remarked to the writer, during his last sickness, "that for nearly forty years he had not known what it was to have a physical infirmity worth naming." During his long ministry, he was kept from his pulpit only thirteen Sundays. In the spring of 1805, he was seized with a rheumatic fever, which confined him several weeks; and, it is a curious fact, that the celebrated Joseph Stevens Buckminster was ill at the same time, they both returned to their respective desks the same Lord's day, and preached from the same text, namely, Psalm cxix. 71. It was his invariable habit to rise early; in the winter, for two hours or more before breakfast, to saw and split his own wood, and in the summer to work in his vegetable garden. He was a great walker; frequently on his exchanges going on foot, out and back, six or seven miles the same day, and without fatigue. He was "temperate in all things," invariably making his dinner, when at the most sumptuous and varied entertainment, from one dish, and that, usually, the plainest on the table. His beverage, for twenty years or more, was cold water, tea, and coffee. Simple in his tastes, and of the strictest integrity, Dr. Pierce was an economist. He brought up a large family, and laid up a portion every year, of an income never large, and at the commencement of his ministry amounting only to \$400, and sixteen cords of wood, per annum; though it must not be forgotten, that his people from time to time increased, until they more



than doubled his stipend, and also showed their regard for their pastor by generous gifts. With all his frugality, however, he had no "*love of money*," and there was nothing narrow or mean about him; on the contrary, he was most liberal and hospitable. To show how little he cared for riches, we may state, that, with all his proper inquisitiveness, there was one question he never asked, namely, what was a minister's salary? and with all the tenacity of his memory, there was one fact it very seldom kept, namely, how much any preacher received for his services. On one occasion he was stripped by an unfortunate investment made for him, of almost all the property he possessed; but to appearance the loss did not disturb him for a moment, and it was months, we believe, before his nearest relations knew of it; showing that his heart was where his treasures were, and that these were not laid up on earth. He never was oppressed with debt, and from the time of his second marriage, if not before, had, on the first day of every year, a year's salary and a year's stock of wood on hand, to begin with. He purchased many books, subscribed for many periodicals, spread his simple table with abundance, and yet made both ends meet, and had something to spare. A faithful domestic, and a coöperating partner, however, must share with him the credit of economical management. He greatly loved music; was a fine singer himself, and enjoyed sacred tunes so much, that he would frequently, on exchanges, when he met with kindred tastes, spend the whole evening, after preaching all day, going through books of psalmody. Among the many attentions paid him during his illness, few gave him so much delight as the weekly visits to the

parsonage, on Saturday evenings, of his beloved choir ; “his sweet psalmists of Israel,” as he called them.

Dr. Pierce’s scholarship and literary attainments were, for one who enjoyed no better early advantages, and belonged to the “Old School,” more than respectable. He made no pretensions to learning ; and yet he had quite a correct knowledge of the classics as studied in his day. He wrote with accuracy ; and we doubt whether an instance of misspelling or wrong punctuation could be found in his numerous manuscript sermons. From boyhood he was fond of reading ; and with the best didactic, historical, and biographical literature of the times, he kept himself well acquainted. He loved to read aloud ; and his family will long remember the many evenings, when his strong and manly voice gave them instruction or entertainment from some new book in that “dear old study,” hung round with innumerable sweet memories of the past. His mind was a practical one — he had no taste for philosophical speculation ; was wanting, perhaps, in depth of sentiment and imagination. But, if not an original thinker himself, he appreciated the best thoughts of others ; and if he collected from abroad more ideas than he generated within, he generally knew how to select the truest, and best, and most useful. Indeed, we have sometimes thought that his reputation as a lover of facts, and his reverence for great writers who have become classic, together with the intense activity of his social nature, may have concealed, and so led to the underrating of his talents and acquirements, which, as they were shown in good sense, sound and discriminating judgment of men and things, were by no means inferior. Of his preaching,

paradoxical as it may sound, we may, perhaps, safely say, had it been less scriptural or evangelical in phraseology — a characteristic which came from his implicit faith in, and profound reverence for the Bible — it would have been found more original and thoughtful than some may imagine. We need not, however, dwell upon this point, for he was never ambitious of literary distinction; and certainly one of a moral and religious character so stainless, exhibiting a life of such uniform worthiness, can well spare the fame of the mere scholar, and wants not the praise of intellectual greatness as a claim to reverential respect. And that moral and religious character, who could, who did observe and study it — so guileless, simple, pure, upright, consistent, and humble — without giving it the silent homage of his heart? If any one might dare to cherish the hope of inheriting, through the Father's mercy, the promises in the Beatitudes, it was he. He was a Christian in his trustful faith, his sincere devotion, his endeavors to keep the commandments, if ever there was a Christian on earth. His domestic virtues made a happy home. His integrity and truthfulness there were none to call in question. He was a peacemaker. He was genial, hearty, affectionate, cheerful, almost always and everywhere. He was thankful for his blessings, and resigned under all his trials, and overflowed with gratitude to heaven for his many years of happiness on earth — saying, as the shadows of the grave began to gather about him, “that he knew not how his life could have been better or pleasanter than a kind Providence had ordered it.” His boyhood was free from rudeness, vulgarity, and profaneness. His college days were unstained by vice, and he graduated

without having received the slightest censure. His youth was pure ; his manhood above reproach ; to the moral beauty, the Christian trust of his old age, who that saw him will not bear willing witness ? We doubt if he ever had an enemy ; and we are sure there are none who can stand by his grave without saying, “ Here reposes the dust which was once, and through a long pilgrimage, the garment of an honest and religious man.” He was highly favored, it is true, in his constitution, his temperament, his early training, and his prosperous lot in life ; but those who knew him intimately, know that not a little which seemed so natural and spontaneous in his goodness, was the work of principle, the result of self-discipline, watchfulness, and prayer, and religious habits of soul. But our purpose here, is not eulogy, and we will simply add that for uniform punctuality, for systematic diligence, for sincere and earnest endeavors to do his duty in all relations, for fine domestic qualities, for faithful exercise to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man, those who dwelt nearest to the subject of this notice, and who were best acquainted with whatever infirmities he may have had, will be the first to give him credit. Dr. Pierce was accustomed to speak of himself as a matter-of-fact man ; and as such he has been known, at least by everybody who lives near, or was a student in Harvard College. There was almost as much truth as wit in the remark of the late Judge Davis, when — all other attempts to find out having failed, and Dr. Pierce could not tell the birth-place of a certain person — he said, “ that it was no use to make further inquiries ; for, if *the Doctor* did not know where the man was born, *he was not born anywhere.*”

The amount of dates and facts Dr. Pierce carried stored up in his memory and had ready for use whenever called for, was perfectly marvellous; and his knowledge, in this regard, was as accurate as it was extensive. He has been known, more than once, to correct mistakes made by his friends, as to their own age and the day of their own nativity; and to catch him in an error about the time of any *minister's* birth, settlement, or death, after he had once ascertained it, or about the class to which a graduate of Harvard College belonged, was next to an impossibility. The whole "Triennial" was in his head; and the personal history of most of the clergymen in his own neighborhood and of his own denomination, he knew almost as well as he knew his alphabet. Then his "Memoirs and Memorabilia," eighteen quarto volumes, in manuscript, of six hundred pages each, his memoranda, his interleaved almanacs, his occasional discourses, falling on the ear, when heard, a perfect hail-storm of facts, and bristling, when read, all over with figures; — these, containing accounts of commencements, exhibitions, ordinations, "jubilees," dedications, genealogies, and hundreds of other like matters, remain to show his industry, the innocent and useful ruling passion of his mind, and to be a treasury of information to those who shall come after him. Ah! how, as the business, matter-of-fact-man, in many societies, and on many occasions, he is yet to be missed! At the "Commcncements" and "Anniversary-weeks" to come, how long it will be before that active, vigorous form, that interested countenance, and those snowy hairs, will cease to be remembered and mentioned!

The main direction which Dr. Pierce's fondness

for facts took, leads us naturally to advert to his love of Harvard College. Venerable Alma Mater never dismissed a child from under her maternal wing, who cherished towards her greater filial affection and respect. He has told us that when a school-boy, he repeatedly walked from Boston to his home in Dorchester, through Cambridge and Roxbury, a distance of nearly or quite a dozen miles, merely that he might have the pleasure of looking at the College buildings! And this early regard for the University never grew cold. He attended sixty-three Commencements; in 1847, there were but twenty-one graduates alive who took their degrees when he was not present; and for fifty-four successive years he "set the tune" of St. Martin's to the hymn sung at the Commencement dinner. He was always alive to the interest and reputation of the University; and in his official capacity, was a model of accuracy and punctuality; keeping the records and discharging all his clerical duties in the most faithful manner. For other collegiate institutions, also, he had a high respect; and as he found leisure, of late years, made it almost a business to attend their respective Commencements.

In speaking of Dr. Pierce as a preacher and pastor, we shall say nothing of his theological views, except that he uniformly refused to be classed with any sect whatever, or to take any names except those of a "Congregationalist" and a "Christian." He seldom preached doctrinal sermons. He had no taste for controversy; and hardly ever indulged in expressions of his belief, clothed in any other phraseology than that of the Bible. For any party to claim him as a member on account of his opinions, would be show-

ing a sad want of respect to his memory, and an utter disregard of his well-known feelings and wishes when alive. No one has any moral right to do for him that which he always refused to do for himself — class him anywhere as a theologian. He must be known simply as an “eclectic Christian,” to use his own terms; and if this phrase is indefinite, it must be remembered that it has all the precision which he desired. On one point we may, however, be very explicit. He set his face like a flint against every form of sectarian exclusiveness and bigotry, and was only intolerant towards those who ventured to judge any body of believers in Christ, and to deny them the Master’s name. Towards some views — more or less prevalent in New England of late years — he might have failed a little in preserving that “charity which is not easily provoked;” but on the whole, his catholicism was a marked trait in his character, which, often severely tried, was seldom found wanting. He was an earnest, plain preacher; dealing generally with practical subjects, without seeking originality of thought, or being remarkable for any graces of rhetoric. Perhaps, as we have already hinted, had his quotations from Scripture been more sparing, his discourses would have gained in clearness and point. Alluding to this feature in his sermons, a friend remarked, lately to us, that “Dr. Pierce certainly preached the Bible.” But his style was that of former days; and few men have retained so much of their early acceptableness in the pulpit, owing to the impression he made upon his hearers of his own deep sincerity and unfeigned piety. You felt that he believed with his whole heart and soul every thing he said, and was thoroughly in earn-

est. It was, however, by the daily beauty of his life as the faithful pastor, that Dr. Pierce won the confidence and affection of his people. He knew every man, woman, and child in his parish—the date of their births, and of all the important events connected with their joys or their sorrows. No one was ever forgotten or overlooked. With the same hearty simplicity he visited the rich and the poor, the refined and the unlearned; and though there were wide diversities in the social condition of the members of his society, there were none to charge him with partiality, none to doubt his friendliness and ready sympathies. His social disposition led him to devote much time to visiting, and he went from house to house, as he did every thing else, according to system.

It is a difficult thing for a settled clergyman, advanced in life, especially if in vigorous health, to see, as soon as his parishoners and others may see it, that time and change have made it desirable that he should receive the assistance of youth, or retire, in a manner, from the active duties of his profession in the field of labor, so long entirely his own. To do this must have been peculiarly trying in the case of Dr. Pierce, unconscious as he was of any infirmity—hardly knowing, indeed, that he was growing old, except as the numerical increase of his years testified to the fact. But in this matter, after a little natural reluctance and hesitation, he met the demands of duty most conscientiously, yielding up every personal consideration to promote the welfare of his parish. It was very fortunate for all parties that the society unanimously chose for his col-



league the very individual upon whom, as he once told us, "without daring to express his feelings to any one, he had fixed his heart." "Fixed his heart," was indeed the right phrase; for no fond father, it seems to us, could have cherished a stronger affection or greater solicitude for the welfare and success of his own son, than did Dr. Pierce, to the day of his departure, for his young associate; and it is but proper to say that this paternal regard was returned with filial respect and devotion; so that the change in his relations to his church, to which he had looked forward with much anxiety, became, after it took place, only another joy added to the many blessings with which his days were crowded.

But we must bring this imperfect and hasty sketch to a close, and we cannot do it better than by a brief allusion to the last days of the subject of it; a full description of which would be the most suggestive eulogy of his worth that could be written. It was on the third of March that his illness commenced, with a sudden attack, which, for a few hours, threatened a fatal result. Relief, however, was obtained; but a gradual decay began, which, with intervals of apparent convalescence, finally closed his earthly career.

Those who knew what pride Dr. Pierce seemed to take in his robust health, and how active were his habits, feared lest the trial of protracted disease and feebleness would prove to be almost too hard even for his patience. But he met this sudden change in his condition, as if to prepare for it had been the sole work of his life — as, indeed, in some sense it was, since now was brought forth the crowning ripeness of his Christian character. At once he set his "house

in order," arranging all his temporal affairs, so as to leave his thoughts free for better things. Until within a few weeks, he rode out almost every pleasant day; and up to his last hours, the unspeakable satisfaction of continuing his records and of seeing and enjoying the society of his friends, was permitted him. It might be said, without much exaggeration, that he held a daily "reception;" and some notion of the number of visitors who came to show their respect and affection, may be formed from the fact, that among them were *one hundred and twenty clergymen, representing seven different denominations*. The scene in his "study," from morning till evening, was beautiful beyond expression. Everybody, from the merest child up to the venerable and devoted parishioner of fourscore years,—from the humble woman who insisted upon bringing with her own hands the ice-cream she prepared each day for his use, up to men high in station, and higher still in their reputation for worth and wisdom,—everybody remembered the good man and beloved pastor. Rare and fresh flowers loaded his table, and filled the silver vase, presented to him by the ladies of the Baptist Society, at his "jubilee;" all the delicacies of the season, and all manner of luxuries which it was thought might do him good, or please an appetite that disease had for the first time, made capricious, were poured around him in profusion. Many were ready, at a moment's warning, to read to him or write for him, or to discharge any office of kindness. In one word, wealth never purchased, and power never won attentions, of all kinds, so devoted and loving, as were gladly rendered, without stint, and in constant anticipation of his slight-

est wishes. Verily, he had his reward. The life-long expressions of his own genial and kindly nature — his own remembrance of all who needed his ministry — came flowing back, a rich harvest of reverent and affectionate service, to fill full with beauty and brightness the close of his days, and to consecrate, in the memory of multitudes, his humble parsonage, as a spot hallowed for months by the presence of unselfish and unwearied affection; and so it went on to the last. And how did he bear it all? Like a meek, lowly, humble, Christian, with the simplicity and frankness of a child, with incessant and grateful wonder at the respect shown him, with the most entire submission to the Divine will, with a cheerful trust in God that took away all fear and looked forward to the grave and eternity with the calm eye of assured religious hope.

Dr. Pierce failed very rapidly after his visit to the Church mentioned above; but retained possession of his faculties and his consciousness, until Thursday evening. At that time, in addition to the members of his family and one or two neighbors, his colleague, and his devoted friend Rev. Mr. Shailer of the Baptist Church, in Brookline, whom he used playfully and affectionately to call his "oldest son," and with whom he enjoyed years of the most harmonious and confidential intercourse — were in attendance upon him. His last words were addressed to Mr. Shailer, in answer to an inquiry as to the manner in which he would be remembered in the evening prayer, and those words were, "*Entire submission to the Divine will.*" Reclining in his easy chair, he lingered until the next forenoon, when, at half past eleven o'clock,

with only one brief struggle, he fell asleep. *He died in the Lord, the death of the righteous. The end of that man was peace.*

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*Sketch of the Character of Dr. Pierce from the Christian Examiner.*

Dr. Pierce was a distinguished man. Any person attending his funeral must have seen that he was a man of mark whom they were burying. There was a great concourse of people thronging with reverent and tender emotions around his coffin, and among them many men of eminent character and station. It was evident from many signs that those were not the obsequies of an ordinary man, or a mere official man. And those signs were not fallacious. When his death was announced, it was everywhere taken much note of by the press, and, in conversation, spoken of with a feeling of interest, by all sorts of persons, in the neighborhood and far in the country. We suppose that there was hardly a man in Massachusetts whose person was known to so many individuals in the State. It is seldom that so many and hearty expressions of affectionate respect, from so many quarters, follow an old man to his grave.

And how came he to be thus distinguished? — This is a question which, of course, has been often asked, and we repeat it now thoughtfully, and shall try to answer it. It may seem a question of some difficulty. For he had but a moderate share of those materials from which reputations are usually constructed. At college he was a diligent and successful scholar, and always retained his strong sympathy

with scholarly pursuits and achievements ; yet his learning, theological, classical, or scientific, was not extensive nor profound. The original resources of his mind were not great. He had not a spark of what is called genius. He had no eloquence in speech nor in writing. As a preacher he was not specially sought. He was nowise remarkable for the reach or strength of his understanding. He had little logic and less rhetoric. The only knowledge for which he was particularly noted was that of dates, and facts of contemporary personal history. He had good sense, and such soundness and sagacity of judgment as usually accompany integrity of mind and honest simplicity of purpose ; but he was not deemed a sage or wise man, in such a sense that his counsel was greatly sought in weighty and perplexed affairs. He always acquitted himself respectably on those public occasions on which he was called to officiate, but his published discourses do not constitute a permanently valuable addition to our literature. To those measures for ameliorating the condition of society in which he took part, he only contributed the testimony of his convictions and the weight of his character, — a large contribution surely, but still the question recurs, whence came that weight of character ? And, withal, his social position was only that of an humble country clergyman.

So, he seems not to have been greatly favored with those qualities and circumstances which are the usual elements of public distinction. And yet we know that he was distinguished, with a widely extended and very desirable reputation. What is the secret of it ? We shall find an answer where a

Christian must most delight to find it, — in the qualities of his heart and in the rectitude and purity of his life.

Whenever a man spends a life as long as that of our late friend in one spot or neighborhood, and spends it in the diligent pursuance of his vocation, and has been found always just and upright, consistent, sincere, and truthful, exemplary in domestic relations and a kind neighbor, affable and sympathizing, — never formal, cold, nor mean, nor selfish, nor crowding, nor grasping, — without a sharp tongue or a rancorous spirit, — steady, friendly, benevolent, blameless, and devout, — bearing his trials well, and his temptations well, with none to taunt him with moral lapses, or charge him with social wrong, — keeping, we say, in one place, so as to be well known to two successive generations, — that man, when he dies, will be found to be distinguished, — it may be within a narrow circuit, if his position be obscure, — yet distinguished. And if he have a position only so conspicuous as that of a country clergyman, though without the least brilliancy of mental endowments or pulpit success, he will be found widely, greatly distinguished, and most honorably so.

Such a character and career imply a combination of gifts, efforts, and circumstances that is rare, more rare than the talents or social advantages which are the usual means of notoriety. Such a combination there was, to an eminent degree, in favor of the late minister of Brookline.

Born in Dorchester, he just moved over to that pleasant parsonage, only going round by Cambridge for purposes of education; and there he has dwelt for more than fifty years, and there he has died.

During that period, we doubt if he has ever been accused of neglecting a duty or forgetting an appointment, or committing a mean, unjust, or immoral action, or speaking a false, or irreverent, or unkind, or insincere word.

But it would be unfair to describe him only by negatives. His was a positive character, and had great positive traits of excellence. He appears to have obeyed and carried out the two parts of the great commandment — to love God and love man — with unusual earnestness and thoroughness.

As to the first part, his personal religion was very positive. He was not a learned and acute theologian, but he was unfeignedly pious, and a firm and ardent believer. He did love and fear God with true practical devotion, and he was a disciple of Christ, in that he believed, and loved, and trusted his Master with all his heart.

His theological opinions, as to disputed points, were not, we suppose, very clearly defined in his own mind. As far as possible, he avoided taking sides in the great controversy between the Liberal and Orthodox parties, disclaimed all party relations and names to the last. And herein some may have thought that he showed an unworthy timidity or an unworthy courting of favor from both parties. But it could not have been from want of moral courage or from a time-serving spirit. For see how early, strongly, and without reservation he committed himself on the Temperance question, everywhere declaring in his loudest tones — and they were loud indeed — his thorough-going, uncompromising ultraism on that subject, in opinion and practice; and that course, in some stages and aspects of the

movement, must have appeared quite as likely to make him enemies as any theological decision. And besides, he had a parish that would have sustained him, probably to a man, in taking ever so decidedly the side which he must have taken, if he were to take any, and which he did take virtually. His somewhat peculiar feelings and position in relation to sects and parties are not to be referred to any moral defect.

The truth is, his personal sympathies were so broad and strong and warm, that he could not well bear to be separated from any body by party lines, — he so loved and yearned for good-fellowship among ministers. The lines were not drawn till some years after his ministry began ; and when he and so many of his brethren came to be excluded, abruptly cut off, from the old Congregational communion, we can suppose that for a time, until he became used to it, it must have been the great grief of his heart to be suddenly turned out of doors by his old friends, ignored by them as a brother-minister of Christ, excluded from their pulpits and their fellowship. How it must have astonished and wounded him, — feeling that he was as orthodox, as sound in the faith, as ever he was, or as they were ! And what a commentary it is on that stern policy of exclusion, that it shut out him as no Christian or Christian minister, — him, who was a minister through and through, and with all his heart, from his very infancy, — him, so pure a man, so evangelical in all his beliefs and words, such a real, hearty, fixed, old-fashioned, Bible Christian !

But he was only grieved, not alienated or embittered. He did not defy his former associates, or go into the opposite ranks to contend against them. He



loved them just the same, would not be driven from his familiar associations with them, and, to the last, took as much interest in them and their institutions, their public occasions, and all their religious affairs, as he did in the affairs of those friends who were excluded with him, and who were ever ready to hail him as father, and reciprocate his confidence. And yet he was always true to his Liberal friends. When he found they were to be driven asunder from their old associations, he did not hesitate to go with them. And we know that to the end of his life he rejoiced that such had been his decision. It would have been violence to his whole nature to have joined what he always considered the illiberal side.

His theological views, probably, never underwent any material change from his early youth to the day of his death, — none, that is, which he was distinctly conscious of. If he was carried along at all by the progress of opinion around him, he was hardly aware of any change of position in himself. His mind was not of a character to discriminate sharply between shades of doctrinal differences, and being himself where he always was, he could see no more reason for a sectarian division of the Congregational body in 1815 than in 1790. He was strictly conservative in theology. He entertained none of the speculations of the time, accepted no novelties, would give no hearing to those who promised to show a better way of truth than that which he had long walked in. He had early anchored his mind fast upon the Bible, and found his Saviour, and learned, as he thought, to read his law, and rest upon his promises, and through him to “worship the Father in spirit and in truth,” and he did not think

that any body could teach him any thing more or better than this. He thought that the important truths of Christianity were as plain to the spiritual understanding as they were ever likely to be made by human learning; and he did not want any young man to give him his spiritual intuitions as substitutes for the old texts about righteousness and love, grace and peace, joy in the Holy Ghost, and the resurrection of the just to eternal life. He thought he had long known well enough in whom he believed, and the way of salvation. So his faith grew up with him, and grew old with him. It seems never to have suffered any distractions or perplexities. He was very firm and very happy in it; and while it gave him a high standard of virtue, humility, and pious trust, he never troubled himself to suit it to the fashion or the philosophy of the day, and never saw any occasion to re-lay its foundations, or change its substance, or distrust old proofs of it, or search for new ones.

There is certainly something very respectable, to say the least, in that sort of mind that can go on through a long life in one religious track, turning neither to the right nor the left, let the wind of doctrine blow about him which way it would, — not indifferent, not cold, not a mere conformist, — warm, living, but steady, always the same, early finding the rock, and, assured it is the rock of ages, planting itself upon it, and never swerving, though all the world say, Lo here! and Lo there! There is some grandeur in such a position and career. We do not say that it is practicable or desirable for all persons. We do not say that it indicates the highest type of mind. It is not from minds of that stamp, perhaps, that the highest

spiritual benefactions have proceeded. The world wants some bold, inquiring, progressive minds; and God wants them, for he has provided that there shall be such. Not all minds *can* abide in one stay. They must be sounding new depths; they must be looking always to the east and the west for more light, going forward, inquiring, proving, recasting their religious ideas. It is a necessity of their nature or their circumstances, and it is well. We will not say that they ought to do or be otherwise. But we do say, that whoever finds himself able and disposed to go through life in one settled faith, and that living and life-giving, needing no change, and seeking none, enjoying it, resting in it, living by it, and ever striving to live it out more and more in charity and in peace,—he is happy; he need not fear the taunts of the restless and progressive, who cannot be fixed themselves, nor bear to see any fixtures about them. He need not feel obliged to quit the tranquil lake because some call it stagnant, nor to launch upon the turbulent stream because some say there only is life. He will be countenanced by the examples of multitudes of as venerable and beautiful lives as ever were lived on earth, or closed in the hope of heaven.

In the other half of the Christian law, love to man, Dr. Pierce was not lacking. The most striking part of his character lay here. He had the kindest of natures. His heart seemed a fountain of loving-kindness, always gushing up and running over. Time, and experience of the world's coldness, never checked its stream or dried up a drop of it. What a cordial greeting was his! What a beaming friendliness on his face! We never knew the person who took so

heartily an interest in so many people, and showed it by such unequivocal signs. He seemed to know almost everybody, and all about him. And it was not an idle, prurient curiosity; if it had been, it would have run into scandal, as it usually does in those who make it a business to know and report everybody's affairs. He had no scandal. His love saved him from that. He said pleasant things and kind things. There was no venom under his tongue, no acid in his breast. He probably never made an enemy, nor lost a friend. His affections were warm, his sympathies were quick. He was generous according to his means. He loved young men. For more than fifty years, without interruption, we have been told, he travelled to Cambridge several times a year to attend the public exercises, and listened to every student with fond eagerness, as to a son of his own, and for ever after remembered him, and in most cases knew all about him.

Age did not blunt these kind feelings, or quench one ray of their youthful glow. Here he was remarkable. Age did not tend in the least to make him shrink into himself, or to narrow the circle of his sympathies. After seventy he would start off with the ardor of a school-boy, and walk miles, just to see an old friend, and would live for months after on the pleasure of the interview. And he not only loved other people, but he loved to be loved. He seemed to value nothing in this world so much as kind attention, affection, good-fellowship.

He was welcomed in all the pulpits to which he had access, not so much on account of his preaching as on his own account. People liked to see him and hear his voice, especially in singing, because his soul was in

it. They liked to see him, he seemed such a personal friend. His bare presence was as acceptable to many, and perhaps as profitable, as the sermons of some much greater men, — he was so sincere, so hearty, so kind. A word from him, with his great, cordial, friendly voice, at the church-door or in the aisle, would, for multitudes, make ample amends for any dryness in the regular discourse.

It is very singular that such warm affections towards both God and man did not impart their unction to his intellect, and give a character of rich and glowing sentiment to his composition ; but we believe they did not. They did lend animation and force to his delivery, but never gave their fire to his composition. He was not eloquent, or poetical, or affecting, in his writing. Somehow, there was a connecting link missing between his heart and his intellect. With feelings fresh, and warm, and pure enough to have made him a poet, an orator, and a splendid writer, he was not a bit of either. It was a singular instance of disconnection between the two parts of the mind. His great, fervent heart is not in his writings. But no matter, — he had it, and everybody knew he had it, and felt the influence of it, was warmed by its radiance, and gladdened by its benignity.

There is, then, no mystery about his extended reputation. This is the way it came, — by natural laws, interest for interest ; all knew him because he knew all ; all loved him, for he loved all ; all are touched by his death, for all have lost a friend.

Our view of Dr. Pierce would be incomplete without some reference to his last days. Providence greatly favored him in his last sickness. His faculties

were not impaired, and he was without pain. He was able, till the last, to sit up in his study and receive his friends. And how they poured in upon him! — and how glad he was to see them! — overwhelmed, he said, with joy at their kindness. It was so congenial to him, that it seemed not to weary him. And he was so cheerful, so happy! — nothing but happiness, he said, in his past life or present decay; happy, when he laid his hands on the children that came to him; happy in taking from kind hands the tokens of thoughtful regard that were brought to him; happy in greeting the troops of brethren and parishioners; happy in the grasp, that he knew would be the last, of a life-long friend, and happy in the tears of affection he shed on the neck of a foreigner whom he never saw before, but loved tenderly, as the apostle of temperance and the benefactor of his race; happy, too, in pointing to the green spot before his house, where he said he should soon be laid; and happiest of all in the prospect of the life that was about to dawn on him. His faith was firm, his trust unfaltering. He not only submitted to God's will, — he loved it and made it his own. He loved God and man, earth and heaven, more than ever. And one could hardly tell with which hand his heart went out with most energy and warmth, that which grasped the dear ties of domestic and friendly love on earth, or that which pointed in joyous and triumphant assurance to the opening mansions of the blest.

“That is greatness,” said one of our greatest men, referring to one of those interviews with him in his sickness — “that is greatness. We did not use to call him great, but he *is* great *now*; and what we commonly call great is very little compared with that.”

MEMOIR  
OF  
JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.





## JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

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JOSEPH TUCKERMAN was born in Boston, January 18, 1778. We have been able to obtain but little information respecting his early life. Like his friend Dr. Channing, he was blessed with the early influence of a pious mother, of whom he always spoke with peculiar gratitude, and to whom he not unfrequently alluded, as having had an important share in the formation of his character. "My father's health," says his daughter, "was delicate from early childhood; and it was this in part which drew him, more than is usually the case, to be the close companion of his excellent mother, as he delighted to call her. He often spoke of the enjoyment he had had as a child in sitting by her side, and reading the New Testament to her, while she sewed; and her good lessons seem never to have left his mind. From those earliest times he always expressed his intention of entering the ministry, and from this he never swerved in after-life." This was a course early recognized by his family. Both parents were spared to him until mature life, as we learn from a letter of his to a friend, dated October 25, 1837:—"I left

my family during the last nine weeks of the life of my father, that I might give myself wholly to him. My mother had left us many years previously. Besides, there were circumstances in her last illness which forbade that nearness to her, and those offices for her on the part of her sons, to which we could be admitted for my father. With him I could pass at once my nights and days; and the remembrance of those days and nights is among the most precious of the treasures of my heart."

Dr. Tuckerman's youth was passed, in preparation for college, partly at Phillips's Academy, in Andover, and partly in the family of the Rev. Mr. Thacher, of Dedham, who also afterwards conducted his preparatory studies for the ministry. "From the testimony of friends," says his daughter, "he seems to have been a very cheerful youth, with much love of merriment and social pleasures, and a very ardent enjoyment of poetry and belles-lettres. Indeed, even in the later years of his life, his eye would light up, and his enthusiasm awake, when speaking of his college life, and he would recite poetry by the hour which had delighted him then. It was a rich treat to see him and Judge Story together. They had been class-mates and room-mates at college; and, though their paths in life ran in different ways, yet, whenever they did meet, it was with all the ardor of youthful friendship; well they loved to talk over those old times together, and many a peal of laughter rang out as they did so. I have seen them meet and embrace in the crowded street, as if quite unaware either of the presence of others, or that in years they were now both old men." To this friend of his youth, we are indebted for the following

interesting letter to Dr. Channing, who was also his class-mate : —

“ Cambridge, April 10, 1841.

“ During our collegiate life, my acquaintance with Dr. Tuckerman was but slight, until my junior year, when he became my chum ; and so pleasant and confidential was our intercourse during that year, that we should undoubtedly have continued chums during the remainder of our college studies, if some family arrangements had not made it necessary for him to adopt a different course. The change, however, did not prove the slightest interruption of our intercourse and friendship ; and I feel great gratification in saying, that from that period until the close of his life, I am not conscious that there was, on either side, any abatement of mutual affection and respect ; and whenever and wherever we met, it was with the warm welcome of early and unsuspected friendship. . . .

“ Many of the characteristics so fully developed in his later life were clearly manifested when our acquaintance first commenced. During his college life, he did not seem to have any high relish for most of the course of studies then pursued. He had an utter indifference, if not dislike, to mathematics, and logic, and metaphysics, and but a slight inclination for natural philosophy. He read the prescribed classical writers with moderate diligence, not so much a matter of taste or ambition, as of duty, and as a task belonging to the recitation-room, the Latin being uniformly preferred to the Greek. And yet I should not say that he was idle or indolent, or without a strong desire of improvement. His principal pleasure lay in a devotion to the more open and facile branches of literature, and especially

of English literature. History, moral philosophy, poetry, the drama, and the class of studies generally known by the name of the belles-lettres, principally attracted his attention ; and in these, his reading was at once select and various. The writings of Addison, Johnson, and Goldsmith were quite familiar to him. The historical works of Robertson, and Gillies, and Ferguson, and other authors distinguished in that day, as well as the best biographical works, were within the range of his studies. In poetry, he was more attached to those who addressed his feelings and imagination, than to those who addressed the understanding, and moralized their song in the severe language of the condensed expression of truth, or the pungent pointedness of satire, or the sharp sallies of wit. Gray's 'Bard,' and Collins's 'Ode to the Passions,' were his favorites ; and, above all, Shakspeare, in whose writings he was thoroughly well read, and often declaimed many of the most stirring passages with the spirit and interest of the dramatic action of the stage. Young's 'Night Thoughts' seemed to be almost the only work, which, from its deep and touching appeals, and elevated devotion, and darkened descriptions of life, and sudden bursts of eloquence and enthusiasm, made him feel at that time the potency of genius employed in unfolding religious truths. He possessed, also, a singular readiness and facility in composition, perhaps what would by some persons be deemed a dangerous facility. What he wrote, he threw off at once in the appropriate language, rarely correcting his first sketch, and not ambitious of condensing or refining the materials by successive efforts.

“ I have thus far spoken of his taste and intellectual

pursuits and attachments in our college life. But what I most delight to dwell on are, his warm-hearted benevolence, his buoyant and cheerful temper, his active, sympathetic charity, his gentle and frank manners, and, above all, that sunniness of soul which cast a bright light over all hours, and made our fireside one of the most pleasant of all social scenes. So, uniform, indeed, was his kindness and desire to oblige, that I do not remember a single instance in which he ever betrayed either a hastiness of temper or a flash of resentment. He was accustomed to distribute a portion of his weekly allowance among the poor and the friendless and the suffering. His love of morals and virtue was as ardent as it was elevated. His conduct was blameless and pure. I do not believe that he ever wrote a word which, dying, he could have wished to blot, on account of impurity of thought or allusion; and his conversation was at all times, that which might have been heard by the most delicate and modest ears. Occasionally, his buoyancy of spirits might lead him to indulge in giddy dreaminess or romantic fervors, such as belong to the untried hopes and inexperience of youth; but it might with truth be said that, even if he had any failings in this respect, they leaned to virtue's side.

“I confess, however, that the opening of his literary career did not then impress me with the notion, that he would afterwards attain in his profession and character the eminence to which every one will now deem him justly entitled. He seemed to want that steadiness of purpose, which looks difficulties in the face, and overcomes obstacles, because a high object lies behind them. His mind touched and examined many subjects, but was desultory and varying in its efforts.

I was in this view mistaken; and I overlooked the probable effects upon a mind like his, of deep religious sensibility, and, if I may so say, of an enthusiasm for goodness, when combined with a spirit of glowing benevolence.

“When we quitted college our opportunities of familiar intercourse, from the wide diversity of our pursuits, as well as from our local distance, were necessarily diminished. I saw him only at distant intervals, while he was engaged in his preparatory studies for the ministry; and when, on entering his study one day, I found him reading Griesbach’s edition of the New Testament with intense attention, and in his comments on it in our conversation, discoursing with a force and discrimination which showed the earnestness with which he was endeavoring to master his profession, a new light struck upon me, and I began to perceive that he was redeeming his time, and disciplining his thoughts to the highest purposes. During his residence, after his settlement, at Chelsea, I saw him frequently, either at Salem, where I then resided, or at Chelsea, where I took occasion, on my visits to Boston, to pass some time at his house. The improvement was constantly visible; his studies more expanded; his knowledge more exact, as well as various; and his piety, that beautiful ornament so deeply set in his character, shining forth with its deep and mild and benignant light, with a peculiar attractiveness.”

It will not be uninteresting to associate with these, the impressions of his other distinguished class-mate, Dr. Channing:—

“My acquaintance with Joseph Tuckerman,” he says, “began about forty-seven years ago, and during

most of the time which has since elapsed, we lived together as brothers, communicating thoughts, feelings, reproofs, encouragements, with a faithfulness not often surpassed. I think of him with peculiar pleasure, as he was, perhaps, the most signal example, within my remembrance, of improvement; of a man overcoming obstacles, and making progress under disadvantages. When I first met him in college, he had the innocence of childhood; he was sympathizing, generous, without a stain of the vices to which youth is prone; but he did not seem to have any serious views of life. Three years he passed almost as a holiday, unconscious of his privileges, uninterested in his severer studies, surrendering himself to sportive impulses, which, however harmless in themselves, consumed the hours which should have been given to toil. How often has he spoken to me, with grief and compunction, of his early wasted life! In his last college year a change began, and the remote cause of it he often spoke of with lively sensibility. His mother, he was accustomed to say, was one of the best of women. She had instilled into him the truths of religion with a mother's love, tempered with no common wisdom. The seed was sown in a kindly nature. The religious principle, which at first had only been a restraint from evil, began to incite to good; and to this, the progress and greatness of his life were mainly due. On leaving college he gave himself to the Christian ministry; but with the unchastened inconsideration of his youth, he plunged into its duties with little preparation. The consequence was a succession of mortifications, most painful at the time, but of which he afterwards spoke as a merciful discipline. So unpromising was the

opening of a career of singular energy and usefulness."

Soon after Dr. Tuckerman began to preach, he received, November 4th, 1801, an invitation to become the successor of the Rev. Dr. Payson, at Chelsea, at that time a small and obscure village in the neighborhood of Boston. The people were chiefly farmers, in very moderate circumstances, and of little intellectual culture. Among them he spent a quarter of a century, in the faithful exercise of pastoral duty, and in this quiet and secluded spot exhibited all the beautiful and noble traits of an Oberlin.

"Years passed," says Dr. Channing, "in a life which we should call monotonous, but which was singularly fitted to give him the calmness and steadiness which he needed. Here he became a student, a faithful, laborious student, and accumulated much knowledge, and devoted no little time to the thorny topics of theology. Thus the defects of his early intellectual training were repaired, and his faculties sharpened and invigorated. He was not, however, made to wear out life in such pursuits. His strength did not lie in abstract speculation. Had he given himself to this, he would never have forced his way to new or great views. His heart was his great power. To his moral, religious, benevolent sentiments, he owed chiefly the expansion of his intellectual nature."

We are indebted for the following remarks respecting this period, to his relative, the Rev. Dr. Parkman.

"At first, my brother was far from being a popular preacher, having some peculiarities (perhaps I must say affectations) of manner and utterance, which were painful and disagreeable, and from which, I think, he



was never entirely free. Neither did his early efforts give clear indications of the strength and ability which he afterwards attained. But with his faithful and conscientious devotion to the studies and duties of his profession, his heart being wholly given to his work, his progress was as rapid as it was manifest; and for many years before leaving Chelsea, he was welcomed and honored in our churches as an able and instructive, if not an eloquent preacher.

“I have always regarded my brother’s ministry at Chelsea as the ‘shining glory’ of his life. It was there he laid the foundations of all his future usefulness, and for a long series of years labored most faithfully and patiently as a devoted Pastor, amidst few encouragements except the love of his little flock and his own approving conscience. I was often his guest, and spent two or three of my college vacations under his roof; and was the witness of his course. I may truly say, that my earliest and deepest impression of what is meant by a good minister were derived from my observation of him. He loved his people, regarded them as his family, and, according to their condition and needs, was the father, brother, and friend to them all. The same kindness and benevolence, which distinguished his ‘ministry at large’ in Boston, were exhibited here. Part of his parishioners lived at a distance, near an exposed beach; and I have known him very often go out alone, in severe storms and snow-drifts, to provide for some family, or perhaps some infirm aged person, who he thought might be suffering. In winter, his church being distant from many of their homes, the congregation was exceedingly small; and, once and again, I have heard him preach new and excellent sermons,

with unabated earnestness and affection, to less than twenty hearers. It might truly be said of him, that he 'commended himself as the minister of God in much patience, in pureness, in kindness, and love unfeigned,' and part of the reward of such fidelity he found in the entire confidence and love of his people."

A similar testimony to his faithful and earnest devotion to pastoral duty, and his interest in the spiritual welfare of his flock, is afforded by the Rev. George M. Rice, who was afterwards pastor of the same church at Chelsea, and whose recent inquiries of the older inhabitants of the place respecting Dr. Tuckerman elicited the most satisfactory evidence of his great fidelity in every particular, and especially of his Christian benevolence.

"So far as the spirit of mingled piety and philanthropy could consecrate any minister to his work, he was consecrated. He was thoroughly devoted to the good of his flock—not merely their spiritual good, though this awakened his deepest interest, and for this he longed and labored more than for any thing else, but to their intellectual and physical benefit also, to every thing, in fact, which pertained to their welfare both here and hereafter. He thoroughly identified himself with his people, entered, with his large and sympathizing heart, into all their wants, and made himself felt as the personal friend of them all.

"But that which characterized his ministry the most, that which made him peculiarly an object of the veneration and love of his parishioners, was his glowing interest in the poor and suffering. The same traits of humanity, compassion, disinterestedness, and self-sacrificing benevolence, were conspicuous in him in this

humble theatre of action, which afterwards drew upon him so much of the public regard and admiration, in the wider sphere of his missionary labors in Boston. He was always, in this respect, the same man. His visits were principally among the poor, the sick, the afflicted, of his flock. *They* were never neglected, but shared the most largely in his attentions and sympathies. His purse, too, was as open as his heart, and his bounty knew no limit but his means. More than one member of his flock looked up to him as almost their only earthly dependence. His visits at the poor-house were very frequent. He delighted to go there, with his words of consolation and cheer ; and seldom did he go without carrying also something which would minister to their physical comfort as well as to the spiritual edification of its inmates. One old lady in particular, who lived to a very advanced age, was supported almost entirely by his liberality. ‘Mr. Tuckerman was *extraordinary* good to old Mrs. Hasey,’ said to me one who was her fellow-lodger, a partaker with her of his kindness, and who is now the only survivor of those who were under the care of the town during the period of his ministry. In this connection it may be properly stated, that the family which perhaps, of all others in his parish, he visited the most, and to whom he showed the most attention, was a *colored family*. Many facts and incidents might be related, illustrative of the goodness and generosity of his heart. There being no physician in the town, and it being difficult for his people to procure medicines, he kept a constant supply of such as they would be likely to need at his own house, and dispensed them to all comers, free of charge. Having a taste also for

medical science, and having possessed himself of a good deal of practical information on the subject, he was sometimes able to give his people valuable advice and assistance when otherwise they would require the services of a physician. ‘Frequently have I known him,’ said one of the former deacons of his church, ‘when I have accompanied him on his visits to the sick, slip a piece of paper into the hands of those upon whom he called, as he parted from them, which would afterwards be found to enclose a substantial token of his charity. Nor was his kindness confined to the little circle of his own parish; wherever, in the vicinity, he heard of any one who was in distress of any kind, and in need of assistance, there he was quick to go, and to do all in his power for their relief. In a word, to quote the expression of one of his parishioners, who had known him longest, and who was on terms of the greatest intimacy with him, and who had himself had large experience of his kindness, his aim seemed to be, *to realize the idea of the good Samaritan.*

“Dr. Tuckerman manifested great interest in the moral and spiritual welfare of the young of his society. He regularly catechized the children, as was the general ministerial practice previous to the introduction of the Sunday School; and he was much in the habit of conversing with the young men, and giving them his parental advice. He secured to himself in an uncommon degree the love and respect of the young, and, in truth, of all of whatever age or condition who sat under his ministry. His preaching was not remarkable for its eloquence, but was always weighty and impressive; and the thorough conviction which his

people had of his sincerity, and their hearty reverence for his character, gave a power to the simplest word that fell from his lips, far beyond any effect which the highest intellectual ability, unassociated with the same element of moral influence, could possibly produce. The results of his ministry were most happy. The general morals of the people were greatly improved, numbers were added to the church, the attendance on public worship was much increased, and there was more attention to religion than ever had been before.

“Nothing could be more delightful than the relation which existed between this good pastor and his beloved little flock. He was all to them that George Herbert describes in his ‘Country Parson ;’ and they looked up to him as to a father, and rejoiced in the benediction of his counsel and care.”

Of the piety and love which influenced Dr. T. in his pastoral visits, and which so eminently fitted him to enter afterwards on the great mission of his life, we cannot give a more vivid picture than in the words of his daughter. “Amongst my earliest recollections,” she says, “are those of accompanying my father upon his parish visits, when I was quite too young to comprehend the greater part of the conversation which passed. To me he seemed some superior being ; and the feeling was not lessened by observing the reverence and love which everywhere greeted him, and how gently and firmly he seemed to guide all in the pathway to Heaven. And as he spoke of the Saviour with so much love and reverence, as he always did, I looked at him and thought, ‘He must have looked as you do now.’ As we walked on from house to house, he would often unconsciously break forth into strong and ardent expressions of his thoughts ; he would then

gesticulate earnestly, and press my little hand, which he held within his, strongly, and quicken his pace until I was obliged to run by his side to keep pace with him. When he perceived this he would stop and speak kindly to me, and would smile when I told him 'he had been preaching aloud, as if we were in church;' and he generally seemed much exhausted; but sometimes the interruption was but momentary, and then he would go on again in the same strain."

During Dr. Tuckerman's residence at Chelsea, his attention was particularly directed to the temptations and sufferings to which sailors are exposed; and he first in the United States made an effort for the improvement and instruction of this class of men. In the winters of 1811-12, he formed the first society which was established for the "Religious and Moral Improvement of Seamen." "The enterprise," he says, "was begun with much spirit. In five years we published eleven original tracts, written with express reference to our objects, and which were distributed extensively. In consequence of a failure in my health, I went to Europe in 1816. The Society soon declined; and in 1817 we published our last tract. I have great pleasure in recurring to the testimonials we received from masters of vessels of the good influence exerted by these tracts. Whether the formation of other associations for this object is in any measure attributable to the action of the society established here, I know not. 'The Boston Port Society,' of which Mr. Taylor is the efficient instrument, is one of the most valuable of the moral agencies in our city."\* "The History of a Bible," prepared for this Society,

\* Ministry at Large in Cities," p. 173.

has been reprinted and extensively circulated in our own country. On one occasion, some eight or ten years before his death, a man who had seen much trial said to him, "I met with a little tract many years ago, which has done me more good than any thing else in this world. I do not know who was its author, but I have blessed him many times in my heart. The tract was called 'Ejaculatory Prayer.'" This was one which Dr. Tuckerman had written for the Society soon after its commencement.

Dr. Tuckerman's sphere of thought and exertion was not bounded by his narrow parish of Chelsea. Did space permit, we could give interesting extracts from his letters at this period. In these he speaks of an association formed in Boston, of intelligent and serious laymen and clergymen, for the discussion of important questions of religion and morals. It was this association, we believe, which afterwards originated the Ministry at Large. He discusses the actual state of religion in New England, and adverts to the missionary enterprise in India, alluding with much interest to Rammohun Roy. The manner in which he speaks of Dr. Channing will be interesting. "Of all men whom I ever knew, Dr. Channing possesses the most perfect and constant self-possession. We were class-mates in college, and I lived with him in habits of the greatest intimacy; and I can assure you that of greater moral purity, or of greater habitual piety, I can hardly conceive in man than I have long known in him."

Dr. Tuckerman was peculiarly happy in his domestic relations. He was twice married; and each of these connections gave him an invaluable friend. In

June, 1803, he was married to Abigail, sister of the Rev. Dr. Parkman, of Boston, who died of consumption, four years afterwards, leaving three children, of whom only one survives. There still live those who remember the loveliness of her character ; and it may not be amiss, to transcribe here a short extract from a tribute to her memory, written by the Rev. Henry Colman, which appeared, soon after her death, in one of the public prints.

“ To know this lady, was to esteem and love her. Her character was truly amiable. The pure and benevolent spirit of the gospel was wrought into her whole life. It glowed in her heart, and displayed itself in all her conduct. Her temper was equable, mild, cheerful, and kind ; her manners were condescending, amiable, and unassuming. Her life was consecrated to her duties ; and her domestic and benevolent qualities rendered her singularly dear to her family, her friends, and the society in which she lived.”

In November, 1808, he was again married, to Sarah, daughter of Col. Cary, of Chelsea ; who was spared to him thirty-one years, to be “ one with him in hope, in interest, in enjoyment.” How worthy she was to be his helpmate, we learn from himself. “ You can hardly imagine a human being more true, more disinterested, more faithful to right and duty. Never physically vigorous, she has, notwithstanding, the greatest moral courage and independence. In times of difficulty and danger, she is as calm, as self-possessed, as under the most tranquil circumstances ; and has passed through long seasons of privation, responsibility, and watching, which might have worn down a strong man. O ! woman, woman, of what art thou not capable in



virtue ! Think you, there are any records in the Book of Life which stand out in brighter characters of light than those of the holy, but humble, service of unostentatious and retiring, but devout and devoted, wives and mothers ? ”

In 1816, Dr. Tuckerman paid a visit to England, accompanied by his wife, in the hope of benefiting his health, but was absent only a short time ; after his return he suffered much from dyspepsia, and never recovered his full tone of health. He continued, however, in the active discharge of the duties of his ministry till the spring of 1826, when he felt the necessity of relinquishing in some measure the labors of the pulpit. In his public services, if not powerful, he could not fail to be interesting ; for he spoke from the heart, and his natural temperament led him to express his deep convictions more warmly in speaking than in writing. “ His flow of words and thoughts,” says his daughter, “ was most abundant ; and I believe his preaching was generally, if not always, more acceptable to his hearers when extemporaneous than when written or premeditated. In later years, I have often given him a text or a subject on the church steps, which he liked much that I should do, particularly when it was one which had that day interested me with my Bible class ; and I have never heard him more eloquent than on these occasions, or seen his audience more deeply engaged and attentive.”

On the fourth of November, 1826, just twenty-five years from the day of his ordination, he preached his farewell sermon at Chelsea, and immediately commenced his service in Boston, to which place he soon removed with his family. Of his residence at Chelsea,

Dr. Tuckerman thus speaks, in a work which he published many years later, entitled, "Principles and Results of the Ministry at Large in Boston."

"I passed twenty-five years," he says, "as the minister of a small religious society in the country. The lines of my parish there were the lines also of the town. There was no other religious society in the place than that to which I ministered. There the rich and the poor, or, in other words, those who had some capital and those who had none, met on terms of equality before the church door on Sunday, interchanged expressions of friendly greeting, and separated to pass into their own pews or into free galleries, without the slightest feeling, in either case, that distinction of condition was thus implied between them. In every family of my flock I was at home. I knew intimately all the parents, all the children, and almost every one who was employed for any considerable time as a laborer upon the farms around me. I visited all, and almost all in return visited me; and to every one I ever felt myself at liberty to speak of his interests, moral as well as secular, with the freedom of a brother. I had given much time to pastoral intercourse, to communication with individual minds upon subjects upon which I had addressed them from the pulpit; and I had learned that this intercourse was a means not less important than the services of the church for giving vitality to the religious principle among the members of a congregation. I had learned also, not only that conversation might usefully be held upon religious and moral subjects with those previously interested in these subjects, but with many who had been indifferent, or even opposed to them; and that not a few were most glad to be

addressed upon them by their pastor, whose diffidence would have restrained them from making these the leading subjects of their conversations with him.\*

With these brief records we must close the history of nearly half a century of the existence, a full quarter of a century of the active life, of one who was destined by Providence henceforth to touch the hearts of thousands instead of a few, no longer to be bounded by a small parish, but to breathe forth his spirit of piety and love over two hemispheres. And was the time lost that was spent thus in obscurity? We believe not. These were "the days of preparation" for that holy sacrifice of his "heart and soul and strength" to the work which his Heavenly Father had given him to do, the work of reclaiming souls to God.

"It was while he was at Chelsea," says Judge Story, "the minister of a comparatively small and isolated parish, that he nourished and matured the great scheme of his life and ambition, the Ministry at Large for the poor. I need not dwell upon its beneficial effects or its extraordinary success. I deem it one of the most glorious triumphs of Christian charity over the cold and reluctant doubts of popular opinion. The task was full of difficulties, — to elevate the poor into a self-consciousness of their duty and destiny, and to bring the rich into sympathy with them; to relieve want and suffering without encouraging indolence and sloth; to give religious instruction, where it was most needed, freely and without stint, and thus to widen the sphere as well as the motives to virtue, among the desolate and the desponding. It was, in fact, doing

\* "Ministry at Large," pp. 14, 15.

what Burke has so beautifully expressed, — it was to remember the forgotten.”

We have hitherto left our readers to estimate Dr. Tuckerman's mind and character from the impressions he made on others, and from the scanty notices of his labors which we have been able to collect. Henceforth we shall learn his principles of action, his thoughts and feelings, chiefly from himself, as we may collect them from his printed writings or his letters to friends. His life was one of but little incident ; it was the unvarying expression in action of the deep purpose of his soul, to live “after the power of an endless life ;” and by gentle persuasion, by untiring effort, by the strength of love, to win others to do so likewise. Could we but read the silent heart-history of but a few of those to whom he extended his ministrations, how many revelations might we have of him, as a ministering angel to the sick and sorrowing, a father to the fatherless, a heavenly guide to the wandering ! But those histories no human eye must behold : to the Father of Spirits only are they revealed. It will be our aim so to record his principles, his feelings, and the course they led him to adopt, that others may be incited to follow in his footsteps.

Dr. Tuckerman has sometimes been called the founder of the Ministry at Large. Strictly speaking, this is, perhaps, incorrect, as gratuitous instruction had been given to the poor, both by laymen and clergymen, before his removal to Boston, and evening religious lectures had been established for those who had no place of worship during the day. The moral claims of the poor had, before this time, engaged the attention of a “Society for the Moral and Religious

Instruction of the Poor," who had employed missionaries in the accomplishment of their objects, one of whom was thus engaged for a short time after Dr. Tuckerman's arrival, but he soon relinquished the work. But Dr. Tuckerman gave a life to this ministry which had never been infused into it before, saw its true aim and high importance, and, by the deep interest he felt in it himself, called public attention to the necessity of such a Mission; we may, therefore, give him, though he did not himself assume it, the high honor of being the originator of this institution. Dr. Tuckerman removed to Boston, and began his ministry on the 5th of November, 1826. He immediately commenced visiting the poor, aided by two of his friends, Moses Grant, and Frederick T. Gray, who afterwards became his colleague. At the end of the first year he had become acquainted with 170 families; at the expiration of another six months he was the pastor of 250 families, and there was hardly a by-way or yard which he had not explored thoroughly.

Those who knew Dr. Tuckerman in later life, when his success in his work must have given him some confidence, can hardly realize the perplexity which, at its commencement, he felt in it. "At first," says Dr. Channing, "he entered almost tremblingly the houses of the poor, where he was a stranger, to offer his sympathy and friendship. But 'the sheep knew the voice of the shepherd.' The poor recognized by instinct their friend, and from the first moment a relation of singular tenderness and confidence was established between them. That part of his life I well remember, for he came often to pour into my ear and heart his experience and success. I well remember the effect

which contact with the poor produced on his mind. He had loved them when he knew little of them, when their distresses came to him through the imagination. But he was a proof, that no speculation or imagination can do the work of actual knowledge. So deep was the sympathy, so intense the interest, which the poor excited in him, that it seemed as if a new fountain of love had been opened within him. No favorite of fortune could have repaired to a palace, where the rays of royal favor were to be centered on him, with a more eager spirit and quicker step, than our friend hastened to the abodes of want, in the darkest alleys of our city. How often have I stood humbled before the deep, spiritual love, which burst from him in those free communications which few enjoyed beside myself! I cannot forget one evening, when, in conversing with the late Dr. Follen and myself on the claims of the poor, and on the cold-heartedness of society, he not only deeply moved us, but filled us with amazement by his depth of feeling and energy of utterance; nor can I forget how, when he left us, Dr. Follen, a man fitted by his own spirit to judge of greatness, said to me, '*He is a great man.*' "

The nature of the enthusiasm which Dr. Tucker-<sup>o</sup>man carried into his work, and the calm, deep earnestness with which he engaged in it, will be best learned from himself. "It has sometimes been said to me, when conversing of the objects and interests of this ministry, 'You are an enthusiast; and indeed no small enthusiasm is demanded for this work.' I never hear this expression without pain. The conception implied is, that a heated imagination, and a corres-

ponding ardor of the whole character, is required for the service ; and that this is not a work for the calm, the cool, and the calculating. This mistake, if prevalent and acted upon, will be fatal to the cause. I admit, indeed, that enthusiasm, in the sense of earnestness, is an element essential to success in this work. And is it not, also, in every other, in which great results are to be hoped for only from great and persevering labors ? The earnestness, however, required here, is as distinct in its kind as is the service itself. It is not merely a constitutional fervor ; nor a fervor of any kind which finds its end in any passion or interest of the individual who feels it ; it is rather the earnestness of a Christian appreciation of human beings, and of moral and spiritual interests. It is the earnestness which is awakened in the soul by a feeling of its own relation to God, and of its relation to all men as equally the children of God. It is earnestness awakened by interest in man, in view of God's purposes respecting him ; of the difficulties of man's condition in respect to these purposes ; of the greatness of man's danger and sufferings, and of his need of sympathy and moral aid ; and, not less than all these, by the conviction that we may be to these sufferers instruments of the sympathy and moral aid they so strongly need. It is earnestness in the work of obviating moral difficulties, where these difficulties are too great to be overcome by those in whose path they lie ; of strengthening those who are ready to sink under their trials ; and of blessing as many as we may, as they could not otherwise be blessed than through the Gospel. It is not, however, a heated fancy, and an easy credulity, with whatever zeal or earnestness these may

be combined, which have given, or can give, important results in this service. I like not, therefore, to hear of this as a work for enthusiasts. Too great earnestness, indeed, cannot be brought to it. But, I pray, let it be the earnestness of calm, deep, and strong conviction; the hallowed earnestness of a Christian estimation of man; of clear conceptions of moral interests, as the highest of all interests; and of a corresponding sensibility to human difficulties and sufferings, as God calls for the sympathy and aid of those who can rescue the exposed, give relief to heavily-burdened souls, show their danger to those who are insensible of it, stretch a helping hand to those who are struggling for life, and, it may be, even save from moral death those who shall be found upon the very verge of it."\*

He thus describes, when writing to a friend, what he conceives to be the needful qualifications of the minister at large. "He must be a man of strong health, of great activity of body and mind; zealous and earnest, but deep and calm in feeling; a hearty lover of his race; one whose moral courage will never fail him; who nicely discriminates, but kindly judges; who will hope, where every one beside will despair; whose confidence in human nature will be unshaken, amidst all possible manifestations of vice; who would rather be the agent of God for the moral recovery of the most degraded and despised fellow-being, than possess the fee simple of his country. O that you might find a man who shall be wholly qualified for the glorious work!" Such a man, except unhappily in physical strength, was Dr. Tuckerman.

\* "Ministry at Large," pp. 190, 191.



We may learn, also, from himself, the principles on which he commenced his ministry, and in the importance of which, continued experience confirmed him only more fully.

“ In the first place I would observe, that in this service we regard every one as an individual, having his own peculiarities, intellectual, moral, and physical ; his own peculiar combination of the elements which go to form dispositions, character, and habits ; his own measure in respect to all capacities and tendencies common to human beings ; his own susceptibilities, weaknesses, exposures ; and consequently his own moral necessities and claims. Too much importance can hardly be attached to this preliminary view of operations for the moral improvement of our fellow-beings. Every human being, not less in this class than in the highest and most approved, is himself, and not another ; and not only numerically, but morally *one*. He is one in a sense which utterly forbids that he should be confounded with another ; and however closely he may be bound to others by common affections and interests, by common weaknesses, and dependencies, and wants, and however he may act with, or for, others, or may be hindered or aided, injured or blessed, by others, he is still to be, — such is God’s purpose, — the former of his own character. He is to bear his own burden. He is to work out his own salvation. No mode of operation is therefore to be adopted, and no result is to be sought, which will interfere with, or be independent of, this elementary and essential principle of action. Our Saviour taught in the temple, and in the synagogue ; he addressed the multitudes which gathered to hear him, from a

mountain, or by the sea-shore, or in a plain. But he never lost sight of the individuality of man. He never viewed men only in classes or masses. He never rested in generalities in his instructions, or his efforts for human reformation, progress, and salvation. The sentiment, or rather the principle, here referred to, is implied in and pervades his whole teaching. ‘*Him*’ — the individual — ‘that cometh to me,’ said Jesus, ‘I will in no wise cast out.’ ‘*Whosoever*’ — or the individual, be he who he may, that — ‘heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man that built his house upon a rock.’ ‘There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one sinner* that repenteth.’ ‘It is not the will of your Father that is in heaven, that *one of these little ones shall perish.*’ A faithful regard to this principle is, I think, vital to the highest moral success in the work of instruction. Where there is a disregard of it, whatever may be immediate promise or apparent fruit, I should look for but little permanent good.

“I beg to remark, also, in view of our modes of operation, that I attach equal importance to the principle, that there is no human being, however depraved, who is yet totally depraved; no one, however apparently lost beyond hope, whose condition is yet to be considered as utterly hopeless; no one for whom moral efforts are not to be made as long as God shall uphold him in being. No one, therefore, is to be given up, abandoned, cast off as a sinner, whatever may have been his long continuance, and whatever may be his hardihood and his desperation in sin. This was a first principle of that theory of human nature with which I entered upon my ministry; and

every step of my way in this ministry has convinced me of the truth and importance of the principle. To my mind, also, this is a pervading principle of Christianity. It has been to me for light and strength, where I am sure I should otherwise have been in utter darkness; and I am persuaded that, with God's blessing, it has been to me for success in cases, in which, otherwise, I should hardly have been induced to have made an effort. I state this principle distinctly, and give prominence to it, because not only the question of modes of operation, but even of the propriety, in many cases, of attempting to operate at all, is most intimately connected with it. I do not indeed believe there ever was, or that there is, the human being in whom there was, or is, no element of goodness; no element of moral recoverableness; no unextinguished spark of moral sensibility, which, with God's blessing, may not be blown into a flame. There is no one so corrupted that there are no moral remains in him." \* . . . .

"I would, then, apply myself to every case with a settled conviction that it is not a hopeless one, even in respect to the ministry which it may please God that I may exercise in regard to it. I would feel and cherish the feeling of responsibility in respect to the degree of success to be obtained in it. I would be wholly discouraged by no difficulties and by no obduracy, as long as means and opportunity for action shall be continued to me. If I shall cease from efforts for a time, I will still look for opportunities of resuming them. In this exercise of my mind and

\* Abridged from "Ministry at Large," &c. pp. 85-89.

heart I have found some of the strongest interests, and in following out this principle, some of the best remunerations of my service. I will give a single example of the application of this principle.

“It was about eight or nine years ago, I think, that I became acquainted with a family in which were four or five beautiful young children, and a wife and mother most solicitously striving for their well-being. But her husband, the father of these children, though entirely able most comfortably to support her, and them, and himself, — for he had a good trade, and was a skilful workman, and had sufficient demand for his labor, — was yet not unfrequently for eight or ten days together entirely disqualified for work, by an utter abandonment to intemperance. At these times, when he could not obtain money for the purchase of spirits, he would leave in pledge for payment one and another of his garments, till he had scarcely a sufficiency left to cover him. I had soon the great happiness to obtain his confidence. He acknowledged his fault, his sin, and resolved and strove against it. But I believe that nearly two years passed before he recovered sufficient moral strength to maintain his self-denial longer than a month. His lapses even seemed for a time to be regularly periodical. During twenty-eight or thirty days he would abstain wholly from every stimulating drink; and then, in an unhappy hour, he would fall again. At my calls upon him after a few days’ absence, and when I had left him at our last interview apparently determined and strong, I from time to time found him, — for he worked at home, — either on the bed or on the floor, utterly stupid and insensible. No check but of forcible confine-

ment could now restrain him from the indulgence of his appetite, till, by some mysterious movement within himself, he should be recalled to consciousness of his condition. Very soon, however, after he was thus recalled, I was always with him. He would then be humbled and ashamed, would make full confession, and even weep. I saw that the difficulties of his case were very great, and I felt no disposition to reproach him. My whole efforts were directed to an encouragement and invigoration of the moral principle, to which I looked for his recovery. I could not, without great inquietude to myself, be long absent from him, and I availed myself of every means of enlightening and encouraging him. His intervals of faithful abstinence became extended to five and six weeks, but for a long time could be carried no further. At length, however, he maintained an entire abstinence from ardent spirits for ten months. Then he fell again. But his family, during this time, had thriven as they had never before thriven. He had known the happiness of self-control, of domestic union and affection, of a little store in the bank laid by of his wages, of the progress and happiness of his children, and of a peaceful conscience. From this fall he rose, as I trust not again to fall. I believe that, during the last three years, he has not tasted ardent spirits. He is a respectable, industrious, useful, and happy member of our community. Few meet each other with higher satisfaction than he and I feel, as often as we come together. But suppose that, within the first year or two, or even within the first three or four years of our acquaintance, he had been forsaken as incorrigible and

beyond hope ; would he, in that case, probably have been what he now is ? ” \*

With such principles, but with plans undeveloped, and almost unformed, Dr. Tuckerman commenced his ministry. He was soon forcibly and painfully struck with the very large number of families who were quite unconnected with any religious society, and who never looked for the visit of a minister, except in a case of severe illness, or of a funeral. These were not only the very poor, but operatives of all kinds, who, feeling a difficulty of paying for seat rent, felt too proud to occupy free sittings. From observation of the evils attendant on neglect of public worship, he was led to perceive, as he had never done before, the importance of religious institutions. He says, — “ I had been made to feel, as no description could have made me feel, the general superiority of the character and condition of the poor who were connected with our religious societies, over those who were not so connected.” Thinking it desirable to ascertain how large a proportion of the population of the city was thus entirely without any religious instruction, he addressed a circular to the ministers of each one of the Protestant religious societies, requesting exact information respecting the number of families connected severally with them. From half of these churches, including a great variety of denominations, he received answers, from which it appeared that above a third of the Protestant families in Boston were not under any regular ministrations of religion. This, and similar facts,

\* “ Ministry at Large,” pp. 91-93.

which he was able to bring before the public, led, after a time, to the establishment of a "Fraternity of Churches" throughout the city. Each church contributed, according to its means, to a general fund, by which a number of "Ministers at Large" were supported, the general direction of the whole being entrusted to a Central Board, while each minister confined himself to his own district. In connection with these, places of worship were established, of which we may speak more hereafter.

The first great need, then, which struck Dr. Tuckerman, on becoming acquainted with the lowest poor in Boston, was the want of religious influence. This he saw might be brought forcibly to bear on their external condition, and he felt that the first aim of the minister should be, to gain a hold on the spiritual nature of each individual, and, by degrees, to draw around him a flock to whom he might be a true pastor. "I want that man's soul," he once said with deep emotion to Dr. Channing; and, with this earnestness of Christian love, he approached all to whom he directed his efforts. But he knew that they were not yet in a condition to comprehend the nature of the blessings he wished to confer on them, or even to understand his interest in them. He first, then, strove to gain access to them in such a manner as should gain their confidence in the kindness of his intentions. Two broad avenues of communication lay open to him. The first and most easy was to those families in which there were children; in these he had always felt the deepest interest.

"In each one of the children of this class, filthy, ragged, wild, and lawless, as we may find it, we see one who is soon to be a man, or a woman; and to be,

in mature life, what the scenes and influences of its childhood shall have coöperated to make it. 'What manner of child shall this be?' is, therefore, to us, a question of paramount concern. It may be that we shall take such a child from the street, and be guided by it to its home. Mark, however, that we shall have uttered no expression to the child but of tenderness and of affection. We shall have allowed nothing in our words, our tone, our manner, which shall have repelled the child, or made him or her reluctant to go home with us. Nor shall there be any thing in our words, our tone, our manner, which shall repel the parent from us. Not only is our interest in the child deep and strong, but our sympathy also with it, and with its parents. They may be very vicious, but it is quite certain that their condition is a very wretched one, and that often at least they are themselves very great sufferers. Their call for sympathy is at least as strong as for reproof; and uncertain as it may be how they would receive reproof, there is no uncertainty respecting the manner in which they will receive kindness. Thus are we enabled to obtain, not only admission into many families, but a very kind reception there. It may be that without this guidance we may call upon them, and make ourselves known by our inquiries respecting their children, and our desires to aid them in their parental interests. In either case, interest excites interest. Our appeal is to the most active instinct, to the strongest affections of their souls. Show me a family, however bad, however apparently inaccessible, in which there is a little child, and I will soon prove to you that this family may be visited, and that a course of moral instruction and effort may be begun in it.



Thus far, then, we are plainly following the leadings of Providence. We are under a Divine guidance, and may confidently look up and ask for Divine aid. Thus, above all other means, do I prefer to obtain admission to families of this class; and in this way, rather than in any other, to begin the work of the Christian ministry there.

“Not unfrequently, however, we are brought into connection with these families, primarily through their physical wants. These, I have said, are real and great; and great are their sufferings under these wants. Ay, very far greater often are these sufferings than they are supposed to be by the casual observer; or by those who, reasoning of them as abstractions, and referring them to the laws of habit, sagely conclude that, intolerable as the condition would be to themselves, it is yet no very great evil to them who are *accustomed* to it. May God have more mercy upon these self-complacent arbitrators upon the sensibilities and sufferings of their fellow-beings, than they have towards those against whom they thus shut out their sympathy and compassion! I deny not, indeed, the power of habit in these cases, and I know but too well the multiplied morally indurating influences which are acting upon the sensibilities of these classes. I know, too, that many of them, in consequence of these influences, suffer far less than otherwise they would suffer. Human nature is to be seen here in terrible debasement, and often in a debasement far greater than the suffering which it occasions. But cold and hunger cannot be long endured without suffering. True, there is greater misery in many a palace of the earth, than in many of the

abodes of its paupers ; and there is also many a dweller in the palaces of the earth whose soul is more deeply degraded and corrupted, than are the souls of many in pauper families. But the most morally broken down of all paupers has not lost all the sensibilities of his nature as a human being. He may not, and does not, suffer as you and I would if we should suddenly be transferred to his condition, but he suffers enough to cause him to feel that relief is good, and a great good ; and he has, too, moral feeling enough for the exercise of gratitude to the benefactor who shall relieve him. Here, then, is a moral element of which we may avail ourselves for our moral ends. Wherever there is want, and strong want, even of the humblest accommodations, and of the simplest necessities of life, access may be obtained by him who is able and disposed in any way or degree to minister to that want ; and the judicious benefactor, who shall know how to address himself to the heart under such circumstances, will find that heart not wholly closed against him. From the beginning of my ministry, therefore, I have always had my poor's purse. I could not have carried on my ministry without it. I could not have gone from house to house among the destitute, and have said to them, ' Be ye warmed, and be ye clothed,' and yet always have left them as naked and cold as I found them. Nor, if I could so have done, should I have acted ' in Christ's stead ' towards them. I could not have obtained the access which I have obtained to their hearts. So much for mere modes of approach and of intercourse. I will only add in this connection, that I think I have been more or less connected in the Min-

istry at Large with twelve or fourteen hundred families, and that I do not remember having met with a rebuff in half a dozen." \*

Nor can it be a matter of surprise that he soon gained their confidence, when he soon made them feel, as he himself says; that "there is no hope or fear, no joy or sorrow, no difficulty or success, which may not be made, and which is not made, a matter of common interest between us. There is no office of Christian friendship for which it is not felt that we may be freely called upon. And how many are the occasions in the life of every one of us, on which, if this resort had been cut off from us, we might have fallen, never to rise again! Need I say, then, what blessings are comprehended in the offices of a ministry which extends this friendship, in its best influences, to very large numbers who otherwise would not know where to look for it? I know not how often the expression has been addressed to me, 'Sir, I never knew a friend till I knew you.' Nor do I think I can feel any higher emotions of gratitude and delight than I have felt in these cases, till I shall feel the gratitude and happiness of a better world." Such happiness, he sometimes said, he thought the angels might envy him; nor can we wonder that to obtain it, if he had no higher motive, he considered no personal inconvenience a sacrifice; he exposed himself to all the inclemencies of the weather, and to the still greater annoyances to be met with in the close and dirty dwellings of the poor, and considered his hours of self-denial those which he spent at his ease in his study. We cannot forbear to give, in this connection, the following nar-

\* "Ministry at Large," pp. 100 - 103.

rative, hitherto unpublished, which, simple as it is, illustrates the character of his ministrations.

“ I found,” he says, in a letter to a friend, “ a poor widow living at the bottom of a long yard, in the kitchen of an old house, the other apartments of which were also rented to the poor. She had two children with her ; a daughter about nine, and another, who was a cripple, about three years old ; and she had a son who was about twelve years old, at that time apprenticed in the country. Her employment was that of dying straw bonnets black, which exposed her to constant dampness ; and the room in which she lived was dark, cold, and comfortless. At my first acquaintance with her, I found that she had a very distressing cough. Her strength was small, and the daily demands upon it great. But she was unwilling to relax her exertions for the support of herself and her children ; and, as I doubt not, by those exertions greatly hastened the progress of the malady which brought her to the grave. Her decline was indeed rapid, from the time when I first became acquainted with her. She was soon confined through the day to a chair by her fireside ; and then again was soon confined entirely to her bed. In passing through these changes, and the very great sufferings experienced under them, she was always patient, humble, and submissive, but still greatly solicitous respecting her children. She could give up herself. She could give up the world. But, oh, what might not her poor children have to endure ! What especially, might be the future condition of her poor crippled child ! Of course, I assured her that nothing should be wanting which I could do for the well-being of these objects of

her affection and solicitude; and it was not long before I had the happiness to find, that even her children were given up; that all anxiety even for the poor little cripple was gone, — that her trust in the Heavenly Father was in this respect perfected. From that time, one sentiment seemed to exert an all-controlling power within her, and that sentiment was, the *love of God*. Her apprehensions of God, — of God in his parental character, purposes, and will, — of God as He is revealed in the Gospel, — were clear and strong; and her confidence in Him was unbounded. As her disease advanced, her sufferings increased; and, at length, so severe were the paroxysms of distress through which she passed, that it seemed from day to day impossible that she should survive them. I have stood over her bed during these times of her greatest distress, — waiting for the moment when she could recognize me, and when I might address to her a word of sympathy and hope; and this time having come, and I having expressed to her our trust that her faith would not fail her, she has looked up to me with a countenance radiant with that beauty to which there is no resemblance on earth, but in the very spirit itself of Christian piety, and has replied, ‘O, sir, I could welcome any suffering, while sustained by the love I feel of our Father in Heaven.’ In truth, all her other sentiments and interests seem absorbed in this one, — of an all-pervading love of Him to whom she looked as her Father; and in whom, therefore, she felt the confidence of perfect and eternal safety. At her death, I gave directions for the sale of her bed, and other furniture, which brought about three dollars, which I put into the Savings Bank, for, and

in the name of the children ; placed the oldest daughter in a very pious and respectable family — and gave the little cripple into the charge of two or three female friends, who, with myself, placed her with a poor but worthy widow, at board, and made her as comfortable as I believe she could have been made in this world, for about four years, when she died, and went to her mother. The son, and oldest daughter, I have reason to believe, will accomplish the hopes of their friends.”

The results of Dr. Tuckerman's labors would, however, have been comparatively small, had he confined them to the poor. He felt that not only did he need the aid of the more favored classes in carrying out his objects, but that he should be benefiting them could he enlist them in the service. “We all need,” he says, “greater disinterestedness, and greater wisdom. We all need, for our own soul's good, a closer connection with the less favored, and even the lowest in condition of our fellow-beings. I believe that by no means could those in the prospered classes be so advanced in the best qualities of the Christian character, as by a more Christian connection than they have ever had with the laboring classes, and the poor. Seek then this connection, and maintain it. Learn to see in the poorest, and the lowest, a fellow-being, and a child of God. I should be to you the greatest of human benefactors, if I could bring home to your heart a strong conviction of your relation and duties to your fellow-beings, and even to the humblest in condition among them, as members with you of the great family of God upon the earth ; and if I could persuade you to fidelity to these duties. From the

absence of this conviction in the prospered, and from its feebleness where it is felt, arise far the greatest obstacles to the success of moral enterprises. In the character of the results of our ministry, thanks to our Father, there is nothing equivocal. We have done far less than we should have been most grateful to have accomplished. But through the blessing which has accompanied our labors, we have not only carried down to the depths, or to the lowest grounds of society, and have sown there, the seed of the word of God, but we have been permitted, and to an extent to call forth our devoutest gratitude, to see it springing up in the forms of a new spiritual creation.\*

The aid he asked from them was not only of a pecuniary nature; though he felt that needful, yet that alone would be an evil rather than a benefit. "You have given them," he says, "fuel, food, and clothing, and you have repaired the wretched room which you thought untenable. But let only a week or two pass, and then go into that room again. What is now the condition of its inmates? The food and clothing which you gave them are gone. The garments which so lately you saw clean and whole, are now filthy, and perhaps ragged. Want in these respects is as urgent, as pressing now, as it was at your former visit; and if again it shall be as liberally supplied, it will soon again be as urgent as it now is. Nay, the feeling of dependence upon yourself, or upon others, for its supply, and the disposition to idleness, to improvidence, and to mere animalism, will be stronger than they were before. *Your very bounty, therefore, may have been the most effectual of all minis-*

\* "Ministry at Large," p. 82.

*trations, not only to the perpetuity of their dependence, but to the increase of their debasement.* There is no fiction in this case. By raising the standard of their conceptions of comfort, while yet no sense of obligation has been called up in them of self-provision for this comfort, and no distinct perception of higher interests and gratifications within their reach, you not only may have made want, whenever it shall be felt more distressing than it was before, but you will have made it higher and more desperate in its demands. I need not cite facts in evidence of this tendency and result. Every intelligent and observing distributor of alms will bear testimony to it."

Dr. Tuckerman succeeded in exciting to a great extent the attention of the higher classes to the moral and spiritual condition of the lower, and obtained ready aid and coöperation from them in the various institutions which were established, either directly or indirectly, by him, in connection with his ministry. These we will now describe, first mentioning one, which, though one of the last established, appears first in importance as a connecting link among all, and adding to the real efficacy of all. This was a "Union of the Benevolent Societies of the City, instituted after his return from England in 1834," for the purpose of a mutual knowledge by these Societies of the beneficiaries of each; for a knowledge of each other's modes of assisting, and for free communication upon all the subjects connected with the ministration of alms. "This union," he says, "forms an era in the benevolent operations of the city. Previous to its formation, these societies were acting wholly without a knowledge of each other's proceedings. Three or



four or more of them might at the same time be regularly supplying families, with the supposition on the part of each society that these families were unaided by any other. A willing dependence upon alms was therefore thus induced; and of course pauperism was extended by the very means intended only for the administration of necessary relief. Twenty-six societies are represented in this union, by delegates chosen by each society as its representatives. Its meetings are held monthly, from an early part of the autumn till late in the spring, and these meetings have been most faithfully attended. Every society, by its delegates, makes a monthly report of the name of every family it has assisted, and of the kind and extent of aid given. These reports are read; the claims of families and of individuals are made known; imposture and deception are thus exposed; and peculiar needs obtain peculiar sympathy. Our benevolent societies have thus obtained a new character and new claims for the contributions which are sought for them. The name of every receiver of their alms is registered, with a memorandum, which shows by what societies, and how often, such aid has been given; and by recurring to this registry we learn at once the extent of aid which has been given to each one through a season. We regard this union as a very valuable fruit of our ministry, and doubt not that it has done much in aid of our endeavors for the suppression of beggary, and the more complete alleviation of the sufferings which have strong and just claims upon us for sympathy and aid." We have given these particulars respecting this "Union of Benevolent Societies," because we believe that it is calculated to be of high

value in our large cities, and that the untiring zeal and Christian charity of a Tuckerman might overcome the many and great obstacles which in England, more than in America, religious bigotry would throw in the way of its establishment.

The erection of chapels for those brought under some degree of religious influence, yet whose circumstances did not allow of their joining regular congregations, was an early and leading object with Dr. T. "Our chapels," he says, "are indispensable to our objects. We need ourselves the aids of these concentrations of our interests and affections, of these opportunities and means of moral and religious action. And those to whom we minister equally need and appreciate them. It is hardly conceivable what a different day Sunday would be to them, but for the social worship and instruction for which we meet upon that day. . . . I can conceive of no moral spectacle upon this earth, comprehending only equal numbers, and yet suited to excite in one who shall know the whole circumstances of the case a greater variety of moral interests, or moral interests greater in themselves and more intensely affecting, than may be seen three times on every Sunday in the Warren Street and in the Pitts Street chapels. Let any one go to these chapels and form a judgment for himself upon the subject."\* The workmen who were engaged in the erection of one of these chapels became so much interested in its objects, that of their own accord they clubbed, and from their earnings bought a clock, which they brought to the building committee and begged

\* "Ministry at Large," pp. 136, 137.

leave to put up in the chapel. Sunday schools were connected with the chapels, and the need which was experienced of suitable services for these led eventually to a plan which Dr. T. thus describes in a letter to a friend :\* “The pupils in these schools are, to a great extent, the children of the poor ; the children of parents who have little or no connection with our places of worship in the city. The practice had been that teachers, after the exercises of the Sunday school, should take as many of these children as they could to the church in which they were accustomed to worship. But many of the children were not thus taken to any church, and of those who were no one was interested in the services. The prayers and preaching were alike unsuited to the capacities and wants of their time of life. During my absence, Mr. Barnard, one of my colleagues, proposed to detain the Sunday school at the chapel, (we had then but one chapel,) and to have a service there for them, which, in all its parts, should be within their comprehension, and if possible be made *interesting to them*. The experiment was at once completely successful. The children joyfully remained after the exercises of the Sunday school to engage in worship in which they might really join, and to hear sermons which they could understand, and of which they could give a fair account to any one who should ask them what they had heard. Soon after the commencement of this service, which is performed in the hours of service in the churches, a congregation, consisting of the poor children of another Sunday school, were formed by

\* To †. Dated February, 1835.

another of my young friends, who at once showed that he possessed a remarkable ability for addressing himself to the intellects and to the hearts of children. He is a merchant; but a better preacher. I have seldom felt the deep interests of my heart to be equally stirred by an address from the pulpit, as it has been by this young man in his appeals to the children of his congregation, when he has been speaking to them of their 'Father in Heaven.' This young man's name is Waterston. I mention it, because it may be that you may meet with his name, and may like to have the associations I have given you with it. Very soon after my return from Europe, my colleague, Mr. Gray, took Mr. Barnard's chapel and services, and Mr. B. has opened another chapel for children, in which he has even a larger congregation than that in which he first preached. Our orthodox friends have carefully observed our movements, and have opened a chapel for similar services, which I am told is very well attended. Several parents have been induced to attend these services, who would otherwise have worshipped nowhere. There is also an evening service for the adult poor in our chapels. Now do you not think that the Heavenly Father is blessing us?" . . . "We have four chapels open every Sunday here *for children*; services suited to their capacity,—ay, and services in which they are deeply interested,—are performed in the hours of service in our churches. Is not this a glorious stage in the administration of our religion? Out of the mouth and hearts of babes, as we trust, will be perfected praise through these institutions."

"The instructions of the chapel are subsidiary,"

says Dr. T., "to the objects of pastoral visitation, and the intercourse of private friendship. Our chapels thus become objects of interest to those who attend them, which they could not otherwise be. There is at once an individual interest in them, and an *esprit du corps* in regard to them, which are the best tribute the heart can render to them. Besides, however, the Sunday services which are held in them, we have there occasional meetings of young men and of others for mutual improvement: these meetings are looked to and maintained with great interest, and are conducive to great good. They are very strong bonds of Christian union, fellowship, and sympathy. The minister has his work to do at these meetings; but his is the work only of a helper."

The condition of juvenile delinquents and of those whose unhappy domestic circumstances made it almost certain that they would soon become so, warmly engaged the attention of Dr. Tuckerman. A few months before his settlement in Boston, a School of Reformation for Juvenile Delinquents had been established, and placed under the superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Wills, a gentleman whose admirable adaptation to his office, and sincere devotion to it, made it a true school of moral discipline. Did space permit, we should gladly copy Mr. W's account of it, from Dr. T's reports. Dr. Tuckerman found this school a valuable auxiliary of his plans; but as it was intended only for those who had already committed some crime, and were sent to it by the municipal authorities, it was not an institution of prevention, and greatly did he commiserate the numerous cases he met with, in which orphans, or otherwise destitute children, were

exposed to great moral evil; or, in which parents earnestly desired the reformation of badly disposed children, yet shrunk from stamping their future character by appeal to the magistrates. Dr. T. dwelt forcibly on the condition of these children in his reports, and awakened the attention of many of the leading men in the city to it. He showed them the evil of allowing these unhappy children to grow up hardened offenders, when suitable moral influence might transform them into useful citizens. This had been done in the House of Reformation, where boys, who had been sent as criminals, had been rendered honest, trustworthy, and capable of "living together as a family, cheerful, happy, confiding." Why should not similar moral benefits be extended to those who had not yet exposed themselves to the censure of the law? In 1832 the plan of the "Asylum and Farm" School was formed, which was the first, if not the only, institution of the kind in America. Its object is, "the education and reformation of boys who, from loss of parents, or other causes, were exposed to extraordinary temptations, and in danger of becoming vicious members of society." Through the liberal aid of some benevolent individuals in Boston, a suitable spot of ground was appropriated to the object on Thompson's Island, where the discipline of a school was united with a practical education in agricultural pursuits, and where a house was provided for the friendless and morally exposed. Admission to the school was to be obtained by application to a board of directors. If the boy is to be boarded and educated in the school free of expense, he is, by a decree of the State government, to be relinquished entirely to the directors until

the age of twenty-one ; if his parents pay two dollars weekly for his support, they may withdraw him when they please. About seventy boys are thus placed under the best moral influence ; and the experience of years confirms the opinion of Dr. T. that it is one of the most important means of moral security and progress.

Gladly would we enter into detail respecting this, and the various schools connected with his mission, in which he took an active interest ; but want of space obliges us to pass on, to speak of his efforts to check the evil which he felt to be his greatest obstacle in the moral and religious improvement of the poor, — intemperance. At the period when Dr. T. commenced his ministry, public attention had not been called, as it has since been, to this appalling evil, which is, more than any one external cause, the source of the misery and vice of the most degraded. Societies for the promotion of Total Abstinence from Intoxicating Liquors were not then known ; but the principle on which Christians, whether high or low in this world, should be led to join them, moulded his course. It was a matter of wonder to his friends when they saw him scrupulously abstaining from what, to him, might be innocent, but which would cause his weaker brother to offend. From this time, however, he resolved entirely to abandon the use of any intoxicating drink. The results, which he states in his work on the Ministry at Large, of a personal examination by the Chaplain of the State Prison at Auburn, New York, will give ample reason for his convictions on this subject. “ Of 975 convicts, 362 were excessively intemperate ; 374 were moderately intemperate ; 219 were tempe-

rate drinkers ; and only 20 had totally abstained from intoxicating liquors."

We cannot better describe his feelings on this subject, than in the words of Dr. Channing:—"Dr. Tuckerman agreed in opinion and feeling with all who visit and labor for the poor. He felt that the poverty of our city was due chiefly to intemperance, and that this enhances infinitely the woes of a destitute condition. A poor family into which this vice had not found its way, was a privileged place in his sight. Poverty without drunkenness hardly seemed to rank as an evil, by the side of that which drunkenness had generated. If there was one of our citizens whom he honored as eminently the friend of the poor, it was that unwearied philanthropist, who, whilst his heart and hands are open to all the claims of misery, has selected as his peculiar care, the cause of temperance.\* Dr. Tuckerman's spirit groaned under the evils of intemperance, as the ancient prophets under the burden of the woes which they were sent to denounce. The fumes of a distillery were, to his keen feelings, more noisome and deadly than the vapors of putrefaction and pestilence. He looked on a shop for vending ardent liquors, as he would have looked on a pitfall opening into hell. At the sight of men, who, under all our present lights, are growing rich, by spreading these poisons through the land, he felt, I doubt not, how the curses of the lost, and groans of ruined wives and children, were rising up against them. I know, for I have heard, the vehemence of entreaty with which Dr. Tuckerman sometimes approached the intempe-

\* Moses Grant.



rate, and he has often related to me his persevering efforts for their recovery.”

We will give one instance in his own words:—  
“One morning I entered a room that I might make some inquiry respecting a family. Every thing in this room was in confusion. The floor, the furniture, and the dress of the woman whom I saw there, were alike filthy; and a man was lying upon the bed in the deep sleep of thorough intoxication. I had never before been in that room. But it was a matter of course that I should at once learn what I could of this family. And I soon learned from the wife that her husband was a journeyman mechanic, and abundantly able to provide for his family if he would but give up the use of strong drink. It was my practice on Sunday to visit certain families, in which the husband and father was seldom to be found at home on other days, except at meal times. I, therefore, told this woman, that I would see her again on Sunday, when I hoped to be able to speak to her husband. She expressed her wish that I would, and I left her. At nine o’clock on the following Sunday morning I was there again. I knocked at the door, and entered. The man whom I had seen upon the bed on the preceding Friday now stood before me. I said to his wife, ‘You have mentioned my intention to call here this morning?’ ‘No, sir,’ she replied. Her husband was obviously much surprised at seeing me enter his room. I, therefore, immediately offered him my hand, which he accepted; and I said to him, ‘I was here on Friday morning, and saw you upon the bed; and have taken the liberty to call upon you.’ We were all soon seated. I did not say to this man, ‘I saw you *drunk* upon your bed.’

He well knew what was the condition in which I had seen him. At once, however, we entered upon the subject upon which I wished to communicate with him. I addressed him with the respect due to a man, and the interest due to a brother. He was touched, affected; and within half an hour threw open his whole heart to me. He assured me that he would not taste any intoxicating drink till he should see me on the next Sunday. At that time I was with him again, and had the testimony of his wife that he had been faithful to his promise. I passed another half hour with him. We were already friends. Again he engaged to go through the week without tasting any thing which could produce intoxication. Again, and again, and again, he renewed his pledge to me, and was faithful to it. After six or eight weeks I found him on Sunday morning in a new suit of clothes—the fruits of his own earnings. Soon a new cooking stove was provided. The dress of his wife also was clean and comfortable. And never shall I forget the bright and happy expression with which she one morning said to me, ‘I have now been married twenty years; and in all those years I have not been so happy as I have been during the last three months.’ Had I treated this man otherwise than with respect and sympathy, how would he have received me, and how would he have treated my endeavors to reclaim him from intemperance?”\*

It was not by acting on multitudes, or by strong excitement, that Dr. Tuckerman endeavored to check this dreadful evil, so much as by influencing individual

\* “Ministry at Large,” pp. 107–109.

consciences, and by endeavoring to diminish the evils which indirectly lead to it. He knew the misery existing but too often in the homes of the poor, which leads them to yield to the attractions of the dram shop, and he felt sure that if the hand of Christian sympathy and aid had been held out to the unhappy victim at the commencement of his career of vice, he might have been stopped in it. "And even," he says, "as things now are with the poor confirmed victim of intemperance, he will allow us to speak freely to him of his sin. Yes, and he will weep, and bitterly too, for his sin; and will resolve, and pledge himself to us, that if possible he will wholly abstain from it. Nor are these tears, nor is this the pledge, of hypocrisy. Again and again I have seen the strong man, under such circumstances, weeping like a child before me, when I was as sure of his sincerity as of his existence. And I am sure, too, that again and again he has passed the dram shop, and has gone to his home that he might maintain his resolution there. But in an evil moment he falls again into the snare, and is then again lost."\* Yet Dr. T.'s firm confidence that "no human soul is utterly past hope," led him to persevere, watching for opportunities when the heart seemed most open to good impressions, until he had at last the happiness of entirely reclaiming the drunkard. And if this happy result did not follow, he yet felt that the intercourse he had with the family might be the means of saving the other members of it; of encouraging the unhappy mother, and aiding and stimulating her in her care of her children. He felt that he had not labored in

\* "Ministry at Large," p. 120.

vain, when he had "even arrested a fellow-being in his career of intemperance; and from time to time obtained intervals, even though they may have been short, of triumph over appetite, and of consequent comparative domestic virtue and quiet. That fellow-being, at the end of the year, is a less debased being than he would otherwise have been; and his family is less vitiated and less wretched than it would otherwise have been. The simple fact of our intercourse with them has made them feel that they sustain a connection with society around them unfelt before, and has called forth in them some corresponding interests and desires. Besides, in these circumstances they are in a condition in which they were not before, to be favorably affected by any religious and moral action of which we can avail ourselves for their improvement and happiness. And many are thus led by our instructions and encouragements, to do more than they would otherwise have done or attempted for themselves and for each other. Does this seem to you a small and unimportant good? Not so do we regard it. Not so will it be regarded by any one who has formed any just estimate of a human soul; of the nature and consequences of sin; and of the good comprehended even in an effectual check interposed to the progress of sin in a single soul."\*

We regret that our limits prevent us from entering into more detail, of the exertions made by Dr. Tuckerman not only to reclaim the offender, but to seek out the causes of the evils which existed, and, as far as possible, to remove them. He received active coöperation from benevolent and influential persons in the

\* "Ministry at Large," pp. 120, 121.

city, as well as from many who gave their personal services to aid in the institutions he established. These were not intended merely to obviate temporary evils; he took an enlarged view not only of the spiritual condition of those classes to whom he directed his ministry, nor of their actual physical state alone,—he investigated their political position; and at his suggestion, in 1832, five commissioners were appointed by the House of Representatives to prepare, digest, and report to the next Legislature, such modifications or changes in the pauper system of the Commonwealth as might be deemed expedient. He was an active member of this commission; and valuable results were obtained from it.

Yet, for the success of his ministry he chiefly relied on spiritual influence; and this he brought to bear on that most degrading occupation, mendicity.

“Another result, and not an unimportant one, of our ministry,” he says, “is the check which it has given to beggary. I need not say how vitiating is this employment; and it has been prevented by our service, as I believe it could have been neither by municipal regulations for the purpose nor by any associations for the suppression of mendicity. It is a specific object with us to repress the spirit of beggary, by the inculcation of principles, and the formation of a character and habits which cannot subsist with beggary. We can and do carry moral and religious influence to recesses to which no other restraining influences can be extended, and to hearts upon which no other improving agencies can be brought to bear.” \*

A proof of this he gives us in a letter to a friend.

\* “Ministry at Large,” p. 123.

“In Boston, the city expenditure for the poor during the five years succeeding 1830, has been eighteen hundred dollars less than for the five years preceding 1830. In 1836, and in one of the severest winters known among us for many years, begging is not half what it was. I think that it is not a third what it was when the population was twenty thousand less than what it now is, — that is, eighty thousand. Juvenile delinquency, also, instead of increasing, has decidedly decreased. Many are depositors in our savings’ banks who, but for this Ministry, would have been dependent upon charity. And besides all this, a vast amount of good has been accomplished, the only evidences and manifestations of which are quiet, sober, honest industry and happiness.”

We must now close this very brief sketch of Dr. Tuckerman’s labors as Minister at Large; we shall, however, frequently find his ministry alluded to in the remaining notice of his life; for it was so entirely interwoven with his existence, was ever so present to his thoughts, that not only did he devote the small remnant of his strength to it, but it was a prominent topic in his letters to his friends, from which we shall make extracts. We will introduce here the following, as it gives an interesting picture both of his sympathy with the poor in their sufferings, and of his view of the influence of these in calling out the spirituality of the character.

“Boston, November 15, 1835.

“ . . . I know not whether it is possible that you should fully conceive how much the sufferings of the poor are sometimes aggravated by the narrowness and other inconveniences of their dwellings. I am, how-

ever, myself much affected by the contrast which is forced upon my observation, of the conditions of the affluent and of the poor under the severe and prostrating illnesses which both alike have to suffer. I know, indeed, that all the wealth in the world cannot purchase exemptions from any one of the forms of disease, and that the richest, in the most spacious apartments, and aided by all which the solicitude of friendship, and the best medical skill, and the most faithful nursing, can accomplish, may have to endure all that can be borne. But, still, a well-ventilated room, and the service of an experienced nurse, and even darkness and silence, are often very great alleviations of suffering.

. . . But, painful as is the first rising thought of this disparity of condition between the rich and the poor in the days of their illness, I have yet seen no more signal triumphs of the grace of God in the soul than in the chambers of illness and death among the poor. I have nowhere seen more perfect fruits of Christian principle than in those whose condition, to the casual observer and, especially, to the mere worldling, has seemed to be one of utter desolation and misery. I have never known a faith more translucent, a love more pure, a confidence in God more unreserved, and a devotedness more entire, than in some of the most tried in respect, at once, to all outward necessities and all the pains which flesh is heir to. It is indeed a striking proof of the impartiality of that Divine justice of which men so frequently complain, that the closer and more extensive is our observation of life, the more obvious and striking becomes the operation of the law of compensation throughout all the classes alike of the prospered and the afflicted. How wonderfully has

God placed one thing over against another, in all the diversity of human conditions! I believe in truth that, on the whole, — in the depths of the soul, — more is suffered by the rich than by the poor. The spiritual nature has not equal freedom, it is not as open to spiritual light, its vital energies are not as controllable, — amidst circumstances of abundance as of want. I speak not of necessary and universal, but of what appear to me to be general and certain, consequences. Golden manacles and fetters encumber the soul quite as much as those of iron. But it requires no argument to convince one whose fetters are of iron, that he is in bondage; while the slave whose fetters are of gold mistakes them, not only for ornament and grace, but for the evidence of his freedom and the instrument of his powers and happiness.

“ . . . I have said that I thought the soul not generally to be as free for spiritual exercise in confinement, and under physical suffering, among the rich as among the poor. Yet I know not that I have had a higher enjoyment of any portion of my life than when I have been confined by illness, or even by severe illness. No brighter revelations, I think, are made to us, either of our own souls or of outward nature, no brighter conceptions are obtained of God and Christ, and no greater quickening influence is exerted upon our sensibilities of right and wrong, upon our affections towards God and our fellow-beings, upon our sense of duty, and upon our convictions of the immortal realities of our faith, — than in the chambers of illness, when illness, whatever may be its ravages upon the body, still spares the mind. So at least, I think, it has been with me.” †

† To \*.



In 1833, Dr. Tuckerman's health sank so much under his constant exertions of both body and mind, in the service of the outcast and forgotten, that a severe pulmonary attack threatened his life. When somewhat recovered from it, he accepted the offer of his and Dr. Channing's intimate and highly valued friend, the Honorable Jonathan Phillips, to accompany him in a visit to England, with the intention of passing the following winter in Italy—a purpose, however, which was not accomplished. He had long desired to embrace with the warmth of personal friendship those whom he had already known by reputation and by correspondence, and who were laboring with him, though in different ways, for the spread of the Saviour's kingdom.

“I long to be with you,” he says, in a letter to Dr. Carpenter, dated July, 1831; “how glad should I be to see *you*, and Dr. Bowring, and a few other English friends! And then, too, if I were in England, I could see and embrace Rammohun Roy. A few letters have passed between us; but I want to bring my soul into contact with his soul, as I can only when bodies shall be in something like a touching distance from each other. I trust, however, that he will come to Boston. I am hoping for great good from his visit to England. Will not all the friends of humanity among you aid him in his objects for the amelioration of the condition of his countrymen? We know but little yet of his reception among you. He has been, I am told, cordially welcomed by his Unitarian friends. How has he been received by others?”

Dr. Tuckerman's immediate object in visiting Europe was the restoration of health; but his mind was

ever alive to the great object of his life, and he desired, far more than his strength would permit, to explore the retreats of poverty in the towns he visited. But, if he could not effect this, he did a greater service to the neglected classes, by breathing into those whose intellectual and moral attainments and position in society enabled them to work thus in the service of God, an ardent desire to do so ; and the warmth and loving tenderness of his character, united with that heavenly-mindedness which shone forth in his simplest actions, gave a touching power to his exhortations which none can realize who have not had the privilege of experiencing it. Thus, in almost every town which he visited, he left an impression which, in the hearts of some, at least, has never been effaced. "The private and public affections lived together in him," says Dr. Channing, "harmoniously and with equal fervor. His experience of life had not the common effect of chilling his early enthusiasm, or his susceptibility of ardent attachment. He was true to old friends, and prepared for new. . . . When he went to England, his sympathies created a home for him wherever he stayed. Where other men would have made acquaintance, he formed friendships." While those who had the happiness of welcoming him in their homes felt under a debt of gratitude to him for the spiritual benefit they received from him, and thought that the pleasure of his society most abundantly repaid any services they might render him, his Christian humility excited in him warm gratitude for even common acts of friendship. "I know not what to say to you, my beloved friend," he writes, "in recurrence to the memorial of yourself, which I found

yesterday upon my table. I did say, 'O, it is wrong, it is wrong!' I meant that you ought not to do so much for me. I can bear, indeed, a very great weight of obligation, as you well know, — for how very great is that which you have laid upon me! Well, accept all I can return for the present, — that is, as true a love as friend can feel for friend." Again, he says, when writing from Ireland, — "Everywhere I have been receiving the freest charity which could be extended to a poor mendicant. I have been solicitous to make such a return as I could, — a very poor one at best, — for such great and constant kindness."\* He said, indeed, that the benefits he received from his friends would oppress him under a sense of his own unworthiness, did he not regard them as a tribute of sympathy to that cause in which his heart was engaged. In London, Liverpool, Bristol, Brighton, Nottingham, Manchester, Birmingham, Dublin, he formed valued friendships, and in some of these places he was able to enjoy the "delightful atmosphere of the domestic affections," and to be under the "influence of the hallowed excitements of *home, sweet home*." The number of Irish who had come under his care in Boston, led him to feel great interest in their condition in their own country, and while in Dublin, he had, he says, a very interesting interview with the commissioners for inquiry respecting poverty and the poor in Ireland. It will not be out of place here to introduce his opinion of them in America, as expressed in a letter to a friend, two years after. "I have read much of Ireland, I have had much communication with poor Irish emigrants; and, my dear

\* To Dr. Carpenter.

friend, will you allow me to tell you, that the Irish pauper is in my view a far higher being than the English pauper. I have seldom found among the suffering poor of our fellow-beings, so much elasticity of spirit, such warm generosity and gratitude, such a disposition to willing and laborious service, whatever, and however low, that service might be, and so much true respect for those whom they considered their benefactors, — which I hold to be one of the elements of a true self-respect, as in the Irish poor. I have, therefore, no prejudices against the Irish character, and no bigotry in regard to Irish faith. Nay, with all their defects, — and I know well what they are, — I heartily love the Irish.” \*

When in London, Dr. Tuckerman had the pleasure he had so long desired, of becoming personally acquainted with the Rajah Rammohun Roy. “I was informed, by a friend who was present at their interview,” says Dr. Channing, “that this wise and great Hindoo, whose oriental courtesy overflowed towards all, still distinguished our countryman by the affectionate veneration with which he embraced him.” The Rajah, indeed, is said to have declared, that he never met with any one who so embodied to him the spirit of the Saviour as Dr. Tuckerman. The personal intercourse thus begun, was soon terminated by the death of Rammohun Roy, at Stapleton Grove, near Bristol; it will doubtless be renewed in a better world. He had desired the melancholy satisfaction of following him to the grave, and thus writes, shortly afterwards, to Dr. Carpenter: —

\* To †.

London, October 26th, 1833.

“ . . . . It would have been most consolatory and grateful to me to have been with you at the obsequies of the Rajah. But I could not learn at what time Mr. Hare went to Bristol to attend them. I had interchanged a few letters with that great and excellent man while he was in Calcutta, and had looked with the highest interest to the hour when I should see him in England. And devoutly do I thank our Heavenly Father that I was permitted to see him. Before I met him here, he was, however, comparatively, only an object of exalted admiration. But I had not been an hour with him, before that revelation was made to me of his heart, which called forth the far higher and more delightful sentiment of *love*. Yes, in the acquaintance of an hour, he became to me an object of very high and strong affection, for I saw in him the most unequivocal evidences of an advancement in Christian piety and virtue, which I have seen in few, very few, of those who have been born and reared under the strongest lights and best influences of our religion. But I cannot write of him now.”

From London Dr. Tuckerman visited France, where “he was received with much kindness,” says Dr. Channing, “by the Baron Degerando, the distinguished philosopher and philanthropist, whose extensive and profound researches into poverty, and into the means of its prevention or cure, have left him no rival, whether in the present or past times. This virtuous man, whose single name is enough to redeem France from the reproach sometimes thrown on her of indifference to the cause of humanity, has testified in private letters, and in his writings, his high consid-

eration for the character and labors of our departed friend."

Dr. Tuckerman's visit to England left, we doubt not, lasting effects on the minds of many, very many, who bless him as their leader on to philanthropic exertion. He felt it his duty, whenever he had an opportunity in season, and as some may think occasionally out of season, to lay before those whom he met, even incidentally, the high duty which devolved on the more favored classes, of remembering the forgotten; of carrying into daily practice, into unselfish exercise, the truth that we are all brethren, the children of one Father. There may indeed have been occasions when, warmed and engrossed by his important theme, he was unaware how little the minds of his hearers were prepared to follow him; and when his words might have seemed as idle tales, his entreaties to visit the haunts of wretchedness impertinent, his holy enthusiasm the manner of one "beside himself;" but we have seen an assembled meeting averted and softened into deep emotion, strong men melted into tears, as they heard from that wasted and benignant form the language of deep conviction, and humble, earnest entreaty; and we have known that from that time the deep purpose was formed of *doing* something for the good of mankind. His words, breathed from a heart overflowing with love, have impressed a *living* conviction on the young, that holiness and virtue alone can confer true happiness, and have aided them to realize the blessedness of heaven. His tender soothing of the bed of sickness, leading the sufferer to look upward, has proved a priceless balm; to many his has seemed, in its highest sense, an "angel visit."

To himself this sojourn in our country was not only a great pleasure, by uniting him in close friendship and sympathy with many with whom he afterwards corresponded on topics most dear to him, but he felt it a stimulus and a benefit. "My English friends," he says, "will be a precious treasure to my heart as long as I live. I hope, in going home, to be able to work more efficiently than I have yet done. I have many interesting objects in view; and if I shall accomplish them I shall, under Providence, owe much of my success to England." One of his farewell letters we must transcribe, as peculiarly characteristic.

"London, May 23, 1834.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, — AS the trial of taking leave of you, even under the most favorable circumstances, would be to me a very great one, and as I am now feeling a great strain upon my brain and my whole system, from the long continued excitement under which I have been living, I am not willing to trust myself to the scene of a parting interview. I am quite persuaded that I could with difficulty bear it. I love you with a peculiar love; and I love Mrs. C. and your children as I love yourself. How very precious is this sentiment! Time and distance, I am sure, will not enfeeble it, for it belongs to our immortal nature. . . . I thank our Father that I know you all, and for all the connection I have had with you. Let us pray for one another, and each strive continually for new growth in grace, and in the knowledge and love, the resemblance and spirit, of Christ; and where he is, we may be sure that we shall be also. I would be very affectionately remembered to all your young

ladies. May the devout wishes of your heart, and of the hearts of their parents, be accomplished in them! Can I wish for them more, or could more be attained by them in time or in eternity?

“Ever sincerely your friend and brother,

“JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.”\*

Even on the eve of his departure from England he left a precious legacy of Christian counsel to a friend suffering under severe illness, to whom he shortly after addressed the following letter:—

“Boston, July 27th, 1834.

“ . . . I dwell with gratitude on a recollection of the hours I passed with you. We have communicated together on the highest of all interests. We have felt together the *realities* of the spiritual world. Many would tell you that your sensibility to these realities has been very dearly purchased. I, however, think far otherwise, and so also do you. What! Can sensibility to our immortal nature, to the nearness of God to us, to his parental interest in us, and to our accountability to Him, be too dearly purchased? Can the cost be too great, the cost I mean of weakness and weariness and pain and deprivation, at which is obtained that knowledge of Christ, under the influence of which our hearts burn within us, through the strength and intensity of our desire to possess, as we have never possessed, *the spirit of Christ*? Can too great a price be demanded for the liberty of the soul; for freedom from sin, and for the Christian’s peace with God; for the Christian’s access to God; for Christian light and strength and consolation and joy? My dear —,

\* To Rev. Dr. Carpenter.



they who doubt upon these great questions are not Christians. And if we have any misgivings, any doubts, either of duty or happiness, when called to the alternative in any case in which the sacrifice is to be made, either of principle or of inclination, *we* are not Christians. Is the test a severe one? I not only answer, that, severe or not severe, it is the test of the Gospel; but, moreover, if there is to be any test of a Christian profession, any one short of this would be a manifest absurdity. The objects of Christianity, the character to which it calls us, and the Heaven of which it assures us, are realities, or they are not. If they are not, let us treat them as delusions, and give thought and care and labor to other objects, if such there be, which will not disappoint us. But what are these other interests? What is there of earth and time which will not, sooner or later, disappoint the heart that confides in it? Deprive me of the faith and hopes which I have as a believer in Christ, I know not where I may look for stability, for security. Every thing beside is not only subject to the law of uncertainty and change, but the very springs of my highest gratification are soon to become to me the springs of the keenest, and of irreparable suffering. But, blessed be God, I *have* felt, — O that I could say that I *always* feel, — the reality of ‘the things that are unseen and eternal.’ . . . I am quite sure that we have in our Christian principles all which we need for guidance, support, and blessedness. Let us be true to these principles, and they will be true to us. Let us make no compromise where Christian truth or righteousness is concerned. Let every thought, desire, or feeling, be bound up with God’s in our hearts; and

let us not deem an indulgence innocent, in the allowance of which we cannot look up with an enlightened trust that our Father approves us. I know that it is your earnest wish to be a Christian. O that this wish could be a prevailing one in every human soul! I feel, yes, I feel strongly, how feeble and ineffectual it is, compared with what it should be in my own soul. But do not let us waste our sensibilities in useless repinings. Wherein there is wrong, let us seek its correction; and whatever we find should be done for our Christian progress, let us do it with all our might." †

To none did Dr. T. feel himself more closely bound than to the suffering; and he looked upon his intercourse with a deeply afflicted one as one of the best of his privileges while in England. Largely did he impart consolation, while he strengthened his own faith, that "the holy influence which affliction, endured and improved in the spirit of the gospel, exerts upon the whole soul, is alone a complete vindication of the providence of God in the appointment of our sufferings." He expressed also deep interest in the acquaintance he formed with an individual who, in an humble sphere, was devoting herself to the service of her God and the benefit of her fellow-creatures; some of her labors he recorded in his "Gleams of Truth," and they are also spoken of in Chambers' Tract, "Annals of the Poor," under the name of Catherine of Liverpool. To her he addressed the following letter:—

"Boston, June 1st, 1835.

"You have labored much, my friend, you have

† To \*.

suffered much ; but you have also been greatly blessed. God has crowned your life with the richest of the blessings with which he favors His children upon the earth. He has made you the honored instrument of His own parental love, to the poor children to whom you have been as a mother. You have thus been made a worker together with God for the salvation of these children. Oh ! what privilege, what honor may be compared with this ? And is your strength now failing ? Must you now give up your cares for those for whom you have so long cared, and toiled, and endured ? ‘ Let not your heart be troubled,’ my dear friend. Let it be the language of your heart, of your soul, ‘ Behold, God is my salvation,’ ‘ *I will trust and not be afraid.*’ You may indeed be called from that particular service for others in which you have so long lived. Yet that very service was but a school of preparation for a higher and nobler service for others in the eternal life which is before you. I have no fear that in dying we shall lose one of the principles or affections which have connected us with our God, with our Saviour, with our duties, and with the offices of Christian love which may be performed towards any who may require them of us. The happiness of Heaven will be the happiness of Christian love, and I believe also of Christian service. Should this letter find you, as I think it may, feeble and ill, may it find you also strong in the faith, the hopes, the consolations of the Gospel. You have, I am sure, wished to walk in the steps of our great Master ; to live in the spirit of Him who ‘ took little children into his arms and blessed them,’ and who ‘ went about doing good.’ May his spirit, within you now, be the light and

strength and joy of your soul! I can wish, I can pray, for nothing better for you, than that you may be more and more enriched with the spirit of Christ. All other possessions must soon be left by us forever. The richest man now upon earth will soon have no other treasure than that which he has laid up in heaven; in the heaven of his own soul. I know, indeed, that in respect to this treasure you will feel yourself *poor*; you will feel that you have much to be *forgiven*. And it is true that you and I and all have much to be forgiven. But thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift, the gift of His son, our Saviour, we may look for forgiveness if we will but forsake and confess our sins. You believe the promise. I know that you believe it. Rest upon it then my friend! Let us but be faithful to the condition upon which the promise is given, and it will most certainly be accomplished to us. I do not expect to see you again in this world; but I hope that I may be permitted to see you in the everlasting kingdom of our Father. I feel indeed my unworthiness even to look to that kingdom; nor should I dare to look to it, but with the hope and the prayer that God will be merciful to me a sinner. In the spirit of this prayer let us go to our Father; and he who justified or forgave the publican will then say also to us, 'thy sins are forgiven thee.' And now, my dear friend, I again commend you to our Father in Heaven; to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, be your consolation here and your eternal inheritance! Remember me to the children whom I saw with you, and tell them it will rejoice my heart to hear they are good children. I may hope to hear of them through

Mrs. R. Be assured that I am most truly your  
friend, JOSEPH TUCKERMAN."

Dr. T.'s feelings towards England will be best learnt from a letter written in the following spring.

"Boston, March 20th, 1835.

". . . The position of your country is one of the deepest interest. My heart hovers over England with a sympathy and affection which I believe you can conceive, because you know much of the number and strength of the bonds which connect me with it as a lover of human freedom, of human improvement, and of human nature. I feel, indeed, the greatness of human capacities, and the resources for human happiness, everywhere. I would look upon every human being, however encrusted with dirt and covered with rags, however degraded by ignorance or debased by sin, as still retaining in his soul the strongly-defined lineaments,—however marred they may be,—of the image of himself there impressed by the great Creator. But I have had opportunities of knowing England as I know no other section of Europe. I know, too, or at least I think, that there are to be found the elements of which true Christian philanthropists might avail themselves, for a more vigorous and successful action for human advancement, than in any other part of the Eastern hemisphere. You have these philanthropists, and I trust that God will make them His instruments for the regeneration of our world. The process will be a long one, for the work to be done is immensely great. But I have a growing confidence that it will be done. I see in the very struggles of opposing interests, the growing power of

the truth, of virtue, and of the great principles against which these interests are arrayed, and these struggles are directed."\*

Dr. Tuckerman had looked forward to his homeward voyage as a period of rest, after the great excitement he had gone through during the latter part of his visit to our country. This, unfortunately, was not the case, owing to the conduct of some of the passengers. He thus expresses his feelings, however, on again finding himself at home:—

“Boston, July 24, 1834.

“At last, my dear friend, I am *at home*. And, blessed be God, I have the happiness to find my wife and children, as I left them, well. My joy, indeed, is not wholly unmixed with disappointment; for, about two months before my arrival, my dear and only grandson, four years and a half old, had left his parents, and sisters, and friends,—for higher tuition, indeed, and more rapid advancement in excellence than he could have attained here, but also to leave them sorrowing that they will see him no more in this world.”

After alluding to the troubles of his homeward voyage, he continues:—“But all these things are past, and *past* is my visit to England. A year and eighteen days of absence from my home and my ministry are *past*. Yet how full of recollections, of most grateful associations, of most invaluable interests, are the months which I passed in Europe,—in England,—in London! And yet, how much did I omit, how much did I neglect, which I might have done within

\* To †.

those months! But I will not waste time in vain regrets. I enjoyed much, — O, how much! — and what precious friendships have I formed! On the blank leaf of the first volume of Mr. Fox's Sermons you have written, as if quoted from me, 'There are those in London who love me.' Did I ever say so? I do not remember having used such expressions. And yet I hope that there are those in your country who love me; for, in truth, there are those whom I love there with an affection which I could well wish should be immortal. I will not, therefore, think of English scenes, and loves, and joys, that they are *past*. No; I have been in England while I have been writing to you; and a hundred times have I been in England, — in London, — since I left you. Would that you could have the conceptions of my home which I have of yours! Would that you knew my wife and my children. Mine is indeed a delightful home. Hearts more affectionate, more true, more strongly principled, more worthy of love, are not anywhere to be found. My beloved wife had ever written to me in a manner to indicate the sweetest state of spirits. Yet great to her has been the trial of my absence; and it is very obvious to me that she has been worn by the trial. But I trust that she will soon regain what she has lost. She feels strongly all your kindness, and that of my other English friends, to me. . . . Must I explain 'my hurried manner of parting?' It had not been, as you supposed, '*premeditated*,' for I had not, and could not, have had the thought that leave-taking would or could have been very painful to any one — *except myself*. The idea of it was, however, to myself sufficiently painful to induce me to

get through with it 'in a hurried manner,' or in any manner in which I might get through with it with the least cost to my sensibilities. I had not the vanity to suppose for a moment that I was an object of any unusual interest. Forget my fault, then, my friend, in this case, and, if you can, forget all my faults; and, when you think of me, let it only be as your old friend, and your true friend,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN."\*

A pleasing picture of his home he gives us elsewhere, in a letter to the same friend:—

"Boston, March 7, 1835.

" . . . How glad should I be if you could step into my beautiful parlor, and see a very fine engraving of Mr. Malthus, hanging between Reynolds of Bristol, and Robert Raikes; then also your Fenelon; then Mrs. H. More, a proof engraving which she gave me when I passed a day at Barley Wood with her, in 1816. Then Miss Martineau; then Mrs. Fry and Mrs. Barbauld, with a fine large portrait of Noah Worcester. Then a drawing of Stapleton Grove" (the place of interment of the Rajah,) "a head of Rammohun Roy, Robertson's picture of Mr. Phillips, and an admirable cast of Spurzheim. Am I not in good company?"

A subject on which Dr. Tuckerman expressed the hope that he was returning to his own land with somewhat modified views, was that of slavery, and the condition of the colored people. He acknowledged to his English friends that he had felt an indefinable nat-

\* To †.



ural repugnance to associating with them, and that he could not but regard them as an inferior race. That he possessed this feeling, rendered it the more admirable in him that a colored family was, at Chelsea, one to which he devoted *peculiar* attention. He was much struck, when at Bristol, with observing, in a Sunday-school, a colored girl sitting by her white companions, on terms of perfect and evidently conscious equality, as well as a colored woman sitting on the same bench with ladies. He conversed much on the subject with his friends here, and was led to feel that, even if there were at present any inequality in the races, there was none which ought to create any separation between them, and that this would disappear after equal advantages of intellectual culture were given them. He determined on his return to Boston, to exert himself more than heretofore for the benefit of the colored race. In the following spring he writes:—“I have opened a sewing-school for our colored population and am doing what I may that every colored female may be a complete seamstress. This is a branch of knowledge in which I have found our colored population to be very deficient, and I believe that their want of skill in the use of the needle is one of the causes of their poverty, and of the filth, improvidence, and suffering in which many are living. This school has become a great pet with me.” The object which Dr. T. had immediately in view prevented him from taking any active part in anti-slavery efforts, but he warmly sympathized in the labors in the cause, of his friend Dr. Channing, who, he writes, “by our southern or slaveholding representation, is regarded as the chief of incendiaries.” From several letters we may select the

following, which will sufficiently show his feelings on this subject : —

“ Santa Cruz, February 27, 1837.

“ The face of this island, as seen in an approach to it, is of surpassing beauty. Its countless undulations, as thus seen, with its perfect verdure, its cocoa-nut and mountain cabbage-trees, and the quiet repose with which it seems to rest upon the bosom of its mother Ocean, give it an ineffable charm — till you shall remember that it is also a land of slavery. Slavery, indeed, is here in a more modified form than in any other of the West India Islands. The Governor-General, I am told, is as accessible by the complaining slave as by the complaining master ; and the injured slave is sure to obtain redress of his wrong. But, in any form in which it can exist, the curse of God is upon it. I have said that the land is beautiful. But it is infested by scorpions, and centipedes, and cockroaches, and mosquitos. It is infested by men whose property is in men. And many estates here, dear —, are held by gentlemen in England. Still your Emancipation Act has occasioned a very considerable deterioration in the worth of property here, and I shall hail any intelligence of an increase of this deterioration till slavery shall be extinguished. It is an important circumstance also, that while the slave population is diminishing in number, no importation of slaves is allowed by Government. Even, therefore, if there should never be virtue enough voluntarily to apply an efficient remedy to the evil, it must of necessity die a natural death. Do you say, may God hasten its dissolution ? So say I also. . . .” \*

\* To M. C.

Dr. Tuckerman's health was not so much benefited by his European voyage as he had anticipated ; he was no longer able to engage in active exertions in the ministry ; and how great a privation this was to him, those only can know who have been called as he was to "stand and wait," when they would joyfully be up and doing their Master's work. Yet, the few years that he was still permitted to remain on earth were perhaps more usefully spent, and more important to the firm establishment of the ministry on a right basis, than if he had been more personally engaged in it. He was able to infuse some of that ardent faith and hope full of immortality which animated him into others, who would continue the work when he was permitted to rest from his labors, and enter his eternal home ; and his true charity enabled him to bring into harmonious action the various denominations of Christians, and form that fraternity of churches of which we have before spoken. His health was feeble ; but he felt strong through his young colleagues, two of whom he found in active service on his return to Boston. He was unable to resume his pulpit services ; but in the autumn following his return, he was able to deliver a discourse on the ordination of his two coadjutors to the ministry, the charge being given by Dr. Channing. He felt his strength altogether insufficient for the work he wished to do : an hour or two among his poor completely exhausted him, and made him feel almost incapable of thinking. Yet his faith failed not.

"I am in this respect," he writes, "quite satisfied. I never get so low that I do not feel the reality of my soul, the reality of Heaven, of immortality, and of a condition of being in which I may look for eternal

advancement in strength, and light, and blessedness. Let us, my friend, live for that immortal existence to which our Father is calling us. How precious does the assurance of it make our friendships here! Of all the poor whom I visit, I pity no one so much in his destitution as I do him — possess what he may, and enjoy what he may — who has no steady, strong, and enlightened trust in any good which is beyond this world. May our treasure and our hearts be in heaven!”

We perceive in all the letters of Dr. Tuckerman, to which we have had access, the most entire, un murmuring, and even thankful acquiescence in the appointments of God concerning him. It will be an encouragement to those who lament in themselves a restless anxiety of mind, to learn from himself that this had once troubled him also, and to know how he overcame it.

“Boston, September 26th, 1835.

“. . . How very great a part of the inquietudes of life arise from an indulgence of desire for that which is not to be attained! I was one of the most anxious of men — anxiety was the bane of my life, and with it impatience, and a disposition to fretfulness — till I learned, first, to distinguish between the attainable and the unattainable; secondly, of attainable things, their comparative importance to myself, in the largest views I could obtain of them; and then, having made my election of that which was to myself the greatest good in the case, that my happiness is to be found not in dwelling upon other interests and objects, but in concentrating thought and directing effort in the course

in which thought and effort promised at least to avail me something. Do not think, however, my young friend, that I am boasting of my moral advancement. Oh, no ! nor did I mean to speak of myself. I should indeed be glad to see you, if I could. But if I cannot see you here, it is my joy that I can, and my belief that I shall see you hereafter. Nay, *I do see you*. I can speak to you. Your visible person is not less a reality to me than your spirit, your soul. Burke says, — I think it is Burke, — ‘ what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue ! ’ So, however, I think not of myself, or of my fellow-beings. Shadows indeed we pursue, *but we are not shadows*. An immortal being is not a shadow. I see everywhere around me, and I feel in my own body, the operation of the laws of change, of decay. All the beauty of outward nature which I see, will fade, will disappear. The very habitations around me will crumble into ruins. Even this very globe which I inhabit may become one vast, untenable ruin. But I feel not more certain of my existence than I do of my immortality. I may be a shadow to others ; but I am not a shadow to myself, nor are others shadows to me. The poorest, lowest, meanest, human being was created an image of God’s eternity, and is a child of God. What a vivifying, glorious thought ! Let us cherish this sentiment of our immortality. Let us feel the immortality of those about us. And let us live, dear —, each for ourself, and each for every other within our influence, — as immortals, children of a common father, and that Father — *God !* This indeed is life. This is true blessedness. This is the life to which St. Paul referred when he said, ‘ I live, yet not I ; but Christ liveth

in me.' This is the life which reveals to us heaven before the world is past, and which makes our world of trial the scene of our preparation, and qualification, for the heaven which is beyond it." †

We have seen that Dr. Tuckerman received friendly coöperation from Christians of various denominations. His object was, indeed, one in which all should unite without party distinction. He would not, however, have been able to effect this union, if his own views of religion had not been of the most enlarged and liberal character, — if he had not himself risen above the narrow boundaries of sect, and viewed all as one in Christ, as the immortal children of one Heavenly Father. We have, in his own words, his views of the essentials of Christianity.

"Stirling, April 23, 1834.

" . . . There are certain speculative questions in theology, upon which some decide very authoritatively, but of which I am accustomed to think but little, and to say nothing. There are, however, certain elementary principles of religion which have all the force of axioms. One of these principles is, the absolute unity of the Great Supreme. Another is, that He is our Father, and that he is perfect rectitude and perfect love. Another is, that I was made, and that all my fellow-beings were made, for the knowledge, love, and enjoyment of God. Another is, that the supreme good of every human being is virtue, or, a conformity to the will and an assimilation to the character of God. Another is, that I need, and that all need, light and aids in the discharge of duties. And another is, that

† To \*.

my greatest benefactor is the benefactor of my soul, of my immortal nature. These at once are teachings of Christianity and principles by which it is to be interpreted. Under the influence of these principles, the New Testament, as often as I open it, or think of it, becomes to me 'glad tidings of great joy.' I cannot think of Jesus but with the sentiment, 'thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.' My best evidence of the truth of our religion is in the fact that, while it reveals to me, in myself, the capacities of a nature which was formed for the infinite, the immense, and the everlasting, it, and it alone, goes to the height and the depth of the soul, — it, and it alone, supplies the objects in which these wants ever found, or can find, satisfaction. My great inquiries are not, therefore, for the metaphysical nature of Christ, or for any of the secret things of God. I would be one in spirit with Christ, as he was one with the Father. This, I am sure, is the end of Christianity here, and will be the perfection of heaven hereafter. With the will of God, as illustrated by the spirit of Jesus for my law, with redemption, or deliverance from all sin, and progress in all virtue and holiness as my end, I have no fear of any dangerous error in my faith. Ah, my friend, our danger lies, not in our liability to erroneous conceptions of Christian doctrine, but in our defective sensibility to Christian obligations, and in our poor and low standard of Christian duty. 'Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ,' and be 'alive to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,' is the language of our religion to all its believers. Any lower aim than this is unworthy of us as his disciples; nor can I conceive that any faith, which does not minister to

our advancement in the spirit and life of Christ, can do any thing to advance our qualification for the immortal blessedness of the Christian's heaven." \*

At the close of the next year, 1835, the number of ministers to the poor in active service was much increased. Dr. T. passed much of his time in a central office, to which the poor came for information which they wanted, and the rich for knowledge of the poor. The month of November was one peculiarly interesting to him, for it brought the anniversaries of his marriage, his ordination, his commencement of the Ministry at Large, and the birth of his youngest son. "You will sympathize with me," he writes to a friend, "in the sensibility with which I recur to all these events. My condition is full, O how full, of blessings! I cannot tell you how much I enjoy." To another he gives the following account of the actual state of the Ministry at Large:—

"Boston, November 15th, 1835.

" . . . I cannot tell you how greatly I feel myself to be blessed. My two young colleagues are full of life, and are doing much good. One of them, Mr. Barnard, will probably preach to-day, to a congregation of five hundred children. Mr. Gray preaches to children only in the morning, and to a mixed congregation of adults and children in the afternoon and evening. Mr. Barnard preaches to his children in the morning and afternoon, and to a mixed congregation in the evening. In the beginning of January, Mr. B. will dedicate, and begin his services in a new chapel,

\* To E. R.



which has been erected for him, in the basement of which he will live, that he may make his home the centre of attraction to all the children of his Sunday Schools and congregation; and there he will bring together all which he can contribute to virtuous amusement and to instruction. Mr. Gray will have a new and more spacious chapel than he now has, in the next summer. A new Minister at Large, of the Christian denomination, has entered the field. The denomination to which I refer are Unitarian Baptists. We have no more liberal class of Christians among us. Dr. B., the gentleman referred to, was a very respectable physician in a neighboring town. But zeal for the cause of preaching the Gospel to the poor has led him to give up a profession in which he was gaining reputation and property, that he might aid others in becoming richer than money could make either them or himself. We have indeed eight Ministers at Large here, and our community are not insensible to the value of their services? Should I not show the most reprehensible insensibility, if I were not one of the most grateful and happy of men? Of my gratitude, indeed, I dare say nothing; it is so far short of what it should be. But I am very, very happy."

In a previous letter he had said: "We have now seven Ministers at Large. One is an Episcopalian, one a Baptist, two are orthodox Congregationalists, or, as they would be called in England, Independents, three are Unitarians; and on all great general interests we act in perfect unison. Does not this look like Christian advancement? We have the most entire public confidence, and, what is far better, we

all feel that we have the blessing of the common Father with us." †

Dr. Tuckerman was now frequently called upon to show by his own cheerful resignation under weakness and suffering, the value of the faith and trust which he had endeavored to infuse into others. The importance of affliction in perfecting the character he thus expresses : —

“ Boston, November 4th, 1835.

“ I wish to think, that whatever may be my weakness or suffering at any time, I am still, in view of my greatest good, in the best condition possible for that good. I have but wisely to avail myself of the circumstances of that condition, — or, in other words, I have but to be faithful to the virtues, the duties, whether of power or weakness, of action or rest, of joy or of sorrow, to which in either condition I am called, and that condition will be to me at once for the greatest usefulness and the greatest happiness. This is one of the great lights which Christianity holds up to its believers. If we bring upon ourselves weakness, or incapacity of any kind, by violating any of the laws either of our Father’s providence or word, our suffering or our incapacity may be an infliction of retributive justice ; and although we may be useful through the suffering thus induced, and may be improved by it, yet we cannot be very *happy* under it. But the best happiness of life is not only consistent with much privation, much suffering, but I have often thought it hardly to be found but in connection with suffering. I am sure, too, that I never knew it to be

† To \*.

possessed by any one who had not been, to a considerable degree, ‘acquainted with grief.’”\*

And to another friend he thus writes, under similar weakness:—

“Boston, December 4th, 1835.

“*From my chamber.*

“ . . . The earth around me is covered with snow, and the cold has been very severe. What a different scene does winter present to you! O how delightful to me were the temperature and the verdure of your winter! Yet I should have no words but of thanksgiving and praise to the Author of all good. I may be taken from my service in a few weeks,—I may be taken from it entirely,—and it will still go on. Others, abler than I am, are in the field. And then, too, I look with a hope full of immortality to a service under a sky, which, if it shall be eluded, will only be for the exhibition of new forms of beauty, and new purposes of benevolence,—and where no chilling influence will come either to the body or the soul. But let us not complain of any of our Father’s appointments in regard to this goodly world in which He has placed us. It is a very goodly world, even when the earth is bound up by frost, and covered with snow; when the trees are leafless, and no bird sings in their branches; when the cold wind pierces through all our coverings and defences against it, and even when disease seizes upon us, and when death separates us. A goodly world may it be to you; a world full of light from Him who is the Light of Life; a world in which you will find that peace which yet the world

\* To E. R.

itself cannot give ; a world in which you will every day be advancing in that virtue which is the beginning of heaven, till you shall be fitted for that heaven, which is the perfection of virtue ! ” \*

As he perceived that he was drawing nearer to that unseen state, and that his outward man was perishing, he felt his inner man renewing day by day, and those affections which he believed to be immortal expanding into increasing warmth and beauty. He then writes to a friend whom he carried “ in the very centre of his soul ; ” that friend was borne to the world of spirits but a few days before him, and, as he was, from a foreign clime, away from his home. In the heavenly mansions they are now united !

“ Boston, January 21st, 1836.

“ I am much affected by your remembrance of me, my dear friend and brother. It is delightful to me. With 3,000 miles of ocean between us, we are connected by the sympathies of a purely Christian friendship. And what are the principles of this sympathy, of this friendship ? An identity of literary tastes ? No. A unity of interest in respect to property or reputation, or any thing which is merely personal, or local, or temporary ? No. I love you all for that for which spiritual and immortal beings may reasonably and for ever love each other. I love you *as* a spiritual and immortal being. I love you because I love virtue, and because you live in my heart with its associations with virtue. Do not think that I indulge in the language of adulation. I would not use such expressions of you, and to you, abstractly. I use them only

\* To †.

in connection with our friendship, and in reference to our friendship. Is it not as pure from the alloy of earth as earthly friendship can be? Did it not grow out of sympathy in the cause of our common humanity? And is not this the highest, the holiest of causes? Is it not the cause for which our Master lived, and taught, and died? Is it not then his spirit which unites us? What an interest, what a value, what a happiness, is imparted to friendship thus baptized, thus consecrated, and may I not say, thus made immortal! O how little do they know of the soul's capacity of love, and of happiness in love, who feel no interests but the gross interests of earth; who are sensible of no attachments but those which death will soon sever, and for ever!"\*

Early in the spring of 1836, Dr. Tuckerman was most seriously alarmed by an illness which threatened Mrs. Tuckerman's life. That was spared to him a little longer. "God be thanked," he writes, "that we may hope to go on together a little further in our earthly pilgrimage. We have lived more than twenty-six years in the most intimate of earthly relations. We have been one in hope, in interest, in enjoyment." He was himself soon after seized by a very serious pulmonary attack, which induced him to visit Newport, Rhode Island, whence he thus writes:—

"July 27, 1836.

"And now a word of myself. I have been very ill. I have been near to death, and am still so feeble that I am quite incapable of any active service; nor do I believe that I shall ever again be capable of great

\* To Rev. Dr. Carpenter.

physical exertion. But I hope that in some way I may still serve the cause of Christ to the poor; and my retreat to this place was first contemplated with a view to the renovation of my wife's strength, and to a beginning, at least, of *the book* you have demanded of me. But when I came here, six weeks ago, I was so very much reduced in health, that I strongly felt at my arrival that I had come here but to die. After a fortnight, however, I began to recover, and am now, I think, without disease. But I can do very little. I am here almost within call of my friend Dr. Channing, and Mr. Phillips also is with us. You will say that this should make a very ill man well. And, indeed, we have glorious hours together. 'O days and evenings worthy of the gods!' exclaimed the sublime bard. And our days and evenings, I assure you, are worthy of immortals. Would that we could bring Grenville and Gower-streets into our neighborhood! The island upon which we are living is sixty-five miles from Boston. It is a place of extraordinary beauty. The town, at its southern termination, is as full of wealth and fashion from the North and South, during the summer, as is almost any of your watering-places. But we are five miles from the town, being amidst the deepest calmness of nature, and surrounded by every form of loveliness. Here, also, we have no intensely warm weather, even in summer. I must yet give up some weeks to rest and amusement, in preparation for winter; and then I trust that I may live to some higher purpose." \*

But the approaching season was to be differently spent from what he had hoped; nor was he permitted

\* To †.

to choose in what way he should glorify God. He was still detained from active service by weakness, and was obliged to spend the winter of 1836-7 in the milder climate of the West Indies, from which he thus writes : —

“ Santa Cruz, Feb. 25, 1837.

“ . . . Glad am I to tell you that the result of my visit to this place has been very happy. I cannot say that I am very well, for I have not yet quite got rid of my cough. But even this is almost gone, and I have acquired a very important accession to my strength. I can walk and ride freely, except when the heat is too oppressive to allow us to be abroad; and I am attempting to accomplish a little with my pen. But this is a place scarcely better fitted for mental than for physical exertion. The influence of a temperature which never falls below 72, and daily rises to 80, or 81 or 82, is very enervating. To one who has good health, your climate or ours is incomparably preferable to this. I believe that no literary work of any claims has ever been produced in the West Indies. There is here a most marvellous intellectual and moral stagnation. The fields, the cane-pieces, and the trees are now withering under an almost vertical sun, for very little rain has fallen for the last two months. But, modified as is the form in which slavery exists here — and perhaps in no part of the world are the laws of humanity less outraged by it than here, — still more withering is its curse upon the soul, than that of the sun upon the yellow leaves and the burnt and brown grass around us. But, thank God, your Act of Emancipation is sensibly felt here, in the deterioration of slave-property; and this deterioration is going on,

notwithstanding the circumstances — 1st, that there is a small annual decrease in the number of the slaves, as the deaths exceed the births among them; and, 2nd, that the Danish laws forbid the importation of any new slaves into the islands. I am hoping in nine weeks to embark for my blessed home; and never again, I think, shall I wish to set my foot upon the soil of the West Indies. We have vice in Boston, but it is more or less within the reach of remedial and of preventive means. But the Danish Government is that of absolute despotism, and so is that of this island. The Governor-General seems disposed, indeed, in many ways to favor the slave. But his will is the supreme law, and there is no freedom beyond it.\*

Dr. Tuckerman returned from Santa Cruz, as it was thought, much benefited. “But the vital force,” says his friend Mr. Gannet, “was too nearly exhausted. Repeatedly prostrated by disease, he rose only to show the steadfastness of those principles and purposes which filled his soul, and sunk again, as if to prove the constancy of the faith which seemed to gain new power from suffering and bereavement.” We find him, however, in the autumn, collecting his wasted strength, to dedicate a young colleague to the ministry:—

“Boston, October 25, 1837.

“You will be glad to know that the Ministry at Large is in very successful operation among us. On the next Sunday evening I am to give “the charge” to a new colleague in the service, Mr. Sargeant. He is on that evening to be ordained. I am now but

\* To †.



nominally in this office, and by courtesy only am recognized as the senior minister in it. But the connection is still to me one of great happiness. The three efficient young laborers, Barnard, Gray, and Sargeant, are as children to me. I give a part of almost every day to my pen, and am hoping that I may, by and by, thus render some service to the cause of humanity. How I should like to talk with you on some of my topics as they pass under discussion !”

“Oct. 30.

“The last evening, my friend, was a most blessed one. I had been very feeble and much indisposed during the day; but I felt all the elasticity of youth in the half-hour in which I was giving ‘the charge’ to the young laborer whom we then set apart ‘to preach glad tidings to the poor.’ Now, however, I am weary enough to wish for repose.”\*

It had long been Dr. T.’s desire, as well as the frequently-expressed wish of some of his friends, that he should embody, in a more permanent form than his regular reports, the results of his experience in the ministry. The work required a greater devotion of time and strength than he was able to command while health lasted, and his anxiety to leave in the world this testimony to the cause, led him, at last, to prepare it under the pressure of disease. He himself thus speaks of it: —

“Aug. 1st, 1838.

“You will probably before this time have received my book upon ‘The Principles and Results of the Ministry at Large in Boston.’ It was written under much

\* To †.

weakness. It is a book of talk. I have not gone into much detail upon results, for the two reasons, first, that this great cause should rest upon principles, and not upon strongly-excited emotions. I entered upon it, and have lived for it under the guidance of the first great principles of the Gospel — principles which, it appears to me, have been but little regarded in plans for the amelioration of human suffering and for the cause of human redemption. I was mainly solicitous to do something, if I might, to call forth in man a Christian sentiment for man — to bring man in every condition before his fellow-man, as Christ has revealed us to ourselves and to each other. And then, too, I have been unwilling, through the press, to speak of individuals and of families, near and around me, with much particularity. I speak in distinct, though general, terms of certain results; — the great check we have given to mendicity, and the generally improved condition of the poor, which are felt and acknowledged here by those who take any note of moral causes and effects; and I call upon all who would see and know more of the blessing with which God has crowned our service, to visit our chapels, and to see for themselves the congregations we have gathered from those who had previously worshipped nowhere. My book will not be popular. My hope is that, sooner or later, either it or the cause will obtain the attention of one or more who will form a Christian estimate of the enterprise, and who will be enabled to do for it what I have had neither the intellectual nor the moral power to do. It is, to my mind, preëminently the cause of God, and of Christ, and of humanity. It comprehends immense interests, which I think are not, and cannot be, met

by the City Missionary service, as that service is now constituted. Can it fail? I think—I trust—it cannot.” †

The work had but little circulation in America, and is scarcely known in England. With his free concurrence, a series of extracts, forming a tract, entitled “Christian Service to the Poor in Cities,” was published by Dr. Carpenter, in this country. The Baron Degerando speaks of Dr. T.’s work, as throwing “invaluable light upon the condition and wants of the indigent, and the influence which an enlightened charity can exert.”

Dr. Tuckerman was soon after called on to sustain one of the greatest of earthly calamities—the removal from him, by death, of the partner of his life. Of this event he thus writes:—

“January 7, 1839.

“Circumstances as they are with me now, ah, my friend, how changed! This day completes sixteen weeks since she who was my counsellor in all difficulties, my guide whenever I needed guidance, the object of my highest earthly love when my heart was young, the tried and well-proved friend of nearly thirty years, and unspeakably dearer to my heart at the close of each one of those years, left me—at the call of her Father and my Father—for her home in heaven. I can dwell upon no other view of her departure. Would that you could have known her! A purer, more artless, single-minded, true and just fellow-being you can hardly imagine. Nor was this all. There was, in the

† To\*.

whole expression of her countenance, in her air and manner, in her expressions and tones, in her words and actions, a sweetness, a loveliness, which, within an hour, would have won your heart entirely. You would have seen and felt at once, 'Here is one in whom there is no guile.' It was not possible that there should have been less of pretension in any one. But while she was modest and unassuming to an extraordinary degree, she was our oracle. I hardly acted in any concern of considerable import but under the sanction of her judgment, and I know not that I ever regretted a concession to her opinion. She never failed to rise in moral energy and dignity in proportion to the demands that were made upon her fortitude. Amidst great embarrassment, great difficulties, she was indeed very great — perfectly calm, natural, self-possessed, unobtrusive, and unostentatious, and sure at once to do the best that could be done, and most wisely to direct all around her. And, oh, how shall I say it — she loved me with all a *woman's love*! Yes, I am sure of it. I of human beings had her undivided heart. Of course I do not mean that she was not as excellent as a mother as she was as a wife. Nor do I mean that she was not excellent in every relation. But, oh, what a wife was she to me! Nor was I insensible of her worth. Ours has been, I believe, in no common sense, a family of love; and she was peculiarly the bond of our union. It was under her forming spirit peculiarly that our children were reared. Never was there a more gratified mother, and hardly could there be a mother more beloved. A miniature of her, taken since my return from England, lies before me, and I keep within it a copy of a few lines which she

wrote, descriptive, in one respect, of herself, and which I have occasionally heard her repeat. Shall I give them to you? Here they are:—

‘I wish I had the power to hide  
The rising of the ebbing tide  
Of sorrow in my breast;  
Or, when my heart ’s with joy elate,  
To wear a prudent air, sedate,  
Without the change *expressed*.

‘But, ah, how different is my case!  
I have, unluckily, a face  
That shows my inmost soul;  
That, whensoever I would conceal,  
Will every wish and thought reveal,  
Without the least control.’

“So, indeed, it was with her; not, indeed, in a sense to imply either intellectual or moral weakness. You will have learned the circumstances of her last illness from Dr. B. Her parting interview with us was the most extraordinary deathbed scene I have witnessed in a ministry of nearly forty years. I cannot give the details of it. I can only say it was in perfect keeping with what I have told you of her moral power in extraordinary circumstances.”\*

He gives us, in the following letter to another friend, so beautiful a picture of Mrs. T. as a wife and mother, and of the effect of her loss upon himself, that we must insert this also:—

“Boston, November 19th, 1838.

“Few have been blessed more than you and I have been in that nearest, dearest, purest, and happiest of all earthly connections,—the union of soul with soul which God intended in the institution of the mar-

\* To †.

riage covenant. O, what other friendship, what other union upon earth, may be compared with this! I know nothing earthly which has even an analogy to it. I am sure that no man upon the earth could have been to me for light and strength, for counsel and support, for never-ceasing sympathy and interest, for encouragement, for gladness, — ay, let me say it, and for the highest bliss of which my nature is here capable, as she was whom it has pleased our Father to remove from us. A truer, purer, stronger, and yet more beautifully balanced love than hers, is hardly to be conceived. It was so from the beginning of our connection; and it continued so till the last moment of her abode with us. I need not ask you, my dear friend, to bring before your mind an ideal of a wife and a mother, as God would have every one to be who sustains these relations. You have long had, and I bless our Father that you still have, the living reality of such a wife and mother ever before you; and your dependence in this case, like my own, has, I believe, been even extraordinarily great. You will, therefore, strongly feel, that great is the trial of faith to which he is called who has to endure separation from such a wife. I was almost as much dependent upon her even as the youngest of my children, — a boy of fourteen years old. You know that I am constitutionally ardent, sanguine, and quick, even to precipitateness in thought and action. Here has ever been my danger. The tendency of my mind to excess has ever been strong, especially in the pursuit of any great object upon which it has fastened desire. I am, indeed, always cool enough as soon as I begin to write. If I have time to see a word, I have also

time to weigh it ; to compare, to discriminate, and to interpose checks and balances in the process of determining what should be actions, as well as expressions. But, till lately, my life for the last twelve years has left me but little leisure for my pen, and I have needed other influences for checks and guidance. And, thanks be to our Father, I have had them from one from whom it was the greatest of earthly privileges to receive them. You can form no imagination of a more natural or more inartificial being, than was my wife. She could never carry out a scene. She could do nothing for effect. She could seek no end by a contrivance, by a circuitous course. Her integrity was most inflexible and uncompromising ; and I never knew an instance in which her moral energy, her self-possession and self-command, did not increase with the greatness of every trial through which she had to pass. In times of real and great difficulty and embarrassment, she was always the calmest, the most clear-sighted, the most judicious, the most morally heroic of us all. And with all this, and with but little physical strength, she had a refinement, a delicacy, a sweetness of voice, tone, manners, and character, which would have indicated to a stranger but little capacity either to sustain suffering, or to direct and support others under it. Her authority over our children was purely that of love, and the influence of her most lovable mind and character. She was to an extraordinary degree one with them, and made them in an extraordinary degree one with herself. They saw how much she lived for them ; and, as it would seem, as a matter of course, they lived for her.

Her influence upon and over them seemed as insensible and all-pervading as that of the atmosphere. She was our earthly central light, and equally the central object of our earthly love. Day by day, as I have gone out to my work, with a smile of ineffable sweetness, she would say to me, 'Peace go with you, and love restore you.' And peace, a most blessed peace, *did* go with me; love *did* restore me to her and to the fullest possession of a love, compared with which all the gold of Ophir, and the diamonds of Golconda, would have been worthless. Nor, my dear friend, has that peace departed from me; nor do I feel that her love is lost to me. What a blessing is it for nearly thirty years to have had such a friend in a *wife*! What a blessing to have had such a mother to my children! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits! Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Trust thou in God!' Yes, heavenly Father, I do and I ever will trust in Thee. Never, while I offer prayer and supplication to Thee will I fail to offer also *thanksgiving*, in the remembrance, as well as in the immediate anticipation, of Thy goodness! I bless God for all that I have had in my wife. Nor is she even now lost to me. She still lives in my soul. In my faith, she still lives a blessed spirit in far higher scenes of action, improvement, and happiness, and I have an undoubting faith, that there is no trial to which our heavenly Father shall call us here, which, if its sanctifying purpose shall be accomplished in us, will not work out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory. I am, therefore, resigned to His will. I



pray that His will may be done in me, with me, by me." \*

It will not be uninteresting to hear Dr. Channing's testimony to her worth, and to the influence which she exercised on Dr. Tuckerman: — "I was particularly acquainted with his last wife," he says, "with whom a large part of his life was spent, and am happy to pay this tribute to her singular worth. Her reserve and shrinking delicacy threw a veil over her beautiful character. She was little known beyond her home; but there she silently spread around her that soft, pure light, the preciousness of which is never fully understood till it is quenched. The good Providence which adapts blessings to our wants, was particularly manifested in giving to our friend such a companion. Her calm, gentle wisdom, her sweet humility, her sympathy, which, though tender, was too serene to disturb her clear perceptions, fitted her to act instinctively, and without the consciousness of either party, on his more sanguine, ardent mind. She was truly a spirit of good, diffusing a tranquillizing influence too mildly to be thought of, and therefore more sure. The blow which took her from him left a wound which time could not heal. Had his strength been continued, so that he could have gone from the house of mourning to the haunts of poverty, he would have escaped for a good part of the day, the sense of his bereavement. But a few minutes' walk in the street now sent him wearied home. There, the loving eye which had so long brightened at his entrance, was to shed its mild beam

\* To Rev. Dr. Carpenter.

on him no more. There the voice, which had daily inquired into his labors, and like another conscience had whispered a sweet approval, was still. There the sympathy, which had pressed with tender and his aching head, and by its nursing care had postponed the hour of exhaustion and disease, was gone. He was not, indeed, left alone, for filial love and reverence spared no soothing offices; but these, though felt and spoken of as most precious, could not take the place of what had been removed. This great loss produced no burst of grief. It was the still, deep sorrow, the feeling of a mighty void, the last burden which the spirit can cast off. His attachment to life from this moment sensibly declined. In seasons of peculiar sensibility, he wished to be gone. He kept near him the likeness of his departed friend, and spoke to me more than once of the solace which he found in it, as what I, in my more favored lot, could not comprehend. He heard her voice from another world, and his anticipations of that world, always strong, became now more vivid and touching."

A similar testimony to his Christian faith and hope under this trial, is afforded by his successor, Mr. Waterston. "Never shall I forget Dr. Tuckerman," he writes, "as he appeared in several instances of affliction, particularly on the death of his wife. His resignation, his fortitude, deeply impressed me. But it was not only this, — there was a faith which seemed absolutely to look into Heaven. There was a serious cheerfulness which amounted to joy, as he looked upward with the sweetest smile, and spoke of her who had so long been his devoted companion. His words then, as he held me by the hand, seemed almost like

inspiration, and I saw, as I had never seen before, how triumphant may become the principle of Christianity even in the darkest trials of life."

But though the spirit was so willing, the flesh was very weak, worn and shattered as it was with his long exertions, and could not sustain the shock he had received; he was ere long attacked with dangerous illness.

"It was in the summer preceding his death," says Judge Story, "that, on his recovery from a severe illness, he rode out to Cambridge. He came to my house, and in his warm, yet anxious manner, said to me, 'I could not pass your house, my friend, without desiring to see you once before I died. I have been very ill, and as I thought very near to death. But I was tranquil and resigned, and ready to depart, if it was God's good pleasure. And I felt no fears.' He stayed with me some time, as long as I would allow him in his then feeble state of health. He talked over our long friendship, our youthful doings, our advancing years. And when we parted, he bade me a most affectionate farewell. It was our final farewell. I saw his face no more."

"In his last sickness," says Dr. Channing, "his character came out in all its beauty. He had not wholly lost the natural love of life. At times, when unpromising symptoms seemed to be giving way, he would use the means of recovery with hope. But, generally, he felt himself a dying man, whose chief work was finished, who had little to do with the world but to leave it. I have regretted that I did not take notes of some of his conversations. It was unsafe for him to talk, as the least excitement increased his burn-

ing fever. But when I would start an interesting topic, a flood of thoughts would rush into his mind, and compel him to give them utterance. The future state was, of course, often present to him ; and his conceptions of the soul's life and progress, in its view and nearer relations to God, to Christ, to the just made perfect, seemed to transport him for a time beyond the darkness and pains of his present lot. To show that there was no morbidness in these views, I ought to observe that they were mingled with the natural tastes and feelings which had grown from his past life. In his short seasons of respite from exhaustion and suffering, he would talk with interest of the more important events of the day, and would seek recreation in books which had formerly entertained him. He was the same man as in health, with nothing forced or unnatural in his elevation of mind. He had always taken great pleasure in the writings of the moralists of antiquity, and perhaps the last book I put into his hands was Cicero's 'Tusculan Questions,' which he read with avidity and delight. So comprehensive was his spirit, that, whilst Christ was his hope, and Christian perfection his aspiration, he still rejoiced to discern in the great Roman on whom Christian truth had not yet dawned, such deep reverence for the majesty of virtue. It might be expected that 'his ruling passion was strong in death.' To the last moment of my intercourse with him, the poor were in his heart. As he had given them his life, so death could not divide him from them."

He so far revived, that, after much hesitation, a voyage to Cuba was recommended, as the only means of prolonging his life. "I often remember," writes

Mr. Waterston, "the last interview I had with him before he sailed. His frame was exhausted. He knew that it was very uncertain whether he should remain in this world; but, beautiful as this world appeared to him, all radiant with a Heavenly Father's love, he conversed about another world with evident delight. There was not a shadow of fear in his mind. I see in thought, at this instant, his almost divine expression, as, in his sick chamber, he stretched forth his hands as to heaven, and poured forth his hopes and joyful anticipations respecting the spiritual world."

He sailed for Havana, accompanied by his daughter. For a time, he appeared to improve, and proceeded to the interior of the island. There he soon began to lose ground at a fearfully rapid rate, and it was with great difficulty that they returned to Havana, where, in a land of strangers, they found many kind friends. "My father's memory," writes his daughter, "in regard to passing things, became very much impaired during the last months of his life, though he would still look back for a great length of time with perfect clearness. He became childlike, but never childish. His dependence upon me was complete. He frequently called me 'mother,' and deferred to my wishes and opinions in every respect with the most touching gentleness. It is true he could not bear to have me leave his side even for a moment. He could not bear to have any service whatever rendered him by any hand but mine; but this was in the fulness of his love. . . . His sufferings were terrible to look upon, and rendered only longer and harder by the wonderful tenacity of life which tethered him to it long after it seemed impossible that the poor, worn

frame should endure more. But though constantly suffering, he never complained, and many times his pale lips murmured, 'The cup which my father has given me, shall I not drink it? Not my will, O God, but thine be done!' His death was worthy of his life!" His pure and holy spirit departed to his Heavenly Father on Easter Monday, April 20th, 1840.

The mortal remains were conveyed to Boston, and laid in the beautiful cemetery of Mount Auburn, where, writes Mr. Waterston, "A monument has been erected at an expense of about 1,000 dollars, contributed by a very large number throughout our churches, and by many among the poor, who were very desirous to do all they could, as a mark of their gratitude. It is a testimony of grateful remembrance from the Churches, of devoted Christian philanthropy and high Christian worth. But his noblest monument is the Ministry with which his name must ever be associated."

Dr. Tuckerman's character has been so fully developed by his own words, and by this brief account of his labors, as not to require much more to be said respecting it. To speak of his religion is but to speak of his daily life, of his daily actions, for it shone forth in them, in the most filial love and trust. "Christianity," says Dr. Channing, "was his rock, his defence, his nutriment, his life. He understood the character of Jesus by sympathy, as well as felt the need of his glad tidings. . . . At one period of his ministry, when the pressing demands of the poor compelled him to forego study entirely, I recollect his holding up to me a Greek Harmony of the Four Gospels, and

his saying, that here was his library, that Christ's history was his theology, and that in the morning, he snatched a moment for this, when he could find time for nothing else." And, "he went among the poor to serve the purposes of no sect, but to breathe into them the spirit and hopes of Jesus Christ. In all sects he found hearty well-wishers; he had the sympathy of those who differed from him in opinion, and perhaps on none did he leave a deeper impression of his piety, than on those with whose peculiarities he had least communion.

There are, however, some points not yet alluded to, which were too characteristic of his ordinary life to be passed by. One of these was his anxiety to avoid all pecuniary embarrassment. The salary which he received from the Association was small, as was also his little patrimony, and it required the strictest economy to bring up his family without pecuniary anxiety. But he desired nothing beyond what was necessary to save him from debt. "Were the thought of money,—in the form of compensation for my services," he writes, "to enter my mind in connection with my services, it would throw a blight over the best sensibilities of my heart; it would paralyze all my powers of action." "Owe no man any thing," says Dr. Channing, "was a precept which he kept in sight in all his domestic arrangements; and by his strict economy and wise providence, he was able to spend a long life, and bring up a large family, without once anticipating his income, or without contracting a debt." At the same time, his feelings of independence prevented him from receiving from his friends that pecuniary aid which would have been so gladly extended to him. When on his

visit to Europe, he had unlimited bills of credit given him by his friends in Boston, but he did not draw upon them for a pound. Open and generous as was his nature, he preferred incurring the suspicion of parsimony, and denying himself the pleasure of giving, to incurring pecuniary obligation.

Another feature of his character was his scrupulous neatness and care in every thing he did. It was said of the venerable pastor, J. F. Oberlin, whom he in many points resembled, "His fidelity was so scrupulous, that he believed it displeasing to God to have written a word, or even a single letter, without care; the neatness of his writing was perfect, and reveals, as the handwriting frequently does, the character of its author. And one can easily imagine, from this alone, what order, propriety, and elegance accompanied the humblest movements of this truly great man, as well as adorned his mansion, and pervaded his parish." — Mr. Waterston, who possesses a page of Oberlin's writing, remarks in it a striking resemblance to that of Dr. Tuckerman, and observed in his character a similar habit of order and fidelity to the smallest things.

The respectful and even tender courtesy with which all his intercourse with others was marked, was peculiarly striking. It indeed excited ridicule in those who could not comprehend his spirit, to see him accost the most degraded by vice or misery, with the consideration that he would use towards the more favored classes. This was the result of no conventional forms, but of his perpetual recognition of the immortal nature of man. He saw in each a child of God, and recognized him as brother, as a co-heir of eternal life; to



awaken him to his high destiny was his life devoted. And grateful should we be to the Disposer of all, that He called to this mission one who was so peculiarly fitted to fulfil it well. The warmth, earnestness, and tenderness of his love, overflowed on his family, his friends, on the poor; yet this love did not blind him to their faults, and make him less faithful in exhorting them to repentance, and setting before them a high standard of excellence. Sin was not less abhorrent to his soul, because he saw it in one whom he loved; but his love made him strive still more to remove it. A knowledge of the temptations and difficulties of his fellow-beings, led him to treat them with tenderness when they had fallen from virtue, but did not make him seek less to bring them back to it, and if possible to remove the temptation. The hopefulnes and joyous simplicity of his nature, made him see ground for encouragement where others would have beheld nothing but chaotic darkness, while his trust in God elevated this hope into a living faith, which made him rise triumphant over obstacles, and sink under no difficulty. His long residence in a retired village, and the affectionate pastoral relation in which he stood to a simple people, gave him an acquaintance with the habits and modes of thought and action of the humbler classes of society, which enabled him at once to adapt his intercourse with them to their circumstances, while he sought to raise them; and his intellectual powers, though naturally not high, acquired from his continual contemplation of a heavenly object, and his communion with the Father of spirits, a comprehensiveness and elevation which gave him wisdom to direct, as well in the lesser as in the greater concerns of his mission.

He has departed from the scene of his labors, but his spirit still abides there ; still is his memory cherished as the father, the friend, the apostle of mercy. He has passed from death unto life ; — O, may he breathe into each one of us a living desire to be a follower of him, as he was of Christ ! — AMEN.

Sunday morning, October 1st, 1848.

MEMOIR  
OF  
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.



## WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

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WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING was born April 7, 1780, at Newport, the chief town of the island of Rhode Island, of honorable parentage.

His father, William Channing, followed the profession of the law, in which he became so distinguished as to be appointed to high offices under both the State and Federal Governments. He died when his son was in the thirteenth year of his age.

The mother of Dr. Channing, who survived her husband to an advanced age, was the daughter of William Ellery, a man of liberal culture, and of eminent standing. He was chosen to represent his native State in the celebrated Congress of 1776. His signature stands appended to the Declaration of Independence.

Dr. Channing's early years were not marked by any extraordinary incidents, or any special development of character. His contemporaries remembered him as a blooming boy, who won the confidence of his companions by an habitual sweetness of temper and by the purity of his manners. Washington Allston, the artist, his life-long friend, described him as a brave and ingenuous child, who, though his junior, inspired him

with a sentiment of respect. It may readily be inferred from the character of the man that, as a boy, he was open to all influences which tended to foster in him the best principles, his sense of justice and love of liberty, his interest in humanity, and his religious sensibility. So early did his predilections appear for the profession in which he became so distinguished that he was called in his boyhood "the little minister." There was much in the religious opinions and practices of the times that could hardly fail to act with a gloomy influence upon a child of so much sensibility; and the effect of which is, we think, early traceable in the history of his life.

At the age of twelve, he was sent to New London to reside with his uncle, the Rev. Henry Channing, by whom he was fitted for college. In 1794, he entered Harvard University, being then in his fifteenth year. His college career was brilliant and full of promise. He was specially impressed by the works of Hutcheson, Ferguson, and Price, and, at that early age, conceived that deep sense of the greatness of human nature which grew in him with all his experience, and became one of the most copious fountains of his thoughts. The sympathy of a mind, fervid with the ardor of youth, was powerfully stirred also by the exciting events of the period. Upon the occasion of his graduation, when the first honor, the English Oration, was assigned him, he ran the hazard of losing his degree, which depended on his acceptance of this honor, through his enthusiasm in the great political interests of the day. The Faculty of the college having forbidden the introduction of political questions into the exercises of Commencement day, he declined to speak

under this restriction ; but the difficulty was partially removed, and upon the urgent recommendation of his friends, he delivered the oration which was received with great applause, and was long and vividly remembered. In after years, he was wont to smile at the vehemence of his youthful zeal.

It was for a while uncertain to which of the professions, Law, Medicine, or Divinity, he would devote himself. "In my Senior year," as at a later period he declared, "the prevalence of infidelity, imported from France, led me to inquire into the evidences of Christianity, and then *I found for what I was made*. My heart embraced its great objects with an interest which has been increasing to this hour."

From Cambridge he went to his mother in Newport, there to determine his plans for the future. "I was poor," he has recorded of himself in a letter, "dependent, hardly able to buy clothes, but the great idea of *improvement* had seized upon me. I wanted to make the most of myself. I was not satisfied with knowing things superficially or by halves, but tried to get some comprehensive views of what I studied. I had an *end*, and, for a boy, a high end in view. I did not think of fitting myself for this or that particular pursuit, but for any to which events might call me. I now see that, had I had wiser direction, I might have done more ; but I did something. The idea of carrying myself forward did a great deal for me. I was not buoyed up by any hopes of promotion. My after distinction has indeed been forced upon me."

Having resolved to seek some method of maintaining himself while pursuing the study of Divinity, he accepted an invitation from David Meade Randolph

of Richmond, Virginia, then on a visit at Newport, to take the office of private tutor in his family, and accordingly removed, to the great regret of his kindred, in the Fall of 1798, from Rhode Island to that city of the South. By his own family he was all but idolized. "Where," wrote at the time one of his brothers, "where shall I find his equal? In vain do I search the whole round of my acquaintance. So pure a mind, united with so noble a spirit, and such exquisite feelings I nowhere discern."

Dr. Channing's residence in Mr. Randolph's family seems to have been very pleasant. He was treated with great kindness and confidence, and was everywhere received with cordial good will and respect. While he was impressed with fine traits of character in the people around him, there was one thing which, as he wrote home, "always depressed him." It was slavery. "This alone," he continues in the same letter, "would prevent me from ever settling in Virginia. Language cannot express my detestation of it. Master and slave! Nature never made such a distinction, or established such a relation." It is thus apparent that the interest which Dr. Channing afterwards took in the abolition of this iniquitous institution was no sudden growth; at the same time it should be remembered that at the period of his southern residence eminent southern men were not behind him in condemning the whole system of slavery. The public conscience was not then seared, as it has been since, by a long course of events tending not only to sanction slavery but to protect it as if it were as precious as Freedom itself.

Dr. Channing's residence at the South was highly



favorable to the correction and enlargement of his views in regard to the political questions which were then of a most exciting character. In his native home he was surrounded by that one of the two great parties in which the country was divided, the Federal party, which, in the war that convulsed Europe, trusted England and distrusted France. The people of New England were all but unanimous in their dread of French influence, which threatened anarchy and bloodshed, while Great Britain was revered as the champion of the liberties and peace of the world. But at the South, and in the native State of Jefferson especially, the general mind was captivated with the brilliant hopes of political progress which the French Revolution awakened. It was of manifest advantage therefore to a young and liberal mind like Channing's, to become conversant with both parties. He was taught to discriminate — to inspect and watch his own prejudices. No doubt this early experience had its share in the formation of that candid temper by which he was always distinguished.

At the same time, it shows us the ardor of his character and the intense excitement of the times, when we find one of so serene a habit of mind, writing from Virginia thus: "Should the worst happen, should my native country be prostrated by the arts and influence of demagogues at the feet of France, I will curse and quit it. I never will breathe the same air with those who are tainted with the foul impurities of French principles. I never will dwell in the country where I was born free, when it is doomed to groan under a foreign yoke. With tears in my eyes, I will bid farewell to the roof which sheltered my infancy and to the

green graves of my fathers, and take up my abode in the foreign land from which I boast my descent, and which my honest ancestors left in hopes of finding climes more favorable to liberty and to the rights of man.”

But although he took an ardent interest in public affairs, yet his days were so engrossed by the business of teaching, that his earnestness in his studies, led him to encroach far upon the night. This mode of life, rendered still more injurious by ascetic attempts to harden himself, such as sleeping on the bare floor and rigid experiments in diet, wrought fatally upon his physical constitution, originally very strong. From this period is to be dated that extreme delicacy of health which subsequently seemed to render the preservation of his life hardly less than a miracle. In after years, he appeared to be the most fragile of human beings, and, even when not suffering under any positive attack of disease, it was always a wonder where he was to find strength for the duties with which he charged himself.

At this period of his life, his mind glowed with the most exalted aspirations. He loved to lose himself in glorious visions of the progress of humanity. His friends appear to have feared lest he should yield too much to his own enthusiasm; and in after years he regretted his tendency in youth to reverie. He cautioned the young against barren musing.

But, while delighting in the vision of human progress and perfection, he did not neglect the studies which were to qualify him for the ministry. To the great subject of Religion he gave profound attention, studying the evidences of Christianity with great dili-

gence. Of the divine authority of the Christian Religion he became fully satisfied, and consecrated himself with deep solemnity to the work of his own salvation and the service of the truth. As by some of his friends he was accounted too orthodox, while others thought him too liberal, it is safe to say that he took his position between the Old and the New, not altogether rejecting the popular views of Christian doctrine, but holding them in a form modified by the liberal and elevated spirit of his own mind.

In the year 1800, he gave up his residence at the South, and returned to his native place. He returned by sea, and was so much exposed on this brief voyage, through the wretchedness of the vessel in which he went, that, when he reached home, he had lost forever whatever remains of vigorous health his rigid habits of self-discipline had left him. He had left his friends, eighteen months before, a strong and blooming youth, he returned "a thin and pale invalid."

He remained at Newport a year and a half pursuing his studies, and having for pupils a son of Mr. Randolph and his own youngest brother. In the absence of an older brother, he became the head of the household, exercising a marked religious influence on its younger members, going little into company and living in great simplicity. He always attributed a great influence in the formation of his mind to the place of his birth. We must transcribe his own words: "I must bless God for the place of my nativity, for as my mind unfolded, I became more and more alive to the beautiful scenery which now attracts strangers to our island. My first liberty was used in roaming over the neighboring fields and shores; and

amidst this glorious nature that love of liberty sprang up which has gained strength within me to this hour. I early received impressions of the great and the beautiful, which I believe have had no small influence in determining my modes of thought and habits of life. In this town I pursued for a time my studies of theology. I had no professor or teacher to guide me, but I had two noble places of study. One was yonder beautiful edifice, now so frequented and so useful as a public library; then so deserted, that I spent day after day, and sometimes week after week, amidst its dusty volumes, without interruption from a single visitor. The other place was yonder beach, the roar of which has so often mingled with the worship of this place, my daily resort, dear to me in the sunshine, still more attractive in the storm. . . . No spot on earth has helped to form me so much as that beach. . . . There, in reverential sympathy with the mighty power around me, I became conscious of power within."

He became acquainted at this time with the Rev. Dr. Hopkins of Newport, a man of mark in his day, and of whom Dr. Channing has given a very interesting account, (*Memoirs*, Vol. i. p. 136.) Dr. Hopkins was eminent for the strength with which he maintained the absolute supremacy of Right, although he expressed this great principle in a phraseology which gave it the appearance of a theological dogma, and although, indeed, it took this form in his own mind. "No man," such was the form in which his great doctrine admitted of being stated, "can be saved, who is not willing to be damned for the glory of God." In this emphatic way, separating the idea of Duty from the idea of Happiness, he taught the absolute disinterest-

edness of Virtue. It is easy to see how the earnest teacher of such a doctrine must have attracted and impressed a mind like Dr. Channing's.

In the beginning of 1802, Dr. Channing removed to Cambridge, where he had been chosen to the office of Regent in the college, an office whose duties were so limited and so few that it gave him ample time for his studies. He never attained or sought great critical acquirements or a minute scholarship. His favorite method of self-culture was writing. And certainly there is no way of learning to think accurately comparable with this. We may think that we understand ourselves, but we do not know that we do, until we attempt the interpretation of our own consciousness by committing our thoughts to words on paper. Then the distinctness or the obscurity of our thinking becomes apparent. No one who had any acquaintance with Dr. Channing could think of him as yielding himself implicitly to the authority of any book which he might read. If it were a work that interested him, his own mind instantly became active, and the book, as we cannot help supposing, was again and again closed, while the reader either fell into a reverie or seized his pen and began recording his own thoughts.

During his residence in Cambridge, "amidst bodily and mental depression, making a path for himself between skepticism on the one side, and a gloomy theology on the other, slowly winning his way to peace and light, delicately conscientious, eager for unobscured views, aspiring with the intense enthusiasm of a highly ideal temperament after perfect good," he found the refreshment he so much needed in the society of his elder brother, Francis, then settled as a lawyer in

Cambridge, who thus writes of him at the time : “ A word of our dear William. You know not how happy I feel in such a brother. He is a bright light in the world ; he illumines, he animates, he points the way.”

Near the close of his professional studies he was admitted a member of the First Church in Cambridge, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Abiel Holmes, a moderate Calvinist. Dr. Channing was never, as he declared, “ in any sense a Trinitarian.” As he avoided committing himself fully to any of the received religious opinions of the day, we may infer that they did not receive his entire assent. His mind from the first appears to have misgiven him as to much that was represented as essential in the popular faith. At the same time, he had not entirely disengaged himself from the orthodoxy of the times. The probable state of his mind will be easily appreciated by those who, bent upon seeing for themselves, have gone through a like conflict. Certain great thoughts filled and satisfied his heart, while an increasing obscurity was hiding from his view the ancient dogmas of orthodoxy. They were growing dim in the twilight which has deepened around them into darkness during the last fifty years.

In 1802, he entered upon the public duties of his profession. His first appearance in the pulpit is represented to have been singularly impressive. His first sermon gave promise of his future power. They who heard him felt that they were listening to no ordinary preacher, but to one, who, if his life should be spared, would rise to great eminence. He was immediately invited both by the Society in Brattle Street and by the Society in Federal Street to preach as a

candidate for settlement ; in the former Society as the colleague of the Rev. Dr. Thacher, then becoming quite infirm. While the Society in Brattle Street were soliciting Mr. Channing to preach for them on trial the Church in Federal Street invited him to become their pastor, which invitation he accepted. He was ordained June 1st, 1803. "My first recollection," says George Ticknor, Esq. "of Dr. Channing is on the day of his ordination. My father, who was one of the council, led me by the hand, as a small boy ; and I went with him in the procession, and sat with him. So far as I now remember, I had never heard of the person to be ordained ; and I have still no recollection of any thing in the services of the day till they were about to be concluded. Then the pale, spiritual-looking young man, whose consecration I had witnessed without really understanding its purport, rose and announced the closing hymn. My attention was immediately fastened on him, and particularly on his visible emotion, when he came to the last stanza : —

' My tongue repeats her vows,  
Peace to this sacred hour !  
For here my friends and brethren dwell,  
And since my glorious God  
Makes thee his blest abode,  
My soul shall ever love thee well.'

His looks, the tones of his trembling voice, and the devout air with which he repeated rather than read these lines are still present to me whenever the scene comes up in my thoughts ; and, in fact, at the time they so impressed the words themselves on my mind, that I have never forgotten them since. After the hymn had been sung, he rose once more, and in the same tender and devout manner pronounced a very

simple benediction. In this, too, I see him still freshly before me, with his upcast eyes, and remember thinking how spiritual he was, and being sad that from his feeble appearance it did not seem as if he would live long."

Thus Dr. Channing, in the 24th year of his age, took charge of a religious society, at a period and in a part of our country, where the standard of preaching, which he subsequently did so much to elevate, was rising, and where the clergy were regarded with great deference. His delicate health and the struggles of a mind thirsting for light with the gloomy theology, which was only then beginning to be superseded by liberal and cheering views of truth, gave to his manners a seriousness amounting almost to austerity. "He had the air of one absorbed in his own contemplations, and looked care-worn, weary, and anxious. Society seemed distasteful; he joined but little in conversation . . . lived mostly in his study." He suffered much from his deep conscientiousness. The pastoral office he regarded then and always with deep solemnity. The opportunities of influence possessed by the Christian teacher always seemed to him among the greatest privileges that could be conferred on a human being. With these convictions his duties seemed to him momentous and he trembled under their weight. At times, he was almost on the point of quitting his profession. But he was cheered and encouraged by his brother Francis. We catch some glimpses of his faithful self-discipline in the extracts given in his Memoirs from the records which he kept of his personal experiences. He cultivated the habit of faithfully confronting his weaknesses and duties by committing his thoughts and prayers to writing.



We have a touching illustration of his self-forgetfulness in the delight which he took in devoting all the temporal means of support now at his disposal, and which were then considered ample, to the comfort of his mother and her family. He instantly invited her to make his parsonage her home, and established her in his household as if it were her own, resigning to her and to them the best parts of the house, contenting himself with an attic as a sleeping room and with the simplest clothing, and representing himself always as the obliged party. All the while he hardly knew for a day the blessing of unimpaired health. His physical weakness was extreme. His pulpit labors prostrated him. Exercise was as likely to exhaust as to refresh him.

His preaching, however, produced a great impression. Buckminster was settled two years after as the pastor of the Society in Brattle Street. The eloquence of these two young men was felt to constitute "a new era in preaching" in that community. The Federal Street Society was small when Dr. Channing took charge of it, but its numbers greatly increased under his ministry.

With all his fine powers of mind and exalted traits of character, Dr. Channing was then and afterwards in nothing more peculiar and original than in his wondrous gift of public speaking. He was a man of most singular eloquence. So slight and frail was his physical structure, that, as he stood in the pulpit, he seemed more like the vision of a man than the reality. His bodily presence was the very opposite of power; and of course it rendered all the more impressive, by the force of contrast, the demonstration of his spirit. His voice, too, was a miracle, sensitive to every shade

of emotion that passed over his mind, so wonderfully flexible that a world of feeling was often expressed in the briefest syllable. His hearers ceased to breathe as he spoke, and the depth of the impression he made was perceptible by the long breath which his audience took when he paused. It seemed as if a spirit were speaking, a spirit that kept its relationship to the flesh only by the feeblest tie. He was a voice, for the voice and the eye alone gave demonstration of life and power. Hence the most familiar passage of Scripture, the most familiar hymn, when read by Dr. Channing, seemed wholly new. In this respect, as a speaker, he was like no other. He reminded his hearers of no one but himself. His voice never needed the aid of gesticulation. His gestures, rare and slight, added nothing to the effect of his voice; neither could they impair it. Eloquent as he was in a rare degree, yet to style him eloquent seemed to be inappropriate. His manner, unborrowed from the schools, could not have been introduced into them. It was *sui generis*, and whatever were the charms of his rhetoric, and they were neither few nor small, there was a deeper and holier charm still. One felt after listening to him, as if he had been receiving an angelic communication. Amidst the simple beauty of the style of his published sermons and their large and flowing thoughts, we look in vain for the effect with which they were delivered. Of that, words can give no idea. They only who had the privilege of hearing him can appreciate it. They can never forget it. Herein, in this one gift of utterance, he was an original man.

How far, as a thinker, a similar claim of originality may be urged in his behalf is a question which the

next generation will more readily decide than the present. To us it seems, that the office which he so nobly discharged was, to give expression, simple and clear, to the thoughts and aspirations which were rising everywhere in intelligent and earnest minds. He was the interpreter of the highest spiritual progress of his day. He brought forward into due prominence that sense of the greatness of human nature, which the expansion of the intellect in so many directions was beginning with new power to indicate. Men recognized in his writings the record of their best thoughts.

For the mission which he fulfilled he was admirably qualified by the delight which he took in large general views. He was always seeking the mountain-tops, whence he could command a broad expanse. And one of the beautiful, one of the holiest traits of his character, was the singleness of his aim in this respect. It had no self-regard. He had no thought of distinguishing himself when he climbed the heights. He sought to see, not to be seen; and the honor which he gained took him by surprise. Never was a writer at once so popular, and at the same time so indifferent to literary distinction. But we are speaking of him now rather as he was in his later years, than as he appeared at the period which we have reached in this brief record of his life.

In the account given in his *Memoirs* of the early years of his ministry, we confess there is much that awakens in the reader a melancholy that amounts to pain. His ill-health, his profound sensibility, the dimness of his views, if we may so speak, in regard to the orthodox doctrines of the day, give us the impression of a very sad and struggling soul,—a saint

walking in darkness. Although tender and gentle, yet Dr. Channing was then far from being a cheerful man. He never seems to have unbent. We have no record of seasons of exhilaration and triumph. He was apparently one of those on whom falls the second benediction of Jesus. He was of "those that mourn." Under that beatitude is he to be ranked.

But though in his pastoral office he seems to have been habitually oppressed with a sense of his own infirmity and the greatness of his work, yet in studying and watching over himself, he was not forgetful of others. He was deeply and actively interested in the poor. He never had any "instinct for money." He gave without stint. More than half his income was thus spent.

It was not in the suffering of his own vicinity that he was alone interested. The character of his intellect, as well as the benevolence of his spirit, prompted him to cast his eye abroad. He had always taken an interest in public affairs, and no fear of being stigmatized as a partisan deterred him from speaking in the pulpit in behalf of what he deemed right. Indeed, it is not easy to see how any one could have kept silent at a period when the very earth quaked under the giant steps of the victorious soldier, the bloody offspring of the old French Revolution. With nearly all the eminent men of New England, — and New England, or rather Massachusetts, boasted then of the names of Strong, Cabot, and Ames, — with the great mass of the people, Dr. Channing was a Federalist. He looked with utter distrust and aversion on France, and although he never at any time mingled with politics, yet his occasional discourses distinctly defined his position.

In about ten years after Dr. Channing's settlement in Boston, the progress of liberal modes of thought, which had been silently going on throughout New England began to be publicly marked. Many of the clergy in Boston and its vicinity had learned to doubt the popular creed, and although they were by no means prepared to subscribe to the views of Priestley and Belsham on the other side of the water, yet so seriously was their faith in orthodoxy shaken, that they satisfied themselves in their preaching with insisting upon the undisputed truths of Christianity with only an occasional expression of their doubts or their dissent. Their people, hearing little or nothing of the distinctive doctrines of Calvinism, and instructed in the importance of those simple principles which no one questioned, outgrew the old dogmas, which they found had as little to support them in the words of Christ as in the discourses of their ministers. It was not by doctrinal preaching, but by the precepts of the New Testament, that a great change in opinion was wrought in New England. It was practical preaching that worked a doctrinal change. The style of preaching which characterized the Boston clergy, remarkable for the absence of the distinctive features of Calvinism, could not fail to arrest the attention of the more orthodox; and accordingly the charge of concealing their real sentiments began to be made and reiterated against Dr. Channing and others. Not eagerly, but slowly, and with reluctance, did he and his friends enter into the warfare to which they were now summoned. The burthen of their sermons and writings was still charity, the love which is the life and the distinction of the religion of Jesus.

The controversy commenced in 1815, with an article entitled "American Unitarianism," in an orthodox periodical called "The Panoplist." Dr. Channing appeared on the side of liberal Christianity, Dr. Worcester as the champion of orthodoxy. But it was Dr. Channing's memorable discourse at the ordination of Mr. Sparks in Baltimore, in 1819, which marked the commencement of a new era in religious opinions in this country. That discourse, than which it is hardly possible to imagine a word more felicitously spoken, eloquent in its rare simplicity and entire freedom from the dryness which seems to be inevitable in all doctrinal statements, began the great controversy. All that preceded it was mere skirmishing. It called forth Professors Woods and Stuart on the orthodox side, and Dr. Ware and Mr. Norton of Harvard University, on the liberal. The work of Mr. Norton will ever be regarded as one of the ablest controversial works ever produced in this country. But controversy was a work utterly distasteful to Dr. Channing. He satisfied himself ever afterwards with attempting to state what he held to be the truth with all possible clearness and power, and then left his readers to decide for themselves, assured that truth would triumph in the end. For himself, his course was as it had ever been, one of aspiration, of steady progress. He thirsted for large views of God, for a more vital influence of Christianity. So far as could be gathered from his discourses at that period, that is, thirty years ago, Dr. Channing was in doctrine an Arian, believing in the preëxistence of Christ, and assigning an efficacy to his death over and above its moral influence.

In 1814, Dr. Channing delivered a discourse in the

Stone Chapel, on the Fall of Bonaparte, an event which the leading men of Boston deemed worthy of special religious recognition. On this occasion the eloquence of the speaker caused the place to be forgotten, and drew forth an involuntary burst of applause.

He took a deep interest also in the cause of peace, maintaining, however, the lawfulness of defensive war.

In 1814, Dr. Channing married his cousin Ruth Gibbs. "We must leave the reader," says his biographer, "to infer from the ever-widening cheerfulness of his later years the fitness of this union. Inwardly and outwardly his lot henceforth was singularly serene. From about this time commenced, too, his summer visits to Rhode Island, where Mrs. Gibbs, his mother-in-law, who resided in Boston during the winter, retained a country seat."

In 1816, he suffered the loss of his first-born, taken away in her infancy. In a few years, a daughter and two sons were born to him. His condition at this time, as he himself said, "was as prosperous as he could well bear." Feeble health was its only alloy. In 1820, Harvard College conferred on him the title of Doctor of Divinity. In 1822, his Society and friends urged his resting from his labors for a year; and, in accordance with their counsels, he sailed, in May of that year, accompanied only by his wife, for England. In that country he was cordially welcomed by friends, familiar with his reputation, and who appreciated his character.

Dr. Channing was one of the earliest admirers in this country of the poetry of Wordsworth. In the notices which we have of his visit to England, one of

its incidents most interesting to us, as we have no doubt it was to him, was his visit to that poet.

“I had spent Sunday morning,” he wrote home to his sister, “at Grassmere, one of the sweetest and most peace-breathing spots under the skies, and in the afternoon, being unable to attend church, I resolved to visit Mr. Wordsworth, who resides two miles and a half from the Inn. Unluckily, Grassmere, whilst it supplied the wants of the imagination and heart most abundantly, could not supply me with any vehicle for the body more easy or dignified than a cart, dragged by a horse who had caught nothing of the grace of the surrounding scene.

“After an interview of great pleasure and interest, I set out to return, and, unwilling to lose Mr. Wordsworth’s society, I accepted his proposition, that we should walk together until I was fatigued. At the end of half a mile, my strength began to fail, and finding my companion still earnest in conversation, I invited him to take a seat with me, which he did; and in this state we reëntered the delightful valley. . . . You, perhaps, might have promised me the honor of being introduced with the cart and horse into a ‘lyrical ballad.’ But to me, who, as you know, prefers to be greatly in debt to Mr. Wordsworth’s genius, and whose respect and affection were heightened by personal intercourse, there seemed a peculiar felicity in riding through this scene of surpassing tenderness with a man of genius and sensibility, who had caught inspiration from the lakes and mountains in whose beauty I too had been rejoicing.

“Mr. Wordsworth’s conversation was free, various, animated. We talked so eagerly as often to inter-



rupt one another. And as I descended into Grassmere, near sunset, with the placid lake before me, and Wordsworth talking and reciting poetry with a poet's spirit by my side, I felt that the combination of circumstances was such as my highest hopes could never have anticipated."

Dr. Channing's visit was distinctly remembered and alluded to by the Poet, twenty years afterwards. Coleridge, whom Dr. Channing also went to see, and to whom he carried a letter of introduction from a common friend, W. Allston, spoke of Dr. Channing after this interview, "as a philosopher in both the possible renderings of the word, having the love of wisdom and the wisdom of love."

From England Dr. Channing passed into France, thence through Switzerland to Italy. At Rome, he received tidings of the death of his youngest son and of a beloved sister-in-law. His letters, while they show the keenness of his sorrow at these losses, abound in touching expressions of entire trust in the benevolence of the all-disposing Power.

In the fall of 1823, he arrived at home; and in a short time recommenced his ministerial duties with new ardor, and with an increased enlargement of mind, which cannot fail to be marked in the history of his life. It was characteristic of Dr. Channing, that he was never at any time a mere functionary. His duties were always new to him; and he was always improving. He never labelled his opinions, and put them by as irrevocably made up. He never conceived himself to have apprehended the full dimensions of truth, but was always pressing on. From this time, the reverence for his character deepened in

the community. His fame was diffused. It was a privilege and an event to hear one of his sermons. While his sense of the greatness of the power within the reach of the religious teacher became most profound, he began to feel and mourn the false position of the clergy, or rather the wall of partition which divides them from the mass of men. He wanted to see religion taken up by intelligent men, treated genially, and with an unaffected sincerity, and not merely professionally. He wished that some one would discourse on the teachings of Christ as on those of Socrates, or Plato. He began to "feel deeply the defects of the present organization of the Christian church." His spirit was expanding more and more, one might almost add, with rapidity. He longed to have it seen that religion and universal goodness are identical.

We cannot forbear to quote here the testimony to Dr. Channing's power as a preacher, borne by one, himself of no common eminence in the pulpit: "I shall never forget," says Dr. Dewey, "the effect upon me of the first sermon I ever heard from him. Shall I confess, too, that, holding then a faith somewhat different from his, I listened to him with a certain degree of distrust and prejudice? These barriers, however, soon gave way; and such was the effect of the simple and heart-touching truths and tones which fell from his lips, that it would have been a relief to me to have bowed my head and to have wept without restraint through the whole service. And yet I did not weep; for there was something in that impression too solemn and deep for tears. . . . His words had a strange and heart-stirring vitality. Some living power within seemed to preside over the selection and tone of

every word, and to give it more than the force and weight of a whole discourse from other men."

Dr. Channing did not gain from the rest and travel of the years 1822-23 all the benefit that his friends fondly looked for. Soon after his return, he felt himself giving way under the weight of his duties. Accordingly, in the spring of 1824, Dr. Gannett was ordained as the associate pastor. To the value and advantage and entire harmony of the relation thus established, which lasted eighteen years, both pastors have borne fervent testimony. On the occasion of the settlement of his colleague, Dr. Channing gave up a portion of his salary, and from time to time, as he saw how his friend's duties multiplied, he gave up the remainder, "until the pecuniary tie between himself and the congregation became almost nominal."

Dr. Channing attained a literary reputation, second to that of no other man in the country. And yet it was not until 1824 or 1825 that he appeared as a writer out of the department of Theology. Previously to that period, his contributions to literature were very few and slight. Then appeared his article on Milton, which instantly, to his own great surprise, attracted great attention here and abroad. This was followed by *Essays on Bonaparte and Fenelon*. These writings were noticed, but in no generous spirit, in the *Edinburg Review*. But as the idea of making himself a name had never entered into his purpose, the remarks of his British Reviewers never commanded his attention. Years afterwards, he had not even read an article on his "Milton," said at the time to have been written by Lord Brougham. He thought it very likely, as he once remarked, that his reviewer's

criticisms were just. He had not anticipated the effect of his writings. To the personal reputation which accrued to him, he attached no value. But that some of his readers might be impressed and elevated by his words, was his fondest aspiration. His biographer has with truth remarked that "from first to last, authorship was the accident of Dr. Channing's life."

From the date of the publication of Dr. Channing's discourse at the ordination of Mr. Sparks in Baltimore, the spirit of free thought awoke with new animation. Its fruits were visible throughout New England, and here and there in all parts of the country. While he illustrated what was then called Unitarianism, or liberal Christianity, with singular felicity, his influence went to make it a spirit of liberty and power rather than a form of doctrine. The boldness of speculation which soon began to appear among the younger members of the liberal body is to be traced to the spirit which Dr. Channing did more than any one man to awaken and diffuse. The new opinions which began to be published — new in this country, although more than half a century old in Germany: opinions respecting the Christian miracles and the inspiration of the Scriptures — began to cause alarm. But Dr. Channing's trust in truth was too strong for any thing of this sort to move him. He rather rejoiced in the stir, as the sign of an awakened attention to the highest topics. He recognized what he himself called an *orthodox Unitarianism*, animated by no disposition for advancement. "I am little," he said, "of a Unitarian," by which we are to understand, not that he was going back to Trinitarianism, as if that were the only alternative, but simply

that he had but little sympathy with any mere opinions, however scripturally or logically correct. He clung with his whole heart to great vital principles of truth and freedom, and the state of opinion interested him chiefly as it indicated progress towards a true and free condition of humanity. He lived in the spirit; the letter chilled and repelled him. "Whenever," he said, "I meet the signs of an honest seeking for truth, my interest is awakened, no matter whether the author arrives at the same results with myself or not." "I read but little," he writes under date of 1841, "of the theology of the day, on account of the plain proof given by writers that they are communicating other men's thoughts, not their own." Although in the new movement, in which Mr. Theodore Parker has taken so leading a part, he saw much to dissent from, yet he could not be grieved by it. He did not believe that the new modes of thought were going to regenerate society. He regarded them as impotent, in that they appeared to separate the grand idea of Christ from the hearts and efforts of men. In that idea, he believed with Paul, were hidden treasures of wisdom and sanctification. At the same time, he said, "Let the honest, earnest spirit speak, and the more fully and freely for attempts to put it to silence." His personal respect for the individuals connected with "the new movement" was unchanged and freely expressed. Of R. W. Emerson, he once remarked: "I find little that is new, but much that is inspiring in his writings. With all his attractions he has no partisans, and he does not need any. Emerson is a hero."

In perfect and beautiful accordance with his indifference to mere matters of doctrine, was the ever-

increasing interest which Dr. Channing took in all the measures that were put in operation to meliorate the condition and elevate the character of men. The grand effort, distinguishing these times, in behalf of temperance, had his active and enlightened coöperation. We have nothing wiser and more luminous on the subject than the address delivered by him, in 1837, before the Massachusetts Temperance Society, in which he discusses the causes and the remedies of intemperance. He aided, too, his friend, Dr. Tuckerman, in the establishment of the Ministry of the poor. The cause of Prison Discipline and of the Poor engaged his attention. He did not satisfy himself with merely declaiming upon the evils of society, but was always ready to work in any way which bid fair to mitigate them. We remember well the tone of cheerful hope with which once, when some one had spoken of the hard labor to which the masses are doomed, he predicted a time when this evil should be remedied, and no man should be engaged in manual labor more than three or four hours a day. In 1838 and 1840 he delivered his well-known lectures on Self-culture, and on the Elevation of the Laboring Classes. These lectures were republished in Great Britain and extensively circulated; and one day, when a letter of thanks had reached him from the Mechanic Institute of Slaithwaite, he said with glowing countenance and beaming eyes, — “This is honor, this is honor.” On his table was then lying a letter written by command of one of the mightiest nations of Europe, to thank him for a copy of his writings; but this heartfelt expression of gratitude in the handwriting of a rough miner, moved him more deeply than the

courteous praises of the great, the admiration of scholars, or even the warm appreciation of friends.

It is scarcely necessary to specify in this brief notice all the subjects of public and social interest which commanded his thoughts and his pen. We refer the reader to Dr. Channing's published works. They bear abundant evidence to the ardor with which he clung to the hope of a great social regeneration, a regeneration which he looked for through the growth and culture of the individual, and the hope of which sprung in his heart out of his deepest faith, his faith in the essential greatness of man.

But there was one movement which, on every account, demands particular notice in any sketch, however brief, of the life and writings of Channing, — the Anti-slavery movement. No social enterprise has wrought in our country so powerfully as this, or is destined to a grander influence. Having for its central life, the very soul of Christianity, aiming to unloose the chains of some millions of human beings, held in bondage by a nation that from its very origin committed itself in the most explicit and formal manner before all the world to the Universal Liberty of man, it could not possibly fail, come up in what form it might, to attract the early attention, and enlist the sympathies, and command the active aid of such a man as this of whom we write. And accordingly, the first awakening of the spirit of liberty, of which, as was early foretold, the continuance of slavery had wrought a wide and melancholy decay, caught the notice of Dr. Channing, and from that moment he grew steadily more and more interested in its progress, and became more and more inspired by it, until it was the absorbing

object of his thoughts and labors, and he saw, as he said, "but one decided step towards a higher practical manifestation of Christianity, and that was *Abolition*." Steady, earnest, and eloquent as was his advocacy of the Rights of Man, and valuable as was the testimony which he gave to the cause of Freedom by casting all the weight of his character and talents on that side, yet, as Truth always repays an hundred fold any service rendered or sacrifice offered in her behalf, it is uttering no disparaging word of Dr. Channing to say, that the cause of Freedom did vastly more for him than he could do for it. It was his privilege and his distinction that he was so well prepared to receive the invigorating influences of the Divine Spirit, and to be benefited by them. They descended upon a fertile soil. In the whole course of Dr. Channing, there is nothing to our minds so beautiful to contemplate as the increasing heartiness and power with which he entered into the Abolition movement, identifying himself therewith. Having all his life long been thrown into the midst of the struggle of the Old and the New, habitually cautious and self-distrustful, conscious of an enthusiastic sympathy with all good hopes, resolved to possess himself, and not be hurried away, he did not at once fling himself into the fight with the fearless spirit of Garrison, but in harmony with every element of his own character, he grew more and more earnest, confessing his infirmities the instant he became aware of them.

In 1828, we find him expressing in a letter to a friend in England his sense of the iniquity of Slavery. "I rejoice," he then wrote, "in the zeal with which the cause of the Africans is espoused



among you. . . . I trust your efforts are to prosper, for nothing can rid us of this curse in this country but a strong moral and religious feeling, and this will be aided by enlightened public sentiment in other countries."

In 1830, his health, requiring a milder climate, compelled him to repair to the South. He sailed in the fall of that year for the island of Santa Cruz, "at the very time that Garrison was preparing to issue the first number of the *Liberator*."

In this island, the recollection of the horrors of slavery, as he had witnessed it in his youth, uniting with what he now saw again of this foul wrong, rendered his visit a season of "regeneration" to his spirit, as he himself called it. In May, of the next year, he returned home, and, on the first occasion of addressing his people, called their attention to the subject of Slavery, spoke of its debasement and its mitigations, and expressed his earnest desire, that "a new sentiment should be called forth on this subject." While in the West Indies he commenced a work on Slavery, which was not published until four years afterwards. Had he appreciated his own influence, he could hardly have foreborne so long to utter his convictions on a subject of such deep interest. But the delay shows at least how devoid he was of all ambition of putting himself forward. Certainly no opprobrium that he afterwards incurred, — and he had his share, — ever seemed to disturb him in the least. With what honesty he dealt with himself we may learn from the very interesting account which one of the earliest, most faithful, and at the same time gentlest of the friends of Mr. Garrison, the Rev. S. J. May,

has given us of an interview which he had with Dr. Channing in the fall of 1834, which account may be found in Dr. Channing's *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 155. In 1835, his first publication on Slavery appeared. From that time he seems to have considered himself bound to the cause of Abolition. In 1837, he published a letter on the threatened Annexation of Texas, addressed to Mr. Clay. In the autumn of the same year, the whole country was moved by the death of the Rev. Mr. Lovejoy, shot at Alton, Illinois, while defending the building containing his press, which was consecrated to Free Discussion. Dr. Channing took a leading part in attempting to awaken in his own community a sense of the value of those principles of free thought, which, by this melancholy event, suffered so gross a violation. He suggested a public meeting to express that sense of the outrage which became freemen. His suggestion was adopted. Faneuil Hall, the Cradle of Liberty, was applied for, and refused by the City authorities. Upon an appeal in the public papers, written by Dr. Channing and signed with his name, the refusal was revoked, and the Hall granted. A meeting, memorable in the annals of Boston, was held there (December 8,) at which the Hon. Jonathan Phillips, one of Dr. Channing's most intimate friends, presided. The object of the meeting was stated by Dr. Channing, in his own impressive way, and resolutions, breathing the spirit of true freedom were offered and advocated; but, although they were passed by a large majority of voices, it was not until the Attorney-General of the State had made a speech, denouncing the friends of freedom as "abstractionists," and been rebuked and

answered with great power, by one, young then, but then and ever since one of the most faithful and eloquent of the friends of freedom, Wendell Phillips.

But it hardly consists with our proposed limits to go any further into detail in our account of Dr. Channing's connection with the abolition movement. It became from that time forward to the day of his death the interest nearest his heart, and his heart was continually expanding in its inspiring proximity. It prompted in him new desires to mingle with his fellow-men. He felt himself drawn towards all who were engaged in the blessed cause. He became more social. He unbent as never before. No one was more fully aware of the change than himself. "At the end of life," he said, "I see that I have lived too much by myself." And again: "My reserve is not to be broken down in these latter years of my life, but I think the ice melts. . . . I welcome any degree of improvement." It must not be forgotten, however that he was all the time trembling under the burthen of physical infirmity. He seemed, even at the strongest, the frailest of men, as if he could scarcely bear even the vigorous breezes of Summer. The prevalence of the east winds drove him, during the Spring months, year after year, from Boston. Several Springs were spent by him in Philadelphia, where he had much pleasure in the acquaintanee of a number of the Society of Friends, a body in whom he always took a deep interest, cherishing great veneration for Woolman and Elias Hicks. Although thus compelled to take constant care of his health, yet amidst the devoted love of his family and the kind attention of friends, who looked up to him with a veneration such as

only few inspire, Dr. Channing's last years were abundant in happiness. His correspondents were many and eminent, and his interest in all public objects seemed never to tire. Such was his celebrity, that wherever he went, there arose a universal desire to hear him, and when this desire failed of being gratified, allowance was not always made for the physical weakness which so often rendered him wholly unequal to the labor of public speaking. And yet, as we have already remarked, no one could look upon that slight, shadowy frame, as he arose to address a public assembly, without wondering whence he was to get strength to make himself heard ; and yet how often have we seen a crowded congregation, in a few moments, turned by his voice "into listening marble." It was on one of his visits to Philadelphia, when he fled from the fatal east winds of Boston, that he delivered before crowded assemblies his lecture "on the Universality of the Age," and his discourse on "the Church," both of which were listened to with rapt attention ; and both were written for the occasions on which they were delivered.

In the Summer of 1842, he went, to enjoy the beauty of the season and the country, to Lenox, Massachusetts. There, in a small but highly cultivated circle of friends, to whom his coming was the great event of the Summer, amidst the glories of nature and the most delightful social intercourse, his spirit bathed in the exhilarating fountains of the Divine Benignity. It was his happiest Summer, we imagine, and his last. On the first of August, he delivered an address on that beautiful spot in commemoration of the great act of West India Emancipation. On that occasion he

seemed like one inspired. His address was marked by a special strength of language. It breathed, more fully perhaps than any word previously spoken by him, his love of freedom, his abhorrence of slavery. It was a noble utterance, worthy to be his last.

In September, Dr. Channing left Lenox, intending to return home through the passes of the Green Mountains, but was attacked at Bennington by a fever which continued more than three weeks, and finally terminated his life. The intelligence of his illness drew his family and near relatives around him. His sick bed was an altar of holiness and worship to all who approached it. His spirit irradiated the room with the expression of a loving interest in all good. He listened, on the last day of his life, Sunday, October 2d, as the words of Jesus were read to him, and they soothed him like the song of an attending angel. "In the afternoon," says one who was watching at his bedside, "he spoke very earnestly, but in a hollow whisper. I bent forward; but the only words I could distinctly hear were, 'I have received many messages from the spirit.' As the day declined, his countenance fell, and he grew fainter and fainter. With our aid, he turned himself towards the window, which looked over valleys and wooded summits to the east. We drew back the curtains and the light fell upon his face. The sun had just set, and the clouds and sky were bright with gold and crimson. He breathed more and more gently, and, without a struggle or a sigh, the body fell asleep. We knew not when the spirit passed."

Thus died a man of rare sanctity, whose living presence from first to last was a remembrance and a witness of the reality of the Spirit, such as is rarely

accorded to us, and whose words always fell with a singular charm upon the ears of men. How blessed is his memory !

“Where is the victory of the grave ?  
What dust upon the spirit lies ?  
God keeps the sacred life he gave —  
The prophet never dies !”

WHITTIER.

MEMOIR  
OF  
JOSEPH STORY.





## JOSEPH STORY.

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JOSEPH STORY was born in Marblehead, Massachusetts, September 18, 1779. He was one of the great men of our country. Very early in life he distinguished himself in the profession which he had chosen, and was a prominent leader in this Commonwealth of the political party whose principles he had espoused with all the ardor of youth, and the warmth and eagerness of his temperament. At the age of thirty-two,\* a period of life at which most of his brethren are but just making their way into the practice of the law, he was appointed by President Madison one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. The result proved the choice to have been most wisely and fortunately made. Young as he was, he was found equal to his office. What higher praise can be given him? The conspicuousness and difficulty of his station would have only made any incompetency more glaring had his claims rested on the flashy brilliancy of superficial acquirement and not on the solid foundation of learning and genius. If there were any,

\* In 1811.

not knowing the man, who, under the circumstances of his appointment, doubted and feared, their doubts and fears were ere long changed into admiration, confidence and respect. From the moment he was chosen to his exalted office, he gave himself up to its duties with all his characteristic devotion and zeal. He forsook all interfering interests, and made it his first fixed aim to be an able, faithful, and righteous interpreter and minister of the Constitution and laws of his country. How he performed the great and responsible duties which he had undertaken, with what consummate ability, with what unswerving uprightness, with what winning grace, with what universal acceptance, — with what laborious diligence of investigation, with what calm wisdom of judgment, with what wide-reaching comprehension of his subjects, with what overflowing fulness of learning, with what matchless resources of legal erudition, available at a moment's warning, with what clearness of reasoning and copiousness of illustration, — and more than this, with what integrity, with what pure love of truth and of justice, with what candor and patience, with what strict regard to the rights of all, with what courteous consideration of the feelings of all, with what gentle independence and firmness, with what mild dignity of bearing, — in a word, with what a rare union of the gifts, accomplishments, and virtues, which best befit and adorn the station which he held, — is well known to his countrymen; and will be yet better known and felt, now that death has set his seal upon his labors, and summons the world to examine his finished career.

It was not the least among the privileges and honors

of the office to which he was so early called, that it brought him into intimate connection with one whose name stands by the side of Washington's in the annals of our nation. He became the admiring friend and the trusted and worthy colleague of Chief Justice Marshall. In the society of that great man, in the light of his wisdom and experience, in the atmosphere of his pure, patriotic, and noble spirit, he began his judicial life, and for a quarter of a century enjoyed the blessing of his companionship and coöperation. Every year added to his reputation and to his influence, till he stood with acknowledged authority among the most accomplished jurists of the age, and, in our own country at least, first among the foremost.

His mind was very peculiarly and happily endowed. It was richly and variously gifted both by nature and by study. It might be compared to the lithe proboscis of the elephant in its union of delicacy, dexterity, and strength. He combined surprising quickness of apprehension with caution and solidity of judgment; the sagacity of a practical understanding with the depth of a profound reasoner in the subjects of his profession; an eagle-eyed insight into the dim and remote truth, with indomitable patience and intense industry in bringing it to light and clearing away the rubbish which had gathered over it; the comprehensiveness of a wide-searching intellect, seizing upon the general principles of his noble science and mastering its most complicated problems, with the suppleness and tact and microscopic vision of a mind that inspects and grasps the minutest facts, and elaborates the minutest details, — reminding us of the mighty power, which in its varied applications, with

equal ease, moves a mountain mass or finishes the point of a pin. He was thus most admirably fitted for the highest success in his office. He was alike ready and qualified for business and for study; for dealing with men and affairs; and for discovering truth and applying it.

Those who can best appreciate his labors in his official station and in his printed works have borne ample testimony to their greatness and value. We may well congratulate our country that such men as he and his coadjutor, Marshall, have laid the foundations of our jurisprudence, deep and strong, for coming generations. And it is not America only which recognizes the debt of gratitude which is due to him for his services and his writings. His name is widely and honorably known beyond the Atlantic. "The loss," it was truly said by one of our most eminent statesmen and advocates, "the loss is not confined to this country nor to this continent. He had a wider range of reputation. In the High Court of Parliament, in every court in Westminster Hall, in every distinguished judicature in Europe, in the courts of Paris, of Berlin, of Stockholm, and of St. Petersburg, in the Universities of Germany, Italy, and Spain, his authority was received, and when they hear of his death they will agree that a great luminary has fallen. He has, in some measure, repaid the debt which America owes to England; and the mother can receive from the daughter without humiliation and without envy the reversed hereditary transmission from the child to the parent. By the comprehensiveness of his mind and by his vast and varied attainments he was most fitted to com-

pare the codes of different nations and to comprehend the results of such research." It belongs, however, to others, better qualified than myself, to speak of his legal attainments and his judicial merits as they deserve to be spoken of. The common voice of his brethren and of the people has already pronounced this general eulogy upon his public character and his official labors; and those who understand them best praise them most.

But there are other relations in which we are at no loss, any of us, to comprehend and to feel his excellence; — other points of view, — and those, too, of more importance in the sight of God, — in which we love to remember him. He was not merely a great man in the common and lower sense of the word, — not only illustrious for his intellect and learning, — not only admired for his ready gifts and varied acquirements, — not only revered for the high station which he occupied, — not only rewarded with a widespread fame for the lucid and instructive works which issued from his pen, — he was much more than all this. He was great and illustrious, admired and revered, for his private virtues, for his Christian graces, for the noble and winning qualities of his kind and generous heart. He was another instance of the double power which is added to superior talent by its union with sincere goodness. His life was without stain. No breath of suspicion ever rested on the spotless ermine of his character. He was the truly upright and honorable *man*, as well as the just and independent judge, without fear and without reproach. He carried into all his dealings, — into all his varied duties, — the same purity and elevation of purpose,

the same heartiness of interest, the same mildness and consideration for others, which distinguished him on the bench of justice. In his habits of life he was remarkable for his simplicity, regularity, unwearied diligence, and methodical arrangement of time. He could never have accomplished what he did, except by the most persevering industry, united with the peculiar activity and lightning quickness of thought, and ever-ready command of his faculties, which were among his peculiar gifts, derived from a happy nature, improved by education, circumstances, and self-discipline, and kept bright to the last by unceasing exercise, amidst the multitude of his pressing duties. And what was remarkable in him was, that while he thus gave himself with his whole heart to his legal pursuits, while he was one of the most laborious of students, and the most industrious of writers, he was always ready to enter into the passing interests of the day, — he could unbend his mind at once from its graver occupations and its profound inquiries, and descend with ease and grace into the pleasantries of lighter conversation, — he could enjoy with keen relish, not only the society of kindred and equal spirits, but the company of younger and differently trained minds, — he could apply himself to their mental condition, sympathize with them in their feelings, and become for the time their companion and friend. He rose from his books, not dulled and stiffened by his labors of thought, but ever with pliant and light spirit, prepared for friendly intercourse, for domestic hilarity, for interchange of ideas and feelings, or for the practical, every-day business of life. And this was to be ascribed partly to a natural versatility of talent, and a

natural elasticity of intellect, and partly to the genial cheerfulness of his disposition, and the outflowing kindness of his temper, that was ready to see good in every thing and to do good to every man. And who that knew him will ever forget his affable and cordial manners, his warm greeting, his ready smile, his hospitable welcome? In him the consciousness of superiority never betrayed itself in a haughty, cold, repulsive demeanor. Wherever he went, he carried with him an atmosphere of sunshine. His pleasant wit, his inexhaustible vivacity, the flow of his conversation, ranging with equal ease from the lightest to the gravest subjects of thought, his stores of anecdote, his varied and instructive discourse, charmed and gladdened all whom choice or chance brought into his company. In the street and by the fireside, in the public conveyance and in the public meeting, among strangers and friends, with all classes and conditions of men, with the old and the young alike, with the learned and the ignorant, his free, social, and communicative qualities made him the life and the light of the circle. And these were connected with, were indeed a part of, the loving and disinterested spirit which formed one of the prominent traits of his character, and which showed itself not only in the ways which have been mentioned, but in all the multiplied forms under which the various calls of human life and human society could bring it forth. He was always among the foremost and the full-handed in every good work; — always standing ready with purse and influence, with wise counsel and generous sympathy, to throw into the stock of human happiness; holding his ten talents in his open palm, and writing in his life a

golden commentary on the charge of the Apostle to the rich in this world's gifts, "that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." No one who needed his help ever went to him in vain. No useful enterprise, no charitable undertaking, ever failed through his negligence or coldness. With all his engrossing cares he found time to serve his friends, his townsmen, his fellow-citizens, in a multitude of ways, besides that which Providence had made the chief mission of his life. And the more he did, the more he seemed able to do. Hard work and useful work was his pleasure. The more of it the better. It was a delight to him to impart aid and comfort and happiness to every individual who came within his sphere. And his kind and liberal heart poured itself out in secret streams of bounty, as well as in more public benefactions, freely and ungrudgingly. The same disposition which led him to communicate so readily of his stores of knowledge to all who approached him led him to communicate not less readily, at every call of duty or charity, of his stores of wealth. He did not live for himself alone. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," said the Saviour. If any man was entitled by this criterion to be called a disciple of Jesus, certainly it was he. In this spirit of love he was indeed a Christian worthy of the name. And he was not only a Christian in spirit, but a Christian in faith. He was a Christian in spirit, *because* he was a Christian in faith. His life bore the fruits of his creed. His death



was in accordance with it. He bowed humbly to the will of God. His last words were words of prayer. He was a believer on conviction in the divine mission of Christ, in the facts of the gospel history, and in the truths of the Christian revelation. He was a sincerely religious man, without any parade of piety. He revered Christian institutions. He was a devout and constant worshipper at the sanctuary. As long as his health continued firm, he never failed to appear, morning and evening, in the house of God. He was deeply interested in religious subjects, and in the religious movements of the day. He gave his voice and his influence, his authority and his example, to the Gospel of Christ. It would be well for others to remember and profit by the lessons which he gave them in this as in other points of human duty.

In his theological opinions, he acknowledged no creed but the Scriptures, and no authority but that of the Great Master himself. He had rejected the so-called Orthodox doctrines, because they were at variance, as he thought, with the teachings of reason and the true interpretation of the Bible. He was an avowed and earnest Unitarian, and, on more than one occasion, bore his eloquent public testimony in behalf of that form of Christian faith which we deem it our privilege to have embraced as the truth of God and the teaching of the primitive Church. He was for several years the President of the American Unitarian Association, and a speaker in its public meetings. When it can number in its ranks such men as Newton and Locke among philosophers, and Milton among poets, and Lardner and Channing among divines, and Parsons and Story among jurists, it may be fairly pre-

sumed that it is no weak or pernicious heresy ; that it rests on safe and strong grounds ; that it has God's smile upon it. We only ask the world to judge the tree by its fruits, — at least, before they condemn it on hearsay, as a barren and poisonous thing, to remember a few of the names which shine among its branches, and whose fragrance yet fills the world.

I have thus given a sincerely-drawn, however imperfect, sketch of the character and merits of the beloved and distinguished man whose death the community mourns, — the learned and upright magistrate, the illustrious jurist, the accomplished scholar, the indefatigable student, the eloquent instructor, the wise counsellor, the pure patriot, the public-spirited citizen, the kind neighbor and friend, the sympathizing and true-hearted companion, — whose genial spirits and open affections ran warm to the last, untouched by the chill of age, — the generous helper and benefactor, the affectionate husband and father, the pure and devout Christian. He has passed from us in the fulness of his virtues and honors, in the unabated freshness and strength of his fine powers. His loss is in many respects an irreparable one. It is a loss to the nation and the world. It is a loss which cannot be estimated, or, as it now seems to us, repaired, to the whole University, over whose affairs he has so long presided, as a member of the Corporation ;\* and, above all, to that department of it with which he was specially connected, and which, under the auspices of his name and the lustre of his character, has at once risen in rank and in numbers above every other institution of the

\* Chosen into the Corporation in 1825.

kind in the country.\* His pupils have already expressed in their affectionate tribute to his memory the veneration and love with which they regarded him. He was "the minister of God to them for good"; inspiring them with his own enthusiasm for the studies of their chosen profession, showing them by his own example the excellence and the rewards of industry, and distilling into their minds, not only by direct precept, but through the high moral tone of his conversation and his character, an interest in all truth and beauty, a reverence for goodness and for God. He led them through the temple of justice to the shrine of virtue and the altar of the Most High. They looked up to him as a father, counsellor, and friend. His kind and familiar manners drew them to him in a kind of familiar confidence. The love which he manifested towards his pupils was amply returned in the love which they bore to him. And what was true of him in this relation was true of him in every other. He was "the general favorite, as the general friend." The anxiety which prevailed among his townsmen, of all classes, during the progress of his last illness was an expressive and affecting testimony to the value of his public services, and the winningness of his private life. He was peculiarly touched and gratified by the

\* "The year 1829 was the commencement of a new era in his life, in the foundation of the Law School of this University, by that eminent lawyer and statesman, Nathan Dane. Impressed with a deep and just sense of the value of sound law, as a conservative element in a free government, he conceived the plan of this School; and, sending for Mr. Justice Story, submitted it to his judgment, requesting him to become the first occupant of the professor's chair. That his acceptance of the office was made the indispensable condition of its endowment by Mr. Dane is now perfectly certain; without it, the plan would not have been carried into effect." — *Greenleaf's Discourse*.

many expressions of interest which came from the workmen and mechanics of the village. He was not less loved than honored by all. For all had experienced or knew his kindness. They read it in his benignant countenance and his courteous manners. They saw it as he passed through the street. He had some word of pleasant greeting for every one whom he met. The poorest and humblest were treated by him with a truly republican, a truly Christian affability and kindness. This was not the least part of his greatness.

No man among us was more universally beloved than he. No man on his dying bed could better apply to himself the words of the ancient saint: —“*When the ear heard me, it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. I put on righteousness and it clothed me; and justice was my robe and diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked and plucked the spoil out of his teeth. . . . . My glory was fresh in me and my bow was renewed in my hand. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.*”

MEMOIR

OF

JOSEPH STEVENS BUCKMINSTER.



## JOSEPH STEVENS BUCKMINSTER.

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JOSEPH STEVENS BUCKMINSTER was born May 26, 1784, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. His ancestors, both by his father's and mother's side, for several generations, were clergymen. His paternal grandfather was the author of several tracts, of some celebrity in their day, in defence of a mitigated form of Calvinism. Dr. Stevens of Kittery, his maternal grandfather, is yet remembered as a very learned, judicious, and pious divine; in short, — to use the language of the very high authority\* from whom I received this account, — “he was a man of whom one may say every thing that is good.” His father, the late Dr. Buckminster, was, for a long time, a minister of Portsmouth, and was esteemed one of the most eminent clergymen of that state. His mother, I find, all accounts unite in representing as a woman of a very elegant and cultivated mind; and though she died while her son was yet in early youth, it was not till she had made many of those impressions on his mind and heart, which most deeply and permanently affect the character.

\* The late Chief Justice Parsons.

Mr. Buckminster was a striking example of the early development of talents. There is some diversity, in this respect, in the accounts which are given us of eminent persons. As far, however, as the intellectual differences of men arise from differences in their original constitution, from greater sensibility, greater capacity of exertion, or superior susceptibility of external impressions, these differences, we should think, would be more or less clearly displayed in every stage of the mind's progress. When, therefore, nothing remarkable is remembered of the youth of a man of genius, the cause may, probably, be traced either to a want of attention, or a want of philosophical discrimination in the observers. The instances of the early display of the powers of Mr. Buckminster were very extraordinary. There was no period, after his earliest infancy, when he did not impress on all who saw him, strangers as well as friends, a conviction of the certainty of his future eminence. It seemed as if the early opening of a mind so fruitful and so fair was intended to prepare, and in some degree to compensate us for its sudden and premature loss. An account of some of the peculiarities of his youth will be found in the following extract of a letter. It was given me, I presume, with the expectation that the facts it contains would be interwoven with my own narration; but as it must evidently be injured by any alteration, I shall venture to give it in the form in which it was received.

“From the birth of my brother, our parents intended him for the ministry, and took the greatest delight in cultivating a mind whose early promise gave them reason to hope he was to be a blessing to the world. I do not know how soon he was able to read; but at



four years old he began to study the Latin grammar, and had so great a desire to learn the Greek also, that my father, to please him, taught him to read a chapter in the Greek Testament, by pronouncing to him the words. As early as this he discovered that love for books, and ardent thirst for knowledge, which he possessed through life. He was seldom willing, while a child, to leave his books for any amusement; and my father was so much afraid that close application would injure his health that he used to reward him for playing with boys of his own age, and would often go with him, to persuade him, by example, to take part in their sports. I have no recollection, that when we were children, he ever did any thing that was wrong. He had always the same open, candid disposition that marked his manhood; nor can I recollect any time when I did not feel the same confidence that whatever he did was right, the same affection and respect, which made the last years I spent with him so happy. From the time he was five till he was seven years old it was his practice to call the domestics together on Sabbath morning, and read to them one of my father's manuscript sermons, repeat the Lord's prayer, and sing a hymn; and he performed the service with such solemnity that he was always heard with attention. I have heard my dear father say he never knew him tell an untruth, or prevaricate in the least. Indeed, there was always something about him which gained the love of all who knew him, and never any thing which made them fear their expectations of his future excellence would be disappointed.

“We lost our excellent mother when he was six years old. But he had received an impression of her

character which time could not efface ; and I believe through life he was anxious to be, in every respect, what he knew she would have wished him to be. After he went to Exeter he passed but little time at home. The year before he entered college his eyes were so weak that my father thought it necessary to take his books from him. It was a deprivation he could not bear to submit to ; and he found means to secrete some old folios in the garret, which he would spend some time, each day, in reading. This is the only act of disobedience, of which I ever knew him guilty. I perfectly remember the great delight he used to take in listening to the conversation of men of literature and science, and in works of taste and imagination. But the progress of his mind, and the development of his powers, I was too young to observe, or take an interest in. — Should this letter contain any such information as you wish, I shall not regret the painful exertion it has cost me to write it."

At the age of twelve he was ready for college, but, fearing his extreme youth, his father detained him for some time at Exeter, — where he had received his preparatory education under the care of Dr. Benjamin Abbot, — and he was entered as a student at Cambridge, in 1797, nearly a year in advance. It may seem strange to those who take their ideas of a university from the establishments of England and Germany, that one so young, should be fully prepared for admission into the oldest of our seminaries, where the preliminary knowledge demanded is greater than at any other in our country. But it is the genius of all our institutions — arising, perhaps, in a great degree from the thinness of our population, which creates a prema-

ture demand for every species of talents — to bring forward our young men very early into life; and, though such proficiency as we find in Mr. Buckminster is, no doubt, rare, it is no uncommon thing to find them closing their professional studies at an age when Europeans are but just entering their universities. This fact opens a field for many interesting speculations on the state and prospects of society, as well as of letters, among us; and will, perhaps, hereafter be found to furnish a solution of some of the peculiarities of that national character, which — if our political institutions should possess any permanency — will, we may suppose, be, ere long, completely formed and developed.

On the entrance of Mr. Buckminster at college, the same decided designation for peculiar excellence, which had so strongly impressed those who knew him in his early youth, was at once seen and acknowledged. His career at this institution was equally honorable to his moral principles and to his mental powers. Amidst the temptations inseparable from the place, he gave an example of the possible connection of the most splendid genius with the most regular and persevering industry, of a generous independence of character with a perfect respect for the governors and the laws of college, and of a keen relish for innocent enjoyment, with a fixed dread of every appearance of vice. It may be worth while to record that he never incurred any college censure, and was not even fined till the last term of his senior year, and then only for some trifling negligence. It may be said of him, as has been remarked of a kindred genius, that “he did not need the smart

of guilt to make him virtuous, nor the regret of folly to make him wise." \*

In the summer of 1800 he received the honors of the university. There are many who recollect the oration, which he then delivered, "On the literary Characters of different Nations," and the impression produced by the sight of his small and youthful figure, contrasted with the maturity and extent of his knowledge, the correctness, as well as brilliancy, of his imagination, and the propriety and grace of his elocution.

To the study of theology he was inclined from the period when he received his earliest religious impressions, and he devoted himself to it for more than four years after leaving college. His time was spent, partly in the family of his relative, Theodore Lyman, Esq., at Waltham and Boston, and partly at Exeter, as an assistant in the academy. The portion of this time which was given to the instruction of youth, he always remembered with pleasure, as leading him to a review of his early classical studies, and giving him that accuracy in elementary principles, in which our preparatory schools have been heretofore chiefly deficient.

The number of works in theology, metaphysics, morals, and general literature, which he read, during the period of which we speak, would appear scarcely credible to one who did not know the rapidity with which he looked through a book, and the intuitive sagacity with which he seized and retained all that was valuable in its contents. That what he

\* President Kirkland's Life of Mr. Ames.

read was thoroughly digested was apparent from the accuracy — so often observed and admired by his friends — with which he would discriminate the peculiar merits of different writers. I find, from some fragments of a journal of his studies, that, where he thought a book of particular importance, he was accustomed to make a copious analysis of its contents. It was also his habit to make references, at the end of a volume, to the pages where any interesting passages were found. Particulars like these are, it is true, unimportant in themselves; but they may, perhaps, gratify, in some degree, that natural and not useless curiosity which we feel with regard to all the circumstances of a distinguished man's preparation for his future eminence.

The process of study and of thought, through which he passed in forming his theological opinions, cannot be too much praised.

It is strange that a principle so natural, and so constantly observed in all other sciences, — that of beginning with what is simple and clear, and gradually proceeding to what is doubtful and dark, — should have been so often reversed in the study of theology. It was not, however, overlooked by Mr. Buckminster. He avoided, as much as possible, all discussion of the controverted doctrines of systematic divinity, till he had given himself a thorough initiation in the evidences of religion, natural and revealed, — examined the nature and degree of the inspiration of the sacred writings, in order to determine what laws of interpretation are to be applied to them, — taken a general survey of the questions connected with the criticism of the Bible, — and sanctified all his investigations by

the habitual study of the spirit and maxims of practical religion. Having, by these inquiries, together with an accurate knowledge of the original languages, prepared himself for the interpretation of the more difficult and obscure parts of the Scriptures, he commenced the study of them with the aid derived from a comparison of the opinions of the best commentators of different sects. The writers on dogmatic theology he now permitted himself to consult; and he has often told me with what eager curiosity, and even trembling interest, he read Taylor and Edwards on original sin, and pushed his researches into those high speculations where so much caution is necessary to prevent the mind from becoming enslaved to a system, and shut forever against the light of truth. Having in this manner gone over an uncommonly wide and extensive field of preparatory studies, in October, 1804, he yielded to a request to preach to the society in Brattle Street, Boston. I cannot attempt to describe the delight and wonder with which his first sermons were listened to by all classes of hearers. The most refined and the least cultivated equally hung upon his lips. The attention of the thoughtless was fixed. The gayety of youth was composed to seriousness. The mature, the aged, the most vigorous and enlarged minds, were at once charmed, instructed, and improved. After preaching for a few weeks, he received an invitation to become the minister of this society, and was ordained January 30, 1805. The fatigue and agitation of spirits which he experienced on this occasion produced a severe fit of illness, which interrupted his labors till the following March, when he recommenced them with the sermon "On the Advantages of Sick-

ness," which makes part of a collection of his published writings.

The situation, in which he was now placed, introduced him to many new and most important duties. The task of a Christian teacher can never be a light one to any conscientious man. There are, however, circumstances, in some respects peculiar to the situation of a clergyman in Boston, which, while they are a source of constant interest and delight to him, serve to make his duties uncommonly great. It is the general habit of the place for the individuals of each society to make their minister a part almost of their families, a sharer of their joys and sorrows, one who has always access to them, and is always welcomed with distinguished confidence and affection. There are many obvious advantages arising from this unreserved intimacy. Religion is more easily made to mingle, as it ought, with the common business and pleasures of life, when the idea of its ministers is not associated merely with images of awe and terror, of gloom and death. Both admonition and consolation come home to the heart with redoubled effect, when they are heard from the lips of one who is not only respected from the sanctity of his office, but who is personally beloved as a friend. This intimate connection with his people — although, to a man of any sensibility, a source of some of the most exquisite gratifications of the human heart — makes a great addition to his toils. It makes a deep inroad on the time he would give to study, and almost compels him to redeem it from the hours which ought to be given to exercise or repose. By the variety and painful interests, also, of the scenes and occupations to which it calls him, the mind is

often agitated and worn down; while the reflection, which it is impossible always to exclude, of the insufficient ability with which his duties are performed, and the inadequate returns he can make for the friendship and confidence he receives, must often come over and oppress his spirits.

The effect of these labors on the delicate frame of Mr. Buckminster could not fail to be soon visible. A disorder, which had made its appearance some years before, was sensibly increased during the year 1805. It was one of the most tremendous maladies which God permits to afflict the human frame; and to which it has often been found that minds of the most exquisite structure are peculiarly exposed. The manner in which this visitation was endured by Mr. Buckminster, I can never think of but with increasing admiration of the fortitude, and reverence of the piety which sustained him. Those who saw his habitual gayety of disposition, and observed the lively interest which he took in his friends and all the usual occupations of life, and, especially, who witnessed all his cheerfulness and activity returning almost immediately after the severest of these attacks, were disposed to think that he could not be sensible of the terrific nature of his disorder, or ever look forward with any distinct anticipation to its threatened consequences. It was seldom that even his nearest friends heard from him any allusion to his calamity; and, perhaps, there was only one of them, to whom all the thoughts of his soul on this subject were confided. How little they knew of him, who imagined he was insensible to any of its appalling consequences, will appear by the following extract from his private journal, which I can scarcely transcribe without tears.



“October 31, 1805. Another fit of epilepsy. I pray God that I may be prepared, not so much for death as for the loss of health, and, perhaps, of mental faculties. The repetition of these fits must, at length, reduce me to idioty. Can I resign myself to the loss of memory, and of that knowledge I may have vainly prided myself upon? O God! enable me to bear this thought, and make it familiar to my mind, that, by thy grace, I may be willing to endure life as long as thou pleasest to lengthen it. It is not enough to be willing to leave the world when God pleases; we should be willing even to live useless in it, if he, in his Holy Providence, should send such a calamity upon us. I think I perceive my memory fails me. O God, save me from that hour!”

It is proper to remark that this suspicion of the failure of his memory was, I believe, wholly without foundation. His fears for the safety of a faculty, which in him was always so eminently perfect that his friends scarcely ever thought of appealing from it on any question of fact, were awakened, probably, by that loss of facility of retention, which every philosophic mind, trained to the habit of classifying its ideas, is accustomed to experience with regard to those insulated facts which cannot be easily connected with its general knowledge.

In the spring of 1806, the increase of his disorder induced him to think of a voyage to Europe. His society, with a generous preference of his advantage to their own convenience and pleasure, readily consented to his departure; and he sailed for Liverpool early in May. He was received in London at the house of his relative and countryman, Samuel Wil-

liams, Esq., who, with his brother, an early friend of Mr. Buckminster, made his residence delightful by every possible attention. In August — having been joined by a friend from Boston, whose office it is to collect this imperfect memorial of his worth — he embarked for the continent, and landed at Harlingen, on the Zuyder Zee. He passed rapidly through the chief cities of Holland, ascended the Rhine, and, partly on foot, made the tour of Switzerland. At Geneva he wrote, in a letter to a friend, a description of the fall of the mountain of Rossberg, or Ruffiberg, which is, perhaps, one of the most beautiful and interesting of the minor subjects of his pen. From Switzerland, he directed his course to Paris, where his stay, which he had intended should be short, was protracted to five months by the embarrassments to the intercourse with England produced by the first operations of the Berlin decree. His residence there, however, could not be tedious amidst the literary resources of the French capital, and the inexhaustible treasures of the fine arts, with which the plunder of Europe had enriched it. Much of his time also, both here and in London, was employed in collecting a library, for which his remarkable knowledge of literary history eminently qualified him; and before he left Europe he formed and sent home a collection of near three thousand volumes of the choicest writers in theology and general literature. Some of the motives which induced him to expend so large a part of a small fortune in the purchase of books, will be seen in the following extract of a letter to his father, accompanied with another very touching reference to the calamity which still followed him.

“London, May 5, 1807.

“If the malady with which it has pleased God to afflict me, should not entirely disappear, I hope I shall be able, by his grace, so to discipline my mind as to prepare it for any consequences of such a disorder; consequences which I dread to anticipate, but which I think I could bear without guilty complaint. I sometimes fancy my memory has already suffered; but, perhaps, it is all fancy. You will, perhaps, say that is no very strong proof that I have any serious apprehensions on this score, that I am continually purchasing and sending out books, and saying to my mind, Thou hast goods laid up for many years. True — but, though I may be cut off, by the judgment of God, from the use of these luxuries, they will be a treasure to those who may succeed me, like the hoards of a miser scattered after his death. I consider that by every book I send out I do something for my dear country, which the love of money seems to be depressing almost into unlettered barbarism.”

In February he returned to London, passed the following spring and summer in a tour through England, Scotland and Wales, embarked at Liverpool in August, and reached home in September. Some of the general impressions, which he received from his visit to Europe, may be collected from a Thanksgiving sermon which he preached soon after his return, and which may be found in his published writings. His disorder — though the mild climate of the continent seemed to mitigate it, and even, for a while, to flatter him with the hope of complete recovery — remained radically the same. His constitution, however, probably gained some additional vigor by his travels, and

was thus enabled longer to endure the attacks of his malady.

He returned now to all the duties of his office with redoubled activity. He was welcomed by his society with unabated affection and regard. But no praise ever seduced him to intermit his diligence. His books gave him an inexhaustible source of interest and delight ; and, as he was unavoidably exposed to frequent interruptions during the day, his studies were protracted till midnight with fatal constancy. In the inquiries peculiar to his profession he took increasing pleasure ; and he has more than once told me that he was fast losing his taste for all other studies. In order that this all-absorbing interest in theology should not wholly destroy his relish for elegant letters, which he justly considered as a valuable auxiliary to his ministerial influence, he occasionally lent his aid, as he had done previously to his voyage, to the "Monthly Anthology," and other literary periodical publications of the day.

His only habitual relaxation was music, of which, from his youth, he was passionately fond, and in which his taste was, I believe, very exquisite. This, of course, led him to take an interest in the sacred music of his church ; and to make this part of worship more perfect, he collected and published, in 1808, a number of hymns as a supplement to those appended by Dr. Colman to Tate and Brady's Psalms. The collection was formed on the general principle, that, as singing is an act of worship, in which all Christians are to join, it is proper that those sentiments, which are peculiar to any of the different sects, should be excluded, so that no tender conscience may be prevented from

sharing in this part of social devotion. Reasonable, however, and evangelical, as is this principle, it did not prevent his little book — though designed only for his own society, and not regularly published — from being attacked with a great deal of asperity. He was accused, in a cotemporary theological journal, of mutilating the hymns of Watts and others, in order to cover a design of suppressing the great doctrines of the gospel by the authority of their names. The charge was sufficiently absurd; and I would not willingly revive a forgotten controversy. But, as I find a reference to this affair in his private journal, and as the charge affects his personal integrity, and may hereafter meet the eye of those who have not the means of knowing how unfounded it was, I feel obliged to insert the following extract. The observations, which introduce it, are very striking illustrations of his humility, and his habitual and elevated piety.

“January 2, 1809. A new year has begun. In looking back upon the events of my life the last year, I see little or no improvement. Sure I am that my stock of theological knowledge has not been increased, though I have some reason to hope that my sermons, for the last year, have not been inferior to any preceding. In the trials, to which God has exposed me, I endeavor to discern the design of his providence. The disorder, to which I am yet subjected, ought to be to me a perpetual lesson of humility. I have sometimes thought, that if our powers and state of mind in another world depend at all upon the condition of the understanding when we leave this; I should prefer to die before my mind shall be irrecoverably debilitated by this disorder. May this con-

sideration, with others, keep me in a state of perpetual willingness and readiness to depart. My greatest trial, this year, was the attack upon my selection of Hymns for the use of Brattle Street Church. I cannot but think it insidious and impertinent. If I have indulged any improper feelings towards the supposed author, I pray God to forgive me; at least I trust they do not appear in my reply. As to the principal and most important charge in the review, that of un-signified alterations, I can here put down, what it was not necessary to tell the public, that I DID NOT KNOW OF THEM TILL THEY WERE POINTED OUT BY THE REVIEWER. I took the hymns without alteration, from Dr. Kippis's collection."

In the beginning of 1809, Mr. Buckminster published a sermon on the death of Governor Sullivan, the first production of his pen, to which he gave his name. In the course of the year he wrote the circular address of the Massachusetts Bible Society, an institution in which he took a very lively interest, and of which he was corresponding secretary. He also published an address, "On the Dangers and Duties of Men of Letters," pronounced before the society of *ϕ. B. K.* at Harvard College, — an enchanting specimen of the variety and elegance of his literature, and of his power and disposition to make it auxiliary to the cause of truth and virtue. These, together with a sermon on the death of the Rev. William Emerson, are the only writings which he published, except the fugitive pieces in the literary journals to which I have referred.

In 1808, he engaged, in conjunction with his friend, Mr. William Wells, and under the patronage of the university at Cambridge, in the publication of Gries-

bach's Greek Testament, containing a selection of the most important various readings. This work passed under the most careful revision, in the course of which several errors in the original were discovered and corrected. I believe that this American edition may be safely said not to yield the palm of accuracy to any which has been published in Europe. Mr. Buckminster wrote several pieces, in which the general merits of Griesbach were largely and ably discussed, the peculiarities of the minor edition were pointed out, and the fidelity and accuracy of this most candid and learned critic were vindicated and explained. Proposals were also issued for a supplementary volume to Griesbach, to contain an English translation of the Prolegomena to his large critical edition, the authorities for his variations from the received text, and some dissertations, original and selected, on subjects connected with the criticism of the Bible. Some progress was made in preparing the work by Mr. Buckminster and one of his friends; but as he did not give his name to the proposals, they did not receive sufficient encouragement to induce him to persevere. In 1810, he formed the plan of publishing all the best modern versions of the prophetic books of the Old Testament. He proposed to use the version of Bishop Lowth for Isaiah, with the various renderings of Dodson and Stock in the margin, where they differ materially from Lowth. The major prophets were to be completed by Blayney's version of Jeremiah and Lamentations, Newcome's of Ezekiel, and Wintle's of Daniel, with Blayney's of the Seventy Weeks. Newcome's translation of the minor prophets was to have followed, with the most important variations from

Horsley's Hosea, Benjoin's Jonah, and Blayney's Zechariah. After this he hoped to have been able to give an additional volume, containing the most important notes and preliminary dissertations to the several books. The whole design, however, I am almost ashamed to say, failed for want of a sufficient taste for these studies among our countrymen.

The remaining years of the short life of Mr. Buckminster were marked by few incidents. The peaceful duties of a clergyman admit of but little variety, and possess no general interest. He was an active member of almost all our literary and charitable societies. He took the liveliest interest in every plan for the improvement of the intellectual, moral, and religious character of the community; and scarcely one was attempted in which his advice and coöperation were not sought and afforded. In 1811, he received a proof of the estimation in which his knowledge in his favorite walk of study was held, by his appointment as the first lecturer on Bible criticism at Cambridge, on the foundation established by the late Hon. Samuel Dexter. This appointment was universally thought to be an honor most justly due to his preëminent attainments in this science. All his studies had contributed to fit him for this office; but, to increase his qualifications, he immediately began the study of the German language, and engaged in a minute review of his former reading. He laid out a very extensive plan for his lectures,—of which, however, some fragments only were found among his papers,—and expected to have been prepared to deliver them early in 1813.

But the all-wise Disposer had otherwise determined.



In the midst of all his usefulness and activity, when he was never more interesting to his friends, and their hopes from him were never more highly raised, they were all at once extinguished. A sudden and violent access of his old disorder instantly made a total and irrecoverable wreck of his intellect; and, after lingering for a few days, during which he had not even a momentary interval of reason, he sunk under its force, Tuesday, June 9, 1812, having just completed his twenty-eighth year.\*

It remains that I should now attempt to embody some of my recollections of his person and manners, his intellectual habits, acquisitions, and powers, his religious character and views, and his ministerial endowments.

In his person Mr. Buckminster scarcely reached the middle size. His limbs were well proportioned and regular. His head resembled the finest models of the antique; and his features presented an almost faultless combination of dignity, sweetness, and intelligence. There were very few peculiarities in the manners of Mr. Buckminster, to distinguish him from the generality of men of refined minds and familiar intercourse with the best society. He was affable and unconstrained, and very accessible to the claims of his friends, and the curiosity of strangers. There was a remarkable simplicity and directness, if I may so speak, an absence of all disguise, in his mode of uttering his thoughts; and it might sometimes seem that his first impressions were made known with a freedom which more prudence or more selfishness

\* This disease made its first attack in the autumn of 1802, in the 18th year of his age.

would have taught him to repress. He had that un-failing mark of a good disposition, an easiness to be pleased. His conversation in large companies was not remarkably copious, but always very correct and elegant. In the private society of his friends he delighted in the exchange of minds, — particularly on subjects connected with education, classical learning, biography, the theory and laws of morals, the nature and influence of religion, the prospects of mankind, &c., — and was very communicative of his great variety of knowledge on all these subjects. Though he was eminently and habitually cheerful, there were occasional inequalities in his manner ; and there were moments, when there appeared in him a sort of reserve, and want of interest in those about him, which made his character misunderstood by several, who, if they had known him more, would have found him formed to engage all their esteem and love. These occasional departures from his habitual manners were, I am confident, to be traced to his bodily indisposition. Many of his friends, who have entered his room, when he was suffering under this effect of his disease, well remember that, after a few moments of conversation, he would shake off the oppression of his languor, his wonted smile would play over his features, that peculiar animation, which usually lighted up his countenance would again break out, and he would enter into any subject proposed with the warmest and liveliest interest.

Mr. Buckminster possessed all the characteristic features of a mind of the highest order. It was not marked by any of those eccentricities which sometimes distinguish and disgrace men of brilliant genius ; and

which, I suppose, are usually to be ascribed either to the deficiency, or the undue predominance, of some one of the mental powers. His mind was a perfectly well balanced one. There was a soberness, a rationality, a practicableness in all his views, which proved that judgment, in a degree very rarely found united with such splendid gifts of fancy, presided over his other faculties, and regulated their use. The most shining attribute of his mind was, undoubtedly, philosophic imagination. It was this which gave him such unrivalled powers of delineation and illustration, and enabled him to impart novelty and lustre to every thing he touched. His conception of any subject, which engaged his mind, was strong and original; and he could hold it in view, till it spread before him in all its parts, and unfolded all its connections. When he was preparing to communicate his thoughts, a thousand associated ideas sprang up, and gathered round the subject; and imagination stood ready to furnish him with innumerable delightful resemblances, which would often carry with them the force of arguments from analogy, as well as shed light and beauty on his conceptions. Yet he did not abuse this exuberant faculty by too prodigal a display of it.

In his intellectual habits I do not remember to have remarked any singularity. He was a real student. He had that first requisite of all true and durable greatness, the habit of patient and long continued attention. He possessed the genuine *φιλοπονία*, the love of labor for itself. He could delight in the driest and most minute researches, as well as in the lofty and ethereal visions of fancy. Like the majority of men of learning, he loved to read more than to think, and

to think more than to write. He composed with rapidity, but with intellectual toil ; and his best efforts were not made without a high degree of mental excitement.

His acquisitions were, for his years, preëminently great. Beside the studies peculiar to theology, his reading was very extensive in metaphysics, morals, biography, and, particularly, literary history ; and whatever he had once read his memory made forever his own. If I were required to state, in one word, in what branch of knowledge his excellence was most conspicuous, I should say it was philology, — understanding by this word the knowledge of language as an instrument of thought, in all its propriety and force, as well as all its shades and varieties of meaning ; in its general theory, as well as in its modifications in different countries ; and, finally, in all its grace and beauty, as it is fitted to invest truth in its richest and most attractive dress.

But it was the light which philology pours on the records of our faith and hope, which gave it its chief value to the mind of Mr. Buckminster. It was the study of the Scriptures in their original languages, which most powerfully seized and occupied his attention, and engaged him in a course of inquiries which he never thought himself at liberty long to desert. His attainments in this department of knowledge would not have been thought lightly of, when compared with those of European critics. He was always of opinion that the principles of Christianity, in their original purity and simplicity, were to be preserved, where they are already held, and recalled, where they are lost or obscured, only by the study of

the Bible according to the maxims of a sound, and cautious, and enlightened criticism. One of his strongest passions was the desire to diffuse a love of Biblical studies; and the impulse among us, which has been lately given to inquiries on these subjects, is, in no slight degree, to be attributed to his exertions and example.

It cannot but be interesting to know in what views of religion the inquiries of a mind so active, so candid, so enlightened, and so pious as that of Mr. Buckminster resulted. It is apparent, from his published sermons, that the foundation of all his opinions was laid in the belief that the great design of the gospel is, to produce a moral influence on the human character, to raise it from the degradation and ruin of sin, and fit it for the pure and intellectual happiness of heaven. From this simple principle, so obvious, so undeniable, and yet so often forgotten, all his views of Christianity took their character. It necessarily follows from it that all the doctrines and views of the gospel, as far, at least, as they regard man, are to be considered in the light of motives and means,—of no intrinsic value, except as they are auxiliary to this great end. Christian faith, therefore, derives none of its efficacy from the number merely, much less the mysticism and obscurity, of the articles we believe. Its genuineness and its worth are to be determined by the energy and permanence of our practical persuasion of those truths which supply the strongest and most affecting motives and encouragements to repentance and a holy life. These, in the view of Mr. Buckminster, were, the paternal character of God; his constant presence and overruling providence; the

connection of his favor always and only with moral goodness ; the pardon of sin to the penitent through Jesus Christ ; his mission to enlighten and redeem mankind ; the confirmation of our immortality by his resurrection from the dead ; the imparting of all needed spiritual aids to assist our sincere exertions ; the just and impartial retributions of eternity to all the human race according to their deeds. These, surely, are views which every Christian will acknowledge, enter largely into the grounds and support of his faith, and hope, and charity. They are, beyond all question, those on which the writers on vital religion, who are most universally acknowledged to have caught the true spirit of the gospel, chiefly insist. And who will say that any man, whose understanding acknowledges and whose heart is imbued with these truths, will want any essential characteristic of a true disciple of his Saviour ?

It was the great object of the ministerial labors of Mr. Buckminster to produce, under the influence of these views, the practical religion of the heart and life, as it is explained in the teaching and illustrated in the example of our Saviour. How near this purpose was to his heart is very strikingly displayed in the closing passage of his sermon "On the mutual Influence of Knowledge, Piety, and Charity : " "It is the constant object of my wishes and prayers, and may it be the effect of my preaching, under the blessing of God, to contribute to the formation of that noblest of characters, the Christian, whose love, as the Apostle describes it, 'abounds more and more in knowledge and in all judgment,' who 'approves the things that are excellent,' and who remains 'sincere and without offence

till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.'” These are the words with which he closed his earthly labors in the desk of instruction.\* His people bear him witness now, and, I trust, will hereafter bear him witness before the throne of God, that all his preaching justified this declaration, and that all his life harmonized with this prayer.

It is impossible that a man who entertained such views of the nature of religion, should be exclusive or intolerant. Mr. Buckminster was eminently charitable towards those who differed from him on speculative points. He felt, with all wide observers of human character, that great errors of the understanding, on almost every subject, are consistent with uprightness of heart. How, indeed, can any one fail to acknowledge that this may be so in religion, who remembers that even the disciples of our Lord were confessedly full of prejudice and misapprehension before their Master's death? Mr. Buckminster could extend his affection towards good men of every sect and communion. He could acknowledge in a Fenelon, with all his zeal for transubstantiation and papal infallibility, one of the purest and most lovely exemplifications of the Christian character which the world has seen since the days of St. John. He did not, however conceive that any part of his or any other man's goodness consisted in or was necessarily connected with,

\* This sermon was delivered before the “Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety, and Charity,” and afterwards altered and adapted to his own people, and preached on the Lord's day before he was seized with his last illness.

his errors. He was, therefore, a steady opposer of what he believed to be the corruptions of Christianity, not only because the gospel is rendered incredible by them to so many intelligent men, but because they lessen, in the minds of so many good persons, that joy and peace in believing which the religion of Christ is fitted and intended to impart.

Of what Mr. Buckminster was, and of what he did, his sermons are now to be the only permanent memorial. If the effect, which some of them will produce when read, may be anticipated from their effect when delivered, it will not often be surpassed. The remark of Quintilian, however, on the eloquence of Hortensius, is, in some degree, true of the compositions of every fine speaker. There is a certain charm thrown over his thoughts by his manner while speaking, which, when we read them, we seek for in vain.\* But, though something of that interest will, no doubt, be lost, which particular passages derived from the liquid voice, the eloquent eye, the illuminated countenance, the indescribable animation, the variety and frequent pathos of the manner of Mr. Buckminster, there are, still, several sermons in this collection, which will gain, by being read, more than they will lose; and merits will be discovered which were overlooked, or not distinctly seen, amidst the general splendor of his eloquence.

They will, perhaps, be considered as, upon the whole, the most successful attempt yet made to unite the peculiar excellencies of the English and French pulpits. The best English sermons are, no doubt, very powerful performances. There are to be found

\* Apparet placuisse aliquid, eo dicente, quod legentes non invenimus.  
Lib. IX. c. 3.



in them some of the ablest defences of Christianity, the most just and rational statements of its peculiar doctrines, the most complete delineations of the virtues and vices, the most learned and judicious illustrations of the Scriptures, the best and weightiest maxims of habitual conduct, and the deepest and most intimate views of the nature and spirit of devotion. They have almost every merit, as dissertations and essays; but, considered as addresses intended for an actual audience, they certainly have many important defects. They often fail of making any other than a very intellectual hearer feel his own personal interest in the truths they inculcate. They are wanting in directness and closeness of application. They are studiously unimpassioned, to a degree which makes them often appear cold and unimpressive. Some exceptions are to be made for the sermons of Taylor and Barrow, and several writers of later years; but the general character of English pulpit eloquence, since the Restoration, has been such as we describe. It has been produced, without doubt, in a great degree, by a desire of avoiding those extravagances which, in the times of the Commonwealth, brought religion into disgrace, and laid the foundation of the unbelief and libertinism of the age of Charles the Second.

It would be opposing the decision of all Europe, to deny the great excellencies of the French sermons. They are, perhaps, the most finished compositions of modern times. They abound in passages of the most splendid description, and, sometimes, of the truest pathos. But their eloquence is usually too artificial, too much designed for mere stage effect. An excessive ambition of the higher attributes of

eloquence leads them to constant overstatements of the doctrines and duties of the gospel. They have a want of truth and nature in their representations of religion and of human life; a fault which no other excellencies can redeem. The origin of almost all the corruptions of Christianity may be referred to this tendency in men to overcharge their statements of religion in order to make them dazzling and impressive. If we attend to the arguments which are brought by the church of Rome to defend what we esteem its errors, we find them chiefly drawn from a literal interpretation of the rhetorical exaggerations contained in the homilies of the early fathers. The fact, that false eloquence has thus been the great corrupter of Christianity, will give a lesson of caution to every rational Christian in the employment of that which is real; and will lead, perhaps, to the general conclusion that the higher forms of it cannot be often safely attempted in the pulpit. Although, therefore, no one, who is not wholly insensible to what is beautiful and sublime, can read the best French sermons without perpetual admiration, yet, when they are considered not as a mere feast of taste, but as an instrument for the improvement of the hearts and minds of men in religion, they must be often viewed with the most serious disapprobation. If we would admire them without reserve, we must regard them merely as beautiful poetry; and read Bossuet and Corneille, Massillon and Racine, too often, with very similar emotions.

That there is nothing necessarily irreconcilable in what is really excellent in both these rival schools, Mr. Buckminster's sermons will, I persuade myself,

furnish a proof. They seem to be the union of truth, and reason, and eloquence. Without saying they are faultless, every one will perceive in them a strength and originality of conception, a power of delineation, a beauty, novelty, and richness of illustration, which proclaim a powerful and peculiar mind. When, also, we consider the seriousness, the rationality, the earnestness, the warm glow of devotion they everywhere exhibit, the apostolic freedom and intrepidity with which sin and error, however popular and fashionable, are denounced in them ; and when, in addition to all this, we recollect that they are sermons not prepared for the press by himself, but selected by his friends from among several hundreds, all written between his twentieth and twenty-eighth year, they will be regarded as among the most rare and admirable efforts which the pulpit has called forth.

I have not attempted a formal description of the qualities of Mr. Buckminster's heart. A life of such uniform purity and rectitude, of such devotedness to God, of such disinterested zeal for the good of mankind, is the surest pledge of its soundness and its sensibility. I might speak of his perfect sincerity, his simplicity, his love of truth, his candor of disposition. I might remark how little the unbounded admiration he received impaired any of the essential features of his character. I might attempt, but I am sure it would be in vain, to describe the magic influence by which he drew around him a circle of most devoted friends, by whom his memory is embalmed in the fondest recollections and regrets. There are many who feel, with me, that his death was the rupture of some of the strongest ties which the human heart

can know. Even now, when time has interposed to subdue all the more powerful emotions of grief, there are those who delight to recall the hours we have passed with him, and to dwell on those traits which we loved while living, and which death cannot efface from our memories. While we think how important to the interests of truth and virtue were the light of his knowledge and the weight of his influence, how many plans of improvement were connected with his exertions and encouragement; when we remember that a mind so rich, so active, so original, so elevated, is no more to impart its conceptions to other minds; that the voice, which has warmed so many hearts and guided so many steps to immortality, is silent as the grave, and is no more to be heard in the church of God or the circle of friendship, we are oppressed by the magnitude of the loss, and are ready to number it among the darkest of the divine dispensations. Yet it is ordered by better wisdom than ours; and we cannot but discern many proofs of mercy in the time of his departure. His wish was granted not to survive his usefulness. He disappeared in all the brightness of his honors, without any twilight coming over his fame. We are spared the dreadful spectacle of beholding such a mind in ruins. God can raise up other instruments to effect his benevolent purposes. Farewell, then! We must say of thee, "*Felix non vitæ tantum claritate, sed etiam opportunitate mortis.*"\* May the example of a life like thine, devoted to truth, to virtue, and the best interests of mankind, animate us to follow thy career of piety and benevolence, that, by

\* Tac. Agric.

the grace of God, we may join thee in another world, where friendship will be uninterrupted and virtue eternal.

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*From the General Repository and Review.*

CHARACTER OF MR. BUCKMINSTER.

BY ANDREWS NORTON.

It may be useful to endeavor to embody the recollections which I have yet fresh and vivid of the character of Mr. Buckminster. I have seen him in different situations; I was, I may hope, in some degree honored with his friendship. It may be useful to recall to those who knew him the memory of what he was, and to give some impression of it to those who knew him not. The life of such a man ought not and will not pass away, leaving only a momentary track of glory behind. In one respect what I have undertaken will be an easy task. There is nothing concerning his life or character, which must not be told; there is nothing which the feelings of friendship, or a regard to the interests of virtue, might make one wish to conceal. In other respects it will be sufficiently difficult. It would be hard indeed to speak of Mr. Buckminster as he would have spoken of one equally loved and valued with himself.

There is no question that he was one of the most eminent men whom our country has produced. In my opinion he was, beyond all rivalship, the most eminent literary man of all those of whom she retains only the memory. Yet I say this of one who was not

a private and retired scholar ; but who, during the last seven years of his short life, (he died in his twenty-eighth year,) was occupied in all the many and laborious duties of a clergyman in our metropolis ; was accessible to the claims which it may easily be thought that friends, and acquaintance, and strangers made upon the society of such a man ; and was, during this whole period, broken in upon by the repeated attacks of that disease which finally put an end to a life whose usefulness it had hardly been able to interrupt. His situation and circumstances forbade him that laborious diligence which too often busies itself about difficult and useless trifles ; but his mind was always vigilant and active, and quick to seize on any new thoughts, and to perceive their bearing and connection. No man better estimated the importance of different objects of attention, the value of different writers, or judged better what works were to be examined, and what to be studied. He did not labor to acquire learning merely for the sake of exhibiting it to the wonder of others, but his studies were all for profit and usefulness. In the time which was left him by his many interruptions, he had acquired such a variety of knowledge, that one could hardly converse with him on any subject connected with his profession, or with the branches of elegant literature, without having some new ideas suggested, without receiving some information, or being, at least, directed how to obtain it. Of his learning, his library, formed by himself, — which, for the number of volumes it contained, (about three thousand,) was, perhaps, one of the most valuable ever collected, certainly the most valuable ever possessed by an individual in our country, — was

of itself no inconsiderable proof. It was always open to the use of his friends, and of every literary man. He was the friend and patron of literature among us. There is no man, who knew him, no man of letters in our part of the country, who does not feel how much is lost in losing his judgment, the influence of his ardor and interest, and the hope of hearing his expressions of pleasure and praise.

His favorite study was the interpretation of the Scriptures. He was of that class of Christians, who, — while they think that the sanction and duties of our religion, what it teaches and what it requires, may be made intelligible to the humblest mind, — yet, believe that much thought and much learning are necessary to understand correctly its early records. He was one of those who think that the Scriptures, both Jewish and Christian, are to be understood only through the same means of elucidation as are applied to all other writings of similar or great antiquity; and who consider that peculiar difficulties attend their study, from the want of collateral sources of information, and from the consequent necessity of collecting chiefly from the sacred writings themselves a knowledge of those facts and circumstances by which they are to be illustrated, and of the language, or dialect, in which they are written. He was acquainted with the best writers on the criticism and interpretation of the Scriptures, especially those who have appeared since a new and better era in these studies has commenced, and he was familiar with the most important results of their investigation. The attention to these studies which is prevailing and increasing among us, is, in no small degree, to be attributed to his example and

influence. He had been appointed to deliver the first course of lectures on the foundation which has lately been established, for the promotion of the knowledge of the Scriptures, in our university. Now that we have leisure to recollect all that we have lost in his death, it cannot be forgotten with how much expectation and interest we looked forward to his fulfilling this appointment.

But, though no one is more sensible than I am of the loss which the literature and theological science of our country have sustained in the death of Mr. Buckminster; and, though all who knew him, and were engaged in the same pursuits with him, felt it, in its first shock, like the prostration and scattering of their hopes and expectations; yet, for myself, I think that his loss as a minister of religion is greater and more irremediable. Of his public discourses I do not fear speaking with exaggerated praise, for they were listened to with delight and improvement by the highest and the humblest minds. To listen to them was the indulgence and gratification of our best affections. It was to follow in the triumph of religion and virtue. It was to be present while those truths were advancing in all their force, which we most desire to see established, and those sentiments making a conquest of our own and every heart, which we most desire to feel and see prevailing. No one, who has ever heard him, has forgotten the interest of his manner, or can ever forget that he has gazed on the illumination of his countenance. The power of his talents is by no means to be estimated by the extent of his reputation. Our literary men are few, and distant from the rest of the world, and incapable of asserting for any object



of their admiration the praise to which he is justly entitled. If we may trust those, however, who are well able to judge, and if we may rely on the fairness of our own comparison of those sermons we have heard with those we have read, the eloquence of some of our preachers is not inferior to any that may now be found in that country which alone we can acknowledge as a rival, and not far below what any country has ever produced. And he, of whom I speak, was, beyond all question, to be placed in the first rank of those by whom we have been best instructed in truth and most animated in virtue.

He considered Christianity as a revelation of our connection with God, of our immortality, and of the sanctions of our duty. He viewed it as the proper foundation of all our prospects of happiness and all our principles of conduct. He did not regard religion as any thing to be addressed to men's minds for the purpose of producing a temporary excitement of fervor or terror, but as what ought to be the animating principle of all our affections and all our conduct, giving life, and health, and vigor to the whole moral system. It was his object, therefore, to bring the lives of his hearers into habitual subjection to the animating and awful motives of Christianity, to connect them with those actions which we are all of us called upon to perform, and to show how they ought to regulate us in those relations in which we are placed to God and our fellow-creatures. The particular purpose of some of his discourses, was to enforce the evidences of our religion, especially those arising from its internal excellence, and the character of its founder and its first preachers. One of his sermons on the character of

our Saviour, and some others on those of his apostles, are yet vivid in the recollection of many of us. We shall not readily forget the impression which he gave us of their characters, and, if I may be allowed to add it, the impression which he gave us of his own. In these and other discourses he fulfilled that very important duty of a clergyman, one of those for which he is particularly set apart, the explanation of the Scriptures. He had, as has been said, in no common degree, the learning requisite for this purpose, and he knew how to accommodate this learning to popular use, and to render it intelligible to such as were not familiar with theological studies. Some, at least, of those who heard him, will, probably, through life, read the Scriptures with other views than they would else have done, and with far more intelligence and satisfaction.

The great influence, which he acquired, and the good which he effected as a clergyman, could have been acquired and effected only by one who united his talents and his virtues. As respects that class of the community who are somewhat above the common rank, the extent of his loss cannot be estimated. By such men, a preacher of even equal genius and eloquence with Mr. Buckminster, but without the sincerity of his faith, the warmth of his piety, and the irreproachable integrity of his life, against which no enmity ever whispered a suspicion, might be listened to, indeed, but only as a transient entertainment; and by such men, a preacher of even equal virtue and piety, but without his commanding strength of intellect, his correct views of religion, and his knowledge of human nature and the proper modes of address,

might be heard only with patience. But no man could pretend to look down on the intellectual powers of Mr. Buckminster. No man, from any confidence in his own superior discernment, could pretend to regard with disrespect what he revered, or to think lightly of what he made the rule of his life, and the foundation of his hopes.

If I were to mention any virtues as peculiarly characteristic of Mr. Buckminster, one would be that manliness of mind, which no applause broke down into any displays of vanity or affectation, which made no sacrifices of honesty or of propriety to acquire any man's favor, and which impressed all, who knew him, with unconstrained respect. Another would be his forgetfulness of self; so that by the frequent attacks of an alarming disease he was never subdued into complaint or despondence. He could not but have looked forward with some of those apprehensions which all, who knew him, felt; but they did not interrupt his exertions, or destroy his cheerfulness, or diminish his interest in the welfare of his friends, and of all whom he had the power to benefit.

I have said that he was not insensible to the prospect that he had but a short time to do good to his fellow-men. Few of those who heard him on the day of the interment of Mr. Emerson, which took place but about a year before he himself was carried to the grave, have forgotten the prophetic foreboding which escaped him of his own death. That day was rendered yet more gloomy by our witnessing in him the symptoms of disease, and by a sense of the personal feeling, with which he must have quoted the words of the Poet, in speaking of his departed brother: —

“ O! 'tis well  
With him. But who knows what the coming hour,  
Veil'd in thick darkness, brings for *us*.”

There are those who, with myself, can recollect, as if he were yet living, his countenance, his manner, the tones of his voice, his accents of welcome and his smile of benevolence. There are others, as well as myself, in whom the association is not yet broken, that connected the thought of him with every plan for the promotion of religion or literature, and which led them at once to dwell on what would be his exertions and interest in its promotion, and his pleasure in its success. It is well for our virtue to preserve the memory of the friends we have lost. There is something of brute insensibility in suffering it lightly to pass away. It connects itself with and strengthens all our better feelings and resolutions. It delivers us from that debasement which is produced by being continually occupied with present objects. It carries us back to the past, when we knew them, and directs our view to the future, when we shall meet them again; and no man can be other than virtuous who often reviews what has been, and often anticipates what is approaching. The thought of those whom we have lost gives us new interest in every thing which we remember them to have approved, in every good purpose in which they were engaged together with us, and in every virtue and excellence which their friendship promoted; and it leads our attention to that world where they now exist, and from which we are parted by so thin a separation. With the objects of that world a feeling of reality is connected, when we believe that those exist there whom we have

known and loved. There, if we live so as to deserve it, we shall again be with them; and he, who in life has suffered the pain of separation from but a few such men as Mr. Buckminster, may, when his life shall end, have more and dearer friends to meet than those he leaves behind.



MEMOIR  
OF  
LEVI FRISBIE.

The following Memoir was originally prefixed to a "Collection of the Writings of Professor Frisbie," published in 1823. No change has been made in transferring it to this work. It did not seem worth while to recast the few expressions which relate to that Collection; or in any way so to alter it, as to give it the air of a composition of later date.



## LEVI FRISBIE.

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MR. FRISBIE was born at Ipswich, in New England, in the year 1784. His father was a respectable clergyman of that place, distinguished for his conscientiousness, and his sense of religion; a Calvinist. To his instructions and example, Mr. Frisbie may be supposed to have been, in a great measure, indebted for the first implanting of those religious sentiments, which acquired strength as his character strengthened, and even, early in life, formed an essential part of it. From him, likewise, he derived the belief of some doctrines, which his maturer reason rejected. These doctrines, however, as I have heard him complain, retained an influence over his feelings, especially in moments of despondence, long after they had ceased to be a part of his faith. They tended to throw darkness and discomfort over his views of the character and moral government of God, and of the future condition of man. His father's death took place when Mr. Frisbie was in the 22d year of his age.

After completing his preparatory studies in Andover Academy, Mr. Frisbie was admitted a member of

the university in Cambridge, at the commencement of the college year in 1798. As a student, he was among the most distinguished in his class for his talents and acquisitions, and for correctness of conduct, integrity, and manliness. The salary of his father, like that of most of our clergymen, was scanty. He was unable fully to supply the means of defraying the necessary expenses of his son; and Mr. Frisbie, during the whole or the greater portion of the time while he was an undergraduate, provided in part for his own support, by writing as a clerk, several hours a day during the college terms; and by teaching a school during the vacations in winter. It has been said, that wealth constitutes the only aristocracy in our country. But this is far from being the truth. Talents, united with correct morals, and good manners, pass unquestioned all the artificial barriers of society; and their claim to distinction is recognized more willingly than any other. It has been particularly the case among the young men who form the body of students at our university, that wealth and parentage are of little account; and that standing in their society depends, if not altogether upon qualities intrinsically estimable, yet, at least, upon personal characteristics. The circumstance of poverty, therefore, was of no disadvantage to Mr. Frisbie, except that it led him to occupy, in other ways, a considerable portion of time, which he might have employed for intellectual improvement.

After taking his first degree at Cambridge, in the summer of 1802, he removed to Concord in this State, where he resided for a year, teaching a public school. He immediately afterwards commenced the study of the law. From his acuteness, force of mind, skill in

argument, and readiness and eloquence of expression, and from the moral characteristics by which he was distinguished, there can be little doubt, that if he had been able to pursue the profession which he had chosen, he would have been among the most distinguished and honored of its members. But his pursuits were suddenly broken off, and his prospects clouded, by an affection of his eyes, which deprived him of their use for the purposes of study.

From this he never afterwards recovered, except so far as to be able to use them for very short intervals. There can be few severer inflictions of Providence upon a young man of ardent, active, inquiring mind, looking forward to usefulness and honor, and conscious of powers to attain what he desires. It leaves him to go abroad in society; but cuts him off, in a great measure, from all participation in the interests and hopes of his associates. When he retires from them, it is to a melancholy loneliness, without occupation, except what the mind, by a strong and painful effort, may be able to furnish from its own resources. The sufferer appears as other men, but he is fettered by invisible chains, like the magic threads of the sorceress in Thalaba, which prevent him from exerting his strength, though they may sometimes provoke him to an unavailing struggle. In these circumstances, Mr. Frisbie felt and acted like a man and a Christian. He considered his deprivation as a lesson from God; and derived from it the moral benefits which it was adapted to afford. It served to discipline and form his character, by calling into action, and strengthening his religious sentiments and principles. When his hopes of honorable distinction were apparently blasted, and he was

shut out from the scenes of promised activity and usefulness, he submitted patiently to the humbler task which seemed to be assigned to him, and was ready to perform it faithfully. He made use of those means of improvement that were still in his power; and during a great part of his subsequent life he was surrounded by friends, and by others whom he could with propriety call upon, some one of whom was always ready to read to him. He thus heard many books, both in English and Latin. It is consolatory to know, that under the deprivations which he suffered, his virtues, talents, and industry gave him power to render so much service to his fellow-men, and to secure so large a share of love and honor.

It was some years after suffering this affliction, that he adopted a very simple means of writing without the use of his eyes. It was suggested to him by an account of a writing-machine for the blind, described in Rees's Cyclopaedia. This machine consists of a square frame, to be placed over paper, in which a ruler is so adjusted as to slide upward or downward, guiding the hand of the blind person to form written lines on the paper, at proper distances, by means of a pencil. It naturally occurred to Mr. Frisbie, that having a great advantage over the blind, it would be sufficient for him to guide his hand by a ruler laid on the paper; and that he could thus write without a painful use of his eyes. Upon trial, something broader than a ruler, as a thin octavo volume, was found more convenient. He accordingly wrote much in this manner during the latter years of his life. I mention the fact, because, simple as the method may appear when pointed out, I do not recollect to have

met with a single instance of a person partially deprived of the use of his eyes, to whom it had occurred from his own reflection. Yet it may occasion very considerable difference in the comfort and usefulness of one suffering under this affliction. An important change for the better in the condition of individuals might often be affected by apparently trifling means, which seem to be overlooked from their very simplicity and obviousness.

The familiar letters of a literary man, when used with that scrupulous judgment and delicacy which the case requires, may often afford the means of giving, in the most pleasing manner, an insight into his character and pursuits. But I have not this resource at command. In consequence of the weakness of his eyes, Mr. Frisbie was, for many years, not in the habit of writing to his friends. I have seen but two of his letters, (which were addressed to myself,) written subsequently to that misfortune. I have read a considerable number written previously. They were very creditable to him, considering the early age during which they were composed, giving a natural and lively view of his feelings, occupations, and purposes; such as it would have been pleasant to have had drawn by himself, when his mind and his style were more matured. From one of the latest, addressed to his father, I will give two passages, both of which seem to me characteristic; and the latter to be marked with strong good sense. The date is July 31st, 1803.

“When I first came in town, I was rather sober than otherwise, and of course not over polite to any one. This conduct, though perfectly inadvertent, has, I find, been of essential service to me. It established

my character, as one not scrupulous in attention to ceremony, nor very familiar in my general intercourse with the world. I have been able therefore to be as independent as I pleased, without giving offence, or exciting any unpleasant reflections."

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"That is the best education, which fits us best for the stations we are destined to sustain in life. And as this cannot be fully known during the period of youth, it is consequently of much more importance to strengthen the understanding, and assist it to distinguish objects properly, and reason upon them justly, than to crowd the memory with a heap of undigested facts, which most probably will never be of any service. If the mind be early taught to reason on those ideas which it has, and to comprehend them in their several relations, it will easily distinguish what kind of information is wanting, and acquire it, at the proper period, with facility and advantage. In choosing pursuits for a child, I should not so much consider what would be most useful to know when a man, as what was best fitted to exercise the reason, and gradually unfold and invigorate the understanding; because knowledge is easily acquired at any time; but wisdom, unless it early become a habit, never will. If we only learn while young, we shall do nothing else all our lives; and shall hardly know that we are capable of any thing else than merely receiving the opinions and ideas of others. It is perhaps from the practice of learning children so much, and exercising their minds so little, that we often observe those, who were judged to be possessed of sprightly capacities, and to bid fair for eminence, shortly lose the rank they held in childhood,

and sink into insignificance ; while those who, at this early period, were considered as dull, afterwards shine forth as their superiors. The original distinction was probably just ; but it has been changed by the faults in the education of the former. The fond parent or instructor, delighted with the brilliant readiness of the child, and the child delighted with the approbation lavished upon its genius, mutually engage to destroy it. Every thing must be taught it ; the ancient and modern languages, mathematics, geography, history, &c., are all heaped upon each other ; till at length the mind breaks down, like a young tree overburdened by a load of fruit. In the mean time, his stupid companion, on whom sentence has been passed, ‘ Oh he will never be any thing,’ is neglected and left to himself. He acquires in consequence few ideas, but what he does acquire, are adapted to his years, for they are of his own acquisition. Leisure and necessity lead him to reason upon the little objects he observes ; and this slowly expands and strengthens his mind, increases his talent for observation, and leads him gradually to exercise his understanding on things of more importance. Thus he outstrips his shining, learned companion ; and the world wonders what can have occasioned the change.”

Being unable to pursue his professional studies, Mr. Frisbie accepted the place of Latin tutor in Harvard University, at the commencement of the college year in September, 1805. He came into office at the same time with Mr. Nichols, now the Rev. Dr. Nichols of Portland, and Mr. Farrar, now Professor of Mathematics, who accepted different tutorships, and with Mr. Nurse, now the Rev. Mr. Nurse of Ellsworth,

who took the office of librarian. The Rev. Dr. Ware had, in the course of the same year, been appointed Professor of Divinity. The whole "Immediate Government" (as it is called) of the University had, with two exceptions, been thus changed. The gentlemen, whom I have mentioned, found the college in a state of disorder, and great relaxation of discipline, arising from various causes. After a severe struggle, they restored it to a different condition, and gave it an impulse and character which it long retained. There has, probably, never been a set of men, to whom it has been more indebted.

It was in the year 1807, while residing as a graduate at Cambridge, that I formed that acquaintance with Mr. Frisbie, which subsequently ripened into intimacy and friendship. I found him in a society, in which I, afterwards, spent many pleasant and many useful hours. It was composed of the younger officers of the university, and of one or two other gentlemen residing at the institution for the purposes of study. I have mentioned the names of Mr. Nichols and Mr. Farrar. The place of Mr. Nurse was shortly after this time supplied by one, whose memory dwells in the respect and affection of all who knew him, the Rev. Samuel Cooper Thacher. For several years, some of us who formed this society were together almost every day, and every evening. There was among us an intercourse of mind and feeling, the most unrestrained and grateful. We were too familiar, and there was too much of good-humored raillery, for any one to suffer himself to indulge in pretension, or artificial display. Our manners towards each other were formed only on mutual regard and respect. Some



others of our number, as well as Mr. Frisbie, were more or less unable to use their eyes for study; and it was not uncommon therefore for one gentleman to read aloud to us when together. We afterwards, perhaps, engaged in conversation, suggested by what had been read; and often in animated discussions of different topics of taste, morals, metaphysics, and the evidences and doctrines of religion. It was a play of mind in which great dexterity was displayed by some of the combatants; but in which it was rare indeed that the feelings of any, the least skilful, were wounded. It was an admirable intellectual discipline, well adapted to strengthen those habits of acute discrimination and facility of expression, for which Mr. Frisbie was distinguished. May I add likewise, that there was in the society of which I have spoken, a high moral tone and a correctness of principle, which, acting reciprocally upon its members were favorable to the growth of such a character as he displayed.

After thus forming an acquaintance with Mr. Frisbie, I was absent for some time from Cambridge. Upon his return thither, after a vacation, I received a lively and pleasant letter from him, dated October 13th, 1809; of which I will give a short passage, as showing how he himself thought and felt respecting the society I have described.

“Here I found ——, with whom I could be tolerably well pleased, could I forget whom we might have had in his stead. I hate this succession of strangers; I hate to make a turnpike of my heart, where every traveller just throws down his toll of ceremonious civility and passes on. We had begun to feel so harmonious and united, that it was provoking to have

our circle broken by the loss of any of its parts. It was like taking a keystone from an arch, which has been nicely adjusted and cemented, and introducing another, that it is ten chances to one can never be made to suit the place. However, we go on very smoothly as yet, and I am glad to find that —— will be the firm advocate of vigorous measures.”\*

In a letter which I lately received from the Rev. Dr. Nichols, he says :

“My recollections and impressions concerning Mr. Frisbie, as a member of that social circle in which you first met him at Cambridge, are similar, I am persuaded, to your own. I deem it a great privilege to have been so long in the society of one, who possessed such resources for the entertainment and instruction of his friends in the native fertility of his mind. He was usually ready for all subjects ; if not in every instance with a thorough knowledge of them, yet with great acuteness and strength of mind, and with that habitual good sense and freedom from sophistry, without which I apprehend that it were hardly possible that intelligent men should be long gratified with the mere display of intellectual powers. It were difficult to say too much of his talents in conversation, especially his habitual clearness, fluency, and elegance of expression.”

During the period of which I have been speaking, Mr. Frisbie wrote the following lines in the form of an epitaph upon himself. They have never been published ; but were circulated among his friends, who thought them a spirited and amusing, though very extravagant caricature. The postscript was written by him in the character of his friend, Professor Farrar.

\* As an officer of the college government.

Here lies an odd fellow as ever was seen,  
 A compound of folly, of sense, and of spleen ;  
 Dogmatical, positive, ne'er at a stand,  
 The affairs of the state, he 'd decide out of hand ;  
 Nice points in the schools he would settle at once ;  
 Who his reasons saw not was put down for a dunce.  
 Yet, oftentimes, the veriest trifle about,  
 He would doubt and consider, consider and doubt ;  
 And at last, having acted, would fret for an hour,  
 That to change but once more was now out of his power.  
 In company too, if he ever came there,  
 Now polite as a lord, now uncouth as a bear ;  
 Now his compliments flew, very fine and well hit,  
 Yet 'twas not to please others, but shew his own wit :  
 Sometimes he was pleasant and cheerful enough ;  
 Then for hours he did nothing but scowl and take snuff.  
 Now he talked you to death, with high spirits half mad ;  
 Then mute as a fish, he sat moping and sad ;  
 If sitting it might be, for still at the best,  
 He would sprawl himself out over three chairs at least.  
 Though eccentric in all things, yet like a mill-horse,  
 It made him quite sick to go out of his course.  
 All strangers alike were his utter aversion ;  
 Because they compelled him to make an exertion.  
 And though all their censures, in truth, he despised,  
 There was nothing on earth like praise that he prized.  
 If it seemed but sincere, though 'twas never so gross,  
 His vanity such, he would swallow the dose.  
 Then to crown all his folly, and let the world know it,  
 He took in his head to set up for a poet :  
 Conundrums and ditties he jingled in rhyme ;  
 And when love fired his muse he was quite the sublime.  
 So tender his heart, if the truth I must speak,  
 He would fall in love four or five times in a week :  
 Yet, it being so soft, very slight was the pain,  
 For the wound, soon as made, closed together again.  
 In short, Sir, his fancy was folly disjointed ;  
 His feeling, mere gloom, grown from pride disappointed ;  
 His talk through extravagance loomed into sense,  
 As an ant seems an elephant, seen through a lens.  
 You have heard he was frank ; no mistake can be greater ;  
 He had something of impudence mixed with ill-nature.

He made for his friends so much trouble while here,  
I'm afraid now he's gone, they will scarce shed a tear.

## POSTSCRIPT.

But 'tis possible still, that there yet may be one,  
Who will say with a sigh, as he leans o'er this stone ;  
It is true he had faults, but he ne'er would defend them,  
And what is still better, at least wished to mend them.  
He rarely meant wrong, if he rarely did right ;  
But what sprung from caprice, was oft set down to spite.  
"Dogmatical, positive:" true, I must own it ;  
But then he'd acknowledge an error when shown it.  
"In company," though he was rather uneven,  
Yet there too his ratio was full four to seven ;  
His spirits amused, and to give him his due,  
When we laughed at his follies, he laughed at them too.  
But to lounge at his ease, oh ! how truly he loved ;  
My books and my glasses full often have proved.  
If to strangers averse, yet his friends were all dear ;  
For his heart was as warm as his tongue was sincere.  
I confess he loved praise, yet "his vanity such!" —  
This epitaph-maker, no doubt, had as much.  
As to fancy, I'm certain of that he'd enough,  
For half of his notions were made of her stuff.  
"His feelings," alas ! they might gloomy appear :  
Once his prospects were bright, his horizon was clear :  
If his eye here and there, a thin cloud might behold,  
Hope played on its edges, and tinged them with gold.  
But darker they grew, and still wider they spread,  
Till hope sunk to earth, and the prospect all fled.  
No more shall I hear him come tumbling up stairs ;  
Or see him stretched out over three or four chairs ;  
When my crackers and apples all roll o'er the floor,  
Or my maps rattle down, I shall scold him no more.  
Though he grieved me much here, still I wish him here yet,  
And, now he is gone, all his faults I forget.  
When I sit all alone, and the night is so still,  
He crosses my mind, let me do what I will.  
I lean on my hand, and I half heave a sigh,  
And I feel a tear starting to moisten my eye.

From 1805 to 1811, Mr. Frisbie discharged the duties of Latin tutor. He was then appointed Professor of the Latin language; his duties, however, continuing nearly the same. The latter office he retained till 1817.

As an officer of the college, he habitually felt the importance of strict and steady discipline, as essential to its respectability and usefulness. At our colleges a large number of young men are brought together at the most hazardous period of life. They are trusted very much to themselves, at a time when the habits are unformed; and when the passions, "the glory and disgrace of youth," are putting forth their strength, and most need direction and control. They have just been released from the restraints of a school, and the immediate personal superintendence of parents and masters. A great pressure has been taken off, and the operation of new and strong motives must be brought to bear upon the mind in order to supply its place. They are commonly at an age, when little can be expected from the influence of merely prudential considerations, derived from just and far-sighted views of life, unless these are strengthened by intimate connection with others of a different kind. It is the duty, therefore, of the governors of such institutions, to give a moral and religious character to the whole establishment, by the influence of their example, by discountenancing and expelling vice, and by those direct and indirect appeals, which may be made effectually to the best sentiments and feelings of the young. They should keep constantly in view the object of the institution, and suffer no one to remain a member, who is not fulfilling the purposes for which he was sent to it.

Enlarged conceptions of learning, of its extent and utility, and a disinterested love of literary labor and intellectual improvement, should be communicated to those under their care. Full occupation should be provided for that youthful activity and restlessness of mind, which there is so much danger will waste itself in folly and mischief. There should be in our colleges, a watchful, ever-active principle of progression and improvement. The continually increasing demands of our country should be fulfilled and anticipated; and, at the present day, it should be esteemed but ill-judged praise of such an institution, to say, that it has not degenerated. The governors of our colleges, should know, that they have more to answer for than other men; that to them is committed

“a nation’s trust,  
The nurture of her youth, her dearest pledge.”

Such establishments should be consecrated ground, inspiring thoughts of study and seclusion, and bearing throughout a moral and intellectual aspect. They must be pervaded by a strong literary spirit, which shall make every member feel its influence; throwing off those who are incapable of feeling it. This is required not for its own sake merely, but as a barrier to the moral evils, which, without it, will be continually pressing in, and spreading corruption. It constitutes, in great part, the best discipline of a college, its preventive discipline. Without it, it is scarcely possible that such an institution should not be a seat of disorder, extravagance, dissipation, and vice. Then it will be a fountain continually pouring bitter waters through the land. What ought to have been a source of good will become a source of evil. The corruption will fall

upon those who are the hopes of society; and the next blighted generation will suffer; though perhaps they may not trace the mischief to its cause.

It was with such sentiments, and the feeling of responsibility which they produced, that Mr. Frisbie acted as an officer of the college. He was always solicitous, that the college should be governed by that firm, vigilant, regular, unintermitted discipline, which may, in a great measure, prevent offences, without the dread of severe punishment. But when any circumstances rendered severe punishment necessary, he did not shrink from his share in the duty of inflicting it; though I believe that the performance of this duty has seldom cost any one so much. I have known it to affect seriously his spirits and health.

In 1817, Mr. Frisbie was married to Miss Catherine Saltonstall Mellen, daughter of John Mellen, Esq., of Cambridge. This lady is still living; and I will therefore only say, that in her he found a most dear and valued friend. Mr. and Mrs. Frisbie had but one child, a daughter, who died in infancy.

In 1817, likewise, Mr. Frisbie was inaugurated as Professor of Moral Philosophy. I will not here add any thing to what may be found elsewhere, respecting his peculiar qualifications for the office. In the subsequent part of this volume, I have given some extracts from the manuscript notes of his lectures. These may afford an imperfect notion of his modes of thinking, and style of lecturing; but it should be understood that they appear under very great disadvantages. From the inconvenience which he always suffered in using his eyes, he, in general, wrote only the heads of his lectures; and this very briefly, so as even

to furnish but an imperfect synopsis. He habitually expressed himself on abstract subjects, as well as others, with so much fluency and correctness, that these short notes were sufficient for his purpose; and his lectures were heard with additional interest, on account of their possessing so much of the freshness and animation of extempore speaking. On some topics, however, he occasionally wrote his thoughts more at length on loose papers. These papers are what I have principally used; sometimes combining together what I found on separate pieces, written at different times. I should hardly have been able to execute the task at all, but from my familiarity with his opinions and reasonings; the subjects on which he was reading and meditating being often discussed by us in conversation. Whether I have judged wisely in preparing what I have done for publication, must be determined by others. I was desirous, and I found it was the wish of many, that, if possible, some few fragments should be preserved of lectures which were heard with so much interest.

Beside the two courses of lectures from which I have given some passages, Mr. Frisbie delivered two others; one on natural theology, and the other on the principles of government, and on the constitution of the United States. I particularly regret that the notes of this last course were too imperfect, for me to venture to make use of them for the present work. These lectures were distinguished by original and striking views, and a just exposition of principles, which it is important should be well understood in our country. Mr. Frisbie, himself, had thought of giving them to the public.



There was a resemblance between the opinions and reasonings of Mr. Frisbie on the subjects of morals and those of Professor Brown. The lectures of the latter were read by Mr. Frisbie during his last sickness,\* having but just before been received in this country. I found him one day engaged in their perusal, and asked him how he was pleased with them. His answer was; "I ought to be pleased with them; for he has what I considered some of my best thoughts." The religious sentiment, and fine moral eloquence of some portions of these lectures, could not but be delightful to such a mind as Mr. Frisbie's. But I do not think that he esteemed their author very highly, as a writer of what may be called *pure* metaphysics. I had formerly read to him Professor Brown's first pamphlet on Cause and Effect; and he had afterwards heard his later enlarged work, on the same subject. He thought his style too diffuse, and his expressions not unfrequently obscure; and he regarded the latter circumstance as arising, in a great measure, from the notions of the writer not being well defined and settled in his own mind.

In the autumn of 1821, I returned to fix my residence in Cambridge, after having been for some months absent. I had looked forward to enjoying again, under peculiarly pleasant circumstances, the society of a friend, with whom I had been, for many years, intimately connected. But I was struck by the change in Mr. Frisbie's appearance, and pained by the account which he gave me of his health. His friends, however, did not for a long time subsequent apprehend

\* It was a symptom of this disease, that Mr. Frisbie was able to use his eyes much more than he could while in health.

that his life was in danger. His disease, which was a consumption of the lungs, was indicated by such obscure symptoms, as not to be clearly ascertained till a few weeks before his death.

But from the period which I have mentioned, he, on the whole, was gradually declining; his disease giving his friends those alternations of hope and fear, which leave so much to be remembered, and so little to be told. For some months before the close of his life, he was aware of the uncertainty of his recovery. While in health, he had felt rather more than common apprehension of death, partly from some accidental circumstances, partly from his high notions of duty, acted upon by those gloomy religious impressions, of which I have before spoken, and partly from a tendency to depression, produced by physical causes. But death, as it appeared more distinctly in view, lost its terrors. When his disease assumed an alarming character, he spoke to me openly of its probable termination; and asked, if knowing his former feelings, I should have expected him to be able to look forward to it so calmly. He was ready and desirous to converse upon all those high themes of speculation, which relate to the realities beyond the grave. He looked forward to them with a calm feeling of certainty. His mind was at once tranquillized and awed by the distinct apprehension of the fact, that in a few weeks, separated from the present objects of his affections, he might be existing in a far holier and happier state, with new powers and enlarged capacities of enjoyment.

A few days before his death, he rode out, for the last time, with Professor Farrar, and called upon a

gentleman in the neighborhood. The principal object of his visit was to express his sense of obligation for some favors which he had received from this gentleman early in life. He then asked to see a portrait of Mr. Thacher, which is in his possession. After looking at it for some time, he observed, "I shall probably soon be with him." This was on Saturday.

During the night between Saturday and Sunday, an abscess broke upon his lungs. I saw him for the last time on Sunday morning, and heard him, for the last time, speak of his resignation to the will of God. He died on Tuesday, July 9th. The last act of his life was an expression of affection to his aged mother, who was adjusting his pillow.

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To the preceding account, I am permitted to add the following extract from a long letter, with which I have been favored by a gentleman\* who knew Mr. Frisbie most intimately, and to whom I applied for information.

*Extract from a Letter to Mr. Norton.*

It is not in my power, I conceive, to add materially to your information respecting Mr. Frisbie. Though I had the happiness of enjoying his friendship earlier, and for a longer period, than you did; yet the principal events of his life are probably better known to you than to me; and from your frequent means of observation, the distinguishing traits of his mind and character must have been more accurately marked by you. Yet if you should be able, in any important respect, to extend your views of him by any thing

\* Daniel Appleton White, Esq., Salem.

which it is in my power to suggest, I would not willingly omit giving you some of the recollections, which occur to me, especially as to those portions of his life, which did not fall under your observation.

My acquaintance with Mr. Frisbie commenced after he was admitted to the university. The relation, which I sustained to his class, led me to attend with more interest to his literary progress, and laid the foundation of a friendship, which I have ever regarded as among the blessings of my life. His religious and moral principles, as well as habits, appeared to have been formed before he left home. He was blest with a father, who was in all respects qualified to lead his mind to wisdom and virtue. I believe he had all the sensibility of conscience and purity of life, which distinguished his son, who always seemed conscious of a tribunal within, that led him scrupulously to avoid, not only whatever appeared to be wrong, but every thing which he did not feel assured was right.

The love of virtue, and regard to duty, which rendered Mr. Frisbie an object of universal respect among his companions at college, were associated with such candor and frankness of disposition, and generosity of conduct, that he equally gained their affection and confidence. Nor was his influence, at this early period of his life, lost upon the university. Alone, he might not have produced any visible effect, but together with others of similar dispositions, he contributed essentially to diffuse just sentiments, and to raise the standard of character among the students. It is well remembered by those who were then members of the college government, that the class to which he belonged, and in which he held a preëminent rank, acquired a reputa-

tion at that time unexampled, for their ardor in the pursuit of literary and moral excellence, and for uniting with a manly independence of conduct, an honorable respect for the authority of college.

Mr. Frisbie was, at this time, remarkable for his attainments in classical learning, and for the taste and elegant fluency of language, which he displayed in rendering the Greek and Roman authors into English. His natural eloquence, indeed, early manifested itself, and added to his reputation as a scholar. He was truly respectable in every department of learning; and with his clear perception, discriminating judgment, and strong reasoning powers, he was capable of excelling in any of the sciences. But being richly endowed with imagination and sensibility, he was perhaps inclined to regard the works of the material world, to the beauty and grandeur of which he was so susceptible, rather as objects of taste, than as subjects of minute science. And in his estimate of the comparative importance of the different branches of knowledge, he appeared to place those first in dignity and usefulness, which more immediately respect the mind, the means of moral and intellectual improvement, the social nature, duties, and destination of man. In this preference, he concurred in opinion with the great British moralist, and exemplified in himself the truth of the sentiment, contained in the following passage from the *Life of Milton*: "The knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great or the frequent business of the human mind. Whether we provide for action or conversation, whether we wish to be useful or pleasing, the first requisite is the religious and moral

knowledge of right and wrong; the next is an acquaintance with the history of mankind, and with those examples which may be said to embody truth, and to prove by events, the reasonableness of opinions. Prudence and justice are virtues and excellencies of all times and of all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance."

Few, I believe, ever acquired clearer ideas on the subjects of knowledge here recommended, or were better provided for action or conversation, for giving pleasure or being useful, and for all the great purposes of life than Mr. Frisbie. To become thus accomplished, appeared to his mind to be the highest object of education. That honor alone was dear to him, which follows genius and virtue, employed in promoting human happiness. Pursuing with ardor and diligence the studies in which he delighted, while he treated none with neglect, he succeeded in gratifying his honorable ambition, and qualifying himself to be a benefactor and ornament to society.

Mr. Frisbie was determined to devote himself to the study of the law, and had his health allowed him to pursue a profession, for which he was so eminently fitted by his talents and education, he might have looked forward with confidence to the highest rewards of distinguished excellence. The first year after leaving college, he passed in the town of Concord, where he sustained the same high character he had already manifested. I have heard the most respectable individuals of that place bear testimony to the purity of his moral principles, and to the enlightening influence of his conversation and example. But the most particular information respecting Mr. Frisbie, during this

period, I derived from one of his friends, residing in Concord at the time, capable of fully appreciating his excellence of mind and heart, and who listened to his conversation with all the interest which a similarity of taste inspires. His mind often took a delightful range in the regions of literature, taste, morals, and theology; and he appears to have been alike judicious in the topics he selected and in his observations and reflections, all tending to moral or intellectual improvement. When it is considered that he was not yet twenty years old, this is no ordinary praise. A single reflection subjoined to some slight notices of Mr. Frisbie's conversation, by the intelligent friend whom I have mentioned, shows the deep impression which he made upon the minds and hearts of those who best knew him at this time. It appears so just, that I will not withhold it from you. "August, 1803. When I reflect on his youth, I am struck with astonishment at the knowledge he has acquired, at the maturity of his judgment, and the strength and perspicuity of his reasoning, at the purity and stability of his principles, at the grandeur, beauty, and excellence of his whole character. Beholding him, I cannot suppress an apprehension that he is not destined to remain long on earth. He appears to have been lent to our admiring view a short time, to serve as an example of piety without ostentation or enthusiasm, pure morality without self-sufficiency, and talents without vanity."

From Concord Mr. Frisbie went to pursue his legal studies at his native village, Ipswich. These, you know, he was compelled to relinquish, on account of the distressing state of his eyes. This was a severe trial to him, but he sustained it as became his Christ-

ian faith. The most inviting prospect of usefulness, that now opened to him, was presented by his appointment to an office in the instruction and government of the university. His friends rejoiced in his acceptance of it; for they believed him to be peculiarly fitted for such a station. Nor did he fail to fulfil their expectations; although from the painful weakness of his eyes, which sometimes could not endure the light of day, he often failed to satisfy himself. I need not speak to you of his integrity and faithfulness in the discharge of his various duties, and his enlightened zeal in studying to promote the true objects of education, and the solid interests of the college; nor need I speak of the confidence which the friends of learning and religion always felt, that his whole influence upon the university would be in aid of just views of education and discipline, and of correct principles, sobriety of manners, and Christian morals.

During Mr. Frisbie's last sickness, which obliged him for so long a time to discontinue his college duties, I was favored with frequent visits from him, and saw him under circumstances the most interesting and impressive. There was every thing in his situation to bind his warm and generous affections to life; domestic happiness, admiring friends, duties in which he delighted, and the animating hope of promoting, by the performance of these duties, the advancement of moral truth and pure religion. At the same time, he felt with the deepest sensibility his accountableness to God. His standard of Christian purity was high, and his religious feelings, which penetrated his whole soul, had been tinged in early life with the gloom of Calvinism. It is not surprising, therefore, if in certain moments



of depression, the prospect of death should have been awful to him. In conversing on the subject, he once expressed to me, in very strong terms, his dread of death; and said, that he considered it as the effect of his early religious associations, adding, that although these associations had long been opposed by the clearest convictions of his reason; yet he could not wholly avoid their influence on his mind. He then spoke particularly of the happiness of one of his friends, in always having cheerful and consoling views of religion and a future state. But in my last visit to him, the week before he died, I was unspeakably gratified to find, that he enjoyed the same happiness in the highest degree. Immediately upon receiving me, he said, "You know what a dread of death I have had—I can now not only view it with coolness, but the prospect of the future world is delightful to me." His mind never appeared more clear and tranquil than it did while he proceeded to speak of the world that was opening to him; and he spoke with an energy and sublimity of feeling peculiar to himself, and which no time can weaken in my memory.

Those who knew Mr. Frisbie in the intimacy of friendship, find it most difficult to speak of him as a friend. He has left an image of himself in their hearts, which no language can paint to others. His rich powers in conversation will be remembered by all who shared in any degree his confidence. But he was no less remarkable for the delicacy and propriety with which he exercised those powers, than for the fertility of his mind in the resources of argument and illustration, and the liberality with which he poured out his intellectual treasures to his friends. With genius and

eloquence that might have made him conspicuous in any assembly of men, he was wholly free from the vanity of displaying his powers, or the habit of engrossing attention to himself. There was a peculiar distinctness and pertinency of thought in his conversation. His mind never soared above the occasion or object of discourse. Even to children he was scarcely less interesting than to his equals in age. His countenance never beamed with more benignant kindness than when he was engaging their minds on subjects adapted to their years. He was a perpetual instructor in their presence, and he was often heard to remark, that if he had children to educate, he should do it principally in the way of familiar conversation with them. In the society of his friends, he was not only a strict observer of the equal laws of social converse, but he was remarkable for his skill in drawing them into interesting discussions, and eliciting their best thoughts on any subject. While they felt a perfect freedom in his presence, and were led by his own frankness and confiding disposition, to the most unreserved disclosure of their sentiments, there was every thing in him to inspire respect and excite them to mental exertion. Hence together with the pleasure which his society and conversation directly afforded, they felt a satisfaction with themselves, which became associated with the remembrance of him, and served constantly to enhance the value of his friendship. The power of producing such a perfect union of intimacy and respect, with the influence attending it, was probably that which most distinguished him in the hearts of his friends. Associated as every thing amiable and excellent was in the idea of his character,

his mere presence was delightful to them ; the very thought of him aided their motives to piety and virtue. He fully illustrated the just remark of the Roman moralist : “ *Occursus ipse sapientium juvat ; et est aliquid, quod ex magno viro, vel tacente, proficias.*”

Unlike most men of superior talents, Mr. Frisbie seemed always to rise in real greatness, the more closely he was seen ; while the softer traits of his character, instead of being obscured by his genius, derived only additional richness from it. He was finely gifted for all the offices of mutual kindness and sympathy, and there was a peculiar charm in the interchange of such offices with him. No man ever performed them with more grateful sensibility. For all the charities of our nature his heart was tenderly alive. You need not be told of his filial piety ; you have witnessed the purity and ardor of his affections in the dearest domestic relations. I have known him most in the family of a friend ; and here I have known him in health and prosperity, and in sickness and sorrow, as the soother of affliction and as the object of sympathy, in all circumstances deepening the impression of his virtues with every view of his character.

The pervading influence of such an example as Mr. Frisbie exhibited through life, is indeed of incalculable value. All that now remains to us, is to cherish the recollection of it ourselves, and impress it upon others.”



MEMOIR  
OF  
NATHAN PARKER.



## NATHAN PARKER.

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NATHAN PARKER was born in Reading, Massachusetts, on the fifth day of June, 1782. He was the son of a respectable farmer, and happily knew nothing in his younger days of those luxurious indulgencies by which so many promising minds are made effeminate and slothful. He was accustomed in later life to congratulate himself on this circumstance, and to say that he owed most of what was good in his character, to his early privations and hardships. He often spoke with peculiar gratitude of the influence of his grandmother. The native elements of his character developed themselves without constraint or forcing, and gave earnest of the person that he was to be; "the child was father of the man." The bouyancy of spirits, the energy of purpose, and the power of influencing others, which distinguished him in mature life, are said to have been traits of his boyhood. It is said that he was "a great favorite with other boys, and king among them in their sports." When at the age of ten or twelve, he was severely afflicted by inflammatory rheumatism for a long period, "he would

sometimes cry all night from the pain, and the next day, as soon as he had got his breakfast, be off on his crutches after partridges, which he caught in snares. He was never in the least degree vicious," it is added, "either in disposition or conduct." And such was his desire for improvement, during one period, that he would rise before others in the morning in order to secure time for reading and study.

It is not surprising, that, with such qualities, the young farmer's boy was removed from following the plough, and sent, like Amos of old, to the service of the prophets. It belongs to the yeomanry of New England to reverence learning, and many are their sturdy sons, whom they have released from the furrow, and sent out, at no small personal sacrifice, to be fitted for the husbandry of the church, or the honorable toils of the state. Nathan, the youngest of two sons, was to be of this number. Having received his preparatory education at Boxboro, from his relative, the Rev. Joseph Willard, minister of that place, he became a member of Harvard College at the age of seventeen, and was graduated in 1803.

The succeeding year he passed at Worcester, as teacher of the Grammar School; availing himself of that honorable office, to earn the means of pursuing his professional studies, while he gratified his love of action and usefulness by imparting instruction. He had intended to study law, but being led to change his purpose, he the next year entered the family of Dr. Bancroft as a student in Theology, and there remained until he began to preach. During his residence in this place he endeared himself to all who knew him, and with the venerable and distinguished



divine with whom he was domesticated, he formed a friendship which continued unbroken and cordial until his death. His letters abound in expressions of attachment to him and his family.

In 1805, he was appointed Tutor in Bowdoin College, Maine, where he remained for two years, discharging its duties, and at the same time preaching on Sunday when opportunity presented. In the month of May, 1808, he preached in the way of exchange in the pulpit of the South Parish of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, then vacant after the death of Dr. Haven. He was a stranger to the place and the people; few of them knew even the name of the young man whose clear, good sense and simple earnestness of manner were taking hold upon their minds. The impression was decided. They desired to hear him further, and the result was that the society gave him an invitation to settle as its minister on the 6th of July, in which the church concurred by a distinct vote on the 31st, and he was ordained on the 14th day of September.

It is not possible to place a young minister in any congregation without exposing him to great trials. They will be different in different situations, but in all they are great. Youth, inexperience, diffidence; the flattery of some, the cavils of others, the indifference of more; the urgency of these to persnade him to a worldly policy, and of those to bring his religious movements to their own standard of zeal or lukewarmness; the consciousness that he is watched both by well-wishers and ill-wishers, and a trembling sense of insufficiency and responsibility; — all this, and much more, fills his path with perplexity and trial; and he

enters with weakness and fear and much trembling on a work that seems the more difficult the more thoughtfully he surveys it. In the situation which Mr. Parker had entered, besides these common causes of solicitude, there were other peculiar circumstances of trial. For it was not then, as it is now, a large, flourishing and eminent congregation, to be called to whose superintendence is one of the highest honors the church has to offer. On the contrary, it was a feeble and depressed society, struggling for very existence. It had been for three years without a pastor, and, suffering the evils of a destitute church, had dwindled away from its prosperity in the good days of Dr. Haven, till it presented but the remnant of its former strength. In a word, all was languishing. The very situation of the meeting-house, being at an inconvenient distance from the larger part of the worshippers, helped to discourage; and only the religious confidence of a few spirited men prevented the dissolution of the society. In undertaking the charge of a congregation under such unpropitious circumstances, he acted on his favorite principle, — we must do our duty, and leave the result with God. “I thought the path of duty plain,” he said, “and I became the minister of this people. With what feelings I entered on the office, it were vain for me to attempt a description. I considered that I was only making an experiment, and expected that a short time would terminate my connection with this people.” But Providence ordained that he should continue, and granted him a signal recompense of his fidelity and devotion. It is an example to encourage others to attempt fearlessly any work which Providence may assign them, assured

that disinterested efforts in the cause of Christ cannot be lost.

As his history from this time is but the story of his ministry, I shall complete my view of this before going on with the personal narrative of his life. He appears to have laid down for himself two great principles, from adherence to which his success, through the Divine blessing, mainly resulted. The first was, to maintain a perfect independence; as he himself says, "It was among the resolutions with which I entered on my ministry, to conduct it in all respects as if I were to be forever in the office which I then entered; to adopt no temporary expedients to gain favor; but to pursue the path of duty whenever it was discovered, and wherever it might lead." To this principle he strictly adhered; and not less so to the second, which was, to make his profession his only care, and to allow nothing to interfere with his attention to that great concern. One might fancy that he was constantly repeating to himself the words of the Apostle, *Give thyself wholly to them*; and he became a minister only, as Paul was an apostle only. He felt that he should be unworthy of his place, if he could not devote himself to it exclusively. He carried this feeling so far that he used to say, "My parish first, then my family." And this claim of his people was in his view so paramount and sacred, that he would not allow himself any hours on which they might not intrude, nor any studies or pursuits beyond the range of his profession; all was theirs;—he scarcely permitted himself in recreation except for their sakes, and absence from their circle was impatiently borne by him as if with a sort of homesickness.

Entering his office with such views, he carried into all its departments the spirit which ensures success. The narrative of his life is simply the illustration of this remark. When we have related how it affected his preaching, his pastoral service, his various devices for doing good, and the power of his personal character, we have told the whole history of his ministry and showed the secret of its efficiency.

I am inclined to dwell somewhat at large on the character of his preaching, because it seems to me to have been formed on the most just principles, and to offer important suggestions for the consideration of those engaged in the same work. The single aim of his preaching seems to have been usefulness. In the choice of his subjects, and in his mode of composition and delivery, he sacredly excluded all consideration of himself, his own reputation or the mere taste of his hearers; he considered simply what would do good. His sermons were thus remarkably characteristic of himself, — plain, unpretending, unambitious, but strong in manly sense, and preëminently serious and evangelical. He loved those views best which are most peculiarly Christian, and that mode of presenting them which appeals most direct to man's sense of responsibility. The adaptation of Christianity to man as being in a state of imperfection and sin and needing great exertion to bring him to holiness and God, seemed to him the view on which the preacher should rest. Therefore he was accustomed to address men as sinners, exposed to ruin and needing to be reclaimed. Whence repentance was esteemed by him the grand theme of the pulpit. Whatever my subject may be, he used to say, I always come round to repentance

before I have done with it. Christ began with it, and men will need it, at least as long as I am here to preach to them. He thought it a sad error to address promiscuous congregations as if all were interested in religion and needed but to make progress in it. He knew that the great majority need to be persuaded to *begin* a religious life ; and, as he remarked shortly before his death, he esteemed those the best sermons which urge men to begin to be religious and teach them how to begin. It was this idea which suggested his advice to a young preacher, to remember, in preparing every sermon, that it might be the last discourse which some impenitent sinner would have the opportunity to hear ; and to say something which should be suited to touch the heart of such an one.

His adherence to these maxims gave a weighty and affecting tone to his pulpit. It also established a central point about which all his teaching revolved, and to which all was referred. It enabled his hearers to discern to what the whole system tended, and showed them what use is to be made of every truth. Some preachers fail of presenting any such rallying point. They discourse at random on a great variety of topics, but have no one grand idea running through them all, by which they are connected together and made to appear as parts of one great whole. In consequence of which their ministry has no unity, no purpose, no tendency to any result ; the blows they strike may be powerful and true, but there is no concert between them, and they are as those that beat the air. Mr. Parker had an aim from the first ; he fixed his attention on one subject, and had reference to that in all that he preached ; thinking every discourse thrown

away which did not help to effect it. In consequence of which his preaching was altogether practical, and progressive towards a definable result.

Not that he neglected the discussion of truth and avoided theological speculation. On the contrary he was fond of it, and often pursued it with evident delight in a train of close and even metaphysical reasoning. His hearers speak with fond recollection of many such efforts, when his strong and sagacious sense pursued and dissected some knotty subject, and laid it open to the satisfactory comprehension of all. But he regarded such discussion as wholly subservient to a further end, as simply preparatory to the application he was to make to the conscience and the heart. He esteemed it little less than sacrilege to spend the sacred hour of public worship in debating some problem in ethics and divinity, and to leave it without pointing out to the hearers the use they should make of it. He knew that speculative truth is good for nothing, except so far as it acts upon the character; and that it is made to act on the character, not by simply being explained to the understanding, but by being made also interesting to the affections and urgent to the conscience. When thus applied, he recognized it as the Christian orator's great instrument; and hence he did not regard that as the most truly practical preaching which deals only in the inculcation of outward virtue, and contents itself with the enforcement of positive precepts. "Precepts are of little use," he said, "when the doctrines which enforce and support them are not regarded." Remembering that men are to be sanctified by the *truth*, he was not backward to urge the doctrines of religion; he knew that they are the only

foundation on which holy principle and steadfast virtue can be erected, and that no man will care enough for religion to build up for himself a religious character, unless he is interested in the glorious realities which religious doctrine unfolds. But he would not treat those doctrines controversially, in the way of debate and disputation. He thought this more likely to hinder than to promote the practical influence he desired. He explained them agreeably to his own view of them, and in their own connection with duty, leaving erroneous views to perish of themselves. As he himself expressed it, "he acted on the maxim, that the best way to refute error is to preach the truth; and he did not think it his duty to bring forward and refute in a controversial manner the errors which exist among Protestant Christians, any more than to bring forward and refute the errors of Popery."

Instead of controversially, he may rather be said to have preached religious doctrines *experimentally*; for it was in their bearing on the affections and desires, the joys and trials of the spirit; on the struggles of the soul with its temptations and sorrows, and in the encouragement, strength, and peace which they impart in the various conflicts of the spiritual life, that he habitually delighted to think of them and speak of them. Hence the unction and impression which the most serious and devout found in his discourses, and the interest which they had to those who were anxiously seeking for the way of life.

Thus his preaching was useful from its constant union of sound instruction with affectionate exhortation. It excited the mind to a train of thought, and on that thought built an appeal to the heart and

conscience. Without any display of what is called oratory, or of the elegance and splendor which excite admiration and applause, it possessed that truth, straight-forwardness, energy and fervor, which enchain attention, fasten conviction, and leave lasting impressions. In all this it was, as I said, a fac-simile of the man; and not least so in the fact that it lost nothing, in respect to its power, but rather gained, from familiarity. As those who knew him most intimately, best appreciated his uncommon worth of character, so those who most habitually heard his preaching best realized its uncommon power. Its sway over the heart, its strength to move the affections, to impress and overcome, — though sometimes felt by strangers, who have been known to carry away lasting impressions from a single sermon, — were yet best understood by those who found it the more irresistible the more they were accustomed to it. How far more valuable than that showy oratory, which astonishes and captivates those who hear it for the first time, but which palls upon repetition, and puts to sleep those who are accustomed to it.

In his preparation for the pulpit, though he had no regard for the merely literary excellencies of composition, he yet was conscientiously careful; laborious, however, rather in thinking and arranging his thoughts, than in putting them into form. His manner seems to have been to meditate his subjects thoroughly before writing, and then to write rapidly and with little revision. Oftentimes on Saturday evening he would walk his study for hours, revolving his subject in his head, maturing his thoughts, and exciting himself by reflection, putting nothing on paper till this process



was finished, and then, at a late hour, would sit down at his desk and pour out rapidly and without intermission the result of his preparation. This practice, not unanalogous to that of the extemporaneous speaker, gave something of the strength and ardor of the extemporary manner to his style of composition.

He never preached in his church extempore. But he was accustomed from an early date of his ministry to speak in a familiar way at a private meeting, held in the house where he boarded, and he thus gradually prepared himself for a more public service, which he afterwards conducted in a hall or lecture-room during a large part of every year. He was not gifted with any native fluency of speech; and his first efforts at extemporaneous speaking are represented as having been far from success. Some of his friends doubted if it were worth while for him to persevere. But he was not to be discouraged; he told them that if a few of them would stand by him, he would learn. They did so, and he learned. And it should be distinctly told for the sake of other beginners, that by dint of application and perseverance he became a ready, interesting, and occasionally eloquent speaker. His little evening meetings were the favorite resort of those who most valued his influence. There he was seen and heard to the greatest advantage. Unshackled by notes, unembarrassed by a huge house and a promiscuous assembly, surrounded by confiding friends and sure of their sympathy, he gave free scope to his mind and feelings, and was often borne away by his excitement into regions of thought and imagination which surprised both himself and those who heard him. I understand that he placed great confidence on these

meetings as eminently adapted to be useful. His particular opinions respecting them may be learned from a passage in a letter to a young minister, which is so just and important that it deserves to be quoted at length.

“With regard to extra meetings for religious instruction, I will make a few remarks, suggested by my own experience. I believe that they may be very useful; but great discretion and independence are necessary in managing them. They should never be placed on the same ground as is *public worship on the Sabbath*. People should not be taught, that attending these meetings is a commanded duty, and that all worldly duties must yield to them; nor are those to be censured who entirely neglect them, provided they exhibit the proper evidence of piety. I believe, too, that these meetings, as to their frequency, and the manner of conducting them, should be *entirely* under the control of the minister. He should appoint them when he thinks expedient, and discontinue them, when his own health, or the situation of his people demand that they be discontinued. They may be frequent, or otherwise, as occasion may require, always having regard to circumstances, and guarding carefully against producing a surfeit of preaching, the worst kind of surfeits. In the management of such meetings, it is worse than useless to attempt to run a race with those, who depend for success on the mere excitement of passion. . . . I am disposed to think that in these meetings, plain instruction should be dispensed, in a plain and forcible manner; and especially that great care should be taken to render people able to read with understanding the Scriptures, and that a pungent

application of the truths communicated should be made to their hearts and consciences. Extemporary preaching on these occasions I believe to be the best : and you will find it not difficult to practise, and a great relief to you in the discharge of your duties. With respect to the devotional exercises, I uniformly ask no one to assist me. I have several individuals, whose aid would be valuable to me ; but I do not call upon them for assistance. My reasons are these. Those best able to be useful in this way, are very modest men. It would be painful to them to make themselves prominent, and nothing but a strong sense of duty would induce them to do it. There are, on the other hand, others who would delight to be thus distinguished, but who are totally unfit for the service. If I were to ask assistance from the wise only, the vain would be grieved, and become uneasy. If I were to call upon the latter, it would destroy what little humility they now possess ; injure them, and as I think, the cause of religion. I therefore perform myself all the devotional exercises.”

It is often thought that private meetings, such as are here spoken of, should be made to have a different object from those of the regular congregation on Sunday. But Dr. Parker appears to have thought otherwise. I cannot find that in his selection of subjects or his manner of treating them, he varied from his ordinary preaching, excepting that in his private lectures he pursued *courses* of subjects, and thus was somewhat more systematic in his instruction. The topics of these courses were very various : The exposition of a book ; a view of fundamental truths and duties ; the history and ritual of the Old Testament ; the parables of

Christ ; the being and attributes of God, — which last series is remembered with peculiar delight by those who heard it. But various as they were, he adhered sacredly to his rule of immediate usefulness. Whatever the discussion, he always conducted it to an appeal to the heart and conscience. You would suppose it had been selected for no other purpose than to afford an opportunity for an exhortation to a religious life, and that instruction and argument had no other end than to lay the foundation of a call to faith, repentance and obedience.

I close this view of his character as a preacher, with a description, from one who heard him much, of his manner at these private lectures. It is written in a glowing style, but is valuable for its corroboration of what has been said, and for some hints respecting the preacher's personal appearance.

“ And here I must say, I think he was truly eloquent ; or if it was not eloquence, it certainly had all its effects. Often were his hearers chained down by the hour together, in almost breathless silence, by these solemn and pathetic appeals ; — and what gave a charm and effect to his eloquence, was the remarkable and ever varying expressions of his fine face. With a countenance sometimes haggard, worn down, perhaps, by a series of almost sleepless nights, and painfully contending with his physical difficulty — at the commencement, from his faltering manner, it might be doubted whether he would be able to proceed. But soon, all doubts would vanish ; as he became engaged in his subject, his dark eye would brighten, his countenance become more and more animated, his language more and more rich and fer-

vent, and his whole manner more and more warm and glowing, till the infirmities of the flesh were merged in the triumph of the spirit, and preacher and hearer, unconseious of time, were completely carried away by the sublimity of the subject. In some of these touching appeals, I have seen the tear start, the spirit of the hearer quail and his cheek burn with shame, as with a flashing eye, a contemptuous curl of the lip, and a deepening shade upon his dark countenance, expressive of his abhorrence of the enormity, and detestation at the meanness of sin, he laid bare to itself some bosom loaded with guilt, and probed to the quick its slumbering conscience. But his severity was confined to sin in the abstract ; his heart melted with pity for the sinner. Depicting to him with a subdued tone, and in most mournful strains, the awful consequences of continued transgression, the doom of the ungodly ; he would,—his countenance lighting up with an almost heavenly radiance, and a sweet smile all the while playing upon his face, as if he had discharged a painful duty, and thrown a heavy burden from his heart, and was in haste to touch a theme more congenial with his own pure spirit,—he would, with the most winning accents, descant upon the beauty of holiness—the peace and joy of believing—the bliss of heaven,—and kindred subjects, on which he so much delighted to dwell, long after the time, usually allotted to such exercises, had expired.”

Dr. Parker's views of the ministry and its objects, as well as the bent of his own mind, led him to attach peculiar importance to the private duties of the pastoral relation. The mere preacher, however excellent, seemed to him to be fulfilling very partially the design

of the sacred office. He regarded the minister as the servant and guide of the people, not only, like the priests of old, by appearing before God for them in the temple, but by a constant intercourse of sympathy, counsel, and kind offices, teaching them from house to house, and watching for souls in season and out of season. Upon this idea he formed his own ministry. As I have already said, he regarded his time, his knowledge, his talents, himself, as not his own, but as belonging to his people, and to be devoted absolutely to their service. He was therefore always amongst them, sharing their joys and sorrows, and close at hand in every moment of trial, anxiety, and sin, with consolation and warning. This was his favorite employment. Many men have more frequent formal conversations on religion; perhaps he had less of this than would have been well. But there is a religious silence as well as a religious speech, and the very air and presence of a truly devout man has oftentimes more influence than an exhortation. When occasion required, he could speak, and at any length; but his habit was, to watch the course of conversation, turn it imperceptibly to useful channels, and point to the Christian moral by a brief remark or a single expression; and many are the weighty sayings of wisdom and truth, couched in his own terse and occasionally quaint manner, which are remembered and repeated, but which might have been forgotten if thrown out in a great flood of words.

It was in acts rather than words that his influence as a pastor lay; acts, which sometimes cost him no little sacrifice, and which evinced a reality of faith in God and a strength of sympathy in men, which mere

words could not have expressed. The substantial kindnesses which he thus rendered did service to religion, and testify to his fidelity. For one of doubtful and agitated mind, he would give up hour after hour, week after week, thinking no time too much, till by the long companionship and sympathy he had won him to peace and God. For the aged, infirm, and poor, he had time to spare, that he might cheer the heaviness of their solitude by familiar and holy talk. To the sick he would go with a smiling face, not for a hasty and hurried visit with formal common-places about patience and prayer, but to sit with them and wait upon them as a brother or a son; and in the chamber of death, with quiet self-possession he would cheer the departing sufferer as he sat long watching by his side, and bring down the peace of heaven to the dark scene of trial. In all this, nothing seemed to be done in a manner merely professional, or because he was the minister and was expected to be present and do a certain duty. He entered into it with a feeling as if it concerned himself, and thence derived a power in such scenes, which never can belong to him who is guided merely by notions of clerical propriety and of what is suitable for the occasion. He threw himself into the occasion and became a part of it. He would stay about the bed of a dying friend, watch him through the night, support his head in the agony of death, and close his eyes in their last sleep. At such seasons he had great power to sustain and soothe; not through his much speaking, but by the expression of his whole demeanor, the affections of his soul speaking through his eyes, his countenance, his whole mien. His words might be few, but they were chosen words,

and the trust reposed in him made them powerful. To one he said, as her self-distrusting spirit trembled at approaching death, "He will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax," and her answering smile showed that the promise went home with a soothing power. On another occasion, as the fearful silence of the chamber of the dying at mid-day was broken by the cheerful notes of a bird alighting on a tree near the open window, he brightly said, "God is still good; he does not forsake his creatures." In this way he said what was suggested by circumstances. Like his Master, he drew lessons from the most common objects, and sanctified trivial occurrences by making a holy use of them.

He did not go through such scenes without severe trials of feeling, which sometimes almost unmanned him, but such was his self-constraint that he would always appear collected and calm to those whom he was called to comfort and sustain. So that his wife would sometimes remark to him, that his friends would not suspect that he had any real feeling for them. His reply to which was altogether characteristic: "It is of no consequence whether they know that I have or not."

It is a gratification to know that his solitudes and cares were not unrewarded. He was not left to mourn over the inefficacy of the truth which he had preached; but was happy enough to witness in others, as he afterwards experienced himself, the peace and hope which it imparts to the trusting spirit in its approach to the tomb. From among the numerous evidences of this, I quote from a letter written in August, 1826.



“The events of the present season have been unusually afflictive to me. June, 1826, is strongly associated in my mind with June, 1812. I then lost one whom I regarded as a father ;\* I have now been deprived of one whom I loved as a brother. ; † and now, as then, other calamities have pressed heavily upon me, and in rapid succession. In one short month five of my most interesting parishioners have been called away from me. But you will be surprised, and perhaps think that time has blunted the little sensibility which once I may have possessed, when I inform you, than for the last two months, I have been far happier, than I had been for the year preceding. I am not insensible of the losses which I have sustained. They are great and apparently irreparable losses ; but they have admitted uncommon consolations. I had for many months been guilty of cherishing very discouraging views of the effects of my ministry, and been almost tempted to say, I will speak no more in the name of the Lord. As I stood by the bed of death, I have felt the reproof there administered to me. I have seen those to whom the world held out every thing to enchain them to the earth, calm and happy in the immediate prospect of breaking away from all earthly ties and endearments. I have seen those who have been left to mourn, around whom desolation seemed to be spreading wide and threatening to destroy every earthly hope, most confidently acquiescing in the unsearchable dispensations of Providence, expressing, while their tears flowed fast, their gratitude to God, and their humble prayer, that they might

\* Dr. Buckminster.

† Mr. N. A. Haven, Jr.

bring honor to that Saviour, who had guided their departed friends in life, and given them hope in death. My heart has been comforted. However fruitless may have been my labors, I cannot doubt the efficacy of the religion, which it is my duty and my honor to preach.

“The events which have taken place, have excited an increased interest in religion among us; and called me to greater efforts to assist my people in their inquiries. I trust that much good will be the result; that the death of those who were interested in every thing good, will impress religious truth upon many minds, which their living virtues could not reach. In this prospect I greatly rejoice.”

It was at the period here spoken of, that he closed a discourse full of Christian consolation, in the following strain.

“I cannot close this discourse without offering a humble tribute of gratitude to God, and to the Redeemer. Scenes of suffering and death have opened before me with most astonishing rapidity. The great destroyer with fatal aim, has hurled his arrows at one after another, and they have fallen before him. Mourning and death have met me at every step. Though tears have been my meat, day and night, yet, blessed be God, the scene has not been all darkness around me. I have witnessed the power of his gospel. From scenes of suffering and desolation, I have been able to gather arguments of religious gratitude and praise. I have witnessed this one truth, that the religion of Jesus, in the form in which I have been accustomed to contemplate it and to love it, has power to sustain the soul under the severest afflictions and in

the hour of death. The conviction of this truth, I trust has been wrought into my soul, and will remain there, while my heart continues to circulate the warm current of life. In the house of God, I bear this testimony to the power of Christianity, and of my confidence in Christ. With a deep impression of its value and of its necessity, I press upon you, my friends, a grateful acknowledgment of the Saviour. Have any rejected his grace, I beseech such to pause and to consider. I beseech them now to repent and turn to God, to open their hearts to the heavenly comforter, and to the joys of a pure faith. Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die ! ”

In filling up his office as a parish minister, it was his object to be always doing something, and in as various ways as possible, but with as little of noise and notoriety as might be. Perpetual activity, but no bustle, seemed to be his design. He therefore, in his plans for doing good, consulted circumstances and occasions, and pressed no measure till he had prepared the way for its success. Hence he rarely if ever failed in any measure which he attempted. Being resolute and persevering, but never rash, he went in accordance with the intimations of Providence and found aid from thence. When he would kindle the flame of devotion and philanthropy, he blew upon it gently, and never gave those furious and impatient blasts which put out the fire they are over eager to light. It would be well if all who conduct important enterprises, would study such examples, and learn that bustle is not strength, nor precipitation success. Real energy is calm ; true power works without passion. I have seen the commander of a ship on the Atlantic

ocean move about the vessel quietly, never raising his voice, never looking or speaking as if excited, equally composed in pleasant weather and in storms, maintaining order by the power of his self-possession and tranquillity, and keeping all as quiet as himself, by the confidence which he inspired. So should it be with the spiritual pilot of the church; steadily watching for the safety and progress of all, but without impatience, impetuosity, or tumult, he should neither strive, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street; but with the gentleness of his Master when on earth, and imitating the sober order of Providence, should lead the way to charity and truth.

It was in this spirit that Dr. Parker projected and executed the several plans which he set on foot for the improvement of his flock, and by means of which he effected so much for its advancement in knowledge and true holiness. It is necessary to describe these at some length, because they exhibit his pastoral policy and the genius of his ministry, and present the picture of the religious organization of society on principles and in a method which can hardly fail to secure happy results wherever adopted.

The first of these in point of time, and certainly not the least in usefulness, was the formation of the Church, that is, the communicants, — which had formerly been a body, like most churches, set apart simply for maintaining the ordinances, — into an association for religious improvement and benevolent action. It was a favorite idea of Dr. Parker, that the Founder of Christianity was the originator of that great system of associated action by which his followers are in the present age accomplishing so much. The institution

of the Christian church was the first instance of this association, and by the power which belongs to it as such, it has made its way through the world. He wished to restore to the body of the communicants its place and duty in this regard. He thought that it possessed advantages beyond most other methods of organization, for the promotion of truth and charity. In an Address delivered in 1824, before the Ministerial Conference in Berry street, Boston, he explained his views on this point, and illustrated the principles on which he was acting. I regret that no copy of this Address has been found among his papers. It was in conformity with those views, that the church in his own parish had instituted, in 1813, a regular series of quarterly meetings as of a society for devotion and charity. At these meetings is transacted all the business which ordinarily demands attention, such as the appointment of delegates to any council, the care of the charity funds, and the discussion of cases of discipline. Then conversation ensues on the state of religion, the condition and wants of the poor or tempted brethren, and the measures to be devised for their relief. The meetings are thus a great means of keeping up a mutual acquaintance among the members and a proper Christian sympathy in each other—an end still further secured, by the regulation that every individual shall keep by him a list of the members. Since 1823, one of the brethren has for each meeting written a dissertation on some important subject of religious inquiry or duty, which has given a direction to the conversation of the evening. Thus the Church acts as a perpetual standing committee of inquiry and charity, ready to consider and pursue any suggestions of truth and use-

fulness. It is not a nominal, but a visible and effective bond of faith and love ; and a constant excitement to individual activity, fidelity, and watchfulness. The records of the meetings testify to the many solemn and affecting interviews to which this arrangement has given rise ; they contain elaborate reports on church relations and personal responsibility, and discussions of vital questions of truth and duty. To show the spirit of the institution, and the influence which it has been adapted to exert, I am desirous of extracting a brief passage from a Report on the state of the church, in August, 1822.

This report showed that the condition of the Church had remained very nearly the same for more than a century. In answering the question, why there had been no improvement during later years, three causes of hinderance were enumerated :—the controversial spirit of the times, prevalent errors respecting the Lord's supper, and the imperfections of church members. Each of these causes is dwelt upon at some length. I quote a portion of the appeal to the brethren under the last head ; premising, that it was written by one of the lay members.

“ Perpetual watchfulness and care are the conditions on which we hold all our virtues as well as all our worldly possessions. As *repentance* is the foundation of all Christian virtue and implies an abhorrence of sin as such,—do we keep alive our strong impressions on this subject ? Do we ever think lightly of sin, or lead others to believe that we do ? Do we give any countenance to the commission of sin, by our presence, or indirect approbation or permission ?

“ Christian penitence is accompanied and followed

by *faith*. Do we believe, — really believe, — all the promises and threatenings of Jesus Christ? Do we feel daily and hourly that the eye of God is upon us? Do we realize that we shall certainly appear before the judgment seat of Christ, not merely to answer for the deeds done in the body, but to give an account of every idle word, and to have every thought of the heart revealed? Do we act as if we were indeed pilgrims and strangers in the world? or are we as much excited by its ambition and allured by its pleasures and engrossed by its business and distracted by its cares and grieved by its troubles, as if we had no other world upon which to fix our attention?”

Similar inquiries are then suggested respecting the duties of Christian love and active benevolence. And the report ends with recommending, that a day be set apart for self-examination and devotion by each member of the church; when “all the members of the church should as far as may be possible and consistent with their usual avocations, employ their thoughts and devote their leisure moments to the purposes above mentioned.

“And that the same good work may be always kept in mind, they would further recommend, that one hour (say from eight to nine o’clock, of the Saturday evening preceeding the communion,) should for the future be set apart by all the members of this church, and employed in reflecting and conversing upon the best mode of advancing the interests of the church, or in prayer for its welfare. They believe that such a course would give every individual a deeper interest in the general prosperity of the church, and lead him to exert a happier influence on those around him.”

The measures here recommended were adopted ; and some years afterward, the report was again taken up and the resolutions renewed. One easily understands how religion must flourish, when its friends thus unite in efforts to increase its power over themselves and to extend it to others.

The benefits of this meeting had not been long experienced, when it was perceived to be desirable that they should be extended to the female members of the church. Accordingly, a quarterly meeting was established, when they assembled together in a large room belonging to one of their number, passed the afternoon in social and religious converse, and took tea together. Their minister was regularly present on the occasion, and led their devotions ; and he delighted to observe, that, through this simple means, the bonds of sympathy and good will were essentially strengthened, and that, by the substantial acts of kindness to which it gave birth, the happiness as well as improvement of many was greatly promoted. Similar objects were effected by a monthly meeting of the ladies of the parish, when the time is past in reading and working, and subscriptions are made for the encouragement of domestic missions and other religious charities.

The next institution was that of the Sunday School, a favorite object with Dr. Parker, which was commenced in 1818. He introduced the project in a sermon on Sunday, and immediately had the happiness of securing the enlightened and devoted coöperation of men, more than one of whom were abundantly competent to the good management of such an institution. It is striking and instructive to look back to that period, when the Sunday School was a novelty in



the land, slowly welcomed by the community, and coldly favored if not expressly discountenanced by many excellent persons, who thought it unnecessary in this country, ill-adapted to our state of society, and likely to be hurtful to religious instruction in families, —and to perceive how readily Dr. Parker and his friends penetrated beyond the objections to it, and entered into a full perception of its merits. Under such auspices, the school had no infancy; it succeeded at once; it reached its maturity while other schools were struggling with the first obstacles. When we remember who were his coadjutors, we do not wonder that he surrendered the management of the school wholly into their hands, and adopted it as a principle that the charge of the Sunday School should be given to the laity, without superintendence or responsibility on the part of the minister. He thought the effect of religious teaching on the children and on their parents likely to be far better if it should come, not from him whose profession it is to teach religion, but from men in the active walks of life, whose devotedness to this service on Sunday would be a new and impartial testimony to the value of religion. One perceives that there is force in this reason; and in the present case it was fully justified by the result. But how few ministers can act upon it! In how few societies, especially the smaller ones, are men to be found of that happy combination of qualities which fits them to be leaders in so difficult and delicate a service! How rare are those to whom the minister can safely delegate his responsibility for the instruction and character of his children! It is cause for congratulation that the number of such persons is multiplying; that more and more of our youth

are becoming qualified to take the active and intelligent oversight of this great work. But it cannot yet be safely laid down as a general rule, that the minister shall have no personal share in the labor or responsibility. In Dr. Parker's society it was otherwise.\* He was able to relieve himself from all solicitude respecting the duties of superintendence and instruction. He attended the meetings of the teachers, and visited and addressed the school quarterly; he never ceased to regard it with intense interest as one of the strong pillars of religion; it was not long before his death that he manifested that interest by securing for it a valuable legacy from a dying friend; but the actual management he left entirely to others, and that with as much gratitude for their services as confidence in them. "Were it in my power," he says, in an address delivered to them at their request, "I would express to you the sentiments with which I regard your exertions in the cause of Christ. But I will not obtrude on you my private feelings. Be assured of my warmest gratitude, and that I regard with the liveliest interest your pious and benevolent labors."

There was still needed another institution to complete Dr. Parker's plan of religious organization, and that was founded in the year 1826. It was an Association for mutual religious improvement. Here he collected from forty to fifty of the young and middle-aged men of the society, for the consideration and discussion of important questions in religion and morality. At each monthly meeting, a dissertation was read by one of the members, the subject of which then

\* See a Letter from Mr. Haven to Professor Ticknor, published in the volume of Mr. Haven's *Remains*.

formed a theme for conversation. Dr. Parker entered into the design with great spirit, and imparted to it a strong interest by the manner in which he elucidated the questions which came before them. His custom was to give at some length his own views of a subject at the close of the evening, answering objections and clearing away obscurities, setting the truth on its strong foundations, and especially taking care to give it a bearing on moral duty and personal religion. These meetings are said to have been full of instruction and excitement. They roused many minds to exercise on high subjects of thought, and settled opinions on the basis of inquiry and reason; at the same time that they opened to many men a new power and new source of enjoyment in the practice of expressing their minds in conversation and writing.

By the several means of religious influence now described, instruction and impression were carried to every portion of the society; a principle of union and life was imparted to it. The members came to feel as members of one body, who had some concern with each other; not as pew-holders, going to a certain place to hear a sermon, and acknowledging no further connection with the house or the people, but as partners and portions of the community assembled there; caring for their fellow worshippers and cared for by them; pleased to meet, and ready to serve, each other in other places and at other times. One cannot doubt that he who addresses a congregation collected on this principle, must preach with a heartiness and soul which he could feel under no other circumstances. If he be as the head of a family, the personal friend of all, while all are the personal friends of himself and of

the rest, he writes and speaks with another and more earnest feeling than he who addresses an assembly of unconnected individuals. There must be much of the same difference as between the case of a man who spends a day in the bosom of his trusting and affectionate family, and of him who spends it in a strange hotel, with persons accidentally brought together, who separate without caring to meet again. Christianity was intended to bring men together; its institutions are social and fraternal; its true and best work is done, only when it has made men brothers and given them a sympathizing interest in each other. Its work is hindered and thwarted, so far as they remain strangers and indifferent to each other. It is a crying evil in the structure of modern society, in the larger towns especially, that it opposes to so great an extent the proper union of Christian worshippers; that it collects together in the house of God and at the Lord's table, men and women who know not each other, and then, instead of binding them together as members of one body, allows them to think it consistent with their profession that they continue strangers. This is far from what ought to be. It behoves Christians to exert themselves to counteract this social evil, and give proper scope to the great Christian relation. Until they do this, their religion will fail of fulfilling its tendency, will be kept back from its full action on the welfare of society. It is a thing which they may do. It cannot be attempted without partial success. Let any minister heartily undertake it, under some judicious system like that just described, and he will find himself so seconded by the desires of many souls and the native tendency of Christianity, that he cannot wholly

fail. Discouragements there may be for a time ; but they will disappear before a resolute perseverance and the kindness of human and Christian affection ; and when the work is accomplished, he will enjoy an unspeakable happiness in preaching the word and breaking the bread of life, no longer to an accidental assemblage, but to a band of brothers.

But the power of Dr. Parker's ministry was not solely owing to these various measures by which he brought religion to act upon men. Much was owing to his personal character. I referred to this when speaking of his attendance on the afflicted ; I speak of it now generally. It is evident, that in a state of society like that which exists in this country, the efficacy of religious institutions must essentially depend on the personal character of him who superintends them ; especially when he lives alway in the presence of the people. To them he is the acting and embodied representation of the religion which he teaches. His character is the interpreter of his preaching, it is the application of his doctrine, it is the standard by which men measure the length and breadth and depth of his principles. If he lived apart from them in mysterious and unvisited solitude, and was never seen except when he came forth from his hermitage like some old prophet with thrilling words from another world, his real character would be of little importance ; for their imaginations would clothe him with any degree of sanctity. But he who walks among them in daily life, like other men, has no refuge from his indiscretions and faults in the fancies of the observers. He is exposed to scrutiny, and must submit to it. He must calculate on having all his instructions respecting vir-

ture, humility, purity, and kindness interpreted by the construction which he himself in his every-day life seems to put upon them. As it was said to the French preacher, "Father, when I hear you speak in the pulpit respecting the severity of a religious life, my heart sinks with despair, but when I meet you in the world, my courage revives again ;" — so men are always more ready to follow the carelessness of a preacher's life than the sobriety of his precepts. On the other hand, he who can endure this strict ordeal of daily observation, and is seen to verify in his character the picture of goodness which he has drawn in his discourses, imparts a power and sacredness to his doctrine which no eloquence or genius could have bestowed. He is listened to with a reverence and trust which the highest oratory never commands.

Dr. Parker was one of those who could stand this severe trial. His virtues bore examination, and his foibles did not become greater on closer inspection. His perpetual living in the presence of men, so far from contradicting or weakening the power of his preaching, incalculably augmented its power by the fidelity with which his example seconded it ; gave it a power, in fact, which those could hardly understand, who did not know the man. It was the illustration of his life which made his teaching what it was to his people.

It would be easy here to use the language of indiscriminate eulogy, and pass off some general outline of a Christian man for a description of the man before us. But if I rightly apprehend it, his character had some marked features ; and it is by these, that he will be most faithfully represented and his life most truly

explained. And I am inclined to think that the pervading characteristic, that which appeared always prominent and gave complexion to the whole, was what may be called *truthfulness*. He was a TRUE man. In thought, heart, purpose, word, act, deportment, directly and indirectly, all was true. Nothing was designed, nothing done or said, for appearance's sake, or through mere expediency. He exhibited himself so undisguisedly, with such straightforwardness, that an observer would spontaneously say, that is a man to be confided in. 'This it was, in connection with his clear-sighted good sense, which caused him to be trusted in the manner already alluded to. This led him to that open plainness of speech, amounting sometimes to bluntness, which has been spoken of. I cannot help suspecting, also, that from this originated that oddity or quaintness of expression which so much characterized his familiar conversation. Might it not have been at first employed as a cover to bold and unpalatable truths? Half sarcastic and half humorous, stingingly severe yet jocose in expression, he was able to say inoffensively whatever he pleased,—his manner acted instead of a formal apology for plain dealing. But whether so designed or not, or whether this peculiarity were the mere result of a sportive habit of mind, it certainly had the effect which I ascribe to it. Those who most keenly felt the censure could feel no resentment; for there was evidently not only no ill will, but the greatest kindness and good humor in him who spoke it. "Every one who came within the sphere of his influence," a friend has truly said, "felt perfect confidence in his sincerity, which would not allow him to flatter his weakness, or palliate his faults; and yet

his kindness and benevolence were so apparent, that they knew his judgments would be lenient as well as just. I think there was in him a rare union of stern integrity, uncompromising detestation and scorn of all that was false and wrong, united with perfect kindness and the most tender sympathy with the imperfections of human nature."

His influence over men was therefore that of character. He did not strive for influence. He did not aim at power. It came to him. It belonged to him, as it does to every man of single-mindedness and trustworthiness. Men saw that he was what he appeared to be, and that his objects were what he professed; that he was not considering what would be expedient, — he had a contempt for those who belittle great intentions by asking whether it be *expedient* to labor for them, — he considered only right and duty. Therefore they felt that he was to be trusted.

There was another trait in his character which gave him influence. His friends remarked in him an uncommon knowledge of human nature, an intuitive perception of character, a singular and almost prophetic sagacity by which he penetrated men's bosoms and discerned foibles or dispositions of which they were themselves scarcely aware. He evidently made man and human character his study; and having, as one expresses it, "a strong faith in the moral power and results of principles," he was accustomed to reason from the act to the motive and from appearances to the reality, so as oftentimes to startle those with whom he conversed by unveiling them unawares to themselves. This talent of observation extended to men's affairs as well as characters. It used to be a



matter of wonder to his friends how he should, without officious inquisitiveness or habits of worldly gossip, be yet so sagacious and familiar in secular concerns. An upright trustworthy man, possessing such penetration into men and things, could not fail to possess influence. Then it is to be added, that he was accustomed to express himself on all subjects with perfect frankness and directness. If he must speak of sin, especially of the mean and base sins, he would use no palliating or softening expressions, nor take pains to hide the expression of indignation and contempt which burned upon his countenance. "A lie he would call a lie, and as such he would treat it, in all its forms and disguises; and if any thing human would make the heart of the deceiver quail, it was such a look as I have sometimes seen dart from his usually mild and benevolent face."\* Finesse, management, manœuvring, cunning, in the conduct of any affairs, met his heartiest detestation. Of other sins he would speak with compassion, because, he said, he could conceive them to be occasioned by unexpected temptation, sudden passion, power of circumstances, faults of education; but this could have no palliation, — it was a deliberate plotting to do wrong and to do it by deception.

Another leading characteristic was his disinterestedness. "He was the most disinterested person I ever knew," said one who knew him intimately for many years. "His time, his studies, his labors, his money, even his personal sufferings, seemed to be considered by him only as they might benefit others." His disregard to selfish considerations was apparent in his

\* Mr. Foster's Address.

whole demeanor and course of life. It was seen in his giving time and thought to others, at seasons when disease and suffering might have excused him for thinking only of himself. As a preacher, it showed itself in his shrinking from commendation ; he dreaded lest he might perchance be brought to mingle a regard to his own reputation with the feelings which he carried into the pulpit ; and as a pastor and friend it showed itself in his habitual attention to the welfare of others. He could not even perceive it to be right to make savings from his little means as a provision for a future day. When entreated to be less generous to others and spare something for himself, he replied, that he had not been convinced that he should do more good by that means than by spending now. In the same spirit was his saying, formerly quoted, — My parish first, then my family. It was a pleasure to him sometimes to invite to his table some of the humble and poor, and share their gratification. I will not ask, he would say, those whom Mr. A. or Mr. B. might invite ; they do not need my dinner ; I will have those whom nobody invites. He pleased himself with getting out for these humble guests some choice wine which had been given him ; and when reminded that they would not know the difference between that and what was inferior, he replied, But I do.

During the night of the great fire in 1814, and in the midst of the consternation of that awful season, as he was walking with a friend, they met a lady retreating from the conflagration of her home. His friend immediately offered her an asylum. No, no, said he, she has friends, let her go to them ; reserve your room for those who have none.

One remarkably cold Sunday, when the snow was driving violently before the wind and few persons were able to reach the church, he laid aside the usual formal discourse, and taking up the words, "Who can stand before his cold?" addressed to his hearers some striking extemporaneous remarks suggested by the season;\* which he closed with recommending, that, instead of coming to church in the afternoon, they should serve their great Benefactor by visiting and helping the suffering poor. He himself set the example by going out in the face of the storm, to visit a poor solitary woman at a distance from town.

At another time, having passed a restless night, when he could ill sleep for thinking of those whom he knew to be suffering from the severity of the season, he rose at an early hour to go and take care of them. Returning late, he observed, with an air of great contentment, that such and such persons had got good fires, and such and such good breakfasts; and now, said he, we will have ours.

Anecdotes like these might be multiplied. They indicate the spirit of his life, — a habit of disinterested thoughtfulness for others.

These qualities of integrity and disinterestedness, as they have been described, receive steadfastness, consistency, and strength, from the more peculiarly reli-

\* He was very fond of using occasions and seasons, and was happy in adapting himself to them. I may mention another instance. Having prepared for his vestry evening lecture on one occasion, he was called to the dying bed of a parishioner. He was present during the last struggle of life, and went directly thence to the lecture room, where he put aside the preparation he had made, and took the text, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." It is said that he was never more impressive.

gious graces of faith and piety, which in him were always living and operating. The power of his religious convictions, their constant presence to his consciousness, coloring the thoughts which passed through his mind, the feelings which rose in his heart, the desires, wishes, purposes, and plans of his whole being, was evident to all who were about him, and is strikingly displayed in his letters to his friends. They are the letters of a religious mind; not formally and professedly discussing religious topics, excepting on special occasions; but full of those incidental expressions and allusions which disclose unawares the habit and bias of the mind. They show that a thoughtful regard to the divine presence, an unreserved trust in Providence, an habitual reference to the highest principles and motives, and a sensibility to spiritual things as if visible realities, were a part of his very life, and accompanied him like the life-blood of his body. They gave him the fortitude with which he bore the sufferings of his long disorder, and the cheerful equanimity with which he waited its trying vicissitudes, its certain progress, and its final approach toward death. It all illustrated his faith and proved the power of his principles.

Such a man as this could not fail of leaving an impression on the society in which he labored. When God qualifies one of his servants with such gifts, and they are faithfully used, he certainly crowns them with a blessing. And I trust that I have explained, as I proposed, the secret of his efficiency by the description which I have attempted of his preaching, his pastoral life, his system of action, and his personal character. Take them all together, observe how each operated

by itself, and then how they all wrought in conjunction, and there can be no mistake as to the causes of his success, so far as he was himself concerned. And I cannot conclude this survey better, than by saying, in the words of a friend who has written to me respecting him, that the contemplation of his example "may be as profitable for his brethren, as it would be for an agriculturist to visit a spot where he could see the best improvements in the cultivation of the soil carried into effect." It is for his brethren, especially for beginners in the ministry, that I have felt myself to be writing. No men are so likely to enter life with general and undefined purposes of usefulness as clergymen. No profession offers so vague a map of duty, and allows so wide a choice of means and measures, so extensive a range between activity and indolence. None, therefore, so much need specific direction from the experienced, and, what is yet better, some pattern of a well arranged and efficient administration. Such a pattern may be found here. Let our young men study it; let them enter thoughtfully into its spirit; let them tread devotedly and discreetly its paths; not slavishly, not minutely, but in the becoming temper of free minds, which own Christ for the only Master, but which yet love to learn of, and imitate those who have worthily served him. They may then hope for satisfaction in their work, for they will see it prosper; and the church will rejoice in the brighter day of activity, piety, and peace, which will be growing up beneath their toil.

We must now turn our attention to his more public relations. At the time of his ordination, the division which has rent in twain the Congregational body of

New England, had not been made. Ministers and churches held fellowship with each other on the broad ground of their common Christianity, and had not learned to refuse it on the narrow ground of their peculiar interpretations of some parts of Christianity. But the signs of the coming division had begun to show themselves; voices were already heard clamoring for it, and suspicion and hesitancy, were beginning to mark the conduct of leading men. The two Congregational churches in Portsmouth had from time immemorial dwelt side by side in the interchange of the offices of Christian fellowship, though the standard of orthodoxy had been higher in the one than in the other. Dr. Buckminster was now minister of the North Parish, a distinguished and respected name, exercising deserved influence over a large and flourishing congregation. Though aware of the extent in which Mr. Parker's opinions fell short of what he himself regarded as sound theology, he soon formed for him an affectionate attachment, and united with him in Christian and ministerial offices. They lived like father and son, mutually respecting and aiding each other. It was a beautiful instance of two disciples merging their differences in their love for a common Master and for one another. In the infirmities which soon came upon the declining years of the elder, the younger was a trusted and confidential companion; and in the perplexities which attended the early ministry of the younger, the elder was a ready counsellor and aid. And when a zealous person, who doubted whether her new minister were sufficiently orthodox, inquired of Dr. Buckminster whether she ought not to forsake his ministry, he charged her not to do so, for

that any one who should listen aright to Mr. Parker, would find the way of salvation.

Dr. Buckminster died in 1812; Mr. Parker preached the sermon at his funeral; and in 1815 gave the right hand of fellowship at the ordination of his successor, the Rev. Israel W. Putnam. The customary intercourse continued between the ministers, notwithstanding that the growing controversies were producing and increasing the ruptures of ancient fellowship in every part of the country, until the year 1819. In the course of this year, Dr. Parker joined in the ordination of Mr. Sparks, in Baltimore. This was seized upon as the occasion for suspending ministerial intercourse with him, and from that time he and his church were treated as heretic and excommunicate. Of course so important a change in the religious relations of two neighboring communities, — from ancient fellowship to sudden alienation, from mutual offices of faith and love, to anathema on the one part, and a sense of wrong on the other, — could not take place without the excitement of a good deal of feeling. Dr. Parker did not affect insensibility. It was a serious change in his own situation, as it abridged his opportunities of religious intercourse. But it altogether failed of affecting his influence as a minister, or of retarding the prosperity of his congregation. Though denounced as unworthy the countenance of the Christian community, and separated from the church universal as far as human power could separate it, it yet continued to advance in numbers and repute. Not by raising the banner of controversial war, and hurling back anathemas; but by carrying into more vigorous action, those fundamental truths and practical princi-

ples which they had contended for as the common ground of Christianity. The adherence to these, in the spirit of love and good works, was every year more and more blest. Those that were of the contrary part, were ashamed, having no evil thing to say of them; and many even of the congregation which had disowned them, became convinced that God was with them, and joined their fellowship; so that it was pithily said, "Individuals and families continue to migrate from the North, in hopes of finding a more congenial climate at the South." This climate they found; and there was evidence that beneath its benignant influences souls were ripening rapidly for heaven.

It is no small trial to the spirit, even in a land where the church has no secular power to enforce its decrees, to be stigmatized by a dominant party as an enemy to the Saviour, and have one's name cast out as evil. But where the trial is borne with meekness and faith, it tends to purify and elevate the character, to confirm the allegiance to conscience, and to strengthen attachment to the holy truth for whose sake the obloquy is endured. Dr. Parker bore it thus, and there can be no doubt that he shared a blessing in the result. One of his friends remarked to me, that he thought he had perceived an evident progress, from this time, in the higher attributes of his Christian life. He seemed to feel a new responsibility when he found himself bearing the burden of a despised and rejected faith. He searched with new diligence into its foundations, he received new convictions of its power and worth, pressed it more closely to his bosom, and exerted himself with new watchfulness in its defence. Not, as I



have already said, by contending, but by seeing to it, that on himself, and on those committed to his charge, it was permitted to exert its legitimate influences, and thus vindicate its divine power. When he attributed the increase of the parish, in his discourse on occasion of removing from the old meeting-house, "principally to the liberality of its members and their peaceable spirit," he uttered what was true, but not the whole truth. It was still more owing to the care which its minister took to maintain that peaceable spirit, and to make the truth lovely by its visible effects. The consequence of this prosperity was the erection of a more spacious place of worship, which was dedicated in February, 1826. Many persons at the time expressed an apprehension that the building was too large, and never could be filled with worshippers. But the event proved otherwise. It soon appeared that many souls were desiring precisely such an administration as was there offered them, and before his death it was completely occupied. He found himself in the spiritual charge of more than two hundred and ten families where he had begun with seventy.

We may advert in a few words to another change in his relations, occasioned by the circumstances of the times. In his early ministry, he had united himself to the Piscataqua Association of Ministers, and used to attend its pleasant meetings in company with Dr. Buckminster, who was observed "to go with more alacrity and increased spirits to the ministers' meetings, ordinations, &c., when his young friend could be his companion in the chaise." It might have been reasonably expected, that the Association would stand up manfully for religious liberty, and be slow to admit the

exclusive doctrines of the day ; for in the year 1790, it had adopted and recommended to the churches the following liberal sentiment : — “ That the profession which churches have a right to demand, is not an assent to any human creed, confession, or summary of Christian doctrine ; but a general profession of faith in Christ, repentance of sin, and hope of the mercy of God through him, expressed either in words or writing, as the person offering himself may choose.” But the enlarged spirit which had dictated this expression, seems to have departed with the good men of that milder day. Their successors became alarmed at the progress of liberty, and it was unavoidable that they should so conduct themselves toward a member of their body whom they knew to favor the heresies of the times, as to make him perceive that his presence at their meetings was irksome to them ; and thus, without venturing on the obnoxious measure of a formal exclusion, to induce him voluntarily to withdraw.

But while thus cut off from the Christian fellowship of those of his own denomination who fancied themselves sounder divines than he, it is pleasant to know that there were others, not of the same denomination nor consenting to his distinguishing views, who yet lived with him on terms of cordial respect and affection. The clergyman of the Episcopal Church in Portsmouth could not be alienated from a good man by the cry of heresy or any speculative differences of opinion. He treated Dr. Parker as a brother, and there was between them a sincere and confiding attachment which only death interrupted. During the severity of Dr. Parker’s illness, when the approach

of the cholera was apprehended at Portsmouth, a united season of fasting and prayer was held by the congregations of these two ministers; the services being conducted by Dr. Burroughs at his own church in the morning, and at the South Congregational Church in the afternoon. That occasion is remembered with deep feelings of satisfaction. It is gratifying to record this instance of a true Christian spirit manifested by good men, each conscientiously devoted to his own views, but able to look above them to the wider fields of truth and love.

There was still another body of clerical men, with whom he was connected by virtue of his office as a Congregational minister, — namely, the Convention of Congregational Ministers in New Hampshire. This from its very constitution, embracing as it did, all the Congregational ministers in the State, was based on the broadest principles of Congregationalism; and therefore the excluding spirit of the times ought to have found no harbor within it. But it did not escape the general infection. For several years, consequently, Dr. Parker had absented himself from its meetings, and thus was totally cut off from all participation with former associates in the public fellowship of Christian life. But it happened, that one of the last public acts of his life was connected with this very body of ministers. When his sinking health revived a little, a few months before his death, he made a journey of recreation, and in the course of it visited Concord. It was at the period of the anniversary celebrations, and as he saw from the window of his lodging the ministers repairing to the meeting of the Convention, he took up his hat, and said that he would step in once more and see what

they were doing. He found them engaged in a project for remodelling the Convention, and excluding from it the Unitarian members. He was struck with the impropriety of the scheme, and its inconsistency with genuine Congregational principles, and rose in his place to expose it. It was almost a voice from the dead, and could hardly have been more solemn if it had issued from the sepulchre.

But while the disorders of the age deprived him of the fellowship of those with whom he began life in more tranquil days, he had the satisfaction of seeing gathered near him a number of ministers with whom he could more fully sympathize. A new Association was formed in the spirit of brotherly love and mutual forbearance and aid. In this connection he enjoyed fully the communion of the saints, and was himself regarded as a member, whose light and counsel were always ready and always valuable. He joined also, in the latter part of his life, in forming the Unitarian Association of New Hampshire, and lent to it the power of his name and influence by consenting to be its first President. He was still as far as ever from all mere sectarianism; but he saw what the times demanded, and he probably, as his bodily strength decayed and another world drew near, felt with increasing force the worth of those great principles on which his own trust and consolation rested.

Less of a sectarian no man could be, and yet no man was more decidedly attached to the opinions which he had embraced. I am not aware that there was any great peculiarity of sentiment by which he was distinguished from the great body of Unitarians; though in a community whose members are so wholly inde-

pendent of each other, and make so little account of minor differences of faith, it is not easy to speak on this point with certainty. To their leading and favorite principles, he was an independent practical adherent; — he allowed perfect liberty of judgment and profession to all, and was willing to join all of any name in the promotion of a good cause. He cared for the prevalence of no doctrine, if it did not make men better Christians. His own words are these: “Believing as I do, that religion is designed to make men good, I can rejoice in the success of no party any further than its success is connected with the advancement of piety. Wherever I see the spirit of the gospel cherished and extended, I will rejoice, whatever sect may be employed in the work of doing good.” Perfectly agreeable to this are certain principles, which he says he had prescribed to himself: “To unite with good men in doing good, — to endeavor to weaken no man’s influence who appeared to be laboring in the cause of Christ, — not to multiply occasions of strife between Christians of different views, — to do all in his power to cherish kind affections among Christians — to defend his character when any attempt should be made to cover it with suspicion, and this, as a means of preserving his usefulness in the world.”

While he thus jealously watched for liberty and charity, his favorite and engrossing views were the practical views of religion. These, as was hinted when I spoke of his preaching, were severe, solemn, and strict, grounded on uncompromising views of the divine law, and on the gospel as a provision for sinners. His thoughts and representations of religion took their tone from this idea; and he had serious

apprehensions of evil from what he supposed to be the tendency of the times to a lax and lenient administration of truth, — intellectual, refined, graceful, tasteful, and rhetorical, but not profound, earnest, spiritual. The controversies and divisions of the day on the one hand, aided by the increasing refinement of society on the other, seemed to him tending to this melancholy result, — to deprive the gospel of its nerve, and make preaching a holiday entertainment. “I cannot but entertain fears,” he said, “that the public taste in our parishes is becoming too fastidious, too fond of mere novelties; of amusement in listening to preaching, rather than improvement. If it be so, our churches will decay, and the situation of clergymen become more and more deplorable. There can be no situation more humiliating than that of a minister who feels obliged to cater for a fastidious taste, who perceives that his standing with his people is made to depend upon amusing their fancy, not upon honest endeavors to save their souls.”

In another passage he uttered forebodings on this subject which have since begun to be extensively verified. “These are bad times for ministers. The whole moral atmosphere is in an unnatural state of commotion; the public taste is becoming more and more diseased. The time will come when brighter hopes will open on the church. I may not live to see them, but I will enjoy them in anticipation. In the mean time, ministers must feel and suffer the agitations which are going on, and which they have had a great hand in producing. They must labor, be reviled, be tossed from place to place, not knowing where they shall lay their heads, — if peradventure they can keep

them sufficiently composed to lay them for temporary repose anywhere. But great results are to be the fruit of severe labors and trials. We have no right either to complain or to despond. Duty is our's; events are God's."

He had great faith in the power as well as in the truth of his religious views. He was sure, as he well might be from his own experience, that they contain the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. But he did not conceal his anxiety lest the causes which have been just referred to, and others of a less definable character, should cause a want of simplicity and earnestness in preaching them. Upon this point he was accustomed to express himself strongly. "No sect can preserve its hold upon the public, which does not bring religion to the hearts of men, and connect itself strongly with their affections. No permanent bond of union can be formed between a people and a minister, unless it be strengthened by a deep conviction that the minister either does them good, or earnestly labors for their good, as moral, religious, accountable, and immortal beings." He rejoiced heartily in all the measures that were taken for increasing the means of theological education. "We are in extreme want," he says, when writing on the subject, "of exertions to raise up rational preachers of the gospel." Ordinary, ill-appointed, half-educated men, he looked upon as a serious impediment to the cause of truth,—feeling, as he once expressed himself in relation to a place in which he was interested, "If there must be a dunce or a drone at . . ., I prefer that he should be on the other side." When he saw in a minister any thing of the *petit-maitre* and the

selfish, he expressed himself in terms of still greater impatience. Not Cowper himself could exhibit a stronger abhorrence and contempt of such a character. If one had appeared to enter the ministry for the sake of its worldly respectability and ease, if he were mainly anxious to secure a reputation, if he seemed to be engaged in turning sentences and contriving prettinesses, instead of dealing with plain and strong truths, he did not disguise how much he was annoyed. He would urge the young men who occasionally preached for him to discard all thought of what would be said of them, and all sensitive anxiety about the merit of their discourses. Why do you not write a sermon, he would sometimes ask, as you write a letter?—throw out your soul freely and warmly, without thinking of any thing else. “We must diminish our pride,” he writes to a friend, “or rather, we must make our duty our rule, and obey its commands. Then we shall be satisfied with doing as well as we can, without bringing ourselves into comparison with others.”

His own practice in this respect was in accordance with his principles. I have brought my mind, he used to say, to be satisfied with doing the best I can. He studied to find his reward in this, and to repress all feverish solicitude about consequences and reputation. He was very reluctant to receive commendation of his preaching, and he thought it of ill effect to hearers to be in the habit of giving it. One said to him, that a recent sermon was very good, and he trusted had done him good. It is of no consequence, he replied, that I should know you think it was a good one, and not at all worth while for you to express a hope that it will



do you good. Never allow yourself to waste your feelings on expressions of this sort, but go quietly home and take care that it shall actually do you good.

In 1815, he married Miss Susan Pickering, daughter of the Chief Justice of New Hampshire, who, with one son, survives him. Their only other child died in early infancy. His habits and tastes fitted him peculiarly to enjoy and adorn domestic life. The strength of his affections, and his love of simple pleasures, imparted a zest to the tranquil delights of home, and being himself always cheerful and happy, he cast a perpetual sunshine upon all within his dwelling. Having but one child, he enlarged his circle of love and usefulness by extending a father's care to two children of his wife's sister, whom he reared as his own. In education he acted on the principle, that every one should be thrown upon his resources as much as possible, and made to depend on his own strength. Young persons should not be spared, but made to toil hard; one cannot learn to lay a stone wall, he would say, by piling up feathers. Not that he would refuse any reasonable aid; and it may be serviceable to others to mention a method, which he occasionally adopted, of giving useful advice and suggestions respecting temper and conduct; namely, by writing on a bit of paper some maxim or precept or moral remark, and laying it silently where it might be found by the person whom he desired to influence.

The degree of doctor in divinity was conferred upon him by Bowdoin College in the year 1820. He delivered the Dudleian Lecture before the University, in Cambridge, in 1824.

About the year 1821, he began to be sensible to

a difficulty in the upper part of his nostrils, which troubled his breathing and gave a little impediment to his speech. For some time it was but a slight inconvenience; but it gradually increased till it became the occasion of severe suffering, and threatened to put a stop to his power of public speaking. He was obliged to submit himself to the instruments of the surgeon, and undergo the painful process of having the polypus, which had grown up in that tender region, forcibly torn away. The annoyance was removed only to grow again, and it became necessary to repeat the operation again and again; until at length it was frequently a part of his preparation for the pulpit to "resort to the tormentors," as he expressed it, and violently to clear out "his offending member." Unwilling to trouble another with so disagreeable a task, he learned to ply the instruments with his own hand; he kept them by him in his study, and inflicted on himself the bloody torture whenever the progress of the disease called for it. Of course his general health was affected by sympathy with this local disorder.

He was early aware of the dangerous tendency of his disease. He looked, however, to its effect rather on his power of usefulness, than on the duration of his life. In August, 1829, he says in reply to the inquiry of a friend, "I have indeed felt at times oppressed by the calamity which I am called to endure. I have found it to be afflictive, not so much on account of the actual pains, which it has occasioned me, as on account of the paralytic influence which it has exerted over all my faculties, oppressing me with the consciousness that I am poorly able to perform the duties of a responsible station,—one in which much good

might be done. But my people are kind and charitable toward me, and I bless God for it; but I cannot but feel at times as if I ought to give place to a more efficient man. My duty in this thing is not quite plain to me; and this is oppressive; yet I feel no disposition to complain, and I hope that I do what I can to be useful." And then, after remarking that he has that day gained relief "by submitting to have his offending member pass through the hands of the surgeons," he adds,—“Health I do not expect; comfortable existence I may, I trust, hope for, without either guilt or presumption.”

In June of the next year, 1830, he left home for the benefit of his health, and visited the springs at Saratoga. He did not much enjoy travelling, and was ill at ease in places of public resort. “I try all I can,” he says, “to think it good for me to be here; but I have often enjoyed more pleasure in visiting a poor widow for half an hour, than I have received from all the novelties here. I do not intend,” “he adds, “to visit every battle-ground in my way. I hope to have my attention awake to whatever expresses the goodness or the grandeur of God; the marring and polluting of his works by human passions and strife, I cannot be anxious to note.”

During this excursion he made a brief visit at Worcester, where he had resided during the period of his preparation for the ministry. The changes which nearly thirty years had made, affected him. “I notice some,” he says, “who were kind to me when I commenced my active life, and their dispositions are unchanged. Many, indeed, are gone beyond my ken, and I have passed my boyish days; but yet I see in

the richness of nature's scenes, in the coming forward of new actors, in the general improvement of the aspect of things, and the appearance of happiness, that, though change is going on, God is not ceasing to be good, and that I have abundant cause to trust in him and to rejoice in him."

He derived little or no benefit from the journey. "My health, I think, is no better. Had I not been heretofore mistaken in my prophecies, I should think that this disease would soon terminate my labors as a minister. This is the care of God, and with him I cheerfully leave it." His life had now become one long disease. At times he enjoyed comparative relief, maintained at all times his cheerful appearance and manner, and attended to the duties of his office. But he perceived himself to be a broken and decaying man. "I hope I do not complain of my trial," he writes in March, 1831, "though I am often painfully reminded, that I occupy a place which ought to be filled by an active, vigorous mind, not by one that is drowsy and paralytic; but I trust in God that I shall not be permitted to hang heavily upon my friends, or to injure a good cause; that I shall know my duties, and have grace to perform them."

In the succeeding October he wrote as follows:

"For myself, though I am never accustomed to think that all things are against me, the few months past have not been to me without a due portion of trials. My health has not been good, often wretched; yet I have been enabled to pass, though heavily, through my accustomed routine of duty. I have never been so sensible of the oppressiveness of duty; and many a time I have sighed to be relieved of all public

responsibilities, and to find in some retired spot a place where with books, rural occupations, and such friends as might feel interested in my welfare, I might pass quietly my destined period here. But such a spot is not within my reach, and I doubt not that it is best that it should be so. I am blest with a most affectionate people, who seem not yet wearied with me. They might be greatly improved, but to *me* they seem to constitute one of the best of parishes. They are fast falling away from me; but as they sink into the grave they increase my confidence in the religion which it is my privilege to preach, and connect my affections more strongly with God and the future. Among those, who yet stand around me, I am rejoiced to notice a grateful attention to the one thing needful. In no year of my ministry have so many been added to the church as during the present; yet there is no feverish state of feeling, all is calm and considerate. At present my health is better than usual, and I have the prospect of passing a comfortable winter. You will say I ought to be happy, and so I trust I am."

In the spring of 1832, his disorder took a new turn, extending itself to the lungs and threatening serious disease in that organ. He was obliged to relinquish preaching, and in August he visited the Isle of Shoals for the benefit of the air and retirement. Secluded and barren as was this retreat, he found it not destitute of hints for devout thought. "The islands are indeed desolate," he writes, "but even here God is not leaving himself without witnesses of his goodness. . . He who is spreading so widely his goodness, is appointing my trial; it must therefore be for good." The thought of the kindness of his friends mingled with

his sense of the goodness of God while he mused and prayed in that lonely retirement, and strongly affected him. "The recollection of the many and persevering kindnesses of my friends, though it is precious to me, often entirely overcomes me." And again, in another letter; "My friends have been abundant in their kindness, and among them you are entitled to more thanks than I can express; thanks, not merely for the wishes expressed for my personal welfare, during a season of trials, but for years of most exemplary assistance in promoting the spiritual interests of my people, which are far more dear to me than the poor remnants of a life which at furthest must soon close. I beg you to remember me most affectionately to all my friends, and to assure them that I am not insensible to their kindness. While I think of their goodness to me, I cannot but carry up my thoughts to the Inspirer of all goodness. He has been very merciful to me; and I cannot be too thankful that he has preserved my mind from gloomy distrust, and kept cheerful images before it. I cheerfully commit all to him; myself, my dear friends, all, I commit to him."

After returning from the Isle of Shoals, he visited Boston for the purpose of consulting the distinguished physicians of that city, and returned home somewhat encouraged respecting the prospect of continued life. It was at this time that he wrote to a friend in the following strain. "The prospect that my disease will soon come to a fatal issue, I do not consider so certain as I once did. It seems to me more probable, that I may be called to pass years of infirmity and uselessness; and I must confess that the anticipation is far more painful to me than that of a speedy death. But I will

not distrust that merciful Being who has hitherto sustained me, nor the consolations which are in Christ Jesus. In my sickness I have been wonderfully supported ; my mind has been preserved in great serenity, and my religious trust has not been for a moment shaken. Though there is at times a degree of fearfulness, when I look forward to the future trials which may await me, yet I am not cast down in the anticipation of them, but stay myself on the promises of God and submit myself to his disposal. All will be well I doubt not."

At this time many of his friends were urgent that he should try the effect of a warmer climate, and begged permission to bear the expenses of his winter's residence in Cuba. But he said, "I cannot be convinced that it is my duty to leave home ; and at the risk of being thought unreasonable and obstinate, I shall remain among my friends." He accordingly passed the season in Portsmouth, but in such a state of weakness that in March he writes, "I have been into the street but twice since the middle of December, and then only to take a short ride." In May he speaks of his health as "surprisingly and unexpectedly improved ;" and for a few Sundays he was able to preach ; but it was a transient revival. The summer passed away and he gained nothing ; and in September he writes, "It seems to me that I have not long to remain here ; and I have a perfect confidence that I shall not be deserted ; that all things will be well." This was the last letter which he wrote.

It was now for many months that he had been unable to discharge any public duty, excepting a few days in the spring, and that others had taken his place

in the pulpit. To live useless had always been his dread ; a burden to his friends and parish he had always resolved not to be. During, therefore, this long trial of languor and helplessness, his feelings had been exercised with no light struggle on the question whether he ought not to resign his ministry, and relieve his flock from the burden of his support. He felt that they could not bear the expense of two ministers, and he was unwilling to stand in the way of their obtaining a pastor with the health and efficiency which he had lost. The parish, on the other hand, clinging to him with devoted gratitude and respect, could not think of a separation so long as his life should remain. They were anxious to give him every indulgence in their power, and to make that provision which should set his mind at ease. With this view they determined to provide a colleague who might divide with him the labors of the ministry ; and having been so happy as to secure the services of Mr. Andrew P. Peabody, the 24th day of October was appointed for his ordination. But the days of the sufferer were numbered, and in vain did gratitude, friendship, and piety, prepare this alleviation for his cares. He lived to see the day which gave him a colleague ; he saw the people that he loved, united under the charge of one whom they could trust ; but as if the heart, which for twenty-five years had beat only in their service, could beat no longer when that service was thought to be no longer needed, he rapidly declined from this time ; a new disease set in, and the hour of his departure drew nigh.

For many days there was nothing alarming in the affection from which he suffered, and it was supposed



that his constitution would rally again as it had done before. But on the morning of Wednesday, November 6th, he intimated to his physician that he felt his end approaching, and every hour rendered it more evident. In the midst of great suffering, so great that he spoke of it as "intense agony," he made the few necessary arrangements of his worldly affairs, and continued from this time, without relief from bodily distress, but in great quietness and even cheerfulness of spirit, until two o'clock, Friday morning, when he ceased to breath.

It would be easy to say much respecting the manner in which he had borne the long trial of his disease, and of the state and expression of his mind in the near approach of death. It was all worthy of the religion which he had preached, and a testimony to its power. It was all, at the same time, in perfect accordance with his own character; so that the same traits displayed themselves during debility and suffering, which had marked him in health and action. What was observed of him by a friend who was with him during the last few days of his life, was true of his whole illness: "all was natural, all was himself, his every-day self, yet there was a dignity and solemnity which was *felt*, if it was not seen by the common eye." This was in perfect accordance with the principles which had always governed him. He once said, when asked what he should do, if he were certain of dying in three or four days,—"Just what I am doing now and intend to do tomorrow." And it was remarked by a friend, who saw him much during the days when he was actually waiting for death, that he was still doing the ordinary duty of every hour as it arrived, and interesting himself in the immediate gratification of his

friends, as he would have done if sure of a long life. But of formal declarations respecting his state of mind and feelings, he had as little now as when in health. What he said was incidental, "so that it is only by retracing general conversations, that anything can be recalled." His soul betrayed itself in the demeanor rather than by the lips. When, however, some of his friends, with the desire, so natural to us, to learn from one's own testimony what is passing within, spoke to him on the subject, he answered them with his own frankness. About a week before his death, when several were sitting by him, one of them asked him whether he experienced the power of his faith as he had expected to do. He answered with emphasis, "I trust that I do." And in further conversation, though speaking with the greatest difficulty, he expressed the undisturbed serenity of mind which he enjoyed, and the confidence of his religious hope; adding, that if it were ever clouded for a moment, he had but to remind himself of the goodness of God, and all was bright again. He often said to one of his friends, I have never felt myself forsaken for a moment, and I have no fear that I shall not be supported to the last. Any attempt to give him support by words of commendation he could ill bear. It was natural that his friends, in their desire to express what they felt toward him to whom they owed so much, should sometimes use strong language. He listened to it very impatiently, saying, Do not call me good, I know my imperfections as no one else can. When it was replied, that he ought not to depreciate himself, he answered, that he certainly did not intend to do that; that he had the comfort of believing he had done some good; he thanked God for it; and desired that the glory might

be given to Him. With the same mixture of honesty and humility, he replied to the remark, that he had always endeavored to promote the happiness of those around him, "So far as I have had *distinct purposes*, it may be so."

Some idea of the manner in which he endured his sufferings, may be derived from the following extract of a letter :

"I have often been with Dr. Parker when he was suffering the severest distress—and though it was almost beyond endurance even to be with him, and witness his distress, he nevertheless remained as calm and cheerful as though nothing whatever was the matter. If any thing was said, he would always, even while coughing so that it seemed almost as if his lungs must be torn in pieces, endeavor to put in a remark, though it might be only a word between each breath ; and when too much exhausted for utterance, he would still turn upon you with a most sweet smile.

"I never saw him cast down but once—and that was the first Sunday in the year, a day which had always been one of unusual interest to him, on account of the review which he had been accustomed to make on that day of the concerns of the church and parish of the preceding year, and the opportunity it afforded him of appealing forcibly to the consciences of his people, and producing a religious impression. It was the first time since his settlement, that he had been deprived of the privilege of addressing his people on this occasion, and he felt it very sensibly. I went in to see him after the afternoon service, and was struck with the appearance of sadness on his countenance. I had been often before urging him to allow his friends to sit up with him at night—and I introduced the

subject again. After I had pressed the matter considerably, setting aside all his objections, he at last came out with what I doubt not was that which weighed most deeply on his mind — ‘He did not think it right to make other people suffer on his account.’ ‘Why, sir,’ said I, ‘your people would rejoice to be permitted the privilege of sitting with you ; and if you will only give the word, I venture to say there are fifty who stand ready to offer to-night.’ His heart was already full ; but the remembrance of his people’s love was too much for him, and he leaned his face on his hand and wept. Excuse me, my dear sir, for running out to this length — but it is a subject on which those who have seen much of Dr. Parker are not apt to say only a word or two.”

In this manner did he pass through his wearisome disease, and thus in faith and patience did he meet the hour of dissolution. He had lived as a Christian should live, and he died as a Christian should die. Devout men attended him to his burial and made great lamentation over him. His body lies in that retired and beautiful spot, which he had lately done much to cause to be consecrated as a place of sepulture, and thither many have gone to ponder and weep, while they rejoiced in the lofty trust and glad faith, which assured them that his spirit was among the blessed. A durable monument of stone has been erected to tell the place where his dust reposes ; but a better memorial is to be found in the volume which contains the records of his teaching. Better than epitaph or eulogy it will describe him to those who knew him not, and will restore him to the memory and heart of those who knew and loved him.

MEMOIR

OF

SAMUEL COOPER TEACHER.



## SAMUEL COOPER THACHER.

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SAMUEL COOPER THACHER, was born in Boston, on the 14th of December, 1785. He was the son of the Rev. Peter Thacher, D. D. who in the January of the same year had been installed minister of the Brattle Street Church; to which situation he was called from Malden, a village in the neighborhood of Boston, where he had discharged the pastoral duties for the first fifteen years of his ministry. He is still remembered by many of the inhabitants both of Malden and Boston as an eloquent preacher, sincere patriot, and excellent man. He was so remarkable for the glowing piety and ready language of his devotional exercises, that the celebrated Whitefield is said to have called him "the young Elijah."

For many generations, indeed, the ancestors of Mr. Thacher had, from disposition and preference, been of that profession, which, among the Israelites, was made the duty of a tribe. His grandfather and great-grandfather, both of the name of Oxenbridge Thacher, though in after life engaged in different pursuits, had ministered at the altar of God, till ill health obliged

them to retire from its service. The elder Oxenbridge was the first man who preached to the settlers of Stoughton; and his father was the Rev. Peter Thacher, the first minister of Milton, where he was ordained in the year 1681, and where, as was not unfrequently the case among our simple forefathers, he performed for his parishioners the duties both of clergyman and physician. He was the son of the Rev. Thomas Thacher, who came over from England in 1635, and was the first minister of the Old South Church in Boston, of which he was ordained the pastor in 1670. He also was a physician as well as a divine; and he too was the son of a clergyman, the Rev. Peter Thacher of Salisbury in England.

From early life, the subject of this memoir exhibited those qualities of mind and heart, which are so very desirable in a teacher of religion; and the reflections of more ripened years determined him to assume a profession which his fathers before him had followed and adorned.

He received the elements of instruction at the Free Schools of his native town, and was fitted for college at the Latin Grammar School, then under the care of the late Mr. Samuel Hunt. In the year 1800, at the usual time for the examination of candidates, he was admitted a student of the university in Cambridge, and was graduated with its highest honors at the annual Commencement in 1804.

While at the university he had the happiness of gaining the attachment and respect of his classmates and fellow students, and at the same time of securing the confidence and favor of the college government. He possessed good sense, good temper, and a true



independence of spirit; and therefore could hardly fail to recommend himself, both to the companions and to the guardians of his studies. He knew that the cultivation of his mind was his business and his duty; and that the object of his instructors, in all their discipline, could be no other than his good. He was not disposed to consider every new requisition an encroachment on his rights, and every officer of instruction his natural foe. He thought too, that quite as much independence could be shown by firmly opposing the passionate measures of mistaken youth, as by withstanding the fancied usurpations of his superiors and tutors. But still he had so much kindness of disposition, was so affectionately attached to his companions, and so obviously free from a servile spirit, that he never forfeited their friendship, or fell under their suspicion.

Before leaving the University, Mr. Thacher had decided on the choice of a profession. In a letter to his elder brother, the Hon. Peter O. Thacher, dated the 15th of December, 1803, he communicates his intention of preparing for the ministry. To this object, he says, "all his hopes and wishes are directed;" and he prays God that he "may not be permitted to touch his ark with unholy hands." Immediately after taking his first degree, he commenced his theological studies in Boston; and enjoyed the valuable privilege of having them directed by the Rev. Dr. Channing. The friendship formed between these two gentlemen was intimate and confidential; was rendered still more so by the subsequent settlement of Mr. Thacher over a church particularly associated with Dr. Channing's; and was interrupted only by that event which sus-

pende all human connections, till they are renewed and perfected in a better world.

In the early part of the year 1805, Mr. Thacher took charge of the Latin Grammar School, during a vacancy in the office of head master, and retained it till the appointment of Mr. William Biglow, as successor of Mr. Hunt. He then for a short time kept a private school. He belonged at this period, to a society of gentlemen who conducted the Monthly Anthology and Boston Review, the most respectable literary work, of a periodical kind, which had then been published in our country.

The summer of 1806 introduced him to an entirely new scene of study and enjoyment, and brought to him the accomplishment of a desire, which he had long indulged, though with but little hope of its ever being gratified — the desire of seeing other countries than his own. It had been deemed expedient, and even necessary, that the lamented Mr. Buckminster, in travelling abroad for his health, should, on account of the peculiar nature of his disorder,\* be accompanied by some friend, who might be at hand in any emergency to administer assistance, and procure relief; and Mr. Thacher was requested to be that friend. This overture he immediately accepted; regarding himself as singularly fortunate in being furnished with means of accomplishing a favorite object, at the same time that a fellow traveller was secured, whom he so highly esteemed. Mr. Buckminster sailed for England in May. Mr. Thacher left Boston in June, and in July had the pleasure of joining his friend, who was then at the house of Samuel Williams, Esq., in London.

\* It was epilepsy. See Thacher's Memoir of Buckminster.

Early in August they embarked together at London for the continent ; and after a disagreeable passage of three days landed at Harlingen, in Holland. From Harlingen they crossed the Zuyder Zee to Amsterdam, and passing rapidly through Haarlem, Leyden, and the Hague, arrived at Rotterdam before the middle of the month. Here, the friends were compelled to separate. Mr. Buckminster set off on a tour through Switzerland, and Mr. Thacher proceeded through Williamstadt, Antwerp, Brussels, Valenciennes, and Peronne, to Paris.

“And what shall I write you of Paris,” he says, in a letter to his brother, “of Paris, the centre of gayety and pleasure, of splendor, folly, vanity, and crime ; the place where you find every form of beauty, magnificence, and taste ; every display of ingenuity and art ; in short, every thing but goodness ? The sentiment of Burke is here completely reversed, and vice *doubles* its evil by losing all its grossness. The embellishment of Paris still advances ; and it is said the Emperor has done more to adorn it in three years, than the house of Bourbon in the whole eighteenth century. By making Italy and Flanders tributary to his capital, he has formed a collection of paintings and statues, without rival in the world. He opens magnificent squares in places which were formerly crowded with dirty and narrow streets ; he renews public buildings which have decayed, or supplies their place with something still more splendid ; and if he should live twenty years longer, he will make Paris throughout one vast palace. Even if his fortune should be reversed, he has left such indelible traces of himself, and connected them with so many monuments of elegance

and taste, that they can never be effaced without mutilating the beauty of the city."

In the same letter which is dated October 7th, he thus speaks of the health of Mr. Buckminster, who had then rejoined him. "When next you see Mr. L. after remembering me to him with all possible gratitude and regard, tell him, that though I am unwilling prematurely to raise his hopes, yet I believe he may indulge very sanguine expectations of the complete recovery of Mr. Buckminster. He has returned from Switzerland, not merely in good, but in robust health; and ever since his arrival on the Continent, and for a month before, he has had no return, nor symptom of a return, of his disorder." And in another letter, dated December 20th, he says: "The climate of France agrees wonderfully with Mr. B., who is in robust and uninterrupted health, although occasionally a little homesick. His greatest danger, at present, is of becoming bankrupt, from the number of books which he continues to buy." These were grateful hopes, and as such, would inspire a tone of gayety; but it is well known how mournfully they were disappointed.

On account of the restraints imposed by the Berlin decree, the friends were obliged to remain in Paris much longer than they had intended; and it was not till the February of 1807 that they were able to return to London.

While in France, Mr. Thacher had felt himself restrained from writing with freedom about politics or distinguished men; because he knew that all his letters were inspected by the police, before they were permitted to leave the country. But once more in Eng-

land, he could indulge himself in full epistolary liberty; and in one of his letters from London he gives a lively description of Bonaparte, whom he saw for a few moments at St. Cloud. It does not vary in its particulars, from descriptions of his appearance which have been given to the public; but every thing possesses a certain degree of interest which relates to that fallen wonder of mankind.

“It was at morning mass, just before the present war was announced; and from his wearied and unrefreshed countenance, I did not envy him the night he had been passing. He had the appearance of a man, exhausted by intensity of thought, and now vainly endeavoring to escape from the subject of his meditations. He was perpetually restless and uneasy; some part of his body was in continual motion; he was now swinging backward and forward, then drawing his hand over his forehead and face, and then taking snuff, with an air which evidently implied that he was unconscious of the action. The whites of his eyes bear a much greater proportion to the colored part than usual, and he makes them more remarkable by perpetually rolling them about. It is a very curious fact, that it is still a dispute what is their color, and among the thousand pictures of him hung up in Paris, part make them blue, and part hazel or black. Upon the whole, however, he has a very fine countenance, and, I must confess, my opinion of his capacity was heightened by observing the fine proportions which it displays.”

In August, Mr. Thacher sailed with his friend from Liverpool, and in September arrived in Boston. Soon after his return he accepted the office of Librarian of Harvard College, and entered on his duties in 1808.

While abroad, he still had continued his connection with the Monthly Anthology, and preserved all his interest in its success unabated. He now contributed to its pages some valuable articles; one of which deserves a particular mention here, on account of the attention which it excited when it first appeared, and the ability with which it is written. It was a review of *The Constitution and Associate Statutes of the Theological Seminary in Andover; with a sketch of its Rise and Progress*. Published by order of the Trustees, 1808.

In the commencement of this piece, the reviewer adverts to the very low state in which critical and exegetical theology then was in our country, and expresses a lively pleasure in the prospect of an establishment, where so lamentable a defect should be, as far as possible, remedied, by instructing candidates for the ministry in the knowledge of that book which they were hereafter to expound to others. So long as the means of information are communicated, he regards the peculiar doctrinal opinions of the instructors as of little comparative importance. "We profess, then," he says, "before we commence the review of this pamphlet, that we rejoice in the foundation of a Theological Academy at Andover; we do not lament that it is directed by men whose opinions differ from ours; and our only inquiry will be, whether the principles, on which it is established, are such as in any degree to impair or destroy the good which such an institution is calculated to effect."

In prosecuting this inquiry, notice is first taken of the connection between Phillips Academy and the Theological Institution; and the reviewer goes on to show, that the donations of two distinct bodies of

founders were designed in the first instance to support two different systems of divinity, the *Calvinistic* and the *Hopkinsian*, and that those gentlemen who, after the coalition drew up the "Associate Statutes," and the "Creed," had very adroitly given the spirit and complexion of the latter scheme to their work, though they had avoided any expression of difference so open and hostile, as to alarm or offend the friends of the former. This position he proves by comparing the Creed, which he quotes at length, with the known principles of the two systems above mentioned; asserting, as the result of this comparison, "that the *only* article in which the Calvinists differ from the Hopkinsians is *omitted*, and that almost every important article, which the Hopkinsians *add* to Calvinism, is either expressed or strongly implied." The conclusion drawn from this circumstance is, as might be supposed, of a kind not the most favorable to the Theological Institution.

He then proceeds to state, with great strength of argument and language, his objections to the imposition of any creed whatever. The first is, that creeds "are founded on the assumption, that the essential doctrines of Christianity are not distinctly and explicitly expressed in the language of the volume which contains them." This he says, the advocate of an imposed creed is obliged to maintain in fact, though he dare not in words; and he thus concludes his remarks on this head: "As soon as you convince us, that a study of the Scriptures will not certainly secure an honest man from *fatal* error, we shall either give up our faith in Christianity, or have recourse, not to you, but to the infallible judge at Rome, to direct us."

His second objection to the use of creeds is, "that they are directed against the honest and conscientious, and operate as a temptation and premium to dishonesty." The third is founded on the constitution of the human mind, which renders a perfect conformity of opinion impossible. The fourth is, that a right is assumed by the imposition of creeds, "which it is the very essence of Protestantism to deny to any human being." The fifth and last relates particularly to the Andover Creed, and is chiefly directed against the provision which requires from the instructors the renewal of their signature every five years, and thus confines them with enduring chains.

An answer to this review was published in the *Panoplist*, a Calvinistic magazine. It drew from Mr. Thacher a defence of his article, in which his former charges were vigorously supported and maintained. The following is the concluding paragraph.

"The whole object which induced us to enter into this unpleasant controversy has been attained. We were desirous of reminding those men, who were attacking our friends, invading the tranquillity of our churches, and attempting to revive the exploded absurdities of the dark ages, that the friends of rational and scriptural religion, though enemies of theological polemics, are not so, because their antagonists have nothing vulnerable in their system. The charge which they bring, that we have been influenced in this affair by a desire of interrupting the harmony of two sects, who had agreed to forget their differences, will not be believed. We disdain the imputation. We attacked them, not because they are Hopkinsians, and not because they are Calvinists, but because their conduct



and their principles, we believe, all honest Calvinists and Hopkinsians ought to unite in condemning. The charges we have adduced and supported are not to be thus evaded. It stands on record against this institution, and all the waters of the ocean can never wash out the stain, that it has been made what it is, by perverting the pious liberality of well meaning devotion, and sacrificing the first principles of Protestantism to the gratification of the unholy ambition of aspiring heresiarchs."

This is strong language, and will appear particularly so to those who were acquainted with the gentle character of the writer, and knew how averse his spirit was to the spirit of controversy. But in this instance, as well as in some others which subsequently occurred, he felt it his duty to enter into an uncongenial warfare, and defend the great principles of truth and freedom. And who indeed, even if we put out of the question the curious circumstances attending the compound creed of the Andover Institution, who is there, what truly rational and liberal man, whatever his doctrinal opinions may be, who will not exclaim with indignation against the demand of a repeated subscription to a long and minute list of disputed articles of faith? And what consistent Protestant is there, of whatever denomination, who will not think it objection enough to a theological establishment that it should presume to speak in language like this: "IT IS STRICTLY AND SOLEMNLY ENJOINED, AND LEFT IN SACRED CHARGE, THAT EVERY ARTICLE OF THE ABOVE CREED SHALL FOREVER REMAIN ENTIRELY AND IDENTICALLY THE SAME, WITHOUT THE LEAST ALTERATION, ADDITION, OR DIMINUTION." *Shall forever remain!* Yes, on the records where you have inscribed them, on the paper where you have

printed them, they may remain, for a memorial and a wonder; but for belief and reverence and instruction, who will undertake to say that they shall remain; who will undertake to say, that in the course of one or two centuries they shall not be clean swept away from the human mind, into the region of outworn and neglected things? It is really amazing to see with what complacency some men will tie together the poor shreds of their own conclusions, and then pretend to sound the unfathomable depths of futurity.

The discharge of his duties as librarian left Mr. Thacher ample time for the study of his profession. The library of which he had the care, especially rich as it is in the department of theology, furnished him with advantages of which he did not neglect to avail himself; and though when he began to preach, he was not generally pleasing in the pulpit, on account of some defect of voice and peculiarity of manner, yet the clearness and correctness of thought, the good sense, the pious feeling, and the chaste style, which his discourses exhibited, secured for him the approbation of men of judgment and taste.

On the third of November, 1810, the Rev. John T. Kirkland, was inducted President of Harvard University; and on this joyful occasion Mr. Thacher was appointed to deliver a congratulatory address in Latin. I had then just entered college, and I well remember the graceful appearance of the orator, and the praises which his performance received from all lips, for the propriety of its sentiments, and the elegance of its Latinity. I well remember too, how universally he was esteemed, as a college officer, by the students, who loved him for the mildness and urbanity,

while they respected him for the firmness, of his character.

But the time approached when he was to leave his employment at Cambridge for a sphere of higher and more arduous duties. The Society of the New South Church, of which President Kirkland had been the minister, was now of course destitute; and Mr. Thacher, after preaching before them for a few weeks, was invited to supply their loss. He accepted the call, and was ordained their pastor on the 15th of May, 1811.

It had long been, and still is, the custom in our churches, for the pastor elect to read a creed, or make some profession of his faith, to the ordaining council, before the services of ordination commence. For some time, however, it has been generally understood by those of liberal sentiments, that the ordaining council is assembled for the purposes of sanction and Christian fellowship, rather than of authority, and therefore that the creed which is read to them is not a demanded, but a voluntary exhibition of religious belief. It is allowed to be proper that the council should become in some measure acquainted, in a formal way, with the opinions of the person, whose entrance on the Christian ministry they have met to welcome and approve; but that is all; if they are not pleased with the character of his belief, they may refuse their concurrence in his ordination, and protest against it, and disperse; but they have not the least power to deprive the congregation of the object of their choice; of him, whom that choice alone is sufficient to constitute their minister. This principle it would be almost unnecessary to advance at the present day; but as it was not,

perhaps, so fully conceded among us at the time of which I am speaking, it was thus decidedly implied in the beginning of the profession which Mr. Thacher read to the council which ordained him. "A belief of the principles of natural religion, and a general acceptance of the truths of Christianity, are implied in the appearance of any one, who is believed to have any sense of integrity, before this venerable council, to receive their approbation and blessing as a minister of Christ. If there should be any doubt of his sincerity, no profession, however ample, would avail to entitle him to confidence and credit. The object, therefore, of the profession which I am now called on to make, is, I presume, to determine whether the general views which I have taken of the gospel, will encourage the hope, that under the blessing of God, the cause of Christ will not suffer in my hands." He then expresses his belief in the being and attributes of God; in the Scriptures as his revealed Word; and in Jesus Christ as his well beloved Son; and concludes with the following scriptural, catholic, and rational view, of the objects and terms of Christian communion: "It may not be superfluous to add, that I regard a credible profession of *faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah*—a proposition rendered credible by such demonstrations of repentance and obedience as in the judgment of charity may evince sincerity—as the only term of Christian communion, which the Scriptures authorize me to require; and of consequence that I embrace every one who professes this faith, as a friend and brother in the Lord.

Mr. Thacher commenced his pastoral duties with the interest and zeal of one who is deeply convinced

of their importance, and of the obligations which he is under to discharge them faithfully. He now lived only for his people, and directed all his exertions to the promotion of their good. He won their hearts by the affectionate friendliness of his manners, satisfied their minds by his lucid expositions of gospel truth, participated in their joys as if they were his own, and led them in their sorrows to the sources of all consolation. He realized the highest conception of a good pastor; giving himself to reading, to exhortation, to instruction; gentle unto all men; and an example to the believers, in conversation, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

But very soon a melancholy cloud rose up, and threw its shade over the morning prospect of his usefulness. He was not gifted with a constitution sufficiently vigorous to support him for any length of time under the manifold labors of his profession, and in the spring of the year after his settlement, he found it necessary to take a journey for the benefit of his declining health. In the month of April he left Boston, travelled through Worcester and Hartford to New Haven, and thence to New York. From this place he took the steamboat to Albany, and continued his journey to Saratoga Springs. A free use of the waters was so beneficial to him, that after remaining there for some days, he set out on his return to Boston, with renewed strength and hopes. But the heat of the weather, and the fatigue of riding, proved excessively injurious to his weak frame. On the morning after arriving at Worcester, he was attacked with a raising of blood from the lungs, which immediately reduced him to a state of extreme debility.

This attack confined him in Worcester nearly a month ; and when at last he resumed his journey, he could only travel at the rate of a very few miles a day. He did not return at once to Boston, but was detained by the hospitality of Gorham Parsons, Esq., at the neighboring village of Brighton ; where every attention and comfort was ministered to him, which his situation could require, or kindness could suggest. Here he gradually recovered, so far as to believe himself able to recommence his ministerial duties in November. A few extracts from the first sermon which he preached, on again addressing his society from the pulpit, will give some idea of his character and feelings, and cannot be otherwise than acceptable to the friends who heard, and who will doubtless recollect them.

The title of the sermon was, *On recovery from dangerous sickness* ; and its subject, the duties of the sick. The following notice of his own situation, toward the commencement of the discourse, must have sunk deeply into the hearts of his hearers.

“ Brought by the goodness of God from the borders of the grave, I cannot better use the strength which is restored to me, than by endeavoring to gather instruction for you, as well as myself, from the scene through which I have passed. And if by this experience I should be enabled to suggest any considerations with regard to the duties of the sick, which may contribute to make any of you prepared for the hour of trial, I shall think that much greater danger and pain would not have been too dear a price for such a privilege.” — “ I propose to speak of the duties of those who are assailed by painful and lingering sickness ; whose powers of exertion are impaired, but not destroyed ;

to whom a breathing time as it were, is allotted, between the summons and the execution of that sentence, which is upon the life of us all ; over whom

“Death his dart  
Shakes, but delays to strike.”

The conclusion of the sermon is so affecting and eloquent, that I need offer no apology, for presenting it entire.

“The last duty to which I have either time or strength to call your attention, is the duty of complete trust in God, and resignation to his will. And, here, my friends, is the reward, the triumph of a life of religion. The time to try the value of the maxims on which our lives have been formed, is the hour of severe sickness. The animating bustle and contentions of life no longer engage our attention ; our ambitious hopes are over ; the sound of fame grows dull to the ear ; the voice of flattery no longer soothes us, and, “all the worshipped pageantry” of pride is fled from before our eyes. Then it is, that we fall back on the resources of our own minds. The world deserts us, and we feel, as it were, alone in the universe with our God. How miserable is that man, who feels himself for the first time in this dread society ; whose life has been past in shaking off the thought of futurity, till the voice of death now forces it in thunder on his ears ! How blest is he, whose life has been made a scene of preparation for such an hour ; spent in habitual communion with his God, in humble desires to gain his approbation, and in forming himself for that pure society to which death is about to introduce him ; and, who, now that flesh and heart fail him, can stretch his

feeble hand, and lift his languid eye to heaven, and say, "God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

"Such, my friends, is an imperfect outline of some of the most obvious duties of the sick. You, I am sure, will not consider it as intended for an exhibition of what I have myself performed, but merely as an illustration of the views and feelings which every Christian, under such circumstances, would desire to cherish. The trial through which the goodness of God has carried me has not been the *most* severe; and it has been lightened, believe me, very greatly, by your sympathy and kindness. I fear I must still have to ask a continuance of your indulgence; but I shall always endeavor to feel that such powers of usefulness as I can command, are altogether yours. Indeed, I have learned nothing from this visitation, if I have failed to be impressed with the necessity of using my utmost diligence in performing the work which is given me to do. If I needed another admonition, I am furnished with it, while I write, when I find the lips of him\* who charged me to be faithful to you, closed forever, and himself called into the presence of his God, to give an account of his own stewardship. What, then, remains for me, what remains for us all, but to endeavor to fill up the various duties of life with fidelity, and in the fear of God? Let us defer nothing which Heaven enables us now to perform. Let us guard against the fatal belief, that by a few formalities at the close of life, we can atone for habitual and presumptuous vices. Believe

\* His uncle, the Rev. Mr. Thacher, of Dedham.



me, we deceive ourselves. It is the righteous man alone who can have peace in death. And he can pass through the dark shadow of its valley, and fear no evil; for the rod and the staff of the Almighty, they shall comfort and sustain him."

While Mr. Thacher was absent on his journey, he met with a severe trial in the death of Mr. Buckminster, his fellow-traveller in foreign lands, his brother in the ministry, his friend. His feelings prompted him to pay a tribute to the memory of one so dear to him, by giving to the public an account of his life and character; and his intimate acquaintance with the deceased, and knowledge of his principles and habits, perfectly qualified him for the duty. The memoir of Mr. Buckminster, which has been prefixed to each of the three editions of his sermons, is from the pen of Mr. Thacher. It is universally regarded, I believe, as an interesting and well written piece of biography; but as the volume which contains it has deservedly commanded an extensive circulation, I shall content myself with the present reference merely.

An event, which can be expected to occur but seldom, called from Mr. Thacher a discourse, which, both on account of the novelty of the subject, and the ingenuity with which it is treated, will be read, perhaps, with as much pleasure as any that have proceeded from his pen. The old meeting-house in Summer street, which was built of wood, and had stood nearly an hundred years, was in so decayed a state, that the Society determined to take it down, and raise a new one of stone, in its place. On the 13th of March, 1814, their pastor preached the last sermon from that pulpit, which had witnessed the labors of all his pre-

decessors ; and he seized the opportunity of enforcing considerations in themselves truly affecting, and rendered doubly so by the circumstances of the occasion.

The new house was dedicated the same year, on the 29th of December. The sermon which Mr. Thacher preached on this occasion was soon afterward published.\* It became a general topic of conversation ; and while by one portion of readers it was praised as an able and lucid exposition of liberal and intelligible Christianity, and a calm and manly defence of those who had embraced such a faith, it was denounced by another portion, as advancing principles, subversive of what they called the peculiar and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel. The weak were alarmed at they knew not what ; the bigoted were surprised at the avowal of non-conformity ; the cautious shook their heads, and intimated their doubts ; while they who had observed the signs of the times, and who knew what they believed, rejoiced that the time had arrived, when religious opinions could be fairly and openly discussed, when reason was to be permitted to come out into the light, and men could maintain that their minds were their own.

If there is any fault to be found with this discourse, it is that it speaks rather too much in the tone of apology and confession. But this was to be expected from the existing state of the public mind, and from the untried and delicate situation in which the preacher stood. But no one, certainly, can read it without perceiving the firm conviction of truth which it everywhere displays, and the resolution not to yield a sin-

\* This is the only Sermon which Mr. Thacher ever printed.

gle fragment of any one great principle asserted. It would conciliate, but without the least compromise of belief.

Still, it must be allowed, that a few expressions in the discourse had better been omitted. Such, for example, is the one contained in the following passage: "There exist — *it is but too well known* — among the different communities of Christians, some peculiar modes of regarding the truths of the gospel; and it is fitting, according to the spirit of our text, that we should be ready to justify these modes of thinking to our fellow-believers." How is it possible, it may be said, that this could be too well known? If these peculiarities of opinion existed, they ought to have been known. It was best for all sides that they should be known; and that an end should be put to a state of things which was an improper, a disagreeable, and, from its nature, a temporary one. The time may be easily remembered, when in our religious world, there was nothing but distrust on the one side, and fear and evasion on the other; when the self-conceited theologian looked awry on the suspected heretic, and the object of his suspicion answered him with circumlocution and hesitation. There is no denying that this was the fact. And how much better is it that there has been a change, and that we can now use language, as it was meant to be used, for the expression of ideas. And again, it may be asked, how is truth ever to be known, if her face is always to be kept under a veil? How are we to expect that our opinions are to be received, or respected, if they are studiously thrust aside, and into the shade, as if we were ashamed of them? Nothing is to be lost, in this country at least, and every

thing is to be hoped, from fair discussion. "Though all the winds of doctrine," says Milton, "were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple! who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?" If we are convinced that our opinions are well grounded and important, we really do not pay them a proper regard, nor do justice to the decisions of our own minds, by deprecating discovery and examination.

If it be said, that the spirit of contention is unhalloved, and that ignorance is better than ill will; it is readily granted. But cannot knowledge and charity walk together, and kindness accompany discussion? If they cannot, it were happy for us if we could neither think nor feel. But surely there is nothing impossible in this union. It has been, and may always be effected; and perfect love will cast out fear.

Entertaining these sentiments, I am certain that if Mr. Thacher had been aware of all that was implied in the few words which have been noticed, he would never have used them; for they hardly comport with the spirit of firmness which marks the discourse, nor, indeed, with the circumstance of his public avowal of liberal opinions, without being called on to do so except by his own convictions of propriety and right. The expression was evidently suggested by his ardent desire of peace, and his strong aversion to pulpit controversy and theological discord. If he were now alive, he would, doubtless, be among the first to acknowledge that his apprehensions were groundless. For, what has been the consequence of that mutual knowledge of opinion existing among us, and of that

change in the state of things, which, I feel authorized in saying, and I say it to his praise, he himself was one of the most active in bringing about? Has knowledge produced strife; or is it pouring forth perpetual controversy from our pulpits into the ears of an inflamed or a wearied audience? Should a stranger go into one of our churches in Boston, with the expectation of hearing peculiar doctrines handled, would he not be disappointed? Would he not be disappointed Sabbath after Sabbath? And yet it is as well known of what sentiments our clergymen are, as in what churches they respectively minister. What condition can be happier than this? The pure and purifying morality of the gospel is preached as constantly as before; while the preacher is no longer troubled with surmises, cross-questionings, and alarms. Every thing is known, and vain terrors have ceased. We still follow our inclination and conviction, in inculcating the precepts of Jesus; but without having it now objected to us, even by members of our own congregations, that we are preaching mere morality.

With an exception or two of this kind, which, at the most, should be termed mere inadvertencies, the Dedication Sermon must be pronounced an excellent performance, admirably adapted to its purpose, and to the occasion, and triumphant in its calm but powerful defence of the liberal principles of Christianity. It must be regarded, too, as one of the chief causes which operated in bringing on the well known Unitarian Controversy, which was soon after conducted with so much spirit and effect in this part of the country.

The sentiments of our liberal clergy had been for a long time understood, though partially, and with a dis-

torted apprehension, by their Orthodox brethren ; who only waited for a favorable opportunity to communicate, in one awful disclosure, their knowledge, their alarms, and their horror, to the people. Such an opportunity was furnished them about this time by the Rev. Mr. Belsham, of London, who, in his *Life of Lindsey*, had devoted a chapter to the history of American Unitarianism. This chapter was re-published in Boston, with a short preface ; and the pamphlet thus formed, was soon after reviewed in an article in the *Panoplist*, which was written in a style of constant high coloring, and contained falsehoods which few would commit themselves by advancing at the present time. Take, for example, the following extract :

“From a great variety of anonymous publications it has been evident, that the defection had proceeded in the downward course to the lowest degrees of Socinianism, and to the borders of open infidelity. Further than this ;—it has not been in a few solitary instances only, that persons, who have been near the centre of all these operations, have heard from the pulpit both sermons and prayers, which neither expressed nor implied any thing more than sober Deism, and which were totally at variance with the gospel.”

It is not, perhaps, easy now to ascertain with exactness, the result which was expected from this explosion. But it is quite probable that the most sanguine among those who had prepared the train and applied the match, hoped that it would tear objects of their attack from the affections and the support of their people. But, if they did look for such an event, they were disappointed. Some excitement and trouble were produced at first, to be sure ; but the atmosphere

soon cleared up, the agitation subsided, and the liberal clergy of Boston continued to preach, and their congregations continued to hear, a gospel of reason, righteousness, purity, hope, promise, and peace.

The reply which was made to the aspersions of the *Panoplist* by the Rev. Dr. Channing, was published in the form of a letter to Mr. Thacher. It was dated June 20th, 1815, and was the commencement of the controversy between Dr. Channing and the Rev. Dr. Worcester, of Salem.

There was one duty remaining, with regard to the explanation of his sentiments, which Mr. Thacher now thought himself required to discharge. In his dedication sermon he had given a general statement only of the principles of liberal Christianity. But soon after the appearance of the review in the *Panoplist*, which I have just noticed, he preached a discourse to his people on the great doctrine of the personal Unity of God. He did not attempt to enter into a full discussion of the subject; as that was not his purpose in presenting it to his hearers. His design was simply to state to them what the doctrine of the Trinity was, and how irreconcilable it appeared, in his mind, to the doctrine, so plainly revealed and so forcibly inculcated in the Scriptures, of the unity of the Divine Nature; how slender, besides, the support was which it derived from the Bible, and how expressly it was contradicted by the instructions, the prayers, and the conduct of our Saviour. We must, not, therefore, read this sermon with the expectation of meeting with elaborate argument, or systematic arrangement; but the animation, the feeling, and the direct scriptural evidence, which are to be found in it, will amply reward a perusal.

It required no little moral courage, at that time, to treat such a subject from the pulpit. The preacher was listened to with eager and intense interest, and his sentiments were almost unanimously approved by the members of his society.

A manuscript copy of this discourse was sent to Liverpool, where it was so much admired that it was printed, though without the knowledge of the author. It was afterwards reprinted here, and is, I believe, the first sermon on the Unity of God, which was ever published in Boston.

This avowal of his opinions did not terminate Mr. Thacher's exertions in the cause of rational Christianity. In the same year he superintended the Boston edition of Yates's *Vindication of Unitarianism*; to which he added several notes, and subjoined an excellent dissertation on the kind and degree of evidence which are necessary to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, and by which we might expect to see it supported in the Scriptures.

But his useful labors were again broken off; and the connection with his people, which was becoming every day more intimate and important, was doomed to be suspended, and after a succession of anxious hopes and fears, at last to be dissolved.

In the autumn of 1815, he was severely visited by a return of hemorrhage from the lungs. He remained in a very feeble state through the winter and spring; and it was then determined by his physicians that he should take a voyage to Europe, as the most likely means of his restoration to health. On this advice being communicated to him, he addressed a letter to the members of his society, dated July 28, 1816, in which



their concurrence in the measure was requested. This was granted by the Society, together with the requisite means of defraying his expenses abroad, with an affectionate readiness, which manifested that any step which might be thought conducive to their pastor's recovery, was precisely the one that they desired to see adopted.

In August, Mr. Thacher once more bade farewell to his home; not, as on the former occasion, for the purpose of watching over the health of a friend, but with the hope of recovering his own. And few have gone down to the sea followed by so many affectionate regrets, and so many fervent prayers.

In September, he arrived in Liverpool, after a pleasant voyage, and with improved health. During his short stay in that city, he was made an inmate in the family of J. R. Freme, Esq. "Of their kindness," he says, "I speak as highly as it is possible to speak, when I say that it resembled that to which I had been accustomed from my friends at home." Mr. Thacher was neither the first nor the last American, who experienced their cordial and heart-touching hospitality.

In his journey from Liverpool to London, he viewed with unabated delight, the surpassing beauties of English scenery; and, after an interval of ten years, was well pleased to recognize its peculiar features, and see "the picture of the mind revived again."

"On my arrival in London," he says in one of his letters, "I immediately applied to a physician; chiefly however, for his advice as to the place in which I shall pass the winter. He very properly requires a longer time before he expresses an opinion of the circumstances of my case, and advises me to pass a week or

two in London and its vicinity, making inquiries as to different spots, which he mentions, without instantly deciding on which to choose. Here, then, I am, in this vast metropolis, with the map of the wide world spread before me, and seeking some spot to which I may direct my solitary steps. Yet I assure you, that though a melancholy feeling will now and then find its way into my heart, I am habitually cheerful; for I regard myself as in the path of my duty."

The physicians whom he consulted in London were Dr. Baillie, Physician to the King, and Dr. Wells. They united in assuring him, that, in their opinion, no disease had fixed itself on his lungs, and that the resources of his constitution were not wasted; but, still, that a powerful tendency to morbid affection existed, which was most effectually to be checked in a climate different from that in which it had originated.

The place which at length was selected for his winter's residence, was not such a one as his inclinations would have chosen; for, though it bore a name of promise, it was far removed, not only from his friends, but from the civilized portions of the world. "I am on the point of embarking," he writes, under the date of October 18th, "for *the Cape of Good Hope*. I am led to this measure, by finding the opinions of the most eminent physicians here coincide with that of Dr. Jackson, and my other medical friends at home. Of course, it would have been more pleasing to me to have been recommended to some spot less distant from you all. But as I came abroad, not for pleasure or curiosity, but in order, by God's blessing, to regain the ability of being useful, I am bound to take that course which shall seem to lead most directly to this

object." "And, after all, he says in a letter to another friend, "a few thousand miles make no great difference, when one is already so far from home. The great effort was to leave you at all. That being done, every thing else is comparatively easy."

The following letter to his elder brother contains an account of his voyage and arrival at the Cape :

"Cape Town, January 2, 1817.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have at length the pleasure of writing to you from the Cape of Good Hope, where we arrived safely two days since. When it came to the point of leaving England, I found it a greater trial of my feelings than I expected. The probability of a long and tedious passage ; my entire ignorance of the persons who were to be my companions ; the possibility of extreme sickness among total strangers ; together with the vague notions of dreariness and barbarism, which were associated in my mind with the idea of Africa ; all these things conspired to give me a momentary depression of spirits, to which I had before been a stranger ; and when I received the last kind pressure of Mr. Williams's hand, on leaving London, I found it hard to command my feelings.

"But every thing has been better, much better than I expected. My fellow passengers were civil to me from the first, and after a little time became particularly friendly and attentive. Our weather, especially on this side the line, was uncommonly good ; and we made the gigantic elevation of the rock which forms Table Mountain, in sixty-five days from the Downs, without a single accident or danger. At the foot of

the precipice which terminates the mountain on the south side, lies the little town from which I write to you. It is in the Dutch taste, very regular, very clean, and its whole aspect comfortable as well as pretty. The inhabitants are celebrated for hospitality; but your friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ross, are more than hospitable. They domesticate me in one of the pleasantest families I have ever met with from home, uniting all that is most agreeable in the English and Dutch characters. They remember Boston with great regard, and are always speaking of your kindness. So you see it is; the same good Providence which has protected me so long and so far, raises for me friends in a corner of the world where I could least expect to find them. My continual prayer is for a grateful and confiding spirit.

“As far as I can judge, the improvement of my health promises to compensate me for the toils of so long a voyage. A shortness of breath which I felt in America, and which followed me to London, disappeared at sea. My cough, if I do not deceive myself, (Dr. Jackson will understand that parenthesis,) is seldom more, and often less, than it was before my last attack. In short, if the climate of this country agree with me as well as it has hitherto, I do not doubt that, with the blessing of God, I may return to you in as good a state of health as I had in 1813 and 14. For myself I ask no more of heaven than to be restored to the ability of once more laboring in that beloved spot where my lot is cast.

“I propose to remove in a few days to Stellenbosch, a village about twenty-five miles distant, which is described as one of the most beautiful residences in the

world. If I am prospered, I shall hope to embark for England in April, and thence to turn my face towards my dear native home."

The reason given by Mr. Thacher in another letter, for not remaining at Cape Town, is, that it is subject to a south-east wind of the most unpleasant kind, which pours over the Table Mountain in hot gusts of such violence, as to fill the streets with dust, and oblige the inhabitants to shut themselves up in their houses. In a few days after his arrival, he removed to the above named village of Stellenbosch, and lived there till his departure for England.

The two following letters which I have been kindly permitted to publish, will be valued not only as lively descriptions of the place of refuge to which he had fled from the pursuit of winter, and of his own situation and employments there, but as pleasing specimens of his style of epistolary writing. The first of these is to his only sister.

"Stellenbosch, Cape of Good Hope, Feb. 10, 1817.

"As I cannot but flatter myself that the most affectionate of sisters sometimes employs herself in thinking of the situation of her exiled brother, I am going to try to give an idea of where he is, what he is doing, how he looks, how he feels, and what are his plans. What would I not give at this moment, for a similar account of yourself and all those dear friends I have left behind me.

"Send then, your imagination across the waters many thousands of miles, to another hemisphere, a different climate, and a far different race of men. You will see, stretching far into the Southern Ocean, the land where

he is; a land, not of any classic or romantic recollections, but always esteemed a land of barbarism and barrenness — the fit habitation of the lion, the serpent, and the tiger, of the sooty Ethiop, the wild Caffre, and the yellow Hottentot. At first view it will seem to you to present nothing but bare and bleak mountains of immense height, and frightful steepness, or else plains of sand to which the eye sees no limit, and which are forever heated by the rays of a blazing sun. But a nearer view will show you that Providence has prepared even here scenes of comfort and peace, and even of beauty and enjoyment. The valleys between the mountains are all fertile. Wherever you find a drop of water, there is verdure.

“ If, therefore, you cast your eye nearly east from Cape Town about twenty-five miles, you will see, at the foot of the first great chain of mountains, a little village of perhaps two hundred white houses, peeping from among the green trees. Here you will find fruits of the most delicious flavor and in the greatest profusion. The air is the driest and purest you can imagine. The valley is surrounded by mountains of the most singular forms, which are so disposed as to furnish you some very romantic and agreeable rides. If you are in search of peace and solitude, there is not a spot on the globe where you will find them in greater perfection. Here it is that you will discover your wandering brother. You will see him moving about in his gray frock-coat, and white underdress, looking very comfortable, it is true, but very little like a minister. His face is beaten and blaekened by long exposure; and an African sun bids fair to throw over it that peculiar tinge of yellow, which you may sometimes have seen

in a mulatto who is not *very* dark. He is not over corpulent, though of quite tolerable dimensions. He lodges in an admirable house, where he has every comfort. As the inhabitants are all Dutch, he has not much society; not knowing a word of their melodious and classical language. He is in a fair way, therefore, to improve his talents for taciturnity. Not, however, that he is destitute of company; for, very happily, the clergyman of the place, and all his family, speak English very well. This divine is a man of great piety and benevolence, of excellent sense, and is truly liberal in all his opinions. He takes great delight in a fine garden, which he cultivates himself with great skill. At the foot of it runs a little river, perfectly clear, and always murmuring over its stony channel. The banks of this stream, are covered with a fine grove of trees, planted by Mr. Borchard's own hand. He has made a little arbor, which is always shady and cool, surrounded by myrtles and wild flowers, and trees overrun with the passion-flower, which here grows with a stem of the thickness of my arm. Here he has placed seats, on which he sits and chats with your brother by the hour; they neither of them being romantic enough to be interrupted by the turtle doves and other birds, which are singing in the branches over their heads. This same good man has several pretty and lively daughters; but it is not to be supposed that they make any part of the attraction which draws so grave a person as your brother so often to the parsonage.

“His mode of passing his time is as regular as it was at home. He gets up pretty early in the morning for a walk before breakfast; then reads a little or writes a little, till eleven or twelve; then pays a visit

to Mr. Borchard's, and gets a walk or ride before dinner. In the afternoon he walks or rides again; and after passing a quiet evening, always at home, goes to bed at ten. He is generally quite cheerful and contented; but it is said that there are some moments when he is thinking of home and the best and most beloved of friends, in which he has a little of that sickness of heart which hope deferred will sometimes give. But this is momentary; for he must be the most ungrateful of men to distrust that good Providence which has so signally protected him, so much improved his health, so smoothed the path of his wanderings, raised him up friends wherever he has been, and crowned him with loving kindness and tender mercy.

"Thus, my dear sister, I have endeavored to give you an idea of where and how I am. It is now nearly six months since I have received a line from home; a long, long interval to one who places so much of his earthly happiness there. I do not attribute this, however, to the negligence of my friends, but to the distance at which I am removed from them. I anticipate with delight the period when this distance will begin to lessen. After the first of April I hope to embark for England, and to be permitted to reach home by the beginning of autumn. With this hope I will solace myself. Adieu. My prayers never cease to ascend for your happiness here and hereafter.

"Your affectionate brother,

"SAMUEL C. THACHER."

The other letter is addressed to a lady of his society. It is written from the same village, and bears the date of the 1st of March.



“I fear I must have seemed very ungrateful to my most constant and excellent friend, in suffering so long an interval to pass without thanking her for her letter. And yet I have been so long accustomed to have the kindest constructions put upon my actions, at your house, that I am not without hope that my silence has been imputed to what is indeed its true cause, my inability to do better. The time I passed in London was full of solicitude and hurry, which scarcely left me leisure for my indispensable duties. On arriving at the Cape, I was immediately obliged to fly from the sirocco winds of the town to this little village, where we hear from the bay only once a week. Opportunities of writing have often occurred and passed without my knowledge; and I now begin this letter without knowing when it will be sent. And if with all these reasons there was mingled something of the self-indulgence of a spoiled valetudinarian, you well know where I learned to claim such privileges; and I also know where there is charity enough to forgive me.

“I wish I could find any thing around me interesting enough to repay you for the pleasure I received from your letter. But the truth is, there is scarcely a spot on the globe more barren, both in a moral and physical view, than all I have yet seen of this part of South Africa. There is nothing classical, no monuments of antiquity, no model of the fine arts, and so little of letters that a book shop is a thing unknown throughout the colony. Man, too, is here found in his most degraded form. Some of my speculations on the dignity of our species, have never received so severe a rebuke as when I look in the face of a Hottentot or a Bosjesman. Not that I do not find means to get over

this difficulty ; for he must be but a poor theorist — I think I hear your father say it — who abandons his fancies for so trifling a cause as *mere* matters of fact.

“ There is nothing interesting here, but the appearances of nature, and these are just what it is impossible to convey any idea of in a letter. Apparently, this is one of the confines of the solid globe ; and the mountains, which are thrown up as bulwarks against the ocean, are immense masses of rock, cast in the most abrupt and rugged forms. There is no such thing in any part of the country that I have seen, as what we should call in New England, a beautiful landscape. You may sometimes find in the valleys a few verdant and fertile spots, which afford a refreshing contrast to the bare summits and sterile sides of the mountains which surround them. A botanist would find a perpetual feast ; but unfortunately, I with my blind eyes am none. I am struck, however, with seeing many shrubs, which at home are raised with difficulty and care, growing here spontaneously in the open air. The habits of these plants are in other respects different from those of the cultivated ones. A geranium, which at home will scarcely bear the touch, I should find it difficult to crush here with a strong blow of my foot ; and the myrtle, so delicate with us, is here growing in lofty hedges so strong as to be impenetrable to cattle. Their flowers however are not nearly so beautiful, nor so fragrant as they are in a state of cultivation ; just as it is with the mind, which shoots more vigorously when left to itself, but loses in delicacy and refinement what it gains in hardihood and force.

“ The Cape is a great resort for invalids from India, many of whom I see, and find several of them very

intelligent and agreeable. I never before was so impressed with the value and magnitude of the British empire there. How much shall I delight to ask your father some questions on this subject ; if the inestimable privilege is accorded me of again making one of your domestic circle. The Count Las Cases, the friend of Bonaparte, is here. His constant theme is his master, whom he represents as the most amiable of men, instead of that monster of cruelty he has commonly been taken for. The Count, you will probably have heard was sent from St. Helena for attempting to send to Europe a letter in cipher. It may be news to you that the British have taken possession of the Island of Tristan d'Acunha, and fortified it, with the avowed purpose of preventing our vessels from using it in another war. So it seems agreed on all hands that we must look forward to future contests."

This letter was the last, I believe, which Mr. Thacher wrote from the Cape. It is stated, in some of his subsequent ones, that his health did not improve so much during the latter part of his residence there, as his feelings at an earlier period had led him to expect ; and this is attributed to his not being permitted by the climate to take that regular exercise, to which he had been accustomed, and which was absolutely necessary to him. He thought on the whole, however, that he left the Cape with amended health.

He set sail for England on the fifth of April. On the eighteenth day of the passage, and in fine weather, the ship suddenly sprung a leak, and took in water so rapidly, that several of the passengers were alarmed, and deserted her at the Island of Ascension. Being assured by the captain that no real danger was to be

apprehended, Mr. Thacher remained on board. The evil did not increase, though some rough weather was afterwards experienced, and he was safely landed at Hastings on the twenty-fifth of June, from which place he went immediately to London.

There is little doubt this voyage was highly injurious to his health. He himself allowed that it deprived him of much of the strength, and more than all the flesh which he had gained from his travels. It was tediously long, and was rendered uncomfortable by the excessive and continued heat, which was the consequence of the vessel's being compelled by the winds to keep near the African coast. The burning rays of an equinoctial sun beat down on the head of the invalid, and "he withered and shrunk," to use the language of an elegant tribute to his memory, "like a frail plant." A few weeks, however, passed in a milder climate, did much to restore and reanimate him.

In London, he again had recourse to medical advice; and the opinions of his physicians opposed the inclination which he now entertained to return home. They thought that after taking, as he had, three summers in succession, the severity of a New England winter would be more than he could bear. In deference to their judgment, he sacrificed his wishes to what appeared to be his duty, and dooming himself to a protracted absence from his country and friends, sought out once more a retreat for the winter.

Toward the end of August he repaired to Paris; and after a residence in that city of a few weeks, proceeded to Moulins, the chief town in the Department of the Allier. This place is near the centre of France, and was chosen by him on account of its great reputa-

tion for mildness and salubrity of climate. His health visibly declined from the period of his arrival in France; and though he himself indulged constant and soothing hopes of recovery and return to America, the friends who had opportunities of seeing him, perceived that in all probability the time of his final rest was at hand. The last letter which he wrote home bears the date of December 17th. On that day he was cheered by a visit from his countryman and friend, Professor Everett, who had come from Paris on purpose to see him. The following extracts of two letters addressed by that gentleman to Judge Thacher, furnish an affecting narrative of the close of Mr. Thacher's life:—

“In a letter which your brother has written you, and which you will probably receive with this, he says every thing to you of his health which I could say. To me, who had not seen him since I left him at home, near three years ago, he of course had the appearance of one reduced by long illness; but those who have seen him longer, and had some opportunity of comparing him at different periods of time, do not, as you are aware, speak discouragingly. Some symptoms, which in their continuance might have been unpleasant, showed themselves, as he writes you, on the journey from Paris, which being seventy-one leagues was of itself rather fatiguing. The fatigue of journeying, and the indifferent quality of the food procured on the road, seemed to have produced a disorder in his digestion, which continued some days after his arrival, not without weakening him considerably. This, however, has ceased, and he is already regaining strength. His appetite is good, and the weather permits him to take daily

exercise in walking abroad. He has now only to wait to see the effect on his illness of the climate of this place. It is certainly a beautiful country. The fields have not yet lost their verdure, and the flowers of the Tulip Tree, gathered from the open air, are to be seen in the flowerpots wherever you go. The Loire, all the way as I came, and the Allier, here at Moulins, that flows into it, instead of being covered with ice, like our rivers in December, is as blue and calm as on a summer's day. The English, that have passed years here, particularly Lord Beverly, who has been here eighteen years, are delighted with the climate; and I am convinced that it is more regular than that of the Mediterranean cities, where, with some warmer days in winter, there is often a vicissitude of trying blasts. Should, however, any circumstance make it desirable to your brother to go further south, he is on the main Lyons road, and can always pursue his journey.

“You can hardly judge of my sorrow at finding he had left Paris but four days before my arrival; though I could not but rejoice that he was getting out of the atmosphere of the Parisian rains, and the noise of that great city. I determined to seize the first moment of visiting him here, and have only to regret that my visit is too short.”

The letter from which the above extract is made, was written at Moulins. That from which the remaining notices are taken, was written at Paris, after Professor Everett had received the intelligence of his friend's death.

“Other letters will perhaps inform you of every interesting circumstance relative to this event; and

from Mr. Thompson's family you will gather in the spring the most particular accounts. Their constant attentions which contributed not a little to render the last days of our dear brother as comfortable as could have been hoped, and far more so than might have been expected in a foreign land, will enable them to satisfy to its extent your curiosity in this respect. But I cannot forbear mentioning to you what I had myself an opportunity of observing, or have learned from his servant.

“The journey to Moulins, as I have already mentioned in my other letter, was very fatiguing, and immediately followed by symptoms both distressing and alarming. This seems to have been the last effort of nature to throw off the disease, and not being successful — as from the character of the complaint, such an effort could not be — an unfavorable turn was to be anticipated. But as the local symptoms yielded, under the treatment of Dr. Bell, as the lost appetite began to return, and as there was the promise of a mild and pleasant winter, instead of apprehending any ultimate bad effect of this attack, it seemed only to have delayed awhile the experiment to be made of the climate. But I do not think that any considerable portion of the strength, lost in this severe attack, was ever recovered; and it seems to have put the delicate springs of life, already so long and greatly strained, to a trial beyond them to sustain. Nevertheless, he continued to go out in pleasant weather, and even declined being attended on his walks. He was able to take his food with appetite, he slept well, and was invariably cheerful and tranquil. His cough, however, appeared to gain, and without being at single efforts very distress-

ing, or attended at all with loss of blood, was by its continuance very exhausting.

“ It was in this condition, after an interval of about seven weeks from his arrival at Moulins, that I saw him. I had been much grieved on my own account, at finding that he had left Paris but four days before I reached it; and I determined to go and see him as soon as I could make the arrangement. On my arriving at Moulins, I met him walking in the street, much altered, indeed, from what I had last seen him at home. The wind was quite violent, and I immediately accompanied him to his lodgings. That was the last time but one that he ever went out. I passed the time I was there entirely with him; and though it fatigued him to talk, he felt interested in hearing me, and I related to him all I could recall of my travels and observations in various countries, which I thought would amuse him. He asked some questions, but upon the whole his attention seemed fixed on higher things.

“ The day that I left him, he felt himself weaker than usual, and desired Captain Burroughs to lend him his arm to walk out. This was the last time he ever went abroad. When I bade him farewell, which I strived to do without betraying the anxiety and sorrow I felt, we exchanged the expectation of meeting in Paris in the spring, and he added that he had now no wish but to return to America. From that day he grew weaker, and I soon received a letter from Mr. Thompson, mentioning that he was visibly failing. The first of January, in the afternoon, he was seized with very violent pains, and was obliged to go to bed. Dr. Bell, on being called, thought it his duty, as he



has himself written to me, to announce to him that he could probably continue but a few hours. 'This intelligence' says Dr. B., 'he received with perfect tranquillity and resignation;' and he proceeded to make some arrangement of his affairs. His pains had yielded to the applications made, and he passed the night better than was feared. Captain Burroughs, and his servant Josef, watched with him. In the morning his pains returned with new violence. This struggle was the last, and like all the rest, was borne with a sweet fortitude, that makes one ashamed of impatience at the little sufferings of life. After this he was at ease, and though he said but little, recognized the persons around him, and discovered himself to be in possession of his reason, as his calmness evinced him to be in the full exercise of his faith. A little after twelve he called for some syrup to moisten his lips. His servant gave it him; he swallowed it without difficulty, rested his cheek upon his hand, and ceased to breathe! — *He died*, said his servant, *like an angel*. — The last mournful offices were performed with every possible mark of respect, and Dr. Bell read prayers over his lifeless remains."

Feelings of peculiar melancholy affect me, when I review the last years of Mr. Thacher's life. Compelled by illness to give up the exercise of a profession to which he had devoted himself from early youth, and for which he was so eminently qualified by his talents and virtues, he takes a reluctant leave of his friends and country, in the hope of regaining, under milder skies, the health which had forsaken him. He crosses the ocean which rolls between the two continents of the world, and finding no place of rest in

Europe, he bends his solitary course from the crowded metropolis of England, to a silent village at the extremity of southern Africa. Here he spends month after month with little society or means of entertainment; hearing but seldom from his friends; snatching the rare opportunity of a pleasant day to wander alone among the desert hills; now visited by a scanty restoration of strength, and now doomed to see it all depart away from him again — “a sunbeam followed by a shade” — but yet with a flattering hope of recovery to support him, and a never shaken trust in God, which without hope would have supported him still. At length his exile terminates, and he again commits himself to the sea. The unrelenting heat of the tropics robs him of nearly all his remaining strength, and hardly has the cool air of a temperate clime restored a portion of his vigor, and he blesses himself with the thought of returning home, when he is obliged to resume his weary pilgrimage, to watch again the fluctuations of his insidious disorder, and again to see his hopes alternately encouraged, checked, deceived, — and at last destroyed.

It is a sad thing to feel that we must die away from our own home. Tell not the invalid who is yearning after his distant country, that the atmosphere around him is soft, that the gales are filled with balm, and the flowers are springing from the green earth; — he knows that the softest air to his heart would be the air which hangs over his native land; that more gratefully than all the gales of the South, would breathe the low whispers of anxious affection; that the very icicles clinging to his own eaves, and the snow beating against his own windows, would be far more pleasant to his

eyes, than the bloom and verdure which only more forcibly remind him, how far he is from that one spot which is dearer to him than the world beside. He may indeed find estimable friends, who will do all in their power to promote his comfort and assuage his pains; but they cannot supply the place of the long known and long loved; they cannot read, as in a book, the mute language of his face; they have not learned to wait upon his habits, and anticipate his wants, and he has not learned to communicate, without hesitation, all his wishes, impressions, and thoughts, to them. He feels that he is a stranger; and a more desolate feeling than that could not visit his soul. How much is expressed by that form of oriental benediction, *May you die among your kindred!*

The piety, which with the subject of this memoir was a habit, sustained him, as we have seen, in the trying circumstances of his last illness. Affectionate and domestic in his disposition, he must have been more than usually sensible to their depressing influence; but he manifested no impatience under the burthen which his Father's hand had laid upon his spirit, because he had long been convinced that all His dispensations were just and merciful, and that it was his duty to suffer with resignation all His will.

Mr. Thacher's piety was indeed the feature of his character, which more conspicuous and perfect than any other, reflected on all the rest its excellence and beauty. It was so connected with his principles, his actions, his conversation and his manners, that it appeared not merely to be united with them, but to control and guide them. It seemed to occupy the place of judgment and will; to rule in his mind, as abso-

lutely as it did in his heart ; and to lead him to those just conclusions both in speculation and conduct, which others attain to by the exercise of what is called good sense and discretion. It seemed also to improve and enlarge his intellectual powers ; to be as it were a distinct and central talent, supplying the rest with light and vigor, and inspiring his thoughts with a strength superior to their natural capacity. In short, it would be impossible to give an idea of his character, without taking into view this ruling principle ; for he was one, whose reference to the will of God, sense of dependence on him, and trust in the promises of the Gospel, were so constant and ardent, that they gave a peculiar complexion of holiness, purity, and sweetness, to all that he said and did. He was one,

“ — in whom persuasion and belief  
Had ripened into faith, and faith become  
A passionate intuition ; whence the soul,  
Though bound to earth by ties of pity and love,  
From all injurious servitude was free.”\*

Further to exhibit the nature of Mr. Thacher's piety, let me make use of an extract from a sketch of his character by the Rev. Dr. Channing, to which I have already referred.† “ It was warm, but not heated ; earnest, but tranquil ; a habit, not an impulse ; the air which he breathed, not a tempestuous wind, giving occasional violence to his emotions. A constant dew seemed to distil on him from heaven, giving freshness to his devout sensibilities ; but it was a gentle influence, seen not in its falling, but in its fruits. His

\* Wordsworth's Excursion.

† Published in the Christian Disciple, Old Series, vol. iv. p. 141.

piety appeared chiefly in gratitude and submission, sentiments peculiarly suited to such a mind as his. He felt strongly, that God had crowned his life with peculiar goodness, and yet, when his blessings were withdrawn, his acquiescence was as deep and sincere as his thankfulness. His devotional exercises in public were particularly striking. He came to the mercy seat as one who was not a stranger there. He seemed to inherit from his venerable father the gift of prayer. His acts of adoration discovered a mind penetrated by the majesty and purity of God; but his sublime conceptions of these attributes were always tempered and softened by a sense of the divine benignity. The *paternal character* of God was not only his belief, but had become a part of his mind. He never forgot that he 'worshipped *the Father*.' His firm conviction of the strict and proper unity of the divine nature taught him to unite and concentrate in his conception of the Father, all that is lovely and attractive, as well as all that is solemn and venerable; and the general effect of his prayers was to diffuse a devout calmness, a filial confidence over the minds of his pious hearers."

He possessed a mind naturally strong, and had cultivated it by a judicious course of study. It was rather discriminating than original in its character; and rather clear and comprehensive than bold. Judgment predominated over fancy and invention; and you would therefore be more likely to see him following the best path of many that were presented to him, than striking out a new one. The success with which he applied his mental powers, may be estimated from the circumstance of his taking the first rank in his class, at the university where he was educated; and

the distinction which he there acquired as a scholar he always maintained.

His opinions were the result of impartial, serious, and mature examination of the best evidence within his reach. They were rational, liberal, charitable. Being deliberately taken up, they were neither rashly avowed, offensively maintained, nor easily resigned. He regarded human authority as the mere dust in the balance, when weighed against truth; and though he feared dissension, he feared God and conscience more. He was moderate in all things, and yet always resolute and decided. There could be no greater error than to suppose, because he was not forward and boisterous in the expression of his sentiments, that he wanted ability to support, or firmness to adhere to them.

His manner of thinking and style of writing, will be judged of from his sermons. He treated a subject as if he had well reflected, before he began to write upon it. He presented those views which he thought the best adapted to secure the attention of his hearers, to enlighten their understandings, and reach their hearts. The topics of his discourses were almost always devotional or practical; and when he did preach on a controverted doctrine, he spoke in a calm and Christian spirit, and preferred giving a lucid and forcible statement of what he held as the truth, to abusing and denouncing what he believed to be error. He was particularly attentive to the proper division of his subject. In looking over his manuscript sermons for the purpose of selection, I do not remember that I met with one, which did not recommend itself by a clear, methodical, and natural arrangement. In this man-

ner he not only led his hearers by easy and sure steps to the proposed end, but imprinted the way on their memory, and enabled them, by the order, and distinctness of his discourse, to carry home something more than a confused idea of what he had been saying. He aimed in all his preaching to convince and persuade, rather than to terrify. If he spoke oftener of heaven than of hell, it was not because he was afraid to pronounce the latter word in "ears polite," but because he conceived that he had better authority from his master to invite men to the abodes of light, wisdom, peace and joy, than to consign them to outer darkness, torture, and misery. He forgot not to warn and rebuke; he hesitated not to declare the certain and awful penalties of sin;

" Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first,  
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,  
And make persuasion do the work of fear."\*

It will be seen that his style is plain, perspicuous, unaffected, copious. His taste avoided all gorgeous and misplaced ornament, and yet could employ with effect the timely and legitimate graces of diction.

Something has already been said with regard to his manner in the pulpit. He labored under a difficulty of utterance, connected no doubt with the weakness of his lungs, which in the latter period of his ministry was painful both to himself and those who heard him. His gestures, and indeed his whole carriage, had a tendency to give strangers the impression that he was affected. But it was an impression which soon wore off; and they who knew him, saw in this peculiarity

\* Paradise Regained.

only an external proof of his earnestness in the sacred cause, and his deep and affectionate solicitude for the spiritual improvement of his people. In other respects his manner was highly impressive and agreeable.

His deportment in private and social life was distinguished for being gentle and engaging, and at the same time dignified. They who were led by his mildness and affability, to think that he might be too nearly and familiarly approached, were sure to be deceived. There was a line drawn about him, imperceptible but impassable, which repelled the intrusions of rudeness or levity. He won without effort the regards of friendship, and made himself the object of respectful attachment, both at home and abroad. His temper was calm and equable; for his heart was the dwelling of piety and peace. In conversation he was instructive, various, fluent; assuming no more than his part, but taking that part with readiness and ease. To his pastoral duties he was unexceptionably attentive; and he seemed willing to sacrifice health, and even life, to their requisitions. This devotedness was repaid by the universal and zealous affection of the people of his charge. There never was a clergyman more sincerely loved, nor more deeply lamented. His loss yet seems recent to those who were accustomed to participate in the benefits of his ministrations; the gloom has not yet passed away from his church; the long day of mourning has not yet gone down; a shade of sorrow still lingers over the places which knew him, because they will know him no more.

His ashes repose in a foreign land. His friends are deprived of the melancholy gratification of paying their frequent visits to his tomb. The peasant of



France passes carelessly by it, and knows not how cherished and excellent he was, whose remains it covers. The weeds may grow round it, and the long grass may wave over it, for there is none to pluck them away. But his memory is sacredly kept in many a heart; and there stands a monument to his name more lasting than marble, in the good which he effected while living, and in the example which he has left behind him.

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EPITAPH ON MR. THACHER,

ENGRAVED ON HIS MONUMENT AT MOULINS.

Memoria sacrum

Reverendi Samuelis Cooper Thacher,

In Novanglia, apud Bostonienses, olim Christi Ecclesiæ Ministri;

Qui Officiis ejus sacris dum sedulo fungeretur,

Quid verum atque honestum Eloquentia et Silentio docuit:

Miti Sapientia, Moribus suavissimis, Caritate erga omnes,

Ingenio disciplinis exulto,

Omni Virtute, quæ Gratiam aut Auctoritatem conciliaret,

Præstans.

Lenta Tabe oppressus, Valetudinis Causa, a Patria discessit:

Ecclesia cujus Minister fuit omne Amoris Officium persolvente:

Sed duos Annos per Mare et Terras jactatus,

In hæc Urbe demum Hospes, Animum Deo placide reddidit;

Longam Memoriam, et grave Desiderium sui,

Apud Bonos relinquens.

Natus Bostoniæ Novanglorum

Decembris Die XIV. A. D. N. MDCCLXXXV.

Obiit Januarii Die II. A. D. N. MDCCCXVIII.

Fratres et Soror ejus mœrentes H. M. P.



MEMOIR  
OF  
ANTHONY FORSTER.



## ANTHONY FORSTER.

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ANTHONY FORSTER was born in the county of Brunswick, North Carolina, January 11, 1785. His father, who was a respectable farmer in that part of the country, died when he was yet a child, and left the guardianship and direction of his youth to the care of a friend. Of his early life little is known. That little, however, is highly honorable to his character in every respect, and clearly evinces that the peculiar traits, which distinguished his mind in maturer years, had begun to develop themselves at that early period. We have the authority of a sensible and judicious man, in whose family he was for some time an inmate in early youth, that he was an extraordinary boy; that he possessed an inquisitiveness of mind, and habits of research and investigation beyond his years. Reasons, as the same person observed, which satisfied other children, were often unsatisfactory to him. Whatever inquiry he commenced, was pursued with unremitting zeal and assiduity, as far as his means of information enabled him. These, however, were but too scanty and limited, at that period, in that part of the country where Providence had assigned him his lot. His early

education was, of course, incomplete. Of that system of steady, vigorous, and efficient scholastic discipline, which the experience of ages has sanctioned as best adapted to mature and harmonize the mental powers, his youth was, in a great measure, destitute. It had been the intention of his father to superintend personally the education of his sons ; but his death early deprived them of this advantage ; and they were sent by their guardian to the University of North Carolina, where they entered the Preparatory School. The subject of this memoir was then twelve years of age. It is not known to the writer how long he remained in this seminary, before he became a member of the College ; nor into what class he entered on his admission ; but the period of his residence in both departments of this institution was five years. Mr. Forster's attainments, when he left the University, were highly respectable. While there, he maintained a distinguished rank in his class — and his deportment was manly and honorable, and secured him the esteem and respect both of his fellow-students and of his instructors.

After leaving college he was induced, by the wishes and advice of his friends, to commence the study of law ; but it was not the study most congenial to his feelings, or his taste, and he seems never to have pursued it with much ardor, or constancy. He was more frequently to be found poring over some old and ponderous volumes of theology, which chance had thrown in his way, than in perusing Blackstone or Coke. His health, too, which seems never to have been robust, became evidently impaired by his too sedentary habits, and it was thought advisable that he should try the

effects of a more active course of life. He yielded to the suggestions of friendship—perhaps to his own sense of duty—and accepted an Ensign's commission in the army of the United States, bearing date March, 1804. He immediately joined a body of troops which was stationed at that time on the western frontiers of Georgia, and while there was promoted to a Lieutenantcy. Here he remained, with the reputation of a brave, correct, and active officer, until October, 1806, when he resigned his commission, and quitted the service. This step, which would seem to have been hastened, at least, by his dissatisfaction with some measures of his commanding officer, left him without employment, far from his friends, and in a great measure destitute of resources. In these circumstances, his mind seems to have been for a period unsettled, and indeterminate with regard to the course he should pursue in life. He was for some time employed in the United States' Factory established at the fort where he had been stationed; and then returned again to his legal studies, in the office and under the direction of a practitioner at the bar at Milledgeville, in Georgia. In these different occupations he passed the greater part of two years. About the close of this period he was attacked with a violent pain in the head; and, as several persons in the vicinity had been recently carried off by inflammation of the brain, he was induced to call in the aid of a physician, who bled him so profusely that a nervous fever was the consequence, which reduced him to the very brink of the grave. At this critical and distressing period, the hand of sympathy and kindness was extended for his relief. A family; then residing in Milledgeville, removed him to their

house, and, although strangers to him, evinced, by their undeviating attention during his illness, the warmest interest in his favor: of which he ever retained a deep sense of gratitude. During three weeks the time passed to him unconsciously. At one time he lay for half an hour to all appearance dead. Those about him thought that he had actually expired, and were proceeding to prepare for him the habiliments of the grave; when their arrangements were interrupted by signs of returning life. At this time, he was in full possession of his mental powers, and distinctly perceived what was going forward around him. But the corporeal functions were entirely suspended; he had no power to utter a sound, or move a limb; and fully expected to be committed living to the earth.

From the effects of this fever he never entirely recovered. He himself always considered it as the origin of that disease which finally terminated his existence. He soon regained, however, sufficient strength to be able to set out on a visit to his friends in North Carolina, intending to proceed thence to Ballstown Springs. On his way, he stopped in King and Queen county, Virginia, to visit a friend of his father, at whose house he experienced an attack of rheumatism so violent as to confine him for some time to his room.

When he had sufficiently recovered to be able to resume his travels, the season was so far advanced that he judged it unadvisable to pursue his original plan, and returned to North Carolina. Some time after his return, his friend and former guardian, General B. Smith, who had been recently elected chief magistrate of that State, gave him an invitation to accept the office of his private secretary. He complied with



this proposal, and soon after removed to Raleigh, and entered on the duties of his office. This was in December, 1810. But he did not continue long in this situation. His mind had of late been more particularly directed to the contemplation of religious subjects — his religious views and feelings had become more distinct and decided; and he had definitively resolved to dedicate his talents and exertions to the immediate service of the Gospel. With the permission of his friend and benefactor, he therefore resigned his appointment, and accepted the office of Assistant Teacher in the Raleigh Academy, pursuing, at his leisure hours, the study of Theology, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. M'Pheeters, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Raleigh, and Principal of the Academy.

He was licensed as a preacher by the Orange Presbytery, in Raleigh, early in 1813; and till November, of the same year, officiated as a voluntary missionary, that is, without receiving any compensation for his services, in various parts of South Carolina and Georgia. About the close of this year, Mr. Forster was invited by the Independent Church at Wappetaw in South Carolina, to settle with them as their pastor. With the state of things in this parish, Mr. Forster was, in a great measure, unacquainted; but by the representations made to him, he was induced to accept the invitation; and, accordingly, removed from Raleigh, with his wife, to whom he had been recently married, early in January, 1814,\* in order to enter on the duties of his sacred charge. On arriving at the con-

\* Mr. Forster was married in December, 1813, to Miss Altona H. Gales, daughter of Mr. Joseph Gales, of Raleigh, North Carolina. His widow and two children, a son and a daughter, survive him.

templated scene of his future labors, he found that the representations which had been made to him, were essentially erroneous, and that the prospects which he had been led to anticipate, were, in a great measure, illusory. So very different did he discover the reality to be from the expectations he had formed, that he felt himself constrained to signify to his parishioners, that he wished to recall his acceptance of their invitation; offering, at the same time, to preach for them during the winter. To this they assented; and he continued to labor among them till June; at which time they formally repeated their invitation to a permanent settlement. Grateful as must have been this token of their affection and esteem, he felt it his duty to decline its acceptance.

During the summer of 1814, he preached in the First Presbyterian Church in Charleston, the pastor of which being at that time absent on a tour to the Northern States. Among this people his services were eminently acceptable. Those who had an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with him, became strongly attached to him, and continued to be among his warmest, and most steadfast friends, in every variety of his fortune, until his death.

After the expiration of his engagement in this church, he was invited to preach at the Independent Church, on John's Island. Here he remained during the greater part of the winter; and early in the spring of 1815, he was elected as temporary pastor in the Independent Church\* in Charleston, in the room of

\* This Church, though incorporated as one body, consisted of two branches, meeting in two distinct places of worship, and served by two associate, or colleague pastors, who officiated in the respective churches alternately, morning and evening.

the Rev. Dr. Hollinshead, senior pastor of that church, who was, at that time, disabled from his labors, and whose age and infirmities forbade the expectation that he would ever be able to resume them. This seemed, therefore, to be the place designated by Providence as the scene of his permanent labors in the vineyard of the Lord; and he entered upon it with a devotion of mind and singleness of heart which ever formed prominent traits in his character. Though chosen as a temporary supply merely, he was vested with all the rights and privileges of a stated pastor, and authorized to perform all the duties and services incident to this office.

In the autumn of this year, he experienced an alarming hemorrhage of the lungs. This discharge of blood was so profuse as to threaten immediate dissolution; and, for several days, his life was despaired of. He, however, experienced no recurrence of the attack; and, after a few weeks, slowly and gradually recovered, in appearance, his wonted health. He did not, however, resume his ministerial duties till sometime in the spring of 1816—and even then, his return to them was probably injudicious. For, though his health was not visibly worse than it had been previously to his attack, yet, in point of fact, his constitution had sustained a shock from which it could never recover,—the fatal arrow was lodged in his vitals, and its effects, though slow, and insidious, were inevitable.

At the close of this year, the death of the Rev. Dr. Hollinshead gave occasion to a series of measures which led to the separation of the Associated Churches, and the settlement of Mr. Forster over that branch which took the name of the *Second Independent Church*.

In order to the better understanding of the transactions about to be related, it may be proper to take a brief view of the progress and state of Mr. Forster's religious opinions, and of his general views with regard to ecclesiastical government and discipline.

Mr. Forster was educated a Calvinist, and in a community where any mode of faith materially differing from the formulas of the Genevan Reformer, was almost unknown; and, where faith, to be valuable, must have been implicit. In this situation, the leading doctrines of this system were adopted by him, as they doubtless are by most others under similar circumstances, as articles to be believed, not as principles to be discussed and investigated. It is certainly no matter of wonder that men, even of powerful and independent minds, who have been taught from the first dawning of reason to associate all personal piety with a particular form of doctrine, should come, at length, habitually to consider them as actually inseparable, and thus to contemplate this form of doctrine as equally unquestionable with the reality of religious feelings and principles themselves. That such is the view taken of this particular system, by very many of those who adopt it, admits of no question. And such seems to have been the light in which the subject was viewed by Mr. Forster, previously to his entering on the ministry, and for some time afterwards.

To examine with a fearless love of truth the foundation of those dogmas for which their votaries claim the exclusive title of Orthodoxy, made no part of the estimate he had formed of his official duty. How should it? He had grown up in the habit of considering them as first principles,—as axioms in the science

of Religion, — beyond which inquiry were useless, at least, if not pernicious. On these doctrines, he had never, according to his own statement, entertained any doubts until long after he became a Preacher.

What first awakened his attention to these topics, and induced him to enter seriously into an examination of them, was the anxiety which he felt in behalf of an intimate friend, who was a professed Unitarian. His acquaintance with this person had commenced when he was a student in Theology; and they had held occasional conversations on the subject of religion; but never, as it would seem, entered very fully, or minutely, into the discussion of these disputed topics. Mr. Forster, of course, regarded his friend's opinions as essentially and fatally erroneous. Still, he entertained a high respect for his general character, and felt a warm interest in his welfare.

After his settlement in Charleston, he determined to communicate to this friend, in writing, what he intended should be a full refutation of his errors. To enable himself the more effectually to accomplish this, he determined to consult some of the principal Unitarian writers, in order to ascertain what were the objections which it would be necessary to obviate, and the arguments which it would be incumbent on him to refute; nothing doubting of his competency to perform both the one and the other. But he had not proceeded far in this course, ere he felt his confidence shaken, and his apprehensions seriously alarmed.

What first excited his surprise, as he often remarked to the writer of this memoir, and created some degree of doubt in his mind as to the correctness of his former impressions, in their fullest extent, at least, was the

evident candor, love of truth, and singleness of heart, which characterized these writers. He had been accustomed to consider them as emissaries of satan, — foes to truth, — at once the votaries and the victims of fatal delusion ; idolatrons of their own powers, and of undevout and unsubdued spirits. But he found in their writings, as he acknowledged, no traces of this character. These exhibited no evidences of perverted intellect or depraved affections ; but very many of an opposite kind. He found, too, as he proceeded, that they had much more to offer in behalf of their peculiar opinions, and this far more plausible, too, than he had previously imagined. He was not long in coming to the conclusion that men of upright minds might differ *very materially* in their *views* of religious truth ; and, that pious affections might consist with the disbelief even of those doctrines which he had been in the habit of regarding as essential to the christian character. His first lesson, therefore, was a lesson of charity ; and it produced a deep and lasting impression on his mind. Its influence was visible during the whole of his remaining life. He was accustomed often to look back with unmingled disapprobation on what had once been the state of his feelings on this subject, and with devout gratitude to God, who had dispelled the cloud of bigotry and prejudice by which he had been enveloped.

But he had not arrived at this conclusion without many painful struggles, and many misgivings of mind. To admit that those views of religious truth with which he had identified his pious affections and devout aspirations, and to which he had attached his faith and his hopes, were other than essential ; that they were questionable, and might be found erroneous, was attended

with extreme uneasiness. He felt, to use his own expression, as if the ground were sinking beneath his feet; his faith and confidence were shaken, and he knew not when, or where they might again settle, on a firm and secure footing. Such were his feelings under the first influence of the new light which was let in upon his mind, that, at times, during the whole night, his eyes were unvisited by sleep. He had every inducement which worldly prudence could suggest, to desist from the inquiry, and quench the light which was kindling within him. A change of opinions on these topics, he was well aware, would probably be followed by loss of employment in his profession, by the alienation of his friends; by misrepresentation, reproach, and calumny; by persecution, in short, in every variety of shape which bigotry, since deprived of the power of the sword, so well knows how to assume. But his mind was not of a character to yield to the influence of such considerations as these. However painful the process, he felt himself compelled to go forward. He regarded the questions as of vast importance, and determined to give them a thorough and *impartial* examination.

Justly considering the doctrine of the Trinity as the key-stone of the popular system, he began with this. His recourse was, as it ought to be, to the Scriptures, which he read carefully and critically; availing himself, as occasion required, of such collateral assistance as his situation enabled him to procure. He proceeded with great deliberation, and with the sober and conscientious earnestness of a man who feels that more than life is staked on the result of his investigations. He certainly did not lightly abandon the system to

which his early prejudices, and powerful associations had bound him. He relinquished not a foot of ground till he felt that it was untenable. His investigation was long and laborious ; but the final result of it was a full and entire conviction that the doctrine of the Trinity was not a doctrine of the Scriptures. This conviction became continually stronger and deeper the further his inquiries were extended, and the more minutely they were pursued. A full persuasion of the strict and unqualified unity of God, of the essential benignity of his character ; of his paternal and *impartial* benevolence towards all his rational offspring — of the efficacy of sincere repentance to restore the sinner to his favor — of the absolute *freeness* of his unpurchased compassion toward erring man, and of the certainty of a future, just, and impartial retribution ; these were the important conclusions to which Mr. Forster's inquiries conducted him. These he believed to comprise the substance of that Revelation which God had made to man by his beloved Son. To that Son he looked up with love, and gratitude, and veneration ; but his *worship* he reserved for his Father and our Father, for his God and our God ; in obedience to the direction of Jesus himself : “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and *him only* shalt thou serve ; and believing with St. Paul, that, “there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.” On the foundation of this faith he was content to rest his hopes for eternity : and it was a foundation, which the experience of his subsequent life, often amidst circumstances trying and afflictive in no ordinary degree, proved to be firm and unshaking.

This imperfect sketch of the history of our author's



mind during the progress of this important change in his opinions, it is believed, may not be altogether uninteresting or useless to others in similar circumstances. Few men have been possessed of more vigorous, more upright, or more independent minds than Mr. Forster. Yet the prejudices of education, and the prevalent mistakes industriously propagated by the bigots and religionists of the day, regarding the character and tendency of Unitarianism, effectually deterred him from the examination of a system, the evidences of the truth of which he afterwards found, when circumstances awakened his attention to the subject, so clear, so convincing, so irresistible.

Can there be any doubt that others have been, and are, deterred from the same examination by the same causes? Can there be any doubt that, if this inquiry were commenced and pursued by others in the same spirit as it was by Mr. Forster, it would lead them too to the same conclusions? Can the Trinitarian be found, who has thoroughly examined the arguments on both sides of the question with an honest determination to follow the dictates of his *understanding alone*, uninfluenced by every consideration but the love of truth? Such persons there certainly *may* be: the writer would fain hope there are many,—he can only aver that, hitherto, he has never *met with one*. Generally speaking, persons of this persuasion have distinctly avowed, that they considered such inquiries attended with a hazard which they had no disposition to incur. Under these circumstances, assuredly, whatever it might do in others, the general prevalence of the opinions alluded to affords not even a presumption in favor of their truth.

It has been already mentioned that Mr. Forster, at his entrance on the ministry, had united himself with the Presbyterian Church. It is obvious that the change in his religious views, which has been described, could hardly have taken place without affecting his notions of ecclesiastical discipline. The claims of this body to regulate the faith and prescribe the opinions of its members, must, to his awakened attention, have appeared altogether untenable. Accordingly, almost at the outset of his inquiries on these subjects, he came to the determination of withdrawing from the Harmony Presbytery, of which he was a member.

In his letter to the moderator of this body, announcing this determination, and which is dated April, 29, 1816, he states very concisely, but forcibly, the grounds of his secession; the principal of which were, "the inconsistency of this system of Church government with our civil institutions, — with our habits, and our mode of thinking on other topics; its establishment of a tribunal, by whose decisions the exercise of private judgment is fettered, and, by which a difference of opinion might be treated as involving as much of crime as a violation of moral duty.

It was no part of his object, on this occasion, to impugn the system; but merely to point out to his former associates the principles on which he acted. But in his pulpit performances, about this period, he frequently enforced the importance of these principles, and showed how void of foundation, either in reason or scripture, were the claims of authority over the consciences of men urged by their votaries in behalf of all creeds and formulas of doctrine whatever, expressed in other language than that of scripture. Deeply convinced him-

self of the importance of drawing his religious opinions from the scriptures themselves, unbiased by early prepossessions, uninfluenced by the authority of names, by the array of numbers, or by any extraneous considerations whatever; he often and earnestly urged this subject on the attention of his hearers. Aware of the efficacy of these causes in beclouding the mind, and shutting out the light of Heaven from the conscience, he expatiated on the necessity of guarding with vigilance against their admission. He often and eloquently portrayed the pernicious consequences to the church, and to the cause of truth, which had resulted from the relinquishment by the great body of Christians, in every age, of any effective exercise of the right of private judgment. The frequent introduction of these topics into his discourses, gave a tone and character to his preaching too remarkable to pass unobserved by the great body of his hearers. It did, in fact, awaken no little attention, and excite no small portion of speculation, on those subjects. Some few persons of that class, which exists, probably, in almost every religious society, whose business it is to watch over the faith and practice of their neighbors, began as early as the summer of this year to breathe suspicions with regard to the *entire* soundness of the preacher's creed. They intimated, that, in their opinions, the peculiar doctrines of the Calvinistic school were not so often or so earnestly inculcated as it was desirable they should be. The truth is, that while his mind remained *unsettled* on these points, Mr. Forster avoided the introduction of them into his discourses. He neither attacked nor defended them; he neither illustrated nor alluded to them; simply, because he

was in doubt regarding them, and was anxiously engaged in examining their claims to scripture authority. His heresy, therefore, if heresy it were, was, as yet, merely negative. He by no means thought it the duty of a minister of the Gospel to perplex, and perhaps mislead, his people, by making them acquainted, on the instant, with every fluctuation of opinion, which, in the course of his studies, his own mind might experience. He thought that he more adequately accomplished the purposes of his high vocation by enforcing the great practical truths of the Gospel, and exhorting his hearers, with regard to all points of doubtful speculation, to make use of their own powers, and to consult the records of truth for themselves. Indeed, from the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, to have pursued any other course would have been a dereliction at once of prudence and of duty. He had entered on the ministry with no misgivings of mind, with no wavering convictions. His religious opinions were settled, as he believed, on a secure foundation. Subsequent and unforeseen events had given birth to new trains of thought, and opened to his mind new views of truth. With regard to some points, his opinions had, perhaps, at this time, undergone a change; with regard to others, he was still inquiring, and the balance still hung in doubtful poise.

In this state of mind, had he not already been engaged in the ministry, he might probably have deferred, for a time, his entrance into it. But now, the case was far different: the question presented for his decision was, what course he ought to pursue in a situation in which Providence had placed him, and from which, had he been so disposed, he could hardly have felt

himself at liberty to retire. For, notwithstanding the apprehensions awakened in the minds of some by the tenor of his discourses, the great majority of his hearers were not only warmly attached to him as a man, and as a pastor, but perfectly satisfied on the score of his religious opinions. Many, — and it ought to be mentioned to the credit of their liberality — even of those who still retained their attachment to that system of doctrines, with regard to which the foundations of his faith were shaken, were nevertheless disposed to allow him the right of speculating for himself, and to admit, that, though his views should differ from their own, on some points, they might still be profited and edified by his ministrations.

Such was the state of affairs in the Society with which he was connected, and such the state of his own views of truth, and convictions of duty, when, in consequence of the death of Dr. Hollinshead, as mentioned above, the Society proceeded to take measures for the permanent settlement of a successor.

It ought to be premised, that, according to the constitution of the Society, every pastor was required, *on his election*, to subscribe to the creed and articles of the Church, in extenso; which creed was avowedly grounded on the Confession and Catechism of the Westminster Divines. It is necessary further to premise, that this Church, in common with most others of the class denominated Independents, in the United States, presents, in its organization, the strange anomaly in ecclesiastical affairs, of a sort of imperium in imperio, — a kind of inner and outer court, like the Jewish sanctuary, — the former comprising those only who are in the habit of participating in the celebration

of the Lord's Supper ; and the latter, those who are not. These distinct, yet united bodies, are usually designated by the terms *Church* and *Congregation*. What was the origin of this distinction, or what have been its consequences to the interests of practical Godliness, this is not the place to inquire. But by the constitution of this Society, the whole body of voters could not proceed to the election of a pastor, until the *Church* had first determined that it was expedient so to do.

To return to the narrative. At the time when the first meeting of the Society was ordered to be convoked for the purpose mentioned above, the feelings and wishes of the Congregation seemed so distinctly to point to Mr. Forster, as the successor of their late pastor, that hardly a doubt is believed to have existed, that he would be elected by a large majority. Indeed, his friends were ready to consider his election rather as a process pro forma, than as any thing involving a doubtful result. But after the meeting had assembled, and the Congregation, in consistency with their forms of proceeding, had retired, in order to afford opportunity for the *Church* to consult on the propriety of proceeding to an immediate election, certain individuals of this body announced that they had held a private conversation with Mr. Forster on the subject, and that he had failed to give them satisfaction with regard to the soundness of his faith. This information brought their deliberations to a close : it was resolved that it was inexpedient to proceed at present to an election ; and, after appointing a committee, composed of the Deacons of the Church, to confer with Mr. Forster, and to ascertain whether, in the event of his election,

he would subscribe their Creed and Articles, the meeting was dissolved.

Shortly after, the committee, in execution of the trust committed to them, addressed a note to Mr. F. covering the resolution by which they had been appointed, announcing the object of this appointment, and requesting a speedy answer to the question proposed. This question Mr. Forster regarded as prematurely put, to say the least, even on the principles of their own constitution. This provided that the pastor should be required to subscribe their Creed and Articles, *on his election*. Mr. Forster was not yet elected. He conceived, therefore, that they could have no right thus *officially* and *publicly* to require of him to bind himself by any engagement which was to be followed by no corresponding obligation on their part. For, though it seemed plainly implied in this question, that, in case he should decline the proposed test, he would not be elected; it by no means followed, that they were bound to elect him in the event of his compliance. It was impossible, therefore, not to perceive that this proceeding of the committee involved, in fact, something of indecorum. It was obvious to reply, that he had not solicited any favor at their hands, that they were at liberty to elect him, or not, according to their own judgment or inclination; and that if they entertained any apprehensions with regard to his opinions, it depended on themselves to quiet these apprehensions by declining to choose him as their pastor. That, in short, it would be time enough to call on him for subscription when they should have put themselves in a situation to require it. Mr. Forster felt the force of these considerations; but circumstances induced

him, in a measure to waive them, and to enter, in his final answer to the note of the committee, somewhat at large into the question respecting the *right* and *expediency* of subscribing, or requiring others to subscribe, to human creeds and articles; in order to point out the grounds of his declining, to use his own language, "to accept of any pastoral charge, but such as should be offered him on the principles of the Gospel."

This answer to the committee was soon after published, and shows that he had maturely considered and fully appreciated those great principles of religious liberty and the rights of conscience, which constitute the foundation of the Protestant churches, great as has generally been the inconsistency, in this respect, between the theory and the practice of these churches.

The tenor of this publication was such as could not fail to produce a crisis in the affairs of the Church. It soon became evident that, either Mr. Forster, or the rule of the Society mentioned above, must be abandoned. The friends of Mr. Forster felt no hesitation on this point. Most of them were, on principle, averse both to the letter and spirit of this article. They regarded it as inconsistent with freedom of inquiry, and, of course, inimical to the cause of truth and righteousness. They were aware, however, that many of the Society entertained very different views on this subject, and views which they would not be likely to change; while, on their part, they were determined not to relinquish the advantages of Mr. Forster's ministry. They, therefore, called a meeting of the Society, and laid before them a plan, according to which, as they believed, without a formal division



of the Churches, the objects of both parties might be substantially obtained.

This plan proposed, in substance, so to amend the rules of the Society as that the Circular and Archdale Street Churches, — these being the names by which the two houses for public worship were designated, — might have each its stated pastor ; by which means every member would have it in his power regularly to attend the ministry of his choice ; while, with regard to all other matters, the two congregations might still continue to act as one body.

This proposition was rejected. Much time was consumed in unprofitable discussion. The patience of many of Mr. Forster's friends had become exhausted ; and, not being aware of any decisive measures about to be proposed by the other side, they withdrew from the meeting. Then it was that a resolution, dissolving at once the relation between Mr. Forster and the Church, was proposed, and, by a small majority, adopted.

This resolution having thus closed the Churches against Mr. Forster's admission, a meeting of his friends was immediately called to determine what course of conduct they ought, in this emergency, to pursue. At this meeting resolutions were unanimously adopted, expressive of entire approbation of the conduct of Mr. Forster through the whole of the late transactions ; pledging themselves to cherish and support him, and to take all proper measures to procure a place of public worship in which he might exercise the duties of his ministry. Convinced, as the friends of Mr. Forster were of their actual majority, it was by no means their intention to relinquish, with-

out a further struggle, their right to the churches, and to the other property and privileges of the corporation. But, until measures could be taken to render this struggle effectual, it was necessary to obtain a place of worship for their temporary accommodation ; and the South Carolina Society, with characteristic liberality, granted them the gratuitous use of their public hall for this purpose. Here Mr. Forster continued to preach to crowded auditories till the final and decisive meeting of the Society.

At this meeting, where the full strength of the respective parties was arrayed, a motion was made to rescind the resolution of the former meeting, by which Mr. Forster had been dismissed. This produced a long, and, in some degree, intemperate debate ; when the opponents of Mr. Forster, finding themselves outnumbered, had recourse to a measure substantially the same as that which his friends had formerly proposed. A motion was made, on this side of the house, that a mutual committee should be appointed to prepare and report a plan for the separation of the associated churches. The motion prevailed ; a committee was appointed accordingly ; articles of separation were agreed on, and reported to the Society, by which they were unanimously accepted.

As soon as this separation had taken place, the friends of Mr. Forster, to whom the Church in Archdale Street had been assigned, took measures for their regular organization as a religious society, under the name of the *Second Independent Church of Charleston*. Discarding the use of all formulas and systems of man's invention, they declared the Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone, to be the rule of their faith and prac-

tice ; leaving every individual to the free and uncontrolled exercise of his own judgment and conscience in the interpretation of the sacred volume.

As soon as their organization was completed, Mr. Forster was unanimously elected to the office of their pastor.

During the whole of these transactions, while no little warmth and intemperance were manifested on both sides, Mr. Forster maintained a calmness, self-possession, and equanimity, truly Christian. He was never, the writer believes, betrayed into bitterness of feeling, or intemperance of expression. Of his opponents in general, though he could not but condemn some parts of their conduct, yet, with regard to their motives, he uniformly expressed himself with the most liberal indulgence. While many of those, with whom he had long lived in habits of kindly intercourse, studiously avoided him, or passed him by with no tokens of recognition, he pursued unruffled the even tenor of his way, supported by conscious integrity, and willing at all times to suffer, in what he believed to be the cause of truth.

On entering upon the discharge of his pastoral office, he unfolded, in an occasional discourse, his views of Church government, and of the inherent right and paramount duty of all men to interpret for themselves the records of our faith, with great force and eloquence. It is regretted that this discourse was not left in a condition to appear in print.

Soon after this, the fever, that so fatally ravaged the city of Charleston in the summer and autumn of 1817, made its appearance. Mr. Forster's people, anxious for his safety, he being in some measure a

stranger to the climate, advised his immediate departure from the city. He complied with their wishes; and took passage in a vessel bound to Philadelphia. The passage proved a tedious and most unpleasant one. One of the passengers died on the way, and was committed to the waves. Some of the others were riotous in their conduct, and brutal in their manners. His habit was feeble and nervous; and, in addition, he suffered much from sea-sickness. By the operation of all these untoward circumstances, he was so reduced when they arrived at quarantine ground, where the vessel was obliged to stop, that he was barely able to get on shore.

Sick and debilitated as he was, he had now the prospect of remaining some weeks at a noisy and miserable inn, surrounded by strangers, and destitute of the comforts which the state of his health imperiously required. But Providence did not desert him. Some benevolent individuals of the city of Philadelphia, to whom he was an entire stranger, hearing of his situation, immediately interested themselves in his behalf; and, by application to the proper officers, soon obtained permission for his removal from quarantine. To announce this message of kindness, they waited on him in person, and introduced themselves to his acquaintance. He accompanied them to the city, and became domesticated in the family of one of them, where he was cherished and attended with all the kindness which could have been bestowed on a brother or a son. He gradually recovered the usual tone of his health; but, by the time he was able to travel, the season was too far advanced to admit of his prolonging his tour. He therefore returned by land to

Charleston, where he arrived and resumed the duties of his sacred office early in December. During the greater part of the winter he was able to preach without interruption; but, on the approach of warm weather, his strength began visibly to decline. As the Spring advanced, the debility increased, and the other symptoms of his disease became more alarming. He was obliged to desist from his labors; and his strength continuing still to fail, he set out early in May, 1818, on a tour to the northward. He travelled the greater part of the summer; and with so much apparent benefit, that, at one time, he considered his health as entirely re-established. He returned near the close of the year, and entered with fresh ardor, and new-ekindled hopes, on the labors to which his heart and his life were devoted. To the watchful eye of friendship, however, it soon became but too obvious that these hopes were illusive. The flattering symptoms which had raised them, disappeared, one after another, in quick succession. His cough returned with more violence, his strength wasted daily, and he soon became reduced to such a degree as made it evident to all that his pastoral labors were rapidly drawing to a close. On the 7th March, 1819, he preached for the last time. It was the day fixed by the Church for the monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper. This Discourse was on the Resurrection of Jesus. The text, Luke xxiv. 34. "The Lord is risen indeed." Few, who were present on this occasion, can soon lose the deep and pathetic impression of the scene. The interesting nature of the celebration, the eloquence of the discourse, and the coloring evidently thrown over some of the topics by the peculiar situation and feel-

ings of the speaker, — his figure pale and emaciated, and so feeble that he could with difficulty sustain himself during the service, — all these circumstances, combined with the melancholy and irresistible conviction that he was listening for the last time, in that place, to the sound of that voice, rendered this one of the most touching scenes which the writer has ever witnessed. From this time he was only able to ride out occasionally, in the middle of the day. He remained with his people until May, when he was induced, by the persuasion of his friends, once more to try the effects of a change of climate; and set out with his family for Raleigh. He arrived there after much fatigue, and with great difficulty; and there, after nine months of almost insensible decline, he expired, without a struggle or a groan, on the morning of January 18, 1820.

The general features of Mr. Forster's character, if the writer has been in any good degree successful in his attempt, will have been gathered from the preceding narrative. Such a character stands in no need of eulogy from us. His pure and elevated spirit would have shrunk instinctively from it, while on earth; and he is now far beyond the reach of either the praise or the censure of mortals. His record is on high. But to us it may be useful to recall and to embody, while their impression is fresh upon our minds, some of the most striking traits in his interesting character. To dwell on the memory of such a man, not only affords a melancholy delight; it is greatly profitable to our virtue. It comes over us with a freshness and a fragrance that are not only grateful but invigorating to our spirits. We naturally consider him as one more added

to that "cloud of witnesses," the idea of whose presence must quicken and stimulate our exertions in the Christian course. The recollection of the great and good, who have gone before us, to their reward, naturally connects itself with all that is high and holy in our feelings and aspirations; it strengthens all our good and generous purposes; it serves to break the illusion which is so apt to gather round present scenes and objects, and which enables them to get so firm a hold on our affections; it accustoms us to embrace with the eye of faith and hope, the prospect of our whole being.

Mr. Forster's was certainly a mind of no ordinary cast. He was endowed by nature with great boldness, decision, and independence of character. His perceptive powers were unusually quick, clear, and strong; and his purposes equally simple and direct. To all the arts of simulation and dissimulation, he was an utter stranger. Like Nathaniel, he was "an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile." His native uprightness and independence of mind, led him to examine every thing for himself. He took his impressions of truth and duty from no man upon trust. He acted under an habitual and deep sense of his own personal responsibility for his opinions and his conduct; and every thing was with him subjected to the test of rigid and unbending principle. Yet was there nothing of obstinacy, of dogmatism, or self-sufficiency in his temper. No man listened with more patience or docility to argument, from whatever quarter; no man could be more free from the folly of a pertinacious adherence to his own opinions, merely because *they were his own*. Of him, if of any man that ever

lived, it might be safely affirmed, that he was a sincere lover of truth ; and to the pursuit of this he devoted himself with an ardor of mind, and singleness of heart, which have been seldom surpassed. Of the right of private judgment, and free inquiry in matters of faith, he was a firm and resolute asserter. He considered this the fundamental and primary article in that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free ; and no earthly considerations could induce him to abandon the right, or forego its exercise for a moment.

But perhaps the most prominent feature in his mind was his strong and discriminating good sense. This was apparent in every thing that he did, and in every thing that he said, and stamped a strong and distinctive character of fitness and decorum on all his transactions. His insight into the characters of others was remarkably keen and unerring ; his judgment was rarely imposed on by hollow pretensions and specious professions.

As a minister of the gospel, his qualifications were of a high order. While his talents and virtues commanded the respect of his people, his manners irresistibly attached to him their affections. Few men have been more ardently beloved while living, or lamented, when dead, with more heart-felt sorrow.

His moral feelings were pure, elevated, discriminating, delicate, consistent ; his piety was rational, deep, heart-felt, operative ; it moulded his whole character, and gave the tone and tenor to the whole course of his life and conversation. His views of the divine character and government were liberal, consoling, and delightful. He regarded the Deity, as the Father of the Universe, with sentiments of the deepest reverence



and humility, — yet joyous, confiding, filial. His trust in the providence of God was a practical and operative principle, a well-spring of hope, and peace, and joy, which never failed him even in the darkest scenes of his life. During the weariness, and wasting, and exhaustion of his long-protracted illness, he manifested no symptoms of impatience. A tranquil resignation and unruffled serenity of spirit, shed around his dying couch the light of his holy example, and displayed the triumph of the Christian's faith.

In the walks of domestic and social life, Mr. Forster shone præëminent. As a husband, father, and brother, he was generous, kind, and affectionate; as a friend, warm-hearted, faithful, and sincere. He seemed peculiarly formed to enjoy, and to give value to, the intercourse of the friendly circle. He possessed a candor of spirit, an openness, simplicity, and directness of mind and feeling, — an entire freedom from all selfishness and obliquity of purpose, that were irresistibly attractive.

But it is time to check the effusion of feelings which those who were unacquainted with Mr. Forster may perhaps think have been already too far indulged. On the other hand, those who knew him intimately, will feel, with the writer, how imperfect is the sketch he has attempted to draw. When we reflect on the premature death of such men, it is difficult to repress a feeling of regret and disappointment, that rises almost to dissatisfaction with the dispensations of Providence. We are ready to inquire, with a repining querulousness of spirit, why to worth like his should have been assigned so short a date? But feelings like these it is our duty to check. The ways of Heaven, though

mysterious, are certainly wise and benevolent. One of the lights of the world is indeed extinguished, and extinguished in its meridian ; but the great source of Light and Truth remains unchanged ; and he will not suffer his children to remain in darkness. Our friend is released from his sufferings and gone to his reward.

“ O ! 'tis well  
For him ; but who knows what the coming hour,  
Veil'd in thick darkness brings for us ? ”

MEMOIR  
OF  
JOHN BARTLETT.



## JOHN BARTLETT.

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THE principal incidents of Mr. Bartlett's life may be briefly narrated. He was born at Concord, Massachusetts, on the 22d of May, 1784, being the fourth of a family of twelve children, of whom most lived to mature years, and several survive. He had that best birthright, a worthy parentage. Both his parents were pious and excellent, and lived to advanced age. His early life was passed under the ministry of the venerable Dr. Ripley, who, beneath the formal manners and address of a past age, had, and retained to the last of his protracted course, (as remarked by his eulogist,) "a freshness, warmth, and youthful glow of sympathy, which attracted the young to him, and caused them to enjoy his society, and love him as a father." What may have been his precise portion of the good influences of that ministry, we will not pretend to assert; but we know that some of the impressions he received from it were among his most cherished and controlling ones. He is remembered as having, in childhood, been remarkably free from the faults of that age,—as frank, reliable, cheerful, and loving sport, but diligent in performing whatever was

required of him, in or out of school, — and especially as careful to avoid paining or harming another, and forward to relieve and aid. He is spoken of as “loving to bring home to his father’s house any strolling beggar or even helpless drunkard, to load them with food or give them shelter, and sit and talk with them by the hour, while they would pour into his childish ears all the marvels with which such people amuse or impose upon others.” “When he was about seven years old,” writes one who knew him almost from his infancy, “being sent to school with a new pair of those necessary appendages, shoes, he returned without them. On being questioned about the matter, he said that he had given them to a poor boy he met in the street. This, and other similar acts of generosity, are characteristic of the disposition which, I believe, he manifested through his whole life. In this instance, it may with truth be said, ‘The child was father of the man.’ His heart ever prompted the utterance of kind words and the performance of good deeds.”

While yet quite young, he was placed with a relative in Maine, with a view to his preparation for mercantile pursuits. But, after a time, being strongly desirous of a liberal education, he returned to his family, which had now removed to Cambridge, and of which the late Professor Frisbie, then a college student, was a member; and under his direction, he very soon completed his preparatory studies. He was highly favored in coming thus early within the influence of one of the finest minds. A friendship was then formed between them which was cultivated in after years. Of his course in college a revered classmate says, — “I remember him as a very respectable

scholar, a favorite classmate, a pleasant companion in the social circle, helping to infuse into it life and cheerfulness." He graduated in 1805, highly esteemed, both by his instructors and fellow-students, for purity and amiableness, for discretion, and the diligent and successful pursuit of knowledge. Having decided on his profession, — a choice determined with him not by expediency or casual circumstances, but, as it always should be, by taste, capacity, and desire of the greatest usefulness, — he continued at the University for about two years, during which he pursued his theological studies. The chaplaincy of the Boston almshouse having been offered to him, he entered on the discharge of its duties with comprehensive views, in his own self-sacrificing spirit, and in the spirit of that Gospel, one of whose signs is, that it is preached to the poor, and is fitted above all things on earth, to elevate and bless them. He made it virtually the first ministry at large in Boston. Beyond the customary duties, to which he faithfully attended, he sought other means and opportunities of benefiting the class to which he ministered. As one method of enabling him to be most serviceable, he endeavored to learn the nature, symptoms, and remedies of disease in its various forms, by observation, study, and attendance on medical lectures. This he did, not so much that he might practise the healing art, as that he might be qualified for what we apprehend many pastors are deficient in, — the exercise of enlightened judgment in adapting their spiritual ministrations to the physical condition of the sick and suffering. He found under his charge individuals with both mind and body diseased, for whose cases no adequate remedies were

provided, and by whose deplorable and almost hopeless situation he was deeply moved. He was not, however, the one to despair or remain inactive, while any thing could be done. At his suggestion, a meeting of influential and wealthy citizens was proposed, for the purpose of considering what measures should be taken to procure suitable treatment for the insane. On their coming together, with the modesty which was a part of his nature, he waited for others to open the subject, and express their views. At length, as no one was prepared to propose a plan, he was called on. He then came forward with such a statement of facts, with so much good sense and depth of feeling, as strongly to interest all present, and, among others, Mr. McLean, the princely endower of the Asylum bearing his name. Mr. Bartlett was commissioned to proceed to Philadelphia, to make the preliminary inquiries; and out of the movement he originated arose that noble institution. Through his instrumentality, also, a society was formed, of which he was the chief agent, for affording relief to destitute families, the number of which, in that trying time of the long embargo, was very great. Its plan was, to furnish food and clothing, either gratuitously or according to the means of the applicant, and especially to afford relief in the most effective form,—that of furnishing materials for employment. This plan included a store, extensive purchases and sales, and an immense amount of labor; in which he received the active aid, as well as liberal supplies, of some of the most opulent and worthy citizens, and performed his part with admirable practical skill and genuine benevolence.

In the mean time, he had not lost sight of his favorite



object, a settlement in the ministry. Having continued his professional studies under the favoring auspices of Dr. Channing, he relinquished the service in which for about three years he had been so successfully engaged, and soon preached as a candidate to the Second Congregational Society in Marblehead, where he received a unanimous invitation, and was ordained on the 22d of May, 1811. He was received there, from the first, with a cordiality, and taken to the hearts of the people in a confidence, with which few pastors are welcomed. And then, surrounded by a people, peculiar, indeed, but brave, enterprising, generous, exposed by occupation to unusual hardships and trials, and capable of appreciating his disinterested exertions and the whole-souled readiness with which he entered into their feelings and wants, — received with favor abroad, where he occasionally ministered or associated, and blessed with the supports and endearments of a happy home, — he set cheerfully and devotedly about his chosen work, and pursued it without wavering, till God called him from it by a message that none can resist. His physical constitution was firm and vigorous, and fitted naturally and by exercise for great effort and endurance. In his garden, which he cultivated with much success, he found recreation and healthful exercise. His labors were too many and various to admit of very regular habits of study. Still, he appropriated a considerable portion of the day, when he could command it, to reading, writing, and meditation. He was one to be always learning, if not from books, from observation and experience. He was in truth, a sagacious observer, acquiring constantly sound and available wisdom; and where he

failed in detecting motives or judging correctly of actions, it was, generally, because his intellect was swayed by the kindness of his heart. There was a pervading good sense, a vein of correct and elevated sentiment and feeling, expressed in pure and flowing language, in most of what he said or wrote. Prudence, dictated alike by tenderness and the desire of usefulness, presided over his words and actions, in public and private. Neither in theory nor in practice did he hold, that prudence, when connected with the ministerial office, or in any other connection, ceases to be a virtue, or that sound discretion is ever pusillanimity, or needful qualification a compromise of truth, or moderation and candor a cloaking of iniquity. On all fit occasions, he was explicit in matters of controversy, — particularly in maintaining the sentiments which, as a Unitarian, he early adopted, and to which he steadily adhered; showing himself, at the same time, always liberal, — ever desirous of cultivating friendly and charitable relations with all from whom he differed.

The style of his preaching was gentle, judicious, adapted to persuade and convince, — wanting, it might be, in animation of composition and delivery, though at times he would abandon in part, or altogether, his notes, and exhibit a high degree of fervor. His efforts of the latter description were among the most acceptable he made in the pulpit. He had uncommon command of pure, good English. It has been justly said of him, that “his conversational gifts were remarkable, and if his usual language had been taken down in short hand, it would have needed no change to fit it for the press, such were its aptness and precision.”

This felicity of utterance gave to his familiar lectures peculiar interest; at these, his hearers hung on his lips, charmed by the graceful and melodious flow of his words, if not by the truth and spiritual life they breathed. He frequently relied on this faculty in his pulpit discourses, writing down only the heads and leading ideas. But most of his sermons (of which he composed many, having extreme dread of old ones,) were written out, — having been thoroughly meditated, and then rapidly committed to paper. He shrank from appearing much in print. Nearly all he published is comprised in a few occasional sermons, and such as, having met particular wants of his congregation, were printed at their request. His public devotional exercises were marked by a simple and earnest manner, by feeling and thought happily combined, expressed in language fluent, appropriate, and mingled with felicitous Scriptural allusion. In the reading of devotional poetry he excelled, and gave it particular effect.

The pastoral walk was the field of his crowning excellence, and most effective exertions. There he was completely at home, — quick and sagacious to perceive — ever ready to meet to the full any occasion for the blessed instrumentality of the Christian pastor. Vigilant, active, abounding in sympathy, delighting “to spend and be spent” for others’ good, he was ever at hand to encourage the timid, confirm the doubting, reform the erring, cheer the penitent, joy with the rejoicing, comfort the mourning, support the dying; having reference, as is always desirable, to special occurrences, — which, in a maritime population are frequent and often sad, and, in that which he served,

of uncommon vicissitude, — instead of making his pastoral duties a stated and formal round.\* Very many were the families, whose fathers were far off on the ocean, or in distant lands, or amid the perils of war, to whom he was as a father. Many were the widows and orphans, — we should hardly dare to say how many, — for whose temporal as well as spiritual affairs and wants he watched and provided. Such was the confidence reposed in his knowledge of disease and its remedies, that he was often called on to prescribe for both body and soul, — a practice to which, by his overflowing kindness, he was not unfrequently induced. His fault, if such it may be called, was, that he grasped at too much and various labor. Yet we know not how widely comprehensive may be the heart of Christian benevolence; and it would ill become us to attempt to fathom its depths, or restrict its bounds, especially where so much has been so well done. In all his relations he was one of the most unselfish of men: his benevolence leading him sometimes to be more generous than just to himself, and those immediately dependent on him. Truly might it be said of him that he was

“More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.”

He assisted in the formation and management of the Humane Society of Marblehead, composed of ladies

\* It may solace some less attentive to their parochial charge than he was, to know, that, with all his pastoral assiduity, he could not wholly escape hints of remissness. A good and eccentric woman, feeling that he had been absent from her house for a longer time than was usual, sent to his pulpit a note, which was read, desiring prayers on account of the loss of a near friend. He took an early opportunity to pay her a visit of condolence. On his inquiring who was the friend she had lost, “You,” she said, “are that friend.”

of different denominations, whose benefactions to the sick and needy have been extensively useful, — and not least to themselves, by raising them above sectarian divisions, and uniting them by the bonds of a real charity. It was in the same spirit that he was long and actively engaged as a member of the Masonic Fraternity, in which he obtained at once a high and good degree, — his interest through all the changes and trials it has undergone remaining unabated. For several years, he was charged with the inspection of the Lodges of Essex county. Though not ourselves among the initiated, we are assured by those who are, and partly by our own observation, that he performed this and similar duties with a dignified propriety, ability, and charity, which contributed extensively to soften the harshness of sectarian dissensions, and leave on many minds permanent moral impressions. It was a gratifying reflection to him that he had in this way accomplished actual good.

For the young, for 'his own, and for others' children, at all times and everywhere, in the family, the parish, the Sunday and common schools, he had an unfailing fund of affectionate interest. With them, even in his more advanced years, he could always be young again, enjoying thereby a sort of perpetual youth. Without sinking the minister, — for that he habitually was in manners and character, — he was, and they felt him to be, their companion, scarcely less than their father, pastor, friend. One, who was associated with him in the care of the public schools of his town, observes, "I have often seen him stop in the street and speak to the scholars, taking them by the hand, patting the younger ones on the cheek, and

showing true affection for them. In his visits to the schools, which were frequent and often unexpected, he always showed great interest in their prosperity. He was very judicious, affectionate, and happy in addressing them. I once heard him address a school on the subject of grammar, and though that is not generally interesting to young scholars, he made it so by his lucid and pleasant illustrations." The Sunday School was with him an object of deep solicitude. Though adopted among us after he came on the stage of action, he was not slow to appreciate its value, and appropriate its benefits to the young under his charge. But he was always, as opportunity offered, their teacher, seeking, in the exercise of judgment and natural feeling, to conciliate their interest; and having opened that avenue to their minds, he would follow up the advantage so gained, and with exquisite tact to adapt them to his instructions, his advice, encouragement, reproof, and infuse right dispositions and sentiments. As he advanced in his ministry, he thus became surrounded by a generation of his own forming, moulded by his own hand and to his own mind; and wherever he went, at home or abroad, they rejoiced to cluster about him, and exchange cordial greetings, and recognize the strong claims he had on their respect and gratitude.

Amidst such labors and such encouraging results, with the prospect before him of remaining years of usefulness, he was arrested by alarming disease. About two years since, after a season of awful disasters at sea, which had carried mourning into many families of his parish, by which an unusual demand had been made on his exertions and sensibilities, and

while he was performing the services of his church, his power of speech was suddenly impeded, and his strength prostrated. Probably a slight attack of paralysis had been experienced. His labors were necessarily suspended, and arrangements were made to afford him opportunity to recruit his exhausted energies. During the summer following, accompanied by his wife, he journeyed first to the interior of New York, and passed some weeks with friends in the valley of the Mohawk. After his attack, his spirits were somewhat depressed. It will be seen, however, by the following extracts from a letter to one of his family, how alive he then was to the influences of nature, and to the spiritual condition of his fellow beings.

“ Among the high hills, and deep and beautiful ravines, I spend much of my time. I wish I had the head, both physically and intellectually, to give you a description of this very romantic and beautiful scenery. Mr. F.’s house is on the ascent from the river, about a hundred rods up the hill, and a hundred and fifty feet above the falls. Opposite, on the other side of the river, is a precipitous hill, nearly seven hundred feet high, covered with trees, which on this side appear like bushes, but on a near approach are found to be large and towering monarchs of the forest, beetling over the Western Canal, immediately under it. O, how I wish the isolated friends at Marblehead could be here, and join in the pleasure of beholding nature in its grandeur and beauty ! The works of art are astonishing, particularly the canal, its locks, and the vast number of boats, deeply laden with produce, passing literally every two minutes, night and day. Three hundred and fifty miles of canal are all the time thus studded with

boats. The illustration which these scenes present of the power and love of an ever-present Father must deeply impress every reflecting, pious mind. But there is no reflection among the boatmen, except that of the sun's rays from the glossy surface of the water, and of their fiendish passions, and profane and corrupt language."

Leaving the interior, he proceeded to Staten Island, where he passed the remainder of the summer. A single passage from another letter will show the strength of his feelings towards his people.

"With the kindness of my friends at Marblehead I feel overpowered, and no one can tell what a cordial it has been to me. Assure ——— and others, of the sincere and deep interest I feel in them and theirs, and, in fact, in every member of the parish. I know no heart ever felt a stronger attachment to a people, or so great a reluctance to burden them. Away from them all, most of my time is spent in thinking of past scenes, in calling up before me each individual, and in the reminiscence of by-gone days; and in the inspection of my feelings towards them, I find that there are none of whom I cannot truly say, God bless them, and especially in every thing that can make them good and happy. You cannot readily imagine the thrill of paternal love I felt toward H. and W. when visiting them at West Point, and in hearing Professor K. speak of them in such high terms. I love the young; and the promising indications of such youths as these throw over the future brightest visions."

On returning to his home, and receiving the warm salutations of his parishioners and friends, his spirits experienced a temporary exhilaration, and he went



with something of his accustomed alacrity about his usual occupations. He preached for a time, and performed other labor. But his strength failed. The bow had lost its elasticity. The silver cord was loosed, never again on earth to resume its tension. As the last autumn came on, a difficulty at the chest which painfully obstructed breathing, was added to his general weakness, so that for weeks he was denied the rest of his bed, and could sleep only in a sitting posture. Through all his sufferings, he retained a strong interest in all in any way connected with him, a deep sense of the sympathy so freely extended, above all, a sustaining faith, and expired gently, on the morning of February 3d, 1849, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his ministry. With singular fitness may we say of him, in the well-known lines, —

“ His youth was innocent, his riper age  
 Marked with some acts of goodness every day ;  
 And, watched by eyes that loved him, calm and sage,  
 Faded his late declining years away.  
 Resigned, he gave his being up, and went  
 To share the holy rest that waits a life well spent.”

Mr. Bartlett's leading characteristics, as he appeared in his maturity, are readily distinguished : the sound, well-balanced mind, the warm and genially social heart ; faith and piety, rational, firm, ardent ; sensibility, quick and tender ; benevolence, large, generous, operating not without discrimination, yet with the certainty and force of instinct ; respectable powers, faithfully employed and improved ; the inward spirit fitly attended, and manifested by the outward demeanor, — by a countenance mild and serene, — manners

unassuming, dignified, conciliatory, — a voice gentle, soothing, persuasive. Without conspicuous talent, he yet had marked traits. There was individuality in all he was, purposed, and did. He was himself, and not likely to be mistaken for another in his external air or his inward life. He understood his capacities, chose a sphere to which he believed them adapted, made it his main object to fill that sphere well; and steadily, independently, and consistently, for a long series of years, even till his strength failed by the way, did he pursue this noble aim. He cared much rather to be useful than to be widely known. With him, utility, in the Christian sense, was every thing, — mere form and show, and array of numbers, little or nothing; though none more than he were observant of all duly appointed means and ordinances, or valued more the power of sympathy and association. In this time of running to and fro faster than knowledge is increased or practical wisdom exemplified, — when the individual is merged in the mass, and the thoughts, feelings, and acts of the freeborn soul are to so great an extent fused and cast in a common mould, — it is refreshing to witness such an instance as he afforded of concentrated effort, of a work chosen wisely and well, pursued with patient perseverance in its own proper time and way and place, and at length triumphantly accomplished. For this we honor him, and bless his memory. By so doing, he has bequeathed an example of eminent wisdom and goodness, which, if not the most brilliant, admits of being most generally appreciated and copied.

MEMOIR  
OF  
SAMUEL HOWE.



## SAMUEL HOWE.

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IN the life of Judge Howe, there was little of incident that claims attention. Yet it may be well, as a help to a proper understanding and fair estimate of his character to give a brief outline of his history.

Samuel Howe was the son of the late Dr. Estes Howe, a physician of Belchertown, in the county of Hampshire. He was born in that place on the twentieth of June, 1785. He received his early education at the common town school, which at that time offered very few advantages. He very early discovered a love of reading and study, finding in them greater attractions than in the common amusements of his age. Books were not easily obtained, and he often rode several miles to procure them. There appeared, even then, marks of that regularity and economy of time, which were so observable in after life. At the age of twelve, he was placed at the academy in New Salem; and afterwards at Deerfield Academy, where he was prepared for college. He entered the sophomore class of Williamstown College, in 1801. The most that I have learned of this part of his life, is, that he

maintained a most respectable standing in a class of great merit, was exemplary in all his conduct, and the object of high esteem. He is said to have been particularly fond of mathematics, and to have made more than common proficiency in those studies, considering his limited opportunities.

Immediately after receiving his degree, he began the study of law in the office of the Hon. Jabez Upham, of Brookfield, where he remained about a year. He then entered the Law School at Litchfield, Connecticut, at that time under the superintendence of Chief Justice Reeves and Judge Gould. From this school he went to Stockbridge, and finished his preparatory studies in the office of Judge Sedgwick, of that place. He was admitted to the Berkshire Bar in August, 1807, and commenced the practice of his profession in Stockbridge. Shortly after, he removed to Worthington, in the county of Hampshire, where he soon distinguished himself as a lawyer and advocate, and had a large share of business. In 1820, he removed to Northampton, and in the following year was appointed one of the judges at the Court of Common Pleas, at the early age of thirty-six. And here I cannot forbear to mention that the members of the bar in one of our counties, who at first were greatly displeased, and had loudly and formally expressed their displeasure, at the appointment of Mr. Howe to this office, after seeing him one week on the bench, united in a public and most flattering expression of their entire satisfaction. It is well known that, in the duties of this responsible station he continued to the last, and that but a few weeks before his death, hastening probably that melancholy event, he gave proofs of inde-

fatigable industry, and a fidelity which regarded no comfort, health, or even life.

Besides those already mentioned, the subject of this notice held other honorable stations. Not long after his removal to Northampton, he associated himself with an eminent member of the bar in that place, for the establishment of the law school, in the arduous duties of which he expended much of his strength, and the success of which is too well known to need any particular notice. He was early a member of our State legislature : a place, however, of which he seems never to have been ambitious, professional, and not political eminence, being his aim. He was also made a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was likewise appointed by our legislature to the Board of Trustees of Amherst College.

Such is a very general sketch of a life that has now closed. That so many high and responsible trusts were delegated to our friend, and so much public service was performed by him, in the space of twenty years, is of itself the highest encomium ; and when we think of the fidelity and ability with which these trusts and duties were discharged, our admiration is surpassed only by our grief, that the influence of such a character and life is thus suddenly, and in its fulness, withdrawn. Many looks of anxious and painful interest, were fixed upon that strength as it began to fail. It was never firm, and for some months there had been strong indications of increasing weakness. Still, the most arduous duties were performed with scrupulous fidelity. This could not continue. At the close of his last great effort, the exhausted frame sunk, and

in three weeks the grave closed upon all that remained on earth of him, whose loss to many, very many, is the rending of one of life's strongest and tenderest chords. He died in Boston about midnight, on the nineteenth of January, 1828.

In presenting the character of Judge Howe, our attention is first called to his *professional* worth. Of this, it may seem presumptuous in any one unacquainted with the science of law, to speak confidently. But there were prominent features in this character which none could overlook, and which require no peculiar talent to describe. Of these, one of the most remarkable, and that which led to every other, was his ardent *love* of the law. This existed from first to last in an uncommon degree. That, which to many who stand high in the profession, is a dry and irksome study, was his delight. In the most abstract and uninteresting parts of it, he could always find a pleasure and even excitement, equal to that which is awakened by powerful works of fiction. This was apparent in his whole private and public course, and was strong enough to remove many serious obstacles, and overpower even the sense of severe pain. For often, by this interest and excitement, aided by a high principle of duty, have we seen him sustained in the discharge of public functions, when suffering from severe bodily disease; sustained to the last moment of duty, and then sinking. This love of his profession, as it was the spring of great improvement, so did it yield him the greatest satisfaction; conferring its reward at every step, and most of all at the last, in the sober review of life.

It *was* the spring of great improvement, and profound learning was one of its natural effects. This



is worthy of particular notice. I believe it is hazarding nothing to say, that very few men in this, or any country, have possessed, at his age, a more thorough knowledge of the law ; certainly not one with only his advantages. His early instruction was very imperfect. The great defects of his classical education he was often heard to lament ; and to the last there were occasional, though not frequent, appearances of carelessness in style, and want of strict accuracy in the use of language, which are said formerly to have been much more obvious. These he was every day overcoming, but they show how much there was to be overcome. And when to these defects in the early culture of his mind, we add the evils of a naturally feeble constitution, and the demands made upon his time and resources by a very early and more than usual portion of domestic care, we cannot but regard his attainments as uncommon. His legal knowledge was remarkable, not only for its extent, but also, and perhaps more, for its accuracy. His research was profound, patient, and thorough, and his memory very retentive. He read every thing connected with his profession, which seemed worth the time, though not connected directly with his own duties ; and all that he read was faithfully stored, and always at command. He was seldom at a loss for authorities or illustrations, name, place, or any important circumstance. At the bar and on the bench, in his arguments to the court, his charges to the jury, his exercises as a teacher, and in the performance of all his official duties, it is confidently believed that few have discovered more readiness, correctness, or extensive and thorough knowledge.

Among the characteristics of his mind as a lawyer, were sound judgment, acuteness, quickness, and correctness of apprehension, fairness, and independence. These, combined with that enthusiastic love of the law, and standing upon the firm basis of that extensive and profound learning just spoken of, could not fail to give him early a high rank in a most honorable and difficult profession. We have never seen a man, who appeared to surmount the difficulties of that profession with more ease, or bear its honors, and discharge the duties of one of its first officers, with more simplicity, more commanding yet unpretending dignity, obvious yet unconscious superiority. In his decisions he was cautious, but prompt; always open to conviction from any quarter, weighing impartially all circumstances, having a kind regard to all worthy feelings, quick to discern between right and wrong, indignant at any attempt to pervert justice or swerve in the least from truth, and fearless in awarding to virtue its merited reward, to vice its just punishment. None could observe him in public or private life, and not see the high moral principles which governed and ennobled his whole conduct, conferring an elevation, inspiring a confidence, and imparting blessings, which no mere power or talents could ever bestow.

It need not be said that the man who possessed these qualities was eminently fitted to be a *teacher* of the science to which he devoted himself. This office he always seemed desirous of assuming, from a willingness and desire to impart to others all the light and knowledge he had been able to acquire himself. In no part of his duty did he take more delight; and in none was he more acceptable or successful. To

this, all who have had the benefit of his instructions, bear eager, full, delighted testimony. His urbane dignity, easy familiarity, his readiness as well as power to communicate his knowledge, his inexhaustible fund of pleasant practical illustration, the amenity and kindness of his manners at all times — these are spoken of with a more than common degree of affection and enthusiasm, warm gratitude, and now unmingled sorrow.

But it is not possible to point out separately the traits of this character, nor is it necessary. Indeed, it is not right. For its excellence and beauty did not lie in separate features, but in the united whole. It cannot be said, perhaps, to have been uncommon in any one respect, so much as in all combined. There was a rare cultivation of every power, an unusual faithfulness to every talent, opportunity, and trust, an admirable adjustment of powers, a balance and completeness of character, which we may not expect to see often. This character was formed under no peculiar advantages; indeed, with the great disadvantages of an imperfect education and a feeble constitution. But it gave him an early distinction, allowed by all to be merited. It placed him in a sphere, in which his powers were largely exercised, and their influence widely felt. Few have had more to contend with, yet very few, none have been more punctual, resolute, laborious, faithful to every duty. Most truly, in this respect, most emphatically may it be said of him, that he lived not to himself; for his strength was again and again exhausted in the service of others. How often have we seen him prostrated by great exertion, yet returning, with an aching head, and powers almost

spent, to the scene of duty, and devoting himself to its performance with the same ardor and unrelaxing diligence. No indisposition, no love of ease, no attachment to domestic scenes, dear as they were, no personal considerations of any kind, made him deaf to the call of duty.

But he was not a professional man only. There was nothing confined or illiberal in his pursuits. He was a general scholar. He kept pace with the progress of the age in almost every department ; particularly making himself thoroughly acquainted, whatever effort it might cost, with any branch of science or philosophy, which would aid, in any way, the discharge of his duties. He seemed ever on the watch to note the changes, the advances, the ever varying circumstances and character of society, with the wish to adapt himself to its changes, to meet its wants, to promote its progress, to direct his professional and other influence, all his energy to the one noble purpose of social, intellectual, moral improvement in those around him.

To do this, to make himself familiar with the literature of the day, and all that should engage the attention of a member of society, and at the same time to maintain a high standing in his own laborious calling, he knew would require great *industry*. And this is a part of his character, or more properly of his conduct, which should not be passed over. To his industry he owed every thing. It was the groundwork and whole explanation of his character and usefulness. It began with his earliest habits, and continued while strength remained. Unusual method in the arrangement, and frugality and assiduity in the use of his time, were

features so prominent that the most heedless observer could not have overlooked them. Many proofs might be given; some of them not common. It is well known, that he seldom, if ever, travelled without a book as his companion, when no better companion was at hand; nor did he ever ride far, without making himself master of the contents of a volume. A portion, even of that time which his feeble health required him to give to recreation and to pass in places of public resort, was regularly set apart and conscientiously devoted to reading. Indeed, nearly all his general reading, which was by no means restricted or superficial, was done at such times, and in the short intervals of business at court. He had also the habit, formed early and always continued, of reading to his family, whenever it could be done; and he ascribed to it much of the happiness of his life. There was a fixed habit of turning, if practicable, every hour and every opportunity to some good account. There seemed to rest upon his mind continually a sense of the immense value of time; a conviction that the use or abuse of it involved lasting consequences to the individual and to society, and that there was with every man an obligation, high and sacred, to devote his time, not to himself, not to trifling pursuits, but to others, to the community.

Of this trait we love to speak. Generally, we know, industry is not ranked with the virtues; certainly not with the great virtues. It seldom attracts attention or commands admiration. It is often passed by in neglect, and sometimes sneered at as not of Christian stamp, nor of much value. To us it does not wear this doubtful character. We are disposed to give it a

high place on the scale of moral worth. In our view, as in the apostle's, to be "diligent in business," is closely connected with being "fervent in spirit," and "serving the Lord." Assuredly, if he who aims to keep his powers in constant exercise, to fill his time, to double the talents entrusted to him, is to be regarded as in any measure a Christian, then is industry a virtue. If to live for others, and to strive to promote the welfare of those around us, is one of the purposes of our existence, and one of the conditions of the divine approbation, then is industry of great moral value. Without this, how can a man be regarded as a religious man? To this, how much private and public happiness may be ascribed. In our community especially, how many men do we see in our highest and most responsible places, raised there by this quality alone; and how much more are such men to be honored, than those on whom wealth, or any adventitious circumstances, have conferred distinction. The former are the true benefactors. Than a man of industry, though this be his only talent, and his sphere very humble, society can hardly have a more useful member, a greater ornament or blessing.

There is another virtue of a similar character, for which he was distinguished; *economy* in the midst of liberality. In regard to this also, there are great mistakes. He usually is considered the most liberal, the most benevolent and generous man, who expends most for the entertainment of friends, or gives most in public charities, even though his family and those who entirely depend upon him, are sufferers by it. Very differently does it appear to us. We regard that as the true generosity and benevolence, which makes its ability the

measure of its exertion, consulting first the wants of those who have the first claim, and then doing all for others that it possibly can, doing it for the good of others, and not for its own display or credit, showing to the world, that liberality, active and large benevolence, is perfectly consistent with frugality, and that the latter is as noble and useful a virtue as the former. For a liberality like this, the man to whom we refer was distinguished. In hospitality, in humanity, for the support and spread of learning and religion, no man was more ready than he, to do all that he could, in justice to the many who depended wholly on his daily exertions. But he would not do more. He would never infringe the rights, or sacrifice the comfort of these, for the sake of a name or praise. He believed, and feared not to act upon the belief, that there was a truer benevolence, a greater and far more useful generosity; that society at large, mankind would be more benefited, by a frugal, quiet, and consistent liberality.

The value to the community of such a character is immense. We can never calculate it. We never know it, until it is withdrawn, until we feel its loss, and see the dreadful chasm that is left, and hear the voice of lamentation, and the mingling of sorrow, that pass through the land. And when has this testimony been given, in a more full and unequivocal manner than now, to the public worth of the man whose character we are attempting to delineate? He was universally known, and it is believed there are few, even among those who knew him only as a public minister, who have not some feeling of personal loss in his death. His powers and station enabled him to do much for

all, and he aimed to be faithful to his ability. He seemed to be deeply impressed with the responsibility that rested upon him, and fearful often, I think I may say always very fearful, that he should not in all respects be equal to that responsibility. This feeling prompted him to great exertion. It made him regardless, too regardless, of his own strength, and thoughtful only of the service he could render. He was a benevolent man in the best sense; not confining his benevolence to good wishes, common sympathy, or loud professions; much less keeping it ostentatiously in sight as a claim upon the public notice and admiration. He was as far from every thing of this kind as any man that ever lived. It was his utter abhorrence, and we believe he would rather have forfeited all reputation for benevolence, than have made any display of it. They who knew him at all, will bear witness to his unassuming character, in every relation and exertion. Yet, we repeat, he was a benevolent man in the best sense. There were in his life many acts of private beneficence, — of that silent, unobtrusive charity, whose disinterestedness admits not of a moment's doubt. But these should be left to the silence which they loved. We appeal now to his life; a whole life devoted, may we not say, sacrificed, to the public service. We appeal to those many relations, domestic, public, civil, and religious, which he filled, and filled so well. But the appeal need not be made; for our community strongly expressed their sense of his worth, before and after that event which deprived them of so valuable a member.

Of his public life, but one remark further need be made; and this applies to his whole life. To whatever



eminence he rose, or whatever influence he acquired, it was attained entirely by a uniform, unpretending, consistent course, — by the power of character ; and this adds another to the proofs, so honorable to our country, that integrity and industry are the surest passports to distinction and the confidence of all.

Of the *private* character of Judge Howe, we would next speak ; his fidelity to the domestic relations. But to this, we can only allude. For they who often saw him there, they especially who leaned upon him there, have too painful a sense of his worth, to permit his private virtues to be drawn from their sanctuary, and exposed to the public gaze. We may, however, be permitted to say, that as a son, — a relation which he sustained until within two years of his death, and which made in some respects peculiar demands upon his fidelity, — as a brother, a husband, father, friend, he exhibited a purity and strength of affection, and inspired a degree of interest, an ardor of attachment, a feeling of dependence, and now of loss, such as we have seldom known ; and nothing but that consolation which is stronger than life or death, which earth has no power either to give or take away, is sufficient to assuage their grief.

But one trait remains ; and this we are hardly willing to present as a distinct trait, for it entered into every part of his character, and its full excellence can be known only by observing it in connection with other features. Nor is it with entire freedom that we speak of this trait ; for, strong as is our own conviction of its power and value, we know that he to whom it belonged would have been more than unwilling that it should ever be made the subject of public remark. Yet there is a

sense in which the public now have a right to know this part of his character. Moreover, it is this on which we most delight to dwell ; it is this which imparts to his whole character a beauty and grandeur, that nothing else could. You know, to what I refer ; for you know there is nothing in this world that confers an elevation and dignity to be compared with that which religion confers. This elevation and dignity were his. He of whom we speak was a *religious* man. He was truly and eminently a Christian.

In asserting this thus strongly and very emphatically, without qualification or reserve, we feel that we are taking upon ourselves great responsibility. But we are willing to meet it. For beside that we have had opportunities of knowledge, such as are not given to every one, we make our appeal to that of which every one may judge ; to the life, to those fruits by which alone men are to be surely known. According to any other standard, certainly according to that of a sound faith, in the popular acceptance of those words, we could not claim for him the name of Christian. For he did not belong to the dominant party. Indeed, he belonged to no party. It were a great wrong to call him, in any narrow sense, a party man. What his religious opinions were, every one knew, for he never concealed them. He held them most firmly. For their quiet enjoyment and wider spread, he incurred many reproaches, and made sacrifices ; and he was always ready to avow, and, in every proper way, to advance and defend them. This, in fact, was a natural consequence of the manner in which his opinions had been formed. He had taken them, not from education, and early, unconscious habit, for these had given a different

direction ; not from man's teaching, for this he regarded as of no authority or value in comparison with the teaching of the Son of God ; not from ambition, a desire of popularity and ease, — this least of all, — for then he would hardly have encountered, as he did, the power of fashion, the violence of prejudice, the opposition and clamor of the multitude. No. He had taken his opinions and imbibed his spirit at the uncorrupted fountains of truth, and at the footstool of that Being with whom he held habitual communion.

He had been educated in the Calvinistic faith ; and though he seems never to have been a bigot to that or any faith, he reached mature life in the full persuasion that this was the religion of the Bible, nor could he regard without fearful solicitude, those who had embraced a different system. It was not until after he had entered upon his profession and removed to Worthington, that he was led, by some peculiar circumstances, to examine the foundations of his religion. This he did patiently and thoroughly, giving the whole subject a long and deliberate investigation, reading much on both sides, bending his highest powers to the task, and seeking continually, anxiously, divine light and guidance. He took nothing upon trust. He cared not for human authority. He feared not human judgment, nor shrunk from the suspicion or sacrifice to which the adoption of an unpopular faith might subject him. Truth was his only aim. The Bible was his only guide. And the faculties which God had given him, and the aid he had promised, were the only means by which he sought to learn what God had spoken and what he required. The result is well known. The force of education and first impressions, yielded

to the power of uncorrupted truth and the convictions of an unshackled mind. He became a decided, firm, serious Unitarian. More than this, his faith in Christianity as a divine system, became more clear, rational, settled, and delightful. Never, it is said without fear of contradiction, never has any man risen from the study of the sacred volume, with a higher reverence for its divine authority, or a firmer conviction that its truths are all worthy of entire confidence, affection, and obedience. These convictions and feelings attended him to the latest hour, and became stronger with every trial of their strength. More than once have we heard him speak of the clearness and power with which the evidences of Christianity affected his mind; and that, not as a religion to be believed merely, but cordially embraced, studied seriously and habitually, and made the governing rule of life, and the foundation of all hope. More than once has he given it as his opinion, as well as the declaration of some of the most eminent men who have adorned his profession, that if the testimony to the truth of the gospel, the evidence on which the supernatural character of Christ and his religion rests, should be brought into any court, and subjected to any earthly tribunal, it must be admitted as entirely conclusive, or all common acknowledged principles of evidence must be abandoned.

To us it is every thing to hear such a man speak thus on such a subject. There is no evading nor adding to the force of such a decision, as regards our religion itself or the character of the man. From every fair mind it must go far to dissipate all doubt, and rebuke all coldness and indifference. It is better, more convincing and valuable, than any testimony from the

appointed ministers of religion ; for in them it is always considered by the world as in some degree, at least, a matter of course, of profession, or policy. Besides, when we give ourselves up entirely to one study, there is danger that our minds may be narrowed, and that arguments and principles which we see chiefly in one connection, may assume in our eyes a character or force that does not belong to them. But when we see a man of a different profession, having the most favorable opportunities for observing human nature and weighing testimony in every connection and form, bringing high powers, a clear, unbiased judgment, to the examination of this question, and reasoning upon it with as much coolness, deliberation, and impartiality, as upon any question of law or equity, we feel that his decision is entitled to confidence ; we feel our own faith confirmed and invigorated by it ; and if we see its good fruits, its sincerity, and influence in the life of him who exhibits it, it gathers an importance which can hardly be overrated.

And this is the great value of the testimony before us. It is not that this individual was better able to judge of the truth of Christianity, or a firmer believer than many others ; for we know and rejoice that many of the leading men of his profession have been, and are, equally firm, and hold the same rational and serious views of truth. But we attach an especial value to this testimony, because it was remarkably consistent throughout. In public and private, as a citizen, a lawyer, and a judge, in his domestic and social walks, at the family altar, and in the temple, in sickness and health, in life and death, this man was the same ; conscientious, unpretending, candid, upright, faithful, firm.

No eye but one of prejudice or malignity, could discover in him any thing inconsistent with strict moral principle. It is saying much, but no more than the truth, that they who have known him best, who have been admitted most freely to the secrets of his breast, and to that sanctuary where there can be no effectual disguise or equivocation, have thought most highly of the purity of his character, the strength of his principles, and the benevolence of his heart. It is beyond the power of man, of the opposing world, to move their faith in his integrity and inestimable worth. They cannot, indeed, point to any one act, any loud professions, any emblazoned charities, or popular opinions; for they know that for his opinions he was cast out from Christian fellowship, and the table of his Lord was barred against him. But they could point to many unnoticed acts; to consistent, uniform good conduct; to unvarying kindness and charity, the more disinterested and real, because unpretending; to opinions held in despite of reproach, at no little sacrifice, and with the firmest adherence to conscience and duty. They do point to a uniform, laborious, irreproachable life; short, but filled with service, and useful beyond the common measure; harassed by continual sickness, and often by severe suffering, yet devoted, without a murmur and without cessation, to the highest interests of the public, to the purest delights of family and friends, to the cultivation of the best powers, to the promotion of truth, virtue, and happiness.

Who will compare such a life, such a religion, with one of mere opinions, professions, or forms? Who will compare its purity, its benevolence, its disinterestedness, its conformity to the Christian standard, with

a religion, whose energies are locked up in the breast, or wasted upon the tongue, or devoted only to those of a particular name or creed, dispensing no real blessing to the community? If any would do this, let him look at the life of Jesus, and stand rebuked. It is a noble sentiment — and we rejoice to express it in the dying words of him whose memory we so fondly cherish — that the exact measure of our happiness, is the degree in which we make others happy. We may add, this is the measure of our religion too, if the happiness we impart to others, is that which God would confer, the happiness of virtue. To seek to promote this, in ourselves and around us, is to be a Christian.

And this we believe, this we know, to have been the constant aim of this excellent man; the language of his life, no less than of his death. Religion with him was a deep principle, having its seat within, not without, and putting forth its power in actions rather than words. If it did not, like a distinct imposing feature, or an occasional garment, force itself upon your attention, it was because it was always worn, or incorporated with the whole man, and its influence equally diffused throughout the character and life. It governed the temper, it subdued the passions, it chastened the conversation, it purified and warmed the heart, it ennobled the mind, it elevated the affections above sordid and debasing pursuits, it prompted to a life of active, self-denying, unwearied usefulness. It led him to take a sober view of life; of life in all its relations, its duties, opportunities, powers, destiny. It led him to speak and act with great deliberation, looking to the consequences of conduct upon others

and himself, upon the present and the future, in this world and through eternity. It kept continually before him his own weakness and liability to err, and made him charitable to the weakness and errors of others, cautious in judgment, sparing of condemnation, yet always open and resolute in discriminating between right and wrong, both in opinion and practice, eager to extol and exalt the one, decided and fearless in condemning the other. It carried his views and aim far beyond the narrow contemptible bounds of party and a name. It told him he was to live to mankind, and not to a favored few; that God and Jesus, and no earthly master, had sent him into the vineyard, and that in imitation of their example, he should open the arms of affection, and send out good influences to all. In short, his religion made him feel deeply and fearfully the burden of responsibility that rested upon him, and upon every member of society, every intelligent, accountable, and immortal being; a responsibility extending to every talent, every faculty, every hour, and reaching in its solemn consequences through uncounted and countless ages. To discharge this responsibility, in all its vastness and sacredness, was his single aim. That he effected it, we do not say. We are content to say, as he did in the final review, "Thou, God, knowest."

Such, in our view, was the religion of Judge Howe, and such its influence on his life. We are aware that the picture may to some seem extravagant — some who saw him only through an unfavorable medium. Of those who knew him well, and saw him as he really was, there need be no fear. I am persuaded that there dwelt upon his mind, a conviction, more than



usually strong, habitual, and operative, of his dependence and accountableness. It was to be seen in his discharge of public duty, in his conversation, and particularly in his private correspondence. His letters to his family, especially those to his children, and I hope I do not violate confidence in speaking of them, are filled with evidences of a serious, devout spirit, expressions of the most affectionate, anxious interest in the temporal, and much more in the spiritual welfare of those depending upon him, and earnest exhortations to diligence, sobriety, prayer, and all Christian virtue. He seems ever to feel, and strives to inspire the feeling, that we are sent into the world for something more than our own indulgence or amusement; that we have higher connections than those which come and go with a breath; that we came from God, and should live to God. This feeling was not occasional; nor ever wild; but calm and habitual, like his religion itself, it was not a passion, but a principle. It brought God very near to him. The thought of his presence, his perfections, his will, was associated with all that surrounded him; with the appearances of nature, no less than with the truths of revelation. In one of his letters, written just after beholding some of the grandest scenes which our country presents, he thus speaks of their effect:—"The view of such scenes always seems to draw me nearer to my God. In the contemplation of his beautiful works, I feel more strongly impressed with a sense of his benevolence, and am ashamed that I should ever be unwilling to resign myself, without reserve, into his Almighty hand."

And was he unwilling, when the hour came? Did

the religion, which guided, strengthened, and cheered him through life, forsake him in death? Did the views for which he had borne suspicion and reproach, for his conscientious adherence to which he had been forbidden to approach the table of a common Lord, or even to dedicate his children to Him who gave them, the views to which he had been brought by his own fearless and devout examination of the volume of truth, and in which he had found support and satisfaction, light and blessing in all his course of duty, toil, and suffering — did these views tremble and fail as the great conflict came near? It could not be. It was not. That same faith ministered abundantly, gloriously, to his support and joy in the hour of bitter trial. Fail? No. It became stronger as nature drooped. It brightened as the darkness gathered. Then was its glory and its full triumph. It pointed the dying believer, through the breaking clouds, up to the unfading light which had always cheered him, and the rock on which he had securely rested. He met that messenger, to whom we are all perhaps too apt to give the name and character of a king of terror and awful gloom — he met him as a friend; taking him away indeed from friends dear to his heart, from scenes that he loved, from cares that he would willingly bear, and duties that he would gladly perform longer, but calling him to higher duties, to holier scenes, to many friends who had gone before, and to the surest, best friend of all. He departed full of this hope, strong in this faith; exhibiting to those around him its reality, its sustaining power, the delightful confidence it inspired, the heavenly serenity it imparted, the unearthly strength it gave, the glorious triumph it

achieved, the pure, unclouded light which it caused to burst upon the parting soul. Of such a death we love to think and speak. For there seems to us to go out from it a voice, strong and eloquent as Heaven's own truth, pleading for religion, for confidence in God, fidelity to Jesus, benevolence to man; yes, pleading, as with an angel's tongue, for humanity, truth, virtue, and the hope of a blessed immortality.

Yet of this, we fear to speak freely; for we know how lamentably such things have been abused. We feel, too, that there is in truth a sacredness in a death-bed scene, which should never be profaned. There are thoughts, moreover, awakened by the recollection of him who thus died, of what he was, and of the instinctive delicacy with which he would have shrunk from any display of the solemn realities of death, which restrain us from a full expression of our feelings, or at least warn us to offer nothing more than a sober, exact statement of what actually was. This we do for our own consolation, and in the belief, that, viewed in connection with his life, its testimony to the power of religion, and the worth of such views of religion as he entertained, is of great value, and should not be withheld.

From the first violent attack of disease, he discovered entire resignation to that event which he saw approaching, and the nearer it approached, the more perfect was his serenity, and the stronger his faith. Indeed its approach at this time, was not, we believe wholly unexpected. A few weeks before, he had expressed to a friend his belief that the December term of the court would finish his career. Although the premonition was not particularly regarded then, he himself

remembered and referred to it the last night of his life. For about twelve days before his death, he was deprived of the power of utterance, and appeared in a great measure unconscious of what was passing. It was feared that he would leave the world in this silence and darkness; but through the goodness of the God in whom he trusted, there was something better in reserve for him and his friends. The clouds that came up as if to obscure his declining sun, were to be dispersed, and the setting of that orb to be more glorious than its rising or meridian splendor.

On the evening of the last day, a near friend entered his chamber, expecting only to witness his silent departure. At the same time his son arrived from a distant town. Their well known faces seemed to recall the dying man to a sense of his whole situation. Affectionately he took the offered hand, inquired after the health of those who had been left, and said he believed it was nearly over with him. After speaking of his previous weakness and distraction of thought, he expressed a wish that he might be permitted to do the little that remained for him to do in this world. He prayed for strength. It was granted; and in the power of it, he addressed those who were about him, clearly and most impressively. He spoke first of the blessings that surrounded him in his sickness, and seemed particularly grateful to God and to his earthly friends, that, though away from home, every attention and kindness had been shown him. He then gave all needed directions as to his worldly affairs. Having done this, and dismissed the world from his mind forever, he expressed warmly and emphatically his entire confidence, his gratitude, his affectionate interest in

those most near to him, in all his friends, and commended them to God. From them his thoughts turned more particularly upon himself, his past life and present prospects. He said he had always felt that high trusts were committed to him, and that his was a solemn responsibility. He had endeavored to meet and faithfully discharge all his duties; and had been astonished often at the degree of light and satisfaction which were afforded him, as from above. His trust was in the mercy of God for the acceptance of his humble efforts, and the pardon of his remissness and sin. To God he appealed; and as he spoke of his trust in him, of his firm faith in the religion of his Son, of the support he had derived from this religion through life, and its increasing power as life drew nearer its close, its power over all terrors of death and the dissolution of nature — there was a collectedness, a strength, an ardor, an eloquence, a sublime uplifting of the spirit far, far above the changing and passing objects of earth, which turned that chamber of death into a temple of calm and holy triumph. All tears were dried. The spirit of heaviness became indeed a garment of praise; the voice of weeping went up in the silent offering of gratitude and joy; every spirit was lifted with his who led the way, until they were rapt into the pure and full light of the world he was entering.

And when we see such a life closed and crowned by such a death, so entirely consistent, so delightfully consoling, we would not, we cannot conceal our satisfaction and gratitude. When we see a spirit like this thus awaking from the torpor of disease, praying earnestly for strength that it might spend its last breath

here for the peace and virtue of those it had loved, then pouring itself out in strains of mighty eloquence for religion's cause, fervent yet collected, glowing yet rational, with repeated petitions for strength and direction, leaving its solemn testimony, — and at last soaring away in serenity and triumph on the wings of Jesus's own prayer — when we see this, we must express the joy that it imparts. We mention it not as a proof of doctrine. Never. It is the triumph of religion, not of a sect. It is the power of principle, the strength of faith, the reality and glory of virtue, that we would exhibit. It is the full, clear, irresistible proof, that Christianity is not a fable, nor the peace it gives a mockery, nor immortality a dream. Many have died thus, we trust, of every name. We thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that it is so; and most fervently do we pray, that others may find the consolation that is given us. For now, in the recollection of this life and this death, our murmurs are hushed, and gratitude mingles with the reverence in which we bow to the inscrutable decree. We feel that God has been good in giving and in taking away. We feel, that to die thus, is to live forever, receiving and dispensing blessing. It is not death, it is birth. It is not the last, but the first hour of life and liberty. It is the dawn of immortality. The darkness of earth rolls away. The light of heaven breaks in upon the departing spirit, and the everlasting arms bear it home.















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