

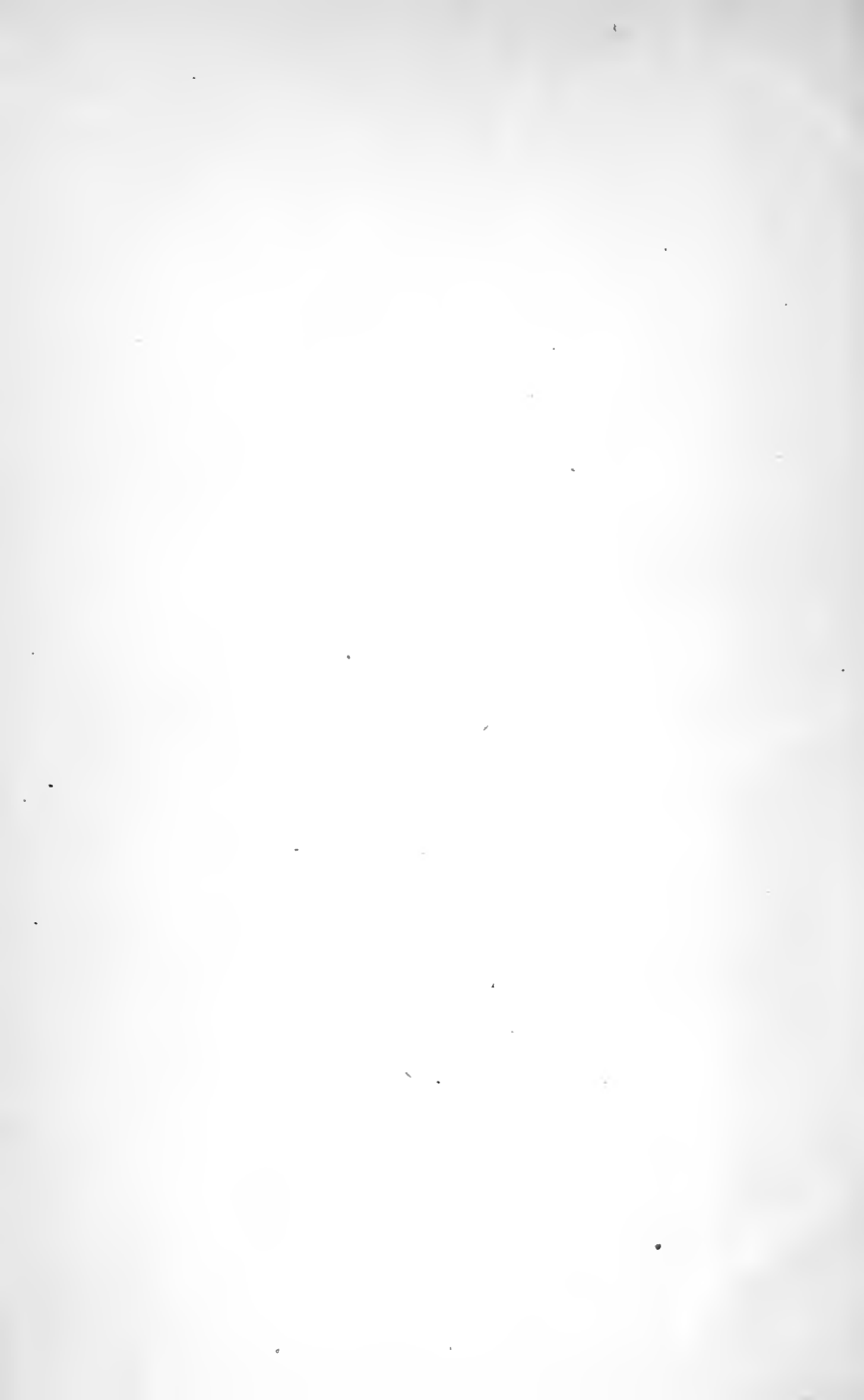
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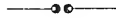


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PAMPHLETS.



Leonard Woods,

D. D.



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Prof. Lawrence's Discourse

AT THE FUNERAL OF

LEONARD WOODS, D. D.

AUGUST, 1854.

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Leonard Woods

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE FUNERAL OF

REV. LEONARD WOODS, D. D.

IN THE

Chapel of the Theological Seminary,

ANDOVER, AUGUST 28, 1854.

BY

EDWARD A. LAWRENCE,

PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, EAST WINDSOR HILL,
CONNECTICUT.

BOSTON:

S. K. WHIPPLE AND COMPANY,

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DISCOURSE.

THE knell is ever tolling the departure of the good and the great. Our cemeteries are filling with the memorials of passing generations. And yet we think of the living as if they would never die — of the dead as if they had never lived. Or if, while the fresh grave is open before us, we cry, “The things that are seen *are* temporal,” by some strange fascination, we are soon drawn back into the contradiction of what our lips had uttered. The “tramp of busy feet” and the light of pleasant smiles beguile us amid the rival attractions of earth and heaven, so that, unmindful of the blessedness of those who die in the Lord, we become “of the earth, earthy.”

The mournful occasion which has assembled us here to-day invites the prominence in which we instinctively seek to present this blessedness. The character of him who has just now been taken from us justifies it. Our confidence in the scheme of redemption, and our gratitude in view of its application to him of whom we are bereaved, demand it.

**And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me,
Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.**
—REV. xiv. 13.

There is implied in these words a peculiar relation of believers to the Lord, and affirmed a peculiar blessedness of those who die in him.

I. Of this relation, the essential elements are knowledge, faith, and love.

There is nothing in philosophic or scientific truth, of itself, tending to this spiritual connection with Christ. The *knowledge* which is an element of this peculiar relation, is the assurance of Christian truth gained by the teachings of the Spirit and Christian experience. It is that mental certainty in which the patriarch says, "I *know* that my Redeemer liveth." It is the knowledge of sin, gained through a deep conviction of the holiness of the divine law, and the sweet experience of the matchless love of God in providing for its remission — a knowledge which leads to self-renunciation, which adores divine sovereignty at the cross, and fortifies the chastened, subdued soul in its unhesitating preference of Christ as the source and substance of all moral excellence and beauty.

Faith is an equally essential element of this relation. As a Christian grace, it is that trust in Christ as the Almighty Redeemer, "whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is freely offered to us in the gospel." It looks to his words for instruction, and to his life for example; to his death as an atoning sacrifice for sin, and to his righteousness for justification. It is the eye that sees his fulness of glory, and the hand that receives from his fulness of grace. As the water is in the fountain, as the branches are in the vine, as the soul is in that in which it supremely trusts, so by faith are believers in the Lord.

Love is the remaining element essential to this peculiar relation. There is no true faith in Christ which is not connected with love. Faith works by love. Men live in that which they love, and on a principle of affinity, easily become assimilated to it. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory." Those who are truly in the Lord by a deep and fervent affection, love to think of him and to speak of him. They love his truth, his cause, and his kingdom. His person is dear to them. His will governs them, and the promotion of his glory is their highest ambition. So peculiar is this principle of love to Christ, that it makes the believer very

humble, yet very happy. It teaches him that he deserves nothing but unending woe, while it allows him to expect nothing less than infinite bliss. The more urgent seem the motives to remain in the world, the greater is his readiness to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

Thus by the force of this threefold bond, the believer is bound to Christ as his Redeemer.

II. The blessedness affirmed of those who die in the Lord is as peculiar as the relation which they sustain to him.

They are blessed, —

1. In the doctrines and ordinances which at their death are seen to have been effectual in their entire sanctification.

In the progress of the believer's earthly life, he is in conflict with sin and opposed by "principalities and powers." But a resort to the Saviour through these constituted channels of grace, brings courage and strength by which the contest is maintained, and he goes on "conquering and to conquer."

As age advances on the weary pilgrim, and disease begins to take down this earthly house of his tabernacle, as the inward spiritual light shines out more and more, dispelling the darkness of the last conflict, we behold an impressive demonstration of the efficacy of those appointed means by which this life is brought to its maturity.

The ripened fruit bespeaks not merely the goodness of the tree, but also the richness of the soil, and the care and culture which have been bestowed upon it. No logic is more resistless, no rhetoric more convincing, and no illustration more impressive, in teaching the efficacy of the Christian doctrines and ordinances, and the blessedness of those who are the objects of their sanctifying influence, than the perfect resignation, the calm, sweet confidence of those who die in the Lord.

2. Those who die in the Lord are blessed in the realization of covenant engagement in their approach to the final dissolution.

Unaided by the supports of a religious faith, none have been able in the hour of death to exhibit more than the

hardihood, the mere power of endurance, which stoicism or pride of opinion imparts. But it is far otherwise with those whose hope is in God. Their reliance is visibly on the covenant faithfulness of their Redeemer. He has said, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." This is indeed an extraordinary engagement. But the comforting experience of its fulfilment by the dying believer is no less extraordinary. It illumines his countenance with a heavenly serenity, sweet as the mellow light at the close of a summer's day. The dark valley is made all radiant by it, and the difficult way all easy. Precisely where the confidence of other men is weakest, his is strongest. Where they lose their hope, his passes into the fulness of realization. His pillow is smoothed by gentler than human hands, his soul sustained by mightier than human sympathy. And while articulation is continued, there is converse on lofty themes — of sin, but of sin forgiven; of Jesus and his atoning work; of peace, and heaven, and glory. He has entered the land of Beulah. He has caught glimpses of the Celestial City. Higher attractions draw him. Better friends solicit him. Brighter scenes entrance him. The light and the glory of the unseen world begin to dawn upon the prepared spirit. Heaven is visibly drawing nigh, and Faith, with her powerful hand, opens wide the gates and bears the freed soul within the everlasting doors. O, this is blessedness indeed! To see a believer, after a life of toilsome conflict with sin and Satan, after successive victories and defeats, coming to the final encounter in the high realization of the promises, — to see him setting his house in order, calmly as only for the separation of a night of sleep and sweet dreams, — this is to witness the transit of a fallen but redeemed soul across the river of death, borne up by covenant faithfulness high above its waves, to be embosomed in the everlasting love.

3. Those who die in the Lord are blessed in a manifest entrance, at their death, upon a higher and glorious life.

"God is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all

live unto him." These words are full of instruction and consolation to the believer. They assure him that his future abode is not a land of mute shadows, but a region of personal consciousness, of living, spiritual beings, capable of affection, recognition, and remembrance. With this view the impression of the death-scene of the saints—the pallid countenance, the faltering voice, the dimness gathering upon the eye as the light of intelligence fades from it forever—becomes to us one of consolation and hope. We know that they are not lost in unending, illocal immensity; but that they have become peaceful dwellers within the mansions of our Father's house. It is our privilege to follow them in our thoughts to "an innumerable company of the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to God, the Judge of all." This augmented spiritual life meets and exhausts the full, deep meaning of the Revelator's words—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." It is through the dissolution of this earthly house of our tabernacle that we are clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven. And this makes death an epoch in the history of that quenchless essence, marked by more enrapturing visions of God and heaven, and the attainment of higher knowledge and blessedness than occur at any other period in the whole range of immortal existence.

Even amidst the hindrances of the bodily state, grace has often given strength for high attainments in religious knowledge. On some Pisgab's top, the sanctified soul has climbed to almost seraphic heights. But when the encumbering adjuncts of sense and sin are dropped, and the spiritual eye is enabled to look undazzled upon the radiance of the divine glory, who can tell what depths of knowledge will be unfolded? With what a lustre will before-hidden truths concerning the attributes and sovereignty of God shine forth! How wonderful will redeeming love appear to us there, where we contemplate it, not as from necessity almost, we do here, in its relation to human sin and safety, but in its higher relations to the character and glory of the Redeemer! It is this peculiar, concentrated glory, this more signally manifested presence of the Lord God and the Lamb, that determines

the locality of heaven. And it is this ineffable union, through the mediation of Christ, of the human spirit with the divine, that constitutes the higher and more blessed life of the Christian in the realms of bliss. There he plucks and eats freely of the tree of life. There he bathes in the crystalline streams ever flowing from under the eternal throne. There, memory, before like a time-worn picture, is revived. Memory in heaven! Delightful thought to bereaved ones on the earth! Our words should be few, where, as here, little is revealed. Yet from that little we cannot resist the impression that departed saints, with whom we have been united in spiritual joy and conflict here, do not lose the remembrance of us there — that they still cherish us as members with them of Christ's mystical body, and as pilgrims traveling the same road which they have trod. And, although there is permitted to us no visible sign of this remembrance, yet a contemplative mind will appreciate the influence of such a communion, and appropriate it, not to cherish, but to chasten his grief.

Such a communion is all of intercourse which now remains to us with the sympathizing brother and friend, the venerated father and teacher, the cherished companion and exemplary Christian disciple.

LEONARD WOODS, the first Professor in this beloved Seminary, and the last of its original teachers, has just passed from among us. The veteran soldier has laid off his armor, received his crown, and now rests in the blessedness of assured victory.

“ See where he walks on yonder mount, that lifts
 Its summit high on the right hand of bliss,
 Sublime in glory, talking with his peers
 Of the incarnate Saviour's love, and past
 Affliction, lost in present joy. See how
 His face with heavenly ardor glows, and how
 His hand enraptured strikes the golden lyre,
 As now, conversing of the Lamb once slain,
 He speaks; and how, from vines that never hear
 Of winter, but in monthly harvest yield
 Their fruit abundantly, he plucks the grapes
 Of life.”

The parents of our revered and departed friend, Samuel and Abigail Woods, were among the early inhabitants of Princeton, Mass. They both possessed strong mental powers, and were of puritanic piety. His father's habits of serious thought upon metaphysical subjects obtained for him the title of "philosopher Woods." With small opportunity for cultivation when young, he became conversant with the most important histories, with the poetry of Milton, Young, and Watts, as also with the works of Locke and Edwards, and of many of the Puritan divines.

Leonard Woods was born June 19, 1774, and baptized on the same day. His education in childhood was conducted mainly by his father, and by an elder sister who preceded him not three years since to the heavenly world. He early discovered a love for books, and was often found listening to conversations between his father and the neighbors, when most children would be engaged in their sports. When but six or seven years old, he would copy examples in arithmetic on a piece of birch bark, as he heard them given to a class of large boys, always obtaining the right answer as soon as they, if not sooner.

The books which he preferred, unlike the dilutions prepared for children of the present day, contained the rudiments of knowledge in their natural relations and rugged forms — of history, mathematics, and Christian doctrine. Of his early training he says, "I was educated in the manner of the Puritans, being taught to reverence the Sabbath, to attend public worship, to repeat the Catechism, and read religious books."

It was the design of his parents that he should remain at home on the farm, that they might enjoy his filial love and care. But from the age of ten he had a strong desire for a public education, and an undefinable wish to become a minister. On account of a sickness occasioned by exposure, which enfeebled him for two years, his father consented to his commencing the study of Latin with the parish minister, in preparation for college, telling him, however, that he had no means of assisting him. Encouraged by his fond mother, who said, "I can help you along," he began his studies. And

nobly was her pledge redeemed. No sacrifice or toil appeared too great in aiding so beloved and dutiful a son. "She sought wool and flax, and laying her hand to the spindle," through his whole collegiate course she clothed him from her own loom.

After three years, in 1792, he was entered a freshman at Harvard College, having received but three months' regular instruction, which he obtained at Leicester Academy, under the tuition of Mr. Adams, afterwards professor in Dartmouth College.

The period of his college life was marked by the absence of Christian influences in the literary institutions of the country, beyond any other in their history. During a part of it, there was but a single professor of religion in Harvard College.* The driftwood of English deism and French atheism had floated high up on our shores. College students prided themselves on their scepticism, and boasted of a theological pedigree from Voltaire and Paine, regarding a reverence for the Bible as a mark of intellectual inferiority and bigotry.

Leonard Woods was under only the outward restraints of early religious instruction. But his intellectual convictions being on the side of Christian doctrine, the bolder approaches of the evil repelled him. That, however, which he withstood in its grosser forms, took effect in its subtler and more insinuating influences. During the last year of his collegiate course, he became greatly interested in the philosophical works of Dr. Priestley. From these he was naturally led to his theological writings. The result was a fascination which, for a time, gave him a strong bias in favor of his materialistic speculations.

He was graduated in 1796, with the highest honors of his college. Says one of his classmates, "He was decidedly the first member of the class, for intellect and attainment, among such competitors as John Pickering and James Jackson. He had the highest assignment at commencement, and delivered an oration which was much admired for its literary excellence." Three years later, when his class took the second

* Dr. John H. Church, late of Pelham, N. H.

degree, he was selected to deliver the master's oration. Both these productions were published, and gave the orator a name and a place among men of intellectual and moral culture, which attracted toward him the regards of many lovers of truth and learning.

For eight months after he left college, he was engaged as a teacher in Medford, during which time, and while occasionally under the paternal roof, that great change took place which gave tone and direction to his subsequent life.

How delightful is the harmony of divine Providence with the divine purpose! The ardent student has passed the ordeal of college, but with an object lying before him like a spirit in the mist. "It stood still, but he could not discern the form thereof." It is now brought out in the distinctness of a visible reality — of a controlling purpose. Like the apostle, he said, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."

Mr. Woods made a profession of religion, and united with Dr. Osgood's church, in Medford, in 1797. In the autumn of the same year, he studied theology three months with Dr. Charles Backus, at Somers, Connecticut, in company with his friend Mr. Church, who was soon after settled in Pelham, N. H. The following winter, he continued his studies at home, the Bible and Brown's System of Divinity constituting his principal text books. Referring to this period in a letter to a sister many years after, he says, "When I turn my thoughts toward you, a multitude of interesting recollections rush upon my mind. I think of the scenes of our early childhood and youth; * * of the time when I was studying divinity in the shop, and you and dear H. and L. used to recite the Catechism and other things to me." He received license to preach in the spring of 1798, from the Cambridge Association, and in November of the same year he was ordained at Newbury as the successor of Dr. Tappan, who had been called to a professorship in Harvard College. He brought to his new field a cheerful hope, a well-balanced mind, and the fruits of an earnest, well-directed study; and he gave himself to it with a singleness of purpose which preserved him from wasting his energies in conflicting avocations. The people of his charge were strongly attached to the half-way cov-

enant. He believed it to be unscriptural, and had difficulties on this account in settling among them. To his friend Mr. Church he writes, "I believe I have a providential call; if so, it is not my duty to do any thing that will directly counteract that call. But, then, it is not a call unless I can comply with it without violating my duty. So I must do duty, and leave the event. But, then, I am doubtful what my duty is. I consider it an error, and am willing to do every thing, and shall do every thing, in my power to extirpate it. Now, shall I be most likely to conquer this enemy by deserting the field because I cannot *at once* prevail, or by keeping my ground and persevering in the contest?"

The following year, the young pastor was united in marriage to Miss Abigail Wheeler, daughter of Joseph Wheeler, Judge of Probate in Worcester. The lovely bride was welcomed in her approach to her rural home by a cavalcade of parishioners, who came out to give her their cordial greetings, from whom she ever received that affectionate deference which her amiable disposition and exemplary piety procured from all who knew her.

Mr. Woods loved the work of a pastor; finding in it his highest and purest joys, as well as his severest trials. It was to him no sinecure, but the toil and watchfulness for souls of a loving shepherd who must give account. He showed himself the sympathizing friend of his people, studying their characters, not to expose their faults, but that he might the better know how to correct them. His preaching then, as in later years, was instructive rather than rhetorical, suggestive more than exciting. The ardor of poetic fire was finely tempered into the genial glow of a healthful enthusiasm. It was always scriptural, having Christ as the central idea. It was often argumentative, but never in a way to allow the inference that the Christian system is doubtful, or may be arraigned and condemned at the tribunal of human reason. He could have had but little instruction in the Hebrew language previous to his entering on the work of the ministry. But we early find him prosecuting a course of philological study, saying, "I am resolved that no common events shall hinder me from a competent knowledge of the Hebrew Bible."

It was at an eventful period in the history of the New England churches, that Mr. Woods entered on his public duties. A crisis was at hand in which the seamless garment was to be rent asunder. Men who had hitherto moved shoulder to shoulder, were now to put on their armor, and stand face to face. Ministers had lapsed from the standards of the fathers and the doctrines of the Bible. Pelagianism crept into the churches, and Arianism followed, and both together brought in Socinianism. The Catechism, before accepted as the common symbol of faith, was displaced by latitudinarian substitutes. Harvard College was removed from its original foundations, and given to the support of another gospel.

Besides these defections from the faith, the evangelical forces were weakened by division. On the one side there were astute metaphysicians and earnest working men, called New Calvinists. On the other were those not less earnest and practical, or less mighty in the Scriptures, called Old Calvinists. Unhappily, plans of benevolent action proposed by one class, were regarded with a degree of distrust by the other, or failed of that full coöperation which their importance demanded. It was at this period, the year 1805, that Dr. Austin gave utterance to his feelings of both despondency and distrust. "If I am sick of myself, I am not much less sick of the greater part of the good men I know — so much jealousy and so much reason for it. Our present state of disunion and confusion is our reproach."

In the midst of such discordant elements, the youthful soldier was called to put on his armor; over this "sea of glass mingled with fire" required to make his way.

By the arrangements of Providence, Mr. Woods was brought into close connection with two persons, whose influence and friendship entered largely into his subsequent career. And, to complicate the scene yet more, they were leading men in the two branches of the Calvinistic family. One was Dr. Samuel Spring, of Newburyport. In the purity of his purposes, and the intelligence and firmness of his self-sacrificing piety, Mr. Woods ever reposed the most implicit confidence. Although not entirely symbolizing in their theological views, they were yet so far in harmony as to secure a

cordial coöperation in most of their plans. When, in 1803, the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine was commenced, Dr. Spring earnestly solicited the aid of his able pen. Respecting a paper which Mr. Woods read to the Association on the half-way covenant, which, it was a favorite object of Dr. Spring to eradicate from the churches, he wrote, "I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for the wise and masterly manner in which your question was considered yesterday before the Sanhedrim. It is for want of information that we see so many new things." *

The other of these two men was Dr. Morse, of Charlestown, a man of generous affections and of a large philanthropy. His theology was not angular, but comprehensive, and of the genuine Pauline school. He was a fearless champion for the truth, and an uncompromising foe to the subtle errorists of the time. For him Mr. Woods cherished the sincerest affection.

Having, on the one hand, been solicited by Dr. Spring to contribute to the Magazine, which was the organ of one type of theology, he is now, in 1805, on the other hand, requested to unite as joint editor with Dr. Morse in conducting the Panoplist, † the organ of the other type. It was by his able articles prepared for this journal, in vindication of the doctrines of Calvinism, and of the Catechism as the continued

* In the sermon preached at the interment of Dr. Spring, referring to his interest in the founding of this institution, Dr. Woods says, "It is with the most delightful sensations that I now recollect how often, at that interesting period, I was invited, sometimes in the stillness of midnight, to kneel down with him, to invoke the name of God to render praise for his goodness, and to ask his guidance and blessing. I am a witness of his laborious and unceasing efforts in the cause of the Seminary, from its commencement till his last sickness. He watched over its interests and prayed for its prosperity with a father's heart, and we had reason to thank him, not only for his incessant watchfulness, but even for his *jealousy* over us; because it was a godly jealousy — the concern of an anxious father. It was an apprehension for which there was too much reason, that a spirit of literary pride should insinuate itself into the institution, and the light of truth and holiness be obscured."

† On the issue of the first number of the Panoplist, he wrote to his associate editor, "To-day Panoplist is born. I hope it will live to grow up and be a good man — the friend of knowledge and religion. I hope and pray that there may not be a spiece of ill nature in it. This does not belong to the Christian armor."

symbol of doctrinal unity in the churches, that his fame as a theological writer commenced.

Both these men had plans for a theological institution, which for several years had been silently, and for a greater part of the time unknown to each other, progressing toward maturity. Both had distinctive objects to be gained by such an institution. Each, too, had, independently of the other, fixed upon Mr. Woods as the most suitable person for a theological teacher, and from each he had received a distinct proposition to this effect. In 1806, the parties became acquainted with each other's purposes. In 1807, the public movement commenced. The unambitious candidate for advancement perceived in the two schemes general affinities and particular repellencies. With others, he saw the objections to two seminaries in such local proximity, and so much resembling each other in their objects and character; and availing himself of his relation to both parties, he determined to act the part of a mediator, and, if possible, to secure a union. For this work, his theological education under the benign influence of Dr. Backus, his pacific disposition, and the confidence reposed in him on both sides, peculiarly fitted him. Although he had not been half a score of years in the work of the ministry, he had seen and deeply deplored the evils of division and jealousy among ministers. He was willing to waive his own predilections as to unessentials, for the sake of harmonious action in defence of what was fundamental. He felt that the insidious and successful workings of error demanded an open, bold, and united resistance. "The liberalizers of the day," he said, "will undo every thing. 'Tis time to speak openly and plainly."

Of Dr. Spring's plan for a theological institution, he said to Dr. Morse, "I think it is good. But we wish to have all the orthodox influence in our State concentrated in one theological institution. This is *exceedingly* desirable. If we can only get all Calvinists together, we need not fear. The Hopkinsians must come down, and the moderate men must come up, till they meet. Then the host will be mighty." In this conciliatory spirit, against opposition and obloquy, he labored to bring together the two classes in the General Association.

But the coöperation of all in the support of one institution for training an effective Christian ministry, was the object which lay nearest his heart. The success of many other enterprises seemed to him, under God, to depend on this. When, in January, 1807, Dr. Morse, who was associated in his plan with Mr. Abbot, of Andover, wrote to him, saying, "Confer with Mr. Spring, and let me know whether he intends to unite with or oppose us in this institution," he felt that he could not have that movement go on without Dr. Spring's concurrence. And when, a few months later, he was present at a little meeting with Dr. Spring and Messrs. Bartlett and Brown, and it was decided to establish a school of theology in his own parish in Newbury, and he was designated as the teacher, he felt almost as strongly that he could not have *this* movement proceed without the coöperation of Dr. Morse and his associates at Andover. For a time he was in perplexity. He had refused the offer of a professorship when proposed by Dr. Morse. He now declined accepting one, when tendered by Dr. Spring, on his plan of a separate, party institution. The day following the meeting of the four gentlemen, Mr. Woods went to Charlestown to consult with Dr. Morse. The next day but one, Dr. Morse came to Andover to consult with Dr. Pearson. Two days later, Dr. Morse went to Newbury to confer with Mr. Woods, where he passed the Sabbath. On Monday, they went together to Newburyport to see Dr. Spring. Thus negotiations were commenced, which, despite all counter influences, after nearly eighteen months, resulted in the happy union of the parties and the opening of this Theological Seminary, September 28, 1808.

Having been appointed by Mr. Abbot to the chair of Christian theology, as a result of this union, and having removed with his young family to this hill the preceding summer, Dr. Woods entered upon that course of theological instruction to which he devoted the greater part of his subsequent life. Thirteen students joined the institution during the first four weeks of the term. Dr. Pearson was his only associate. Of seminary buildings there were none; and of theological books but few, and those belonging to the library

of Phillips Academy. His first instructions were given in his little parlor in the small dwelling still standing some four-score rods from this on the Lowell road. Two were graduated after a partial course of one year, as the first fruits of the youthful institution. Although it was the day of small things in comparison with what has followed, those engaged in the enterprise were not easily disheartened. They believed themselves to be doing God's work, and they laid deep and broad foundations. They wished to provide for the church a learned, orthodox and pious ministry. For this the founders had placed as the theological basis of the Seminary that comprehensive symbol of the reformed faith, the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. To guard this basis, the associate founders added a specific creed, more minute in some things and less so in others, but in nothing conflicting with it.

With these views of the founders, and with the system thus defined as the theology of the Seminary, Dr. Woods was in cordial agreement. Their restrictions interposed no barrier to his freedom of inquiry. For ten years his range of study had been over the whole field of revealed religion, under no restraints but those which truth imposes. And during the thirty-eight years of his occupancy of the chair of theology, his instructions were in such harmony with the standard of the institution, as to give entire satisfaction to the two boards of trust.

The union of the Evangelical parties in founding the Seminary prepared the way, as was expected, for other philanthropic and Christian combinations. The Missionary Magazine, according to his earnest desire, was immediately merged in the Panoplist. The General Association soon became more comprehensive and consolidated. The missionary spirit among the Seminary students created a necessity for a missionary society. Consultations, preliminary to the organization of the American Board, were held on this hill with the Professors—Woods, Porter, and Stuart; and a part of the counsellors, Dr. Spring, and Rev. Mr. Worcester, the next day went from these deliberations to Bradford, where the Board had its birth.

At the "Monday evening meetings" in Dr. Porter's study, commenced a little more than forty years ago, we see six

humble men quietly preparing electric wires, on which their influence was to pass round the world, and round, till the whole atmosphere is kindled to a blaze of light. Of this noble band four are not — Porter, Stuart, Edwards, and he who has just fallen asleep.* That little room is hallowed as the birthplace of great thoughts and schemes of massive moral grandeur. There, in 1813, the germ of the American Tract Society sprang into being. Dr. Woods assisted in preparing and examining tracts, and with a subscription paper secured the means of publishing them, while another member of the circle contracted with the printer. How mighty is the tree into which this twig has grown, striking its roots deep into the soil of the age, and scattering abroad its leaves for the healing of the nations!

Soon after, in the same circle of devoted men, the Temperance Society had its origin. It was suggested that a fund should be raised to employ some suitable man in collecting facts, and laying them before the public. Dr. Woods again took his subscription paper, and with Mr. Edwards went to Boston, making application to a distinguished philanthropist and friend of temperance. He received a courteous but decided refusal: "I have for many years given money and labor to reform inebriates, and with no success." "But," replied Dr. Woods, "we have got a *new idea*. We do not expect to have much success in reforming drunkards; we wish, by the principle of entire abstinence, to prevent temperate men from becoming drunkards." This secured for him five hundred dollars, and upon this "new idea" the true temperance movement had its beginning. Dr. Woods addressed to the public the first appeal in behalf of the society, and for a long time was chairman of the executive committee. At this same source the American Education Society took its rise.

From this fountain, destined to a more enduring fame than was imparted by Delphic oracles, gushed forth the fertilizing rills which, for more than a generation have been commingling in deepening and widening channels, to flow in refluent tides over the land and over the world. At this fount no one

* The remaining two are John Adams, LL. D., and Samuel Farrar, Esq.

stood with a more inspiring genius than he who came as the first Professor to this sacred Seminary. His interest in all the benevolent associations of the age increased with the increase of years. Of two or three he continued the presiding officer till his decease, and of several others was a working member so long as health allowed. During his last sickness, letters were received from several of these institutions, soliciting his opinion on matters of moment. And the last of his benefactions was to one of these societies, sent in a letter dictated in this same sickness.

In the public controversies of the last forty years, he has also borne a distinguished part. And, as these were conducted by him and his colleague, Professor Stuart, and such men as Morse, Worcester, and Evarts, they were, by the divine favor, the means of first placing a check to the inrushing tide of error, and then of turning it back. They fought a good fight; they *kept* the faith.

After thirty-eight years of unremitted toil in the service of the Seminary, — after all the founders and all the original guardians but two had passed away, — in the seventy-second year of his age, the connection of Dr. Woods with this institution was brought to a close. He had rocked it in the cradle of its infancy; he had borne it as on his bosom of love, watching over it at every step of its progress with the tenderest care. It had lain on his heart as a child, and the fervor of his affection for it grew with its growth and strengthened with its strength. But he did not regard himself as discharged from his Master's service. His mental eye had not grown dim, nor was his intellectual force abated. He engaged with alacrity in the most important work of his whole life — the revision for the press of his theological lectures and a portion of his miscellaneous writings. These he gave to the world under his own hand. They have gone into the four quarters of the globe. His grateful pupils ponder them in India and in Persia, on the shores of the Levant and of the Pacific, at the mouth of the Gaboon and in the valley of the Mississippi. They are found in the universities of England and of Scotland. They are read in the cottage of the peasant and the palace of the prince. These works,

with his earnest prayers for the divine blessing upon them, are his rich legacy to the church. They will constitute a monument more enduring than Parian or Pentelic marble.

A portion of the last four years he has been occupied in writing the history of this school of the prophets. To no work has he given more assiduous care; in none has he labored with more patience under the difficulties of collecting all the diverse and scattered materials, and in none evinced a stronger desire for perfect accuracy, and to exhibit the objects of the Seminary in the light of the acts, and instruments, and designs of the founders. For such a work no man had equal advantages. He was an agent or an eye witness in almost every thing relating to its establishment. He often heard from the lips of the founders an explanation of every public document, and was familiar with their private views and their most cherished wishes. This work occupied his last thoughts. It received his deliberate approval in his dying hours. Had he lived longer, he might have made additions; but just entering eternity, he saw nothing to alter. His latest efforts were expended in perfecting it; dictating to another, when no longer able to use his pen, even to the last week of his life. Thus he continued to bring forth fruit in old age. He fell with his armor on. But he now rests from his labors, and his works do follow him.

I should fail of what this occasion requires, did I not allude to the more prominent elements of Dr. Woods's character.

His *mental qualities* did not place him in the rank of brilliant men. The structure of his mind was solid rather than showy. His learning was not as extensive and varied as that of some whose early opportunities were more favorable; but what he did possess was peculiarly his own.

One of his characteristics, but little observed in only a general acquaintance, was a playful *humor*. "While at college," says a classmate, "he was eminently distinguished for his keen wit and satire." But he regarded wit as a dangerous weapon in the hands of a Christian minister. It was therefore controlled, and nearly subdued by the kindness of his heart and his sense of duty. When the keen edge of his

satire sometimes involuntarily showed itself upon his page, he immediately so blunted it, that this characteristic seldom appears except in his most familiar epistles.

He was influenced beyond what is common, by a *love of knowledge* for its own sake. Few men so much and so long in the public eye, have discovered less regard for a merely literary reputation. He desired to know things in their causes and moral relations, their laws and their religious uses. Of the abstruse subjects which occupied his thoughts, while he studied to attain all that comes within the province of human research, he soon found that there are limits beyond which labor is wasted, often worse than wasted. Though speculation sometimes issues in knowledge, yet, because it generally ends in error or mere conjecture, he seldom speculated.

Closely connected with this love of knowledge, and partly growing out of it, was his habit of patient, careful and cautious *inquiry*. Some minds leap to results at a single bound. Their conclusions are intuitively perceived in their premises. They will learn as much of a difficult subject by a few glimpses as by long study, perhaps as they can ever learn. Dr. Woods did not belong to this class. Whatever was deserving of attention he regarded as worthy of patient and careful study. He thence came to a difficult problem prepared for discouragements. He walked around it; he surveyed it at all its different angles, and in all its diverse lights. Then, removing the rubbish, he commenced his entrance at the point from which he could most easily reach the centre.

In gathering up the results of his inquiries, he carefully excluded whatever did not bear the impress of truth. These elements of his opinions were then cast into the alembic of his scrutinizing mind, and tested by all the criteria of science within his reach. After this they were allowed a place among his settled principles.*

By this cautious process, he was constantly extending his

* In reference to this careful and persevering habit, he once wrote to a friend, "My father's mode of instruction was such as required me to think for myself. He would let me study on a hard question in arithmetic for many days rather than give me any assistance. To this early discipline I am chiefly indebted for any patience and perseverance in study which I possessed in after life."

intellectual domain, and taking more assured possession of it. He was never weary of an old truth because of its age, nor repelled from a new one because it was new. He believed in improvements in theologians and theological science, though not in theological truths. He regarded these improvements as coming through much study and prayer, by approximations of human ideas and human hearts to the revealed standard of doctrine and the model of the Christian life. He accepted certain views of progress; but his cautious habit led him to take no step until he was sure that it was not a backward movement. Much that the world esteems progress he counted the reverse. If his caution made him conservative, his abhorrence of evil made him also a friend to all judicious reforms. He moved slowly because he moved with care, and with care that he might move securely and lose no time. If he seldom had occasion to retract his opinions, it was from the patient labor and caution with which he formed them.

The *logical* power of his mind deserves a passing notice. It was not merely the power of consecutive thought, for thoughts may be consecutive without constituting a logical process. There is a quality of mind which reasons legitimately from a given premise, but from a defective discrimination in determining this starting point, the result is an intellectual structure, well jointed and of good proportions, with no defect except that it has no foundation. The logic of Dr. Woods led him to be particularly careful with regard to his first principles. He saw that if these were wrong, whatever was in agreement with them must also be wrong. In mental and theological science, he adopted the Baconian method, reasoning from facts to laws, and from laws to general principles. In theology he placed Christ in the *centre*, rejecting whatever was derogatory to this primal arrangement. This was the crowning excellence of all his logical processes as a Christian, a minister, and a teacher of theology. He bowed with a profound submission to the inspired Word as the sovereign authority in all human reasonings and theological investigations.

As a consequence of these mental habits, the intellectual

character of our venerated friend was distinguished by a high degree of *candor*. He was attached to an opinion, not because it was his, but because he regarded it as true.* He never objected to having his views examined. He never exhibited impatience on seeing them questioned, but rather was accustomed to lay them open in the freest manner, and to invite inspection. "I cannot but feel," said he more than twenty years ago, "that every public teacher of religion needs the vigilant inspection of his brethren. We ought also to crave it as a privilege. And if at any time the friends of Christ, apprehending that we have begun to wander from the right way, suddenly raise the cry of alarm, instead of complaining of their want of confidence in us, or indulging any suspicions as to the motives which govern them, we ought to bless God that he has given them a heart to feel so lively an interest in the cause of truth, and to take so quick an alarm at the sight, or even the apprehension, of danger."

These qualities of mind were of peculiar service to him as an *instructor*. When his pupils lost themselves in the labyrinths of theological speculation, having threaded the mazes beforehand, he would go in after them and patiently lead them out. If they were inclining to settle on some false principle, the force of his logic was employed, mainly in the Socratic method, to show them its absurdity, or its discordance with other admitted principles, or its erroneous logical sequences.

There was often in his manner of putting a question a peculiar power of extricating an honest mind from an embarrassing difficulty. Large is the debt of gratitude cheerfully acknowledged to him by many ministers and Christians, who have been led to settled and satisfactory views on intricate subjects, by his lucid method of treating them.†

* Of the system of theology to which from the beginning he was attached, he says, "Such, my brother, is the spirit of genuine Calvinism. I glory in being its professed and conscientious advocate, not because I value it as the ensign of a party, but because, in my view, it contains the substance of sacred truth, and echoes the voice of God. Such, as I have imperfectly described, is the character it has taught me to ascribe to the great Being of beings. How attractive, how venerable, how glorious!" — *Panoplist*, vol. i. p. 438.

† An Association of Ministers were once examining for license one of his students, in his presence. "One difficulty after another came up," says an eye wit-

Of these intellectual characteristics the productions of Dr. Woods contain intrinsic evidence.

His *style* bears marks of the care with which all his mental processes were conducted. It is rigidly Anglo-Saxon, and of Doric simplicity. With a little occasional diffuseness, it is yet so transparent, like the waters of Lake Superior, that superficial thinkers have pronounced him less profound than some others, whose turbid style rather conceals than discloses their thoughts.

It is peculiarly suited to the elucidation of abstruse subjects, and the inculcation of important truths. Free from foreign words and idioms, from cataracts and chasms, it has an easy, onward movement, as of a well-constructed, seaworthy vessel, on the broad ocean of thought, freighted with gems and treasures from the rich mines of truth.

His *controversial* writings exhibit in a high degree, not only his logical powers, but also his candor. He had an object in them all — some radical error to expose, or some cardinal truth or system of truths to defend. He neither departed from the main question, nor permitted his antagonist to do so with impunity. In the "Reply" to his opponent in the longest and most effective of his controversies, passing over "many passages of taking plausibility; against which a charge of incorrectness might easily be maintained," he says, "My purpose is to fix on the main points of the controversy. If we can by legitimate arguments support the chief doctrines of our system, and vindicate them from the chief objections of opposers, the work is done. Let the strength of the foundation be made to appear, and we shall not doubt the building will stand. And as to the scheme which we feel it to be our duty to oppose, if we can succeed in taking away its foundation, we shall deem it sufficient, without either making a violent attack upon the superstructure to hasten its fall, or standing by to exult in its ruins." His "Letters" had called out the strong man of the liberal party.

ness, "and the candidate and ministers were all perplexed, when the candidate said, 'Now, gentlemen, if Dr. Woods could only ask me one or two questions, the whole thing would be cleared up.'"

As a theological instructor, his antagonist was several years his senior. He had long sat at the centre of literary influence, and was possessed of a varied learning and metaphysical acumen. Occupying the chair of Divinity Professor in the State University, he was justly accredited as the theologian laureate. His defence of the liberal faith, and his assault upon the orthodox system, were more courteous, more elaborate, and perhaps more profound than those of any other controversialist of the time.

In treating his opponent's argument, Dr. Woods gives it the advantage of a clear and full statement in the author's own words. Then he commences by taking one stone after another from the logical masonry of its foundation. And when the demolition is completed, his antagonist, in view of the ruins, concludes that "they show, not the weakness of the cause, but that its strength has not been fully displayed," striving to shield his system at the expense of his own reputation as a skilful defender.

Dr. Woods was not a lover of polemical warfare, but on the contrary, perceived many and strong reasons for avoiding it. He says, "I have seen that it has so often occasioned the offensive boast of victory, or that which is no less offensive, the sullen mortification of defeat; that it has so often injured the beauty of men's characters, cooled the ardor of their piety, and detracted from their comfort, or at least from the comfort of their friends, that I have earnestly wished to avoid the danger. I have wished also, if possible, to avoid * * the unhappiness of being reproached or despised by my opposers, or the greater unhappiness of feeling a disposition to reproach or despise them." But he loved truth more than personal ease and comfort, and more than he feared danger in standing for its defence. He felt that this Seminary was founded for the defence as well as the diffusion of the faith, and that peace which is procured by a compromise with error is treason to Christ. Strong hands had grasped the pillars of the Christian system, and were laboring to wrench them from their foundation. Many anxious eyes were turned toward this hill. Therefore, he said, "I must go forward, hoping to derive benefit to myself from the

kind and amiable temper of my opponent, and no less benefit to my cause from the frankness with which he declares his opinions, and the zeal with which he attacks mine."

Did he in a single instance violate the decorum of Christian discussion? Did he once attempt to turn the point of an argument by sarcasm? Did controversy in his hands ever degenerate into rancor or a strife for conquest? Truth was always dearer to him than victory. He felt that to lose one's temper in a grave discussion is to surrender the citadel in a vain effort to defend the outworks. He says, "I cannot avoid the persuasion that I should commit a less offence against the Christian religion by bad reasoning than by a *bad spirit*, and therefore that I am bound to take as much pains at least to cherish *right feeling* as to frame right arguments."*

Most cordially did he adopt upon this subject the sentiments of Bishop Hall. "God abides none but charitable dissensions: those that are well grounded and well governed; grounded upon just causes, and governed with Christian charity and wise moderation."

The *Lectures* of Dr. Woods possess every attribute of a careful, cautious, logical, and elaborate system. He did not claim for it perfection. Alas! he knew that this belongs to nothing human. But his systematic theology is the ripe fruit of his life-long study. It was the *growth* of his mental and moral being rather than a product; more an organism than a mechanism, so much was it a matter of consciousness, of experience. Beside this, the two great pillars of his system, sin and salvation, have their basis in the two great facts of history—the fall of man in the moral corruption of his nature, and the vicarious sacrifice of Christ in the redemptive assumption of this nature. These pillars he guarded with a

* Of one series of his controversial letters, an acute British reviewer said, "They afford an excellent example of the close and pressing pursuit of an antagonist, without, as we can perceive, the slightest improper feeling. There is no vaunting, no contempt; there are no anathemas, and no imputations; but many serious and reasonable cautions, the fruit of experience and sound piety."—*London Eclectic Review*.

jealous care, walling them around with the massive blocks of his logic, and the warm cement of his love. Of whatever tended to weaken their foundation he had a godly fear. For he said, "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" and that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The *social disposition and moral sentiments* of Dr. Woods were as marked as the intellectual qualities with which they formed so delightful a harmony. A naturally ardent and impulsive temperament, blending with his cautious habit of mind, resulted in a cheerful equanimity and self-control, as attractive as it was happy in its influence in both public and private life. If, for a moment his feelings were disturbed, they almost immediately subsided, as the wave dies upon the shore. He was peculiarly confiding, sometimes to his own injury. Practising no arts himself, he was little inclined to suspect them in others. Kindness constituted a prominent element of his nature. He would not unnecessarily injure the smallest insect, and he was more careful than any man we have ever known, not to utter a word that could wound the feelings of any human being. In his connection with the Seminary, if, in the duty of admonition and discipline, which in a great measure was assigned to him, aught occurred making a contrary impression on any of his pupils, a few years of mature reflection have, in most such instances, led to a frank acknowledgment of both the friendliness and discretion of their teacher.

Out of this natural kindness, by the refinements of human culture and divine grace, grew that woman's tenderness of sympathy, of which so many sorrowing hearts have had a most consolatory experience in his visits and by his letters. How many chambers of sickness have been illumined by the light of his presence! How many murmuring spirits have been hushed to submission by the great Comforter through the subduing tones of his touching prayers! How many could say to him as David to Jonathan, "Very pleasant hast thou been unto me"!

In a large family circle, never was a brother cherished with

a warmer sisterly and fraternal affection, and never was there a more full and sincere return.

The filial tie was peculiarly strong; and during the life of his excellent mother, he was accustomed to make a semi-annual pilgrimage to her home, ministering to her in the infirmities of age, in such tokens of affection as were prompted by filial gratitude and love. To her sympathy and energy in encouraging and assisting him in his early struggles for an education, he was wont to ascribe much of his subsequent success. Shortly after her decease, he writes, "When I go to Princeton, it will be a gloomy place to me. Our beloved mother gone! - It cuts me to the heart to think of it. I shall go away to my rock and my bower, and shall weep at the remembrance of departed parents, and days and years that are past. I shall take a farewell of that house where I was born, and where once were hearts that loved me, and made my improvement and happiness one of the dearest objects of their life. I shall take a farewell of those hills, and pastures, and trees, and rocks, so associated with the most tender and interesting recollections."

The strength of his home affections was not less marked. He was not "as a bird that wandereth from his nest." He lived in the bosom of his family. If parental love, as it is wont, made him sometimes blind to the failings of his children, it gave him, nevertheless, an ever-present corrective influence, which sternness of authority alone does not command. He entered into all the little joys and sorrows of his children, remembering that he was once a child, and continuing in some respects still to be one. His peculiar affection for little ones is manifest from a letter to a bereaved mother, in which he says, "It seems to me I should be very happy to be in the paradise of God, with a company of children; that the company of such darling children would be more delightful to me than that of Newton and Locke."

His social nature was developed and matured by being brought into all the relations of life, and by suffering bereavement in them all. After the death of a dear child, he writes, "I find the wound is likely to heal with most others while it is all fresh with me. I cry out when I am alone, 'O,

when shall I see her smiling face again, and hear her pleasant voice?" When suffering from a still severer stroke of the chastening hand, he exclaims, "O my poor, stricken heart! I cannot bear up under my thoughts. Away I must go to the blessed world, where the object of my love shines in perfect beauty, and serves and glorifies God with a heavenly activity and fulness of joy." His was a *whole* humanity, a capacious social nature. There were no general emergencies in the experience of others, for which he could not draw something of comfort or guidance from his own. In the sympathies of life he was ever young. Years came upon him, but his heart did not grow old. It beamed in his countenance in the glow of his warm and cordial greetings. Much of this affluence of his social nature was laid open to all. But there were refinements of feeling, delicacies of affection within the veil, visible only in those infinitesimal expressions which affection alone can appreciate or even interpret. And of the kindness and sympathy of others he possessed a grateful sense, as exquisite as was his delight in bestowing them. "Kind, tender feelings, and words, and actions," he said in a season of trial, "are flowing in upon me from dear children, and grandchildren, and friends; and how they cheer my sorrowing heart! I thank God for these precious favors. All the love that is found in human hearts is from him; it is a stream from the inexhaustible fountain. The stream is refreshing; but the fountain—O, if we may but drink at that!"

His attachment to those who had been early and long associated with him in the instruction and government of the Seminary grew stronger with years. They had mingled together their desires and prayers for its welfare. They had stood side by side in times that separated other men. And on the decease of Professor Stuart, with whom he was longest united in his official duties, he writes, "The death of brother Stuart is a serious matter to me. He has been very dear to my heart. Men fall away as apples from the tree in autumn. And now, of my old associates, I am left alone—as a single apple; and who knows how soon the wind will shake that off!"

In the purity of his social affections, and the reciprocal influence of his moral sentiments and intellectual powers, lay the secret of his high enjoyment in social and professional life. He was a stranger to that ennui which makes life a burden to some. He knew nothing of those disgusts with society which afflict so many others. He was never weary of labor, though often weary in it. His habits of industry, which remained unbroken at the age of fourscore, were not more the result of moral principle than of the zest with which, to the last, he continued his mental toils.

At the general meeting of the alumni of the Seminary in 1847, Dr. Woods made a brief address. "He ascended the pulpit," says one who was present, "with the same erect form, and serene, benignant countenance as in former years. Some of us had not seen him since we began to preach, twenty or thirty years before, and few of us were to hear his voice again."

Adverting to his personal experience, he remarked, "It is not common that a man says, at the end of forty years in any pursuit, he has enjoyed as much as he expected. I am permitted to say that I have found more happiness in my professional labors than I anticipated. But I have one regret. It has been my purpose and delight to honor Christ in my course of public instruction. My regret is, that I have not honored him *more*."

But it is the distinctively *Christian* character of Dr. Woods which awakens our deepest interest and attracts our profoundest regards.

At the age of ten, he was the subject of religious impressions, which, however, in a great measure passed away. It was in his twenty-third year, — the year after he left college, — that he made a confession of his faith, and united with the church.

The purity of his early religious sentiments had been corrupted by the infusions of a seductive and vain philosophy. But in the seclusion of his own room, he is led to read, not elaborate treatises on the evidences of Christianity, but that unpretending, yet most admirable confuter of carnal wisdom,

Doddridge's Rise and Progress. It was in such resistless agreement with the plain sense of the Scriptures and his own consciousness of sin, and it came with such demonstration of the power of God, that his disenchantment from all merely rationalistic philosophies was complete. No experimental measures were tried upon him. No heat of an excited assembly fused his mind, and heart, and nervous sensibilities into an amalgam of merely human elements, to be afterwards hardened into more obdurate forms. But in the anguish of his spirit, he knelt alone, and clasping his Bible, he raised it over him as did John Huss, and cried, "O God, my Lord, and Master of my life." Henceforth Christ was to him all and in all, the beginning, the middle, and the end of his theology and his life. The free fields by day, and the star-lit canopy by night, now wakened in him a keener sense of the beautiful and the sublime in nature, because they spake to him of the great and good Father who *so* loved the world. The bold Wachuset, on which, in after years, he so often, from this hill, gazed with delight, as it lay bathed in the glories of the setting sun, now breathed upon him the language of invitation and of love, as from the lips of that Father.

"For several months preceding," he says, "I was the subject of distressing convictions of sin. I found in myself painful evidence of what the Scriptures teach — that the carnal mind is enmity against God."

Under date of September 30, 1796, he writes to his friend, Mr. Church, from whose discreet counsels and affectionate interest he derived great benefit, "You wish to hear of the health of my soul. After I wrote to you, I grew lower and lower. The exercises of my mind were very violent. I feared a relapse into carelessness and unconcern. I could not obtain an answer to my prayers. I was clamorous in address to God. I could not find him. I sank, I sank — O the depths of despair! Terror, amazement, cold chills of body and mind, sometimes a flood of sorrow; hard thoughts of God, dreadful conceptions of his character; — I have no words to express my state for about a week. I felt my health declining. I wandered about. I tried to run from myself. I awoke in the morning, and read my sentence

for having committed the unpardonable sin. I should have preferred millions of millions of millions of centuries of the most exquisite misery to my *chance*." Six weeks later, he writes to the same friend, "I am a poor, tempest-beaten creature. Pride, and doubt, and false hopes, and reasonable fears, and dangerous joy, and dark apprehensions compose the round of my existence. I care not, however, what I suffer, if I can but be truly humbled. When I say I am humble, I find afterwards it was spiritual pride. I have built up and torn down a hundred times. One day I feel quite easy; the next I chide my foolish hopes. One time I give myself to Christ; another I find I did not do what I thought I did. When I get a little joy by supposing that Christ will accept me, then I begin to think I am a little less sinful. That thought proves that I am more so. Alas, what snares I have been in!" At length the Spirit of God, through the message of mercy, gradually raised him up from his despondency, and inspired him with a hope of salvation by free grace. He was never accustomed to speak of his change with the confidence which many feel. The greater his advancements in holiness, the more visibly did the evil of his sinful nature and life stand out before him. His was a style of character which there is some reason to fear is passing away. It arose into an attractive elevation and symmetry from a deep and broad foundation in the consciousness of sin and adoring views of divine sovereignty. After forty years of Christian pilgrimage, he says, "The sight of a thousandth part of my sinfulness of heart and life has filled me with amazement and shame." But his experience of the amplitude of divine grace was as elevated as his sense of sin was self-abasing. In the same connection, he adds, "But O, there is very plenteous redemption—sufficient even for me; and if for me, for any one on earth." Here is the root from which grew, in such beautiful harmony, contrition and confidence.

From this base rose the character of Edwards, like a monumental shaft, in the simplicity and loftiness of moral grandeur. "My wickedness," says he, "seems to me perfectly ineffable;" and hence came his iron firmness in battling with it.

Between the religious character of Dr. Woods and his theological system there was a peculiar and living harmony. "As face answereth to face in water," so did his Christian experience correspond with his doctrinal belief. It was the union of both which constituted the substance and symmetry of his intellectual and moral life. He could no more essentially change his creed than he could change the course of his consciousness, or the facts of his religious history. The Holy Spirit had quickened the truths of the divine Word into a living and resistless demonstration in his heart, thus making them equally a matter of the affections and the intellect. The self-distrust and humility which were observed by all, and most by those who knew him best, grew out of his clear discovery of his own sinfulness. His conceptions of the divine character and sovereignty had a counterpart in his abasement before God and desire to be changed into his image.

The particular providence, so vital in his system, enabled him to see a paternal love in the government of the material not less than of the moral world, and led him, with an equal filial confidence, to pray for the arrest of a wasting pestilence and of a blighting heresy.

His ideas of moral agency came to a result in his sense of personal responsibility. His doctrine of divine efficiency deepened the feeling of his absolute dependence, and made him a man of much prayer. Justification through faith by the righteousness of Christ, which, with Luther, he regarded as the article of a standing or a falling church, led him to discard all merit from the best of his own works, resting his hope for salvation solely on the merits of another. At the same time, it was one of his firmest and most controlling convictions, that no faith can be verified as genuine except by the fruits of obedience and love.

His belief in the lapsed condition of the race, and his faith in Christianity as adequate to its recovery, was the occasion of his deep interest in all movements for the diffusion of the gospel, and gave him a pure and permanent satisfaction in whatever he was able to do for the promotion of this object. From the necessity imposed upon him in the struggles of his

early life, he formed a habit of economy and of exactness in little things as well as great. But his was a liberal heart. To the poor he opened his hand wide, and the needy never went from his door empty away. The economy and self-denial commenced in necessity were continued from Christian principle. He gave largely to charitable objects in proportion to his means, because he had a plan for doing it. The simplicity of his domestic arrangements, and his remoteness from prodigal expenditure, became a part of this plan, and received from it, not only the vitality of Christian virtue, but its dignity and beauty.

The view he took of the kingdom of Christ made him hopeful with regard to the final triumph of truth. His confidence was not derived from the experimental philosophy, although it is no longer an experiment that the gospel, as the power of God, is adequate to the transformation of the rudest and most malignant specimens of human depravity. If the prevalence of error, and the din of strife in the church, and the inrushing of iniquity agitated him for the moment, he remembered that God is a sovereign, and was calmed. There are mysteries in providence and redemption which he could not fathom; but in the simplicity of his faith, perceiving in this the finiteness of his own nature, and the infiniteness of God's wisdom and power, he thence rested with a more unwavering confidence in the stability and equity of the divine administration. In such a trusting spirit he writes, "Wonderful things in the course of God's administration will take place, scenes of overwhelming interest will open before us, and the universe will see that there is no fault in God, no mistake in his government. He will be glorified and admired forever."

From his long experience as an instructor, from his exalted views of the sacred office, and his discernment of the signs of the times, he was impressed with the peculiar qualifications required in those who aspire to be preachers of the gospel. To a pupil, many years ago, after listening to his first sermon in this chapel, he wrote, "We want men at this day who have clear and deep views of the doctrines of revelation, and of the duties and graces of Christianity; men who

cleave to the Bible, who avoid unscriptural speculations and offensive phrases, who are as firm and as pliable as Paul,—men who are free from party spirit, who guard and qualify their positions, so that while they teach the truth, they may mix no error with it; we want men of sober judgment, of candor toward those who differ, men of a lamb-like, dove-like spirit, and who will so preach, and so write, and so live as to secure the entire confidence of the whole Christian community. Now, it is the desire of my heart that you may be one of this number.”

Many students of this Seminary could bear testimony to the earnestness and fidelity of his personal efforts, by correspondence, and conversation, and prayer, to raise their character into agreement with such a standard. He felt the importance of a varied learning in the ministry. But he regarded as much more essential to ministerial success, fervent and humble piety. He considered the power of the pulpit as peculiarly a moral and spiritual power, not literary or philosophical; that it is acquired more by increase of holiness than by scientific attainments. During his long connection with the Seminary, it was his first object, of which he never for a moment lost sight, to advance the piety of his pupils, by increasing their knowledge of God and man, and of the way of reconciliation through the cross. It was for this that the institution was founded, and on this account he placed it in the front rank of human agencies for promoting the kingdom of Christ. He loved it with a pure and permanent love. If to some he may have seemed over-fearful, it was the solicitude of intense affection for an object dear to him as the apple of his eye, and to which a near approach to the heavenly world only gave purity and intensity—an affection which, in the last hours of his earthly life, fervently implored for the students, and teachers, and trustees, and visitors of the beloved Seminary the guidance and blessing of Him who is head over all things to the church.

As the shadows of life were lengthening upon him, his humility and sense of the divine favor evidently increased.

A year or two before his death, he writes, "My trials have been not a few; but O, how do the divine favors predominate! I wonder at God's forbearance and goodness, and at the poor returns — the *no* returns — I have made to the God of all grace." On the 18th of last June, the day preceding the eightieth anniversary of his birth, in a letter to one of his children, he says, "To-morrow is my birthday. I know not how to express my admiration of the long-suffering and goodness of God toward me during these fourscore years."

During the last winter, the health of Dr. Woods was unusually good. But the time was drawing nigh when the silver cord must be loosed. On the 8th of the last month, from over-exertion in the extreme heat, an affection of the heart, which for thirty years had been comparatively dormant, was roused into activity. The following day, which was the Sabbath, he called in the physician, but could not be persuaded to remain from his wonted place in the sanctuary. He had a cherished plan, which at this time he greatly desired to execute. In a letter communicating the disappointment occasioned by his sickness, he said, "It was a favorite object, but I give up all, because such is the will of God." He continued to take gentle exercise in the open air till the 27th, when the difficulty of respiration was greatly increased. For much of the remaining time, his distress was like the agonies of death; yet he bore it all without a murmur. During the last three or four weeks, he was unable to talk, except with great difficulty. But the few words he uttered were in delightful harmony with the language of his life. To one of his former pupils, who inquired respecting his views as expressed in his works, he replied in broken language, "No change." But immediately, with a pleasant smile, he added, "Yes, there *is* a change. Those doctrines appear to me more truthful, more weighty, and more precious than ever." The sweetness of the Saviour's love was inexpressible, and on this rock he rested with unwavering trust. He repudiated every idea of worthiness in himself, and felt that he could be accepted only

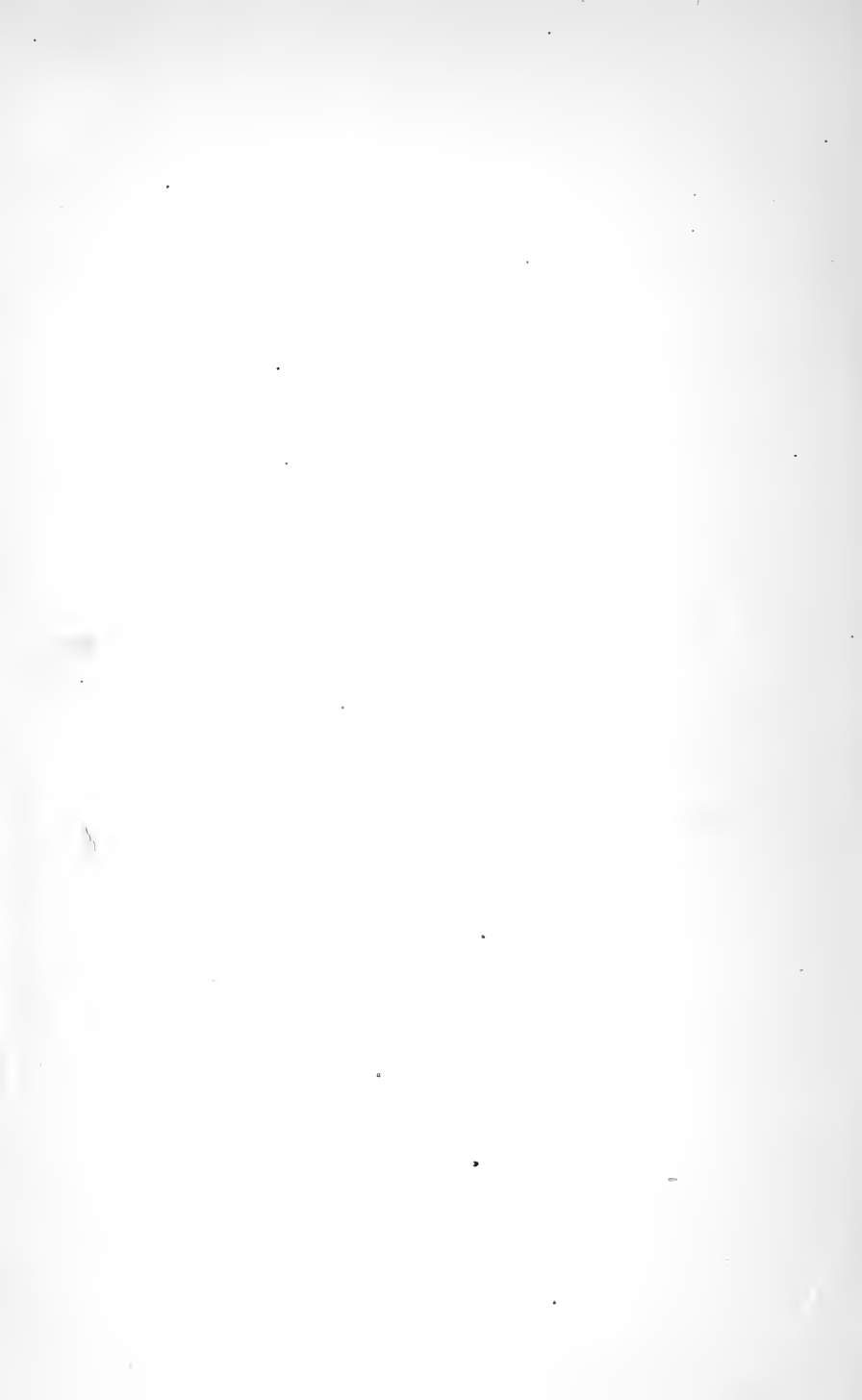
through the merits of Christ. When asked by one in attendance, if he should offer prayer for him, he replied, "No prayer will suit my case but that of the publican." And when it was repeated, "God be merciful to me a sinner," he gave his most significant assent. At another time he said, "I value your prayers, that I may have the grace of a full salvation." The last night, in the midst of extreme suffering, it was remarked to him, "You are almost home." Feebly he responded, "Blessed home!"

During his last few hours, his breathing became easy as that of an infant. As the sun was sinking in the west, and the veil of darkness was settling upon the face of the earth, gently the light of his life passed away. That noble and venerated form now lies silent before us. Those feet, ever swift to run at the call of sorrow, will no more tread these shady walks or yonder quiet grove, where he was wont to listen to the music of the rustling leaves, and hold sweet communion with Heaven. That mild blue eye, which so often lighted up his benignant countenance in this sacred desk, as redeeming love glowed in his heart, is now closed forever. That pleasant voice, from which, within these hallowed walls, for so many years, fell the accents of instruction and love, is hushed in death.

But that redeemed, immortal spirit, soaring from earth, has risen to the higher and glorious life. With Spring and Morse, with Abbot, and Bartlett, and Brown, and Norris, with Porter and Griffin, with Stuart and the Edwardses so recently preceding him, he walks the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, or stands entranced amid blazing glories now bursting on his view. Vailing his face from the ineffable brightness, he yet presses onward. With patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, through the divine oracles, he had long been familiar. He now talks with them face to face; with Abraham and Paul, discoursing on that wonderful theme, more wonderful as seen in heaven — justification through the righteousness of faith; with the beloved John, who leads him farther and farther into the opening mysteries of the great Triune, and of incarnate love. But he

still presses on, nor rests content till he reaches the throne of the Lord God and the Lamb. O the effulgent glory that now breaks on his enraptured vision!

“*Light! light!* — Look up! ’tis rushing down from high!
Regions on regions — far away they shine:
’Tis light *ineffable*, ’tis light *divine!*
IMMORTAL LIGHT! AND LIFE FOREVERMORE!”



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