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Bliss : Historical Memoir of the
Springfield Cemetery . 1857

U.S. 13459,10,100



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Ms. B.

HISTORICAL MEMOIR
OF THE
SPRINGFIELD CEMETERY,

READ TO THE PROPRIETORS AT THEIR MEETING, MAY 29, 1857.

—♦—

GEORGE BLISS,
THEIR PRESIDENT.

—♦—

Accompanied by an Address delivered at the Consecration of the Cemetery,

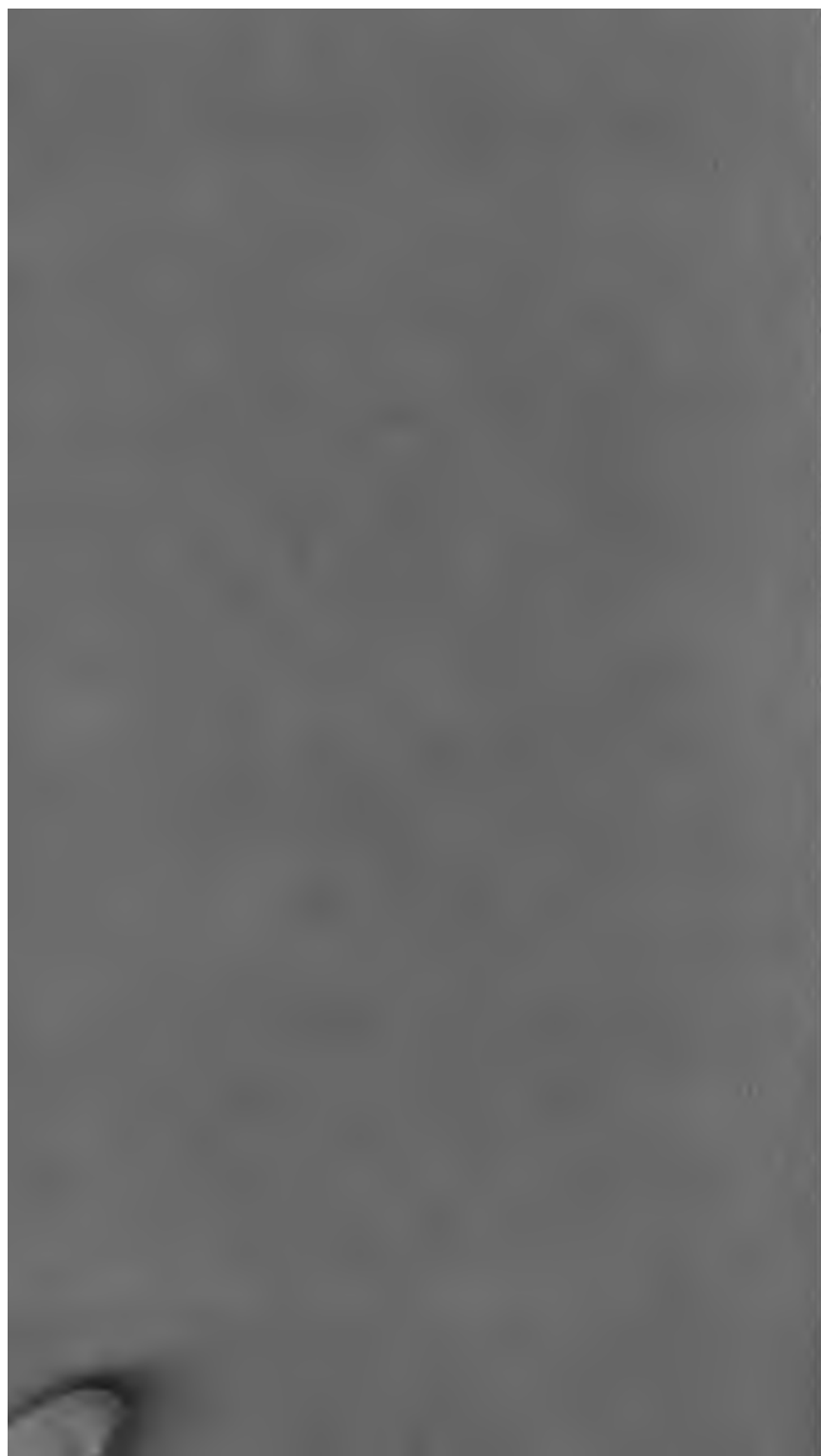
SEPTEMBER 5, 1841,

—♦—

REV. WM. B. O. PEABODY.

—♦—

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.
SAMUEL BOWLES AND COMPANY, PRINTERS:
1857.



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HISTORICAL MEMOIR
OF THE
SPRINGFIELD CEMETERY,

READ TO THE PROPRIETORS AT THEIR MEETING, MAY 23, 1857.

—BY—

GEORGE BLISS,
THEIR PRESIDENT.



Accompanied by an Address delivered at the Consecration of the Cemetery,

SEPTEMBER 5, 1841,

—BY—

REV. WM. B. O. PEABODY.



SPRINGFIELD, MASS.
SAMUEL BOWLES AND COMPANY, PRINTERS.
1857.

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1857 Dec 20

by mail

SPRINGFIELD CEMETERY.

TO THE PROPRIETORS OF THE SPRINGFIELD CEMETERY:—

THE Cemetery established and sustained with varying fortunes through a period of sixteen years, has become an institution of such absorbing interest and attachment to all our local population, that it is deemed proper to embrace the present occasion of your annual meeting to submit a brief memoir of its origin, progress and present condition. This is peculiarly appropriate now, as all the proposed purchases of territory have been made, the whole has been paid for, the association is out of debt, with a moderate surplus of funds, and the premises are all comparatively in good order.

ORIGIN AND ORGANIZATION.

On the 4th of October, 1840, an informal meeting of a few gentlemen was held for consultation on the subject of a "*Rural Cemetery*." This resulted in the appointment of committees to select and report upon a suitable location, and to prepare a form of association. At a meeting on the 28th of March, 1841, upon the report of these committees, it was voted to purchase of Mr. Alexander Bliss the part of the present premises known as "Martha's Dingle," being about twenty acres. Suitable access to the same was provided for, and measures taken for a legal organization. On May 6th, 1841, on the application of fourteen gentlemen, a warrant was issued by a magistrate for a legal meeting on the 9th.

At that meeting the present system of organization was perfected—a board of seven trustees provided for and chosen—and the Rev. Wm. B. O. Peabody elected President, an office which he continued to hold until his death in 1847.

To insure success to the enterprise, a subscription was taken up for shares in the company, of \$10 each, which, on the 1st of June, 1841, amounted to \$3,070, the subscribers to be at liberty to take an interest in lots to be laid out, to the extent of their subscriptions. The work of laying out, grading, planting, ornamenting and fencing the grounds, was commenced, and has been constantly pursued to the present time. The grounds have been enlarged by several additions since the first purchase, and they now contain about thirty-five acres of land at a total cost of about \$8,270 51; and they are believed to be ample for many generations to come. They include a house and lot in Mulberry street, adjoining the Cemetery, purchased for \$1,700, in 1848, for the use of the Superintendent—a part of which has been rented. A barn was erected near the house in 1849 for the purposes of the company, at a cost of about \$600. A receiving tomb was constructed in 1841, and being found too small, an addition of equal size has been recently made to it.

On the 5th day of September, 1841, the Cemetery was duly consecrated by religious services, and an appropriate address was delivered by the President, the Rev. Mr. Peabody.

On the 12th day of March, 1845, the trustees voted that it was expedient to build a gate-way according to a plan submitted by Mr. Peabody, and directed an estimate to be prepared. On the 26th of March, 1845, such an estimate was presented, and it was voted that the building of the gate-way be commenced under the superintendence of Messrs. Peabody, Eaton, G. Dwight, Brewer and Elwell. The work was prosecuted through that year, at great expense—the exact amount of which cannot well be ascertained; and in June, 1846, a vote was passed that Mr. G. Dwight go on with the gate-way at an expense not exceeding \$300. The structure was still unfinished; and the funds of the company being needed for other and more pressing purposes, the work was

suspended, and it has thus remained to the present time. A contract has now been made to complete it by the 15th of June next, according to the original drawing by Sikes, for \$160. From a cursory examination, it appears that the whole cost cannot be less than \$2000 to \$2,250. The trustees propose to cover it with suitable ornamental vines when finished.

In 1848, an arrangement was made by the trustees with the First Parish in Springfield, who held the title of the principal part of the old burying grounds on the river, at the foot and each side of Elm street, to convey the same to the proprietors of the Cemetery, on condition of the careful disinterment of the remains of all persons buried there, and the removal of such as should not be claimed and removed by their friends, to a portion of the Cemetery, specially and exclusively set apart for them adjoining Pine street, and their re-interment—the old monuments to be erected to their appropriate remains. This service was performed during that year, in a manner satisfactory to all parties, and with the following results:—

The number of bodies then removed from the old North Burying ground, - - - - -	1,624
From the South Burying ground, - - - - -	810
Total, - - - - -	<u>2,434</u>

Thirty of these were removed to other burying grounds; the residue were deposited in our Cemetery. Five hundred and seventeen old monuments and tablets were also removed. All remains having no monuments, and not recognized, were deposited together, and a common monument erected, designating the fact; the whole enclosure was surrounded by a hedge, and a monument, commemorative of these removals and re-interments, was erected near the eastern entrance on Pine street.

The whole expense attending this removal, was - -	\$1,625 33
To which add amounts paid for sundry private burial lots adjoining, not belonging to 1st Parish, - - -	420 62
Total cost of the old grounds, - - - - -	<u>\$2,045 95</u>

The lands of the old burying grounds were laid out into lots, and have now all been sold, and paid for from time to time :—

Producing in the whole, - - - - -	\$7,144 79
Deduct cost and expenses above, - - - - -	2,045 95
	<hr/>
Net proceeds, - - - - -	\$5,098 84

The whole number of lots in the Cemetery, sold in 16 years—up to May 1st, 1857, is 730. The whole number of burials is as follows :—

By sextons of different societies prior to the appointment of the Superintendent in 1842, say - - - - -	12 00
Removals by the Hartford railroad company, on locating their road—and removals by friends prior to 1848, say - - - - -	227 00
Removals by the Cemetery company in 1848, from the old grounds to their own premises, as before stated, - - - - -	2,404 00
Original burials by the Superintendent, from November 1842, to May 1, 1857, - - - - -	1,570 00
	<hr/>
Total, - - - - -	4,213 00

Of this last number about 170 original burials were upon the common ground owned by the Cemetery company, being principally paupers and strangers.

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Since June, 1841, there have been received by the treasurer to May 1st, 1857:—

From subscriptions and sales of lots as per annual statements annexed, "A," - - - - -	\$19,552 65
From Fairs and a Concert, - - - - -	2,440 47
From labor by the Superintendent for sundry owners of lots —attending funerals, use of tomb and burials, - - - - -	6,369 71
From rents, - - - - -	1,152 38
From sales of lands of the old burying ground, \$7,144 79	
Less paid expenses of removals and cost of private lots, - - - - -	2,045 95 — 5,098 84
Sundry miscellaneous sources, - - - - -	100 50
	<hr/>
Total, - - - - -	\$34,714 55

The payments have been as follows:—

For purchases of lands for the Cemetery from time to time as per the annexed schedule marked "B,"	\$8,270 51
For labor and sundry expenses of laying out, grading, pre- paring and ornamenting the grounds, building fences, drains, paths, a tomb, gateway, salaries of treasurer and other incidental expenses for sixteen years, and includ- ing interest,	25,037 54
Leaving a balance in the treasury May 4th, as per treasurer's report of that date, of	1,406 50
Total,	\$34,714 55

This is exclusive of receipts and payments on account of moneys borrowed. There are no debts outstanding, and no claims against the company unpaid.

I take great pleasure in congratulating the proprietors upon the eminent success which has thus far attended this enterprise—the entire prosperity of every department of their business, and the flattering prospects for the future. It is the purpose of the President and trustees to grade and prepare for sale, lots in different parts of the Cemetery as there shall be a demand for them, and gradually further to improve and ornament the grounds by the erection of more permanent fences, and the construction of durable sewers for temporary, insufficient ones, laid down in former years.

Among the purchases of lands, the proprietors will notice one of six and a half acres, called the Peach Orchard, being wholly plain land on the south side of the Cemetery. As this was the only direction in which it was supposed the grounds could be enlarged at any future time, the trustees improved the opportunity to secure this tract for future use, in case it should be needed. It is not designed to have any part of this lot used for burials for many years; but the trustees intend to plant it with trees and shrubbery, from time to time, and to lay it out into drives and walks.

I cannot close this communication without stating that the friends of the late Rev. William B. O. Peabody—eminently the

founder and the constant and steadfast friend of this institution—propose to erect by subscription, in some prominent place in the Cemetery, a monument to his memory, which will be alike honorable to him, and a just appreciation on their part, of his character and services. And I beg leave to suggest, that the proprietors should, in token of their concurrence in so laudable an object, contribute something towards the erection of such a monument.

And in this connection it would be inexcusable not to acknowledge in grateful terms, the services of GEORGE EATON, Esq., of Boston, then a resident of Springfield, who devoted himself with untiring assiduity to the laying out, planting and ornamenting of the grounds. To the eminent taste and judgment of Mr. Eaton and Mr. Peabody are we mainly indebted for the great beauty of the drives and winding walks and fountains which elicit the admiration of all strangers, and constitute this Cemetery the pride of our citizens.

Nor should we omit to place on record for future reference, the name of APOLLOS MARSH, who has been the devoted Superintendent of the work and grounds from the commencement of the undertaking to the present time, to the entire acceptance of the proprietors and their officers.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE BLISS, PRESIDENT.

May 23, 1857.

SCHEDULE A.

Schedule of Annual Receipts from Subscriptions for Burial Lots and Sales of Lots.

For year ending	May 1,	1842,	principally subscriptions,	\$3,457 60
"	"	"	1843, sales,	880 72
"	"	"	1844, "	1,195 59
"	"	"	1845, "	846 62
"	"	"	1846, "	1,047 37
"	"	"	1847, "	1,043 91
"	"	"	1848, "	780 40
"	"	"	1849, "	1,566 68
"	"	"	1850, "	1,215 02
"	"	"	1851, "	1,004 03
"	"	"	1852, "	1,009 00
"	"	"	1853, "	1,193 85
"	"	"	1854, "	1,138 70
"	"	"	1855, "	1,087 70
"	"	"	1856, "	996 50
"	"	"	1857, "	1,089 00
Total,				\$19,552 64

SCHEDULE B.

Statement of Purchases of Lands of the Springfield Cemetery.

DATE OF PURCHASE.	NAME OF GRANTOR.	QUANTITY OF LAND.		PRICE PAID.	DESCRIPTION, &c.
		ACRES.	RODS.		
1841, May 12.	Alexander Bliss,	18	108	\$1,548 55	Martha's Dingle.
" Sept.	H. Adams, A. Bliss, Hills, Parker and Springfield bank. [Entrance av.] (No. quantity given.)				
" Sep. 21.	O. Burnham,	5	80	269 00	Entrance Avenue.
" Oct.	O. Burnham,		107	708 E9	
1844, Dec. 11.	T. J. Shepard,		14	69 37	
1845, July.	O. Burnham,		39	163 00	
1846-8.	H. Sterns, (say) Bowdoin, Mills, Simons, Moore, Cooley,		80		On South line of Dwight lot.
1847, June 1.	Thomas J. Shepard,	1	50	185 00	Straightening North line.
1850, Mar. 6.	— Rumrill,		113	1,357 00	Laundry Lot.
1849, Nov. 8.	H. W. Adams,	6	7	60 00	Straightening West line.
1849.	John Kilborn,		80	2,000 00	Peach Orchard.
	Thomas Rogers,		42	5 00	Straightening North East line.
				1,700 00	Mulberry st. house and lot.
Total,		35		\$8,270 51	

**CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN ALL DEEDS OF LOTS IN
THE CEMETERY.**

FIRST, That the said lot of land shall not be used for any other purpose than as a place of burial for the dead ; and no trees within the lot, or border, shall be cut down, trimmed, or destroyed, without the consent of the Trustees of the said Corporation.

SECOND, That the proprietor of the said lot shall have the right to erect stones, monuments or sepulchral structures, and to cultivate trees, shrubs and plants in the same.

THIRD, The proprietor of the said lot of land shall erect thereon, at his or her own expense, a monument of stone, to be provided by said Trustees, with the number thereof legibly and permanently marked thereon. And if the said proprietor shall omit, for thirty days after notice, to erect such monument, and mark the number, the Trustees shall have authority to cause the same to be done at the expense of the said proprietor.

FOURTH, That if any trees or shrubs situated in said lot of land, shall, by means of their roots, branches, or otherwise, become detrimental to the adjacent lots or avenues, or dangerous or inconvenient to passengers, it shall be the duty of the said Trustees for the time being, and they shall have the right to enter into the said lot and remove the said trees and shrubs, or such parts thereof as are thus detrimental, dangerous, or inconvenient.

FIFTH, That if any monument, or effigy, or any structure whatever, or any inscription be placed in or upon the said land, which shall be determined by the major part of the said Trustees for the time being, to be offensive or improper, the said Trustees, or the major part of them, shall have the right, and it shall be their duty, to enter upon said land, and remove the said offensive or improper object or objects.

SIXTH, No fence shall from time to time, or at any time, be placed or erected in or around the said lot, the materials and design of which shall not first have been approved by the Trustees, or a committee of them.

SEVENTH, No tomb shall be constructed within the bounds of the Cemetery, except in or upon the lots situated in such parts of the grounds, as shall be designated by the Trustees for that purpose ; and no proprietor shall suffer the remains of any person to be deposited in a tomb so authorized, *for hire*.

EIGHTH, The Trustees may at any time enter upon said lot to keep the same neat, and clear off the grass and weeds therefrom and appropriate the said grass and weeds to their own use.

NINTH, The said lot of land shall be holden subject to the provisions contained in the By-Laws of the proprietors of said Cemetery, heretofore established, or which may be hereafter established by them.

APPENDIX.

ADDRESS OF REV. W. B. O. PEABODY AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE CEMETERY, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1841.

WE have long¹ been endeavoring to secure a fit resting place for our dead. And now, having succeeded in this enterprise—having found a place, in every respect, grateful to our feelings—we are come,—with solemn service, on the day of rest—to implore on our place of rest the blessing of our God.

When I saw this great audience just now, winding up through the glades of the Cemetery to take their places on this ground, I was deeply affected with the thought, how soon we shall take our places in the dust below. With this deep thought upon our minds—with these hills and vallies around us—in presence of these venerable trees and these sparkling waters—with the green earth beneath, and God's own bright sky above us—I need not ask your attention—I need not labor to bring you to solemnity; for I doubt not that a voice is now saying in every heart, "the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

The feeling which leads us to respect the dead—the same feeling which brings us here to-day, is found in every age and country; aye, in every man, who deserves the name

of man The rough soldier, at the grave of his comrade, feels this strong emotion, and becomes a better man for the time; the seaman, as he leans over the side of his vessel, to watch the plunge of his shipmate's corpse in the waters, becomes more thoughtful than ever he was before. And ye yourselves do know, that, in every funeral, where the dead lies out before the living, with an air of mysterious reserve upon his brow—with an unsearchable depth of expression which no living eye can read—he is invested, for the time, with the stern majesty of death, and every heart does willing homage to his power.

Nor does this reverence cease when the dead are hidden from our eyes. It follows them to the grave, and makes us regard as sacred the place where we have laid them. The burial place is the favorite retreat of the thoughtful; it calms all troubled feelings—it is the place where many holy lives begin—where the unfortunate are most reconciled to this world, and the gay most concerned for the other. When our friends depart, we hang over these places with profound interest, because here it is that we lose them. Up to this place we can follow them, through all changes of joy and sorrow, of life and death. But “hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther” is written on the portal of the tomb. Here is the boundary, beyond which they cannot return—beyond which we cannot go. No wonder then that it chains attention; it is like the spot in the ocean, where we have seen some gallant ship go down.

And now I say, it is nature—that is—the God of nature, who inspires this feeling in the human breast. I have heard some men say, that they care not what becomes of their remains when they are gone. It may be

so—they may say so of themselves if they will. But if they say that they care not what becomes of the remains of their friends when they are gone, their hearts are not in the right place; I should doubt if they had friends—I should know that they did not deserve them. Indifference to these things is not natural to any good mind or heart. Nature says, "Bury me with my fathers." The feeling which nature dictates is, "that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and my mother."

It is true the soul is more than the body; the condition of the soul which has gone into eternity is infinitely more important than that of the tenement of clay which it leaves behind. But whoever truly cares for the one will also care for the other. Whoever follows with his heart the friend who has gone into eternity, will surely have some regard to the place where that friend's remains are laid. Why is the body cared for? Is it not because it has been for a time the dwelling of the soul? This reason will be sufficient to keep any one who values the soul from treating it with the least disdain. Have you not known, how, when a friend departs, every thing that has been connected with him becomes consecrated in your eyes? The letters he wrote, the dress he wore, the books he read—every thing is a sacred memorial to the surviving. Surely then, the mortal frame which the soul has once illuminated with light and love—the mortal frame, where the soul has beamed from the eye, breathed from the lips, and shone like a glory on the brow,—surely the remains deserve to be treasured; and I neither envy nor respect the man who can treat them with light regard.

Do you say that this feeling grows out of refinement?

that it springs from cultivation, not from nature? To this I have a reply. The land on which we dwell was possessed by a different race two hundred years ago. There is reason to believe that their camps were stationed, and their council fires burned on a part of this very ground. That wild race was never equaled by any civilized people, in their attachment to the grave and the memory of their fathers. Was this refinement in them? Was it not rather a natural feeling, which all their barbarism had never been able to extinguish?

Let me ask too, what portion of a civilized community manifest this feeling in its greatest strength? Is it the refined as they are called? or is it those who are more true to nature? Who are they who make it so dangerous to violate the grave? Let an insult be offered to the tomb, and all the roughest elements of the community are up in arms. They say that the living can protect themselves; but they must guard the slumbers of the defenceless dead. So far from refinement being the parent of these feelings, it rather tends to weaken and destroy them. Silver and gold may be refined till they are fit for no useful purpose, and serve only for ornament and show; and so man may be refined till he becomes cold and heartless—till all generous impulses and affections forsake his breast forever.

But you ask, if this feeling is natural, why has it not done more to improve the outward aspect of the grave? I answer, this is the province of taste; and it does not follow, that because the feeling of respect for the dead is strong, it shall manifest itself in this way; though, in coming days, there is encouragement to hope that it will. The proper taste has been inspired; it is spreading fast

and far; the time is not distant, when Mount Auburn, which for years was almost alone, will be the mother of a thousand fair cities of the dead. It is not so now. In most parts of our land, the burial place is another name for desolation. Its walls, if it has any, are broken down; its monuments are leaning with neglect, not with age—as if they were weary of bearing inscriptions which no one comes to read; there is no relief to the eye but the rank grass in summer, and the aster and golden-rod in autumn, which nature spreads there as if in shame for the living and compassion for the dead. In such places, every one feels ashamed of his race; every one feels that the living are unjust and unworthy. Why, the very dog, who has been faithful to his master, deserves a more honored grave.

And now let me say, that religion strongly testifies to the power of this natural feeling. If I would know what will affect the human heart, the Bible is the authority to which I go. There we find it written that God determined to separate the sons of the patriarchs as a peculiar people. They were then wanderers by habit and profession; it was necessary that they should give up their roving, and settle quietly down in the limits of the promised land. And this was done. Hard as it is to change the manners of a people, in the case of the Hebrews this was so thoroughly done, that these hereditary wanderers became renowned through all the nations, for the depth of their attachment to their father-land. In the captivity, by the rivers of Babylon, when their conquerors respectfully desired to hear their far-famed minstrelsy, the songs of Zion were so full of recollections of their country, that it almost broke their hearts to sing them. They

hanged their harps on the weeping willows, and could not strike them again. Their feeling is expressed by one of their prophets, in the words, "Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country."

And how was this great change accomplished? It was done by means of this feeling of respect for the dead. It was done by anchoring the affections of the children to the graves of their fathers. From the earliest ages, all who dwelt near to God took an interest in this subject, resolved that the body, which had once been the dwelling of the soul, should not, like common dust, be trodden under foot of men. When Jacob was dying in Egypt, he could not bear the thought of being laid to rest in the distance and solitude of a foreign land. Joseph, too, bound his children by a promise, that his remains should be borne to the sepulchre of his fathers. This feeling grew and gained strength among them, till it destroyed all inclination to wander—till it was the heart's desire and prayer of the dying Hebrew, that his ashes might mingle, dust to dust, with his own, his native land.

We should not have expected to find the true taste in times so ancient; nor should we find it in any except the patriarchs and those whose souls were lighted from on high. But we do trace, in those early ages, the same taste which now begins to prevail among ourselves—the same desire to bring trees and flowers, to remove the dreariness of the place of death. When Abraham bought the fields of Machpelah for a Cemetery, he secured the right to all the trees that were in it, and all that grew on its borders. The sepulchre of our Saviour, too, was in a garden—a place where trees spread their shade above, and flowers

breathed incense from their little urns below—a place not distant from the city, and yet not so near, that the noise and business of the living should disturb the silence of the grave. Not anticipating that their Master would rise, they laid him in a place to which they might come in peace and loneliness, to meditate and remember, and where pilgrims in after times might resort, to be strengthened and inspired by the memory of that great friend of man.

The religion of Jesus tends to confirm the feeling of which I speak. It gives us reason to believe that the departed are living—gone from this world, indeed, but not from existence,—living in some province of creation, where it is not given us to know. If it be so, they must look back with deep interest on all the scenes through which they traveled in their pilgrimage below. And if, from their bright abodes, they look down on their own neglected graves, must there not be sorrow in heaven? But no! Sorrow can never enter to disturb the untroubled calm above. Let me ask rather, will there not be joy in heaven if they can see that their resting place is honored? and that memorials are planted there by affectionate hands? It will assure them, not merely that they are remembered, but that their surviving friends are faithful, both to the dead and the living, and that they are preparing to meet them in their Father's house on high.

But I am going beyond your patience and my own strength; I will therefore bring the subject directly home to ourselves.

We have made arrangements to leave the burial place of our fathers. The opening of that small grave yonder was the act by which we bade it farewell. We have done

it from necessity and not from choice. If I am told that there is room there yet, I answer, it is true; we may bury our dead there if we will. But if we lay our heart's treasure there to-day, the stranger may be laid at his side to-morrow; and thus they who have been united in life, must be separated in death. Surely every heart will confess that it ought not so to be.

The place "where the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep," was originally chosen with true taste and feeling. It was so near the village, that the mourner might follow his dead on foot, as the mourner should, if God gives him strength; at the same time it was so distant as to leave the place in silence and repose. When I came here, twenty years since, it was my favorite resort, at morning, at evening, and sometimes at midnight hours. It was peaceful—it was beautiful—on one side the eye wandered over the two spires, which were all that then rose in the village, to the high walls of the valley, crowned with the dark pine wood. On the other side, it fell upon the bright stream, with the green fringe upon its borders, where there was seldom even a dashing oar to break the smoothness of the tide. But as the village grew, the place was changed. The sounds of busy life came near; the noise of men, on the fields and the waters, was brought into painful contrast with the stillness of the grave. And now, for years, we have heard the quick steps of improvement, as it is called, trampling like a war-horse round it, impatient to tread it down. When Jerusalem was about to fall, a voice was heard at midnight in the temple, saying, "let us depart;" and when I have been, in the dead of night, at the place of which I speak, it required little fancy to hear a voice, saying to the sleepers, "arise and depart, for this is not

your rest; the place where the living buy and sell is no longer a home for you."

Suffer me to congratulate you now, on the success which has attended this enterprise from its beginning to the present hour. Seven years since I presented this subject to all whom my voice could reach. I did so, at the desire of a daughter of this village, who was deeply interested in its welfare; but before her purpose could be accomplished, she was called away; and from necessity she was borne to the very place where she could not bear that the remains of her friends should lie. Last year, another effort was made—by those, whom, if they were not present, I might name with the praise which they deserve. The means to conduct the enterprise have been liberally supplied by those who could have no hope of gain, nor even requital for the efforts and sacrifices they made. There were some, who would have selected a different place; but with that generosity which it is more common to hear of than to see, they gave up their own preferences, and showed that they cared for nothing but the general good. Have we not reason to hope that this will be secured? Nature has made this place beautiful, and the purpose for which it is now set apart will make it an attractive and delightful resort in every state of feeling—to the sorrowful and the happy—to the aged and the young. I am persuaded that nothing has been done in this village since its history began, which will tend so much to improve and refine it, as what you are doing now. Observe that small fountain, whose sweet voice you hear! It gathers the streams, which formerly ran unseen through the meadow, and lifts them up to the eye in graceful silver falls. And in like manner this place and this enterprise will assemble streams

of good taste and feeling which formerly ran to waste, and from them produce results which shall be grateful to every eye, and inspiring to every heart. When the native of this town, after long absence, returns to the home of his fathers, he will walk the streets, and all whom he meets there will be strangers; he will inquire concerning familiar dwellings, and the names of their inhabitants will be new; when he meets his old acquaintance, he will find that they know not the Joseph of former days. He will be forlorn and solitary among the living, and will not feel at home till he comes to the mansions of the dead. Here he will find the guardians and the playmates of former years; here will be all whom he used to reverence and love; and here his heart will overflow with emotions such as no tongue can adequately tell.

Reflect how many tenants will soon be here, to claim their freehold in the dust below. One fair and gentle child has already come—a fitting herald to take possession in the name of all the dead. Here he has laid himself down on a colder pillow than a mother's breast. Many such will soon be here—morning stars quenched in the brightness of their rising—before they have known the stains and sorrows of life below. Children, in tender years will follow their parents to this place; the domestic circle will be fearfully broken, and thenceforth the wide world will be their home. The husband will follow the wife—the light and joy of his desolated home; and the wife the husband, on whose strong arm she had hoped to lean through all her days. The young, sinking under the slow torture of wasting disease, will flee away and be at rest in this holy ground; the aged, after years of labor and sorrow, will depart to this place in peace. The pale marbles will

rise everywhere around us, telling of the dead, sometimes what they were, but still oftener what they ought to have been.

We are here to day to consecrate these grounds. And we consecrate them in the name of "Him that liveth, and was dead." We consecrate them to the service of our heavenly Father—to the influences of his Spirit—to the kingdom of his Son. We consecrate them to the sacred repose of the dead, and the religious improvement of the living; we consecrate them to all kind affections—to heavenward hopes—to the tears of love—to the consolation of grief. We consecrate them to the growth of Christian principles—to the power of Christian emotions. Heaven has made it a land of streams and fountains, a land of vallies and hills; and now may a stronger and deeper interest be given to it than beauty can ever bestow; and may the blessing of God be upon it from the beginning to the end of the year.

But when we consecrate this place in the Saviour's name, it should remind us of the promises of the gospel. Many of us have been at his table, to commemorate his dying love to-day. When he sat, with his disciples, at the last supper, the bread and the wine passed untasted by him; he said that he would not share them again till they met in the kingdom of God. So then, happy meetings were yet before them, and that parting was not the last. What a world of bright promise to the faithful do those simple words bestow. It spreads out in a thousand forms of hope, each one of which is a ray of glory to some afflicted heart. The mother for example—the Rachel weeping for her children, but not refusing to be comforted, because she has surrendered them to her Father and their

Father, to her God and their God,—she may lift up her eyes and look forward to the time when she shall go to those who cannot return to her—when they shall be the first to meet her at heaven's gate, and with bright and glad voices, bid her welcome to their own happy home.

“ O, when the mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,—
Hath she not then, for all her fears,
The day of woe, the sleepless night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight ? ”

But the hour is wasting ; I see by the lengthening shadows that the sun is sinking low. I see that some, who, when I began to speak, were in the sunshine, are now in the evening shade. And some, who are now in the full sunshine of prosperity and gladness, will soon be covered with the awful shadow of death. We shall soon leave this ground—never again thus to assemble, till we meet in the dust below. The day is going down ; the darkness of night will soon settle on these hills and vales. The season is declining ; the red leaf is already hung as a signal from the tree, and the winds of autumn will soon be heard singing their vesper hymn. The year is waning ; the trumpet of the winter storms will soon be sounded ; they will sweep through these leafless woods, and rush and howl over the habitations of death. Let us feel then, for it is true, that every fading year—every fall of the leaf—every closing day, and every toll of the funeral bell is measuring our dead march to the grave.

Let us prepare then, since, prepared or not, we must go. Let us have the only preparation that can avail us in the dying hour. Let us “ so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Let us say to Him who made us,

“ The grave cannot praise thee ; death cannot celebrate thee ; but the living, the living, he shall praise thee as we do this day. ” May we so spend our days in his service, that, in the hour which is not far from any one of us, we may look forward with hopes full of immortality ; and when the cares of this short life are over, through Him who lived, and labored, and died upon the cross to save us, may we serve him in nearer presence, and with angels’ powers on high.









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