

Memoir of
Henry Edward Riles

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Memoir of Henry Edward
Niles, 1823-1900

In Memoriam

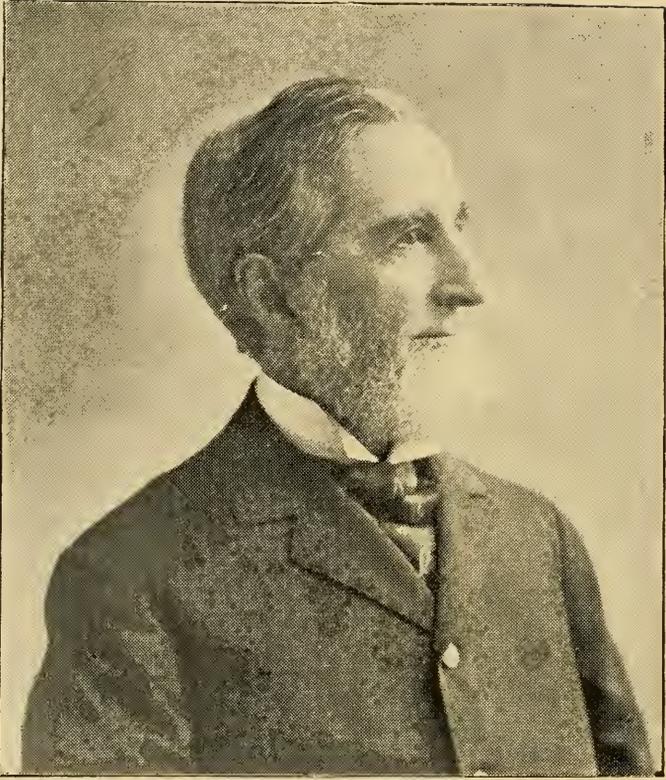
HENRY EDWARD NILES

Dr. William M. Tappan

Please accept this souvenir
of your friend & classmate
of Princeton Theo. Sem 1848-

From his widow.

Baltimore. Oct 9th 1911.



Fraternally Yours
W. E. Niles.



✓
Memoir

OF

✓
HENRY EDWARD NILES

1823-1900

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THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL FLOURISH LIKE
THE PALM TREE: HE SHALL GROW
LIKE A CEDAR IN LEBANON. THOSE THAT
BE PLANTED IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD
SHALL FLOURISH IN THE COURTS OF OUR
GOD.

THEY SHALL STILL BRING FORTH FRUIT
IN OLD AGE; THEY SHALL BE FAT AND
FLOURISHING;—TO SHOW THAT THE LORD
IS UPRIGHT.

PSALM XCII. 12-15.

CHAPTER I

Introductory



OUNTLESS have been the palm trees and cedars that have grown tall and spread wide their fruit-laden branches on Mount Zion!

This Memorial is of one cut down at seventy-six in his prime and vigor.

After fifty-two years of service as Ambassador of the King of Kings, Henry Edward Niles delivered his last message and was called up to appear in the Court of his Sovereign to be acknowledged before "the principalities and powers in heavenly places."

His daily prayer that "when the youths should faint and be weary and the young men utterly fall, he might so wait upon the Lord as to renew his strength—run and not be weary, walk and not faint," was most signally fulfilled:—"To show that the Lord is upright."

At three-score and sixteen, with all his faculties of body and mind in full exercise, Dr. Niles still had the entire charge of the First Presbyterian Church of York, Pa., which he had shepherded for thirty-five years. The church was never so strong and aggressive. He seemed as young in spirit, as full of energy and magnetism, as when, in 1865, at

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his first public appearance before a general audience in York, he stirred the crowd by his eloquence on Lincoln's martyrdom.

Abreast of all modern methods, he knew which of the new movements of philanthropy to harness to the "old, old story" of the cross. He believed that every living root of Brotherhood sprang out of Calvary. To the last he was a progressive conservative.

His watchful eye was ever on the alert to test all improvements in church machinery, and mark their practical effects upon the running of the wheels of spiritual life—to adopt them if they gave good results, or discard them if they produced friction.

So, like a palm tree, he stood in the full strength of his matured manhood, bearing fruit on the topmost bough:—"To show that the Lord is upright!"

He had not come to feel the physical limitations or infirmities of age.

Never did he sit more master of his spirited horse or come back from a ride more exhilarated and full of virile life than at seventy-six years of age. Indeed, his erect form and elastic step testified how lightly the years rested on him, in spite of the snow, that never melts, which whitened his beard, and the almond blossoms in his hair.

His keen sense of humor and enjoyment of a hearty laugh no doubt lubricated his mental and bodily machinery.

His warm, responsive nature showed itself in the magnetic eye, genial smile, and cordial grasp. Many times was it said: "Just to have Dr. Niles stop and speak to me on the street made my burden lighter. I felt as if I had heard a strain of martial music and could march faster."

The last three or four years had crowded the spacious church to its utmost capacity. It had become impossible

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for families to obtain pews and many were compelled to wait months for seats, until it seemed necessary to enlarge the beautiful edifice to accommodate those desirous of making it their church home.

One characteristic of his congregations was marked by visitors. The proportion of men in attendance in church and chapel, especially young men, was unusually large. They, indeed, were the most ardent admirers, devoted friends, and loyal supporters of their pastor, and he wielded through them a powerful influence.

He tried to imbue them with his own high ideals of Christian manhood and civic righteousness.

So he brought forth fruit in old age, "to show that the Lord is upright," and was an example of the fulfillment of the promise:—"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."

He often spoke of God's distinguishing goodness to him, Who, as he said, "put upon each morning's brow the two crowns of loving-kindness and tender mercy!"

Keble's hymn commencing,

"New mercies each succeeding day
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of Heaven,"

and

"Awake my soul, with rapture rise,
And now the God of grace adore;
Awake my soul, awake my heart,
And with the angels bear a part,"

were, frequently, his first waking words.

In life's afternoon he seemed to mellow and grow more genial.

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Always a social centre and responsive, the delight of every company he entered, his presence was coveted, and an eager welcome awaited him at the family gatherings of his people and his neighbors, and at their holidays and literary circles.

His dramatic recitations of classical selections were prized as a great elocutionary treat.

His flow of good fellowship was unfailing. His manner of mingling the playful and serious with that rare tact which is such a magical solvent in social life, made him as welcome to the young and gay as to the serious and mature.

So he bore fruit on the topmost bough:—"To show that the Lord is upright!"

He literally, practically, "walked with God." He talked with Him, consulted Him about everything; at the family altar, round which all the household gathered, and in that "study" by whose locked door everyone passed reverently, when he spoke to the Father in secret, as friend to friend. He had the most child-like, humble belief in a prayer-answering God who had put the condition of asking before receiving. He never made an engagement or any important decision, a plan for a day's journey, a call, or wrote a letter without consulting his omniscient family Friend for the wisdom which is promised to him who asketh "without wavering."

So, waiting on the Lord, he was, progressively, of good courage.

This made him brave and fearless in meeting that future which his covenant-keeping God had planned out for him in Omniscient Love. He understood in his own experience every day what is the perfect love that casts out fear; how "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall

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flourish in the courts of our God:—To show that the Lord is upright.”

During the year 1900 the chapel was greatly enlarged and all modern improvements added to make the church plant, its grounds, manse, chapel, and temple of worship perfect in all their appointments.

With the completion of the improvements, Dr. Niles was full of new plans for a more aggressive campaign of Sunday-school work.

That “study”—the Holy of Holies of the beautiful home—that had so often before been a Peniel, was reconsecrated.

A special tenderness and solemnity came down upon the church services and warmed the atmosphere of Sunday-school and Christian Endeavor and prayer-meeting. To their pastor’s invitation to meet him for personal religious conversation, many who had long been special objects of prayer and effort responded.

Night after night, as the chapel was not quite ready for occupation, the parlor and study of the manse were filled with those of all ages, from whose soul-vision the Spirit had removed the cataracts of unbelief so that they saw the realities of the world to come.

Some twenty-five came to the Lord’s Supper for the first time in March and a larger number waited for the June sacrament.

So at his last communion this blessed pastor saw those for whom he had watched and prayed sitting with him at the table of his Master. He continued the meetings with still greater success till he was compelled to drop everything and go for what all supposed would be a brief rest at Atlantic City.

His assistant, Rev. David Curry, came during his illness

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and continued the meetings, and another harvest of souls was gathered into the church at the June communion, after he himself had gone up to sit down at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Never was there a more hushed, tearful, solemn assemblage. It hardly required the "sixth sense" of faith to recognize the encompassing cloud of witnesses—holy women and noble men, the fruits of his early labors, now joined in the spirit world by the pastor and guide, and sharing with him angelic joy over this "aftermath" of his sowing of the seeds of truth.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall bring forth fruit in old age; he shall be fat and flourishing:—To show that the Lord is upright."

*“ Four things a man must learn to do -
If he would make his record true :
To think without confusion clearly ;
To love his fellow-men sincerely ;
To act from honest motives purely ;
To trust in God and heaven securely .”*

CHAPTER II

Ancestry, Life, and Character

HENRY EDWARD NILES was of an old New England family. He was born August 15, 1823, at South Hadley, Mass., the second child of William Niles and Sophia Goodrich; and was descended, in the seventh generation, from Captain John Niles, who came from Wales in 1630, settled in Abington, Mass., and afterward removed to Braintree.

William Niles moved with his family to Spencertown, Columbia County, N. Y., when Henry was about five years old; and the boy spent his youth amid the beauties of the Hudson River and Berkshire Hills.

He was graduated from Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., in 1844, and from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1848, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Columbia and installed pastor of Valatie (Kinderhook), N. Y., October 24, 1848.

In 1855 broken health compelled him to spend about a year in travel and recreation; after which he supplied the church at Angelica, N. Y.

From 1859 until the outbreak of the war he served as "pastor-elect" of the North Church of St. Louis, Mo.

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In 1861 he was called to Albion, N. Y., from whence, after a very successful ministry, he came to York.

In 1875 he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Wooster University.

June 26, 1850, at Lowell, Mass., he married Jeannie E., daughter of Sumner Marsh, whose qualities and efforts so supplemented and aided his as to make their lives a harmonious whole of joint devotion to all that is good, unselfish and beautiful.

Since April 16, 1865, Dr. Niles was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at York, Pa.

During these years his strong character and devotion to principle and duty, aided by peculiarly responsive sympathy, and enforced by no ordinary eloquence and a ready pen, made him an influential factor in the religious and intellectual life and development of the town and county.

Under his charge the church constantly increased in numbers, philanthropy, and influence; branches were established in the north and south sections of the city, known as the Westminster and Calvary churches; and the parent organization is now larger and more active than ever in its history.

He was largely interested in forming plans upon which his intimate friend and elder, Samuel Small, founded the York Collegiate Institute. Of this institution Dr. Niles was, from the beginning, a trustee.

As trustee and active friend of Lincoln University he showed his constant interest in the colored race.

For many years he was a member of the Board of Ministerial Relief of the Presbyterian Church and gave much care and thought to the duties thereby devolving upon him. While requiring sacrifice of time, and large drain upon his sympathies, this work was enjoyable to him; because per-

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formed with delightful associates. With his intimate friend and classmate, the Rev. Dr. W. C. Cattell, there existed a life-long congeniality, peculiarly sweet.

In 1874 he was moderator of the Synod of Philadelphia, and in 1877 associate member of the Pan Presbyterian Council in Edinburgh, Scotland. His last outside ecclesiastical activity was as member of the Minneapolis General Assembly of 1899.

Nor were his energies and talents devoted by any means exclusively to his own church and to Presbyterian institutions.

All wise reforms in morals and politics had in him a fearless and judicious advocate, and he was a strong support for all movements of evangelization and philanthropy.

Before the union of the Old and New School, in 1870, he and his church were connected with the latter branch, and his ecclesiastical tendencies were ever in favor of all liberty of thought and expression, consistent with devotion to fundamental truth.

These are but the bare outlines of a useful and happy life.

On May 14, 1900, he entered upon a well-earned rest, after seventy-six years of true living and fifty-two years of preaching, by acts no less than words, the Gospel that was to him a vital force and hourly reality. From the manse that had been built for him, and where he had spent fourteen happy years, his spirit sought his eternal home. The sad news was told to the tearful people by the church bell that for thirty-six years had called him and them together for instruction, prayer, and praise.

The picture was completed and hung in the gallery of noble lives. The song had been sung and floated heavenward to mingle with the harmonies of the blessed.

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In a sketch of the life of Dr. Niles the first place should be given to his position and work as a Christian minister. It was to this holy vocation that he pledged himself in youth, and in the performance of its obligations and the enjoyment of its privileges his enthusiasm never cooled.

Personal ambition or desire for literary or professional reputation never seduced his steadfast soul from the yearly, daily, and hourly sacrifice of all his thought, time, and ability in the effort to guard, train, instruct, and inspire the feeblest and most wayward as well as the docile of his flock.

The results of energies so spent do not appear in bound volumes, and are unobserved by the world at large; but the reward in his own consciousness and in the loving appreciation of successive generations was sweeter to him than wealth or fame.

Generations have been nurtured, instructed, guarded, and restrained by his wise and tender pastoral care. He loved them as his own. When they pursued the paths of virtue, he rejoiced with greater pleasure than that which comes from pursuit of worldly gain; and when they strayed, he grieved as a father, and still followed them with prayer and hope. He loved his people individually, discriminately. He loved to study human nature in the process of the regenerating and sanctifying grace.

The Church was to him the workshop of the Almighty. His anointed eye was alert to note the features of the Master being sculptured out by sorrow and joy, repentance and faith, until the saint, made perfect, became fit for a niche in God's eternal gallery.

No formless block into whose unpromising heart the Holy Ghost had cut but one stroke was uninteresting to him. He rejoiced as the spiritual likeness showed more and

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more clearly in some Priscilla, or Mary, or Barnabas, or Timothy.

Although not unduly emphasized, he regarded preaching as a very important part in his ministerial calling. In keeping up the high quality of his sermons, while at the same time earning the reputation of a model pastor, his success was extraordinary.

Doctor Niles was an impressive public speaker. His sermons, and addresses on special occasions, were well prepared, thoughtful, and appropriate in matter, and delivered with a polish of expression and grace of elocution that was a gratification to the cultured ear. If particularly stirred by a subject, especially when speaking without notes, his oratory was very effective.

The winter of 1843 he spent in Washington as a Congressional shorthand reporter, where he had excellent opportunities of observing the style of the best speakers of the time, including Clay, Webster, Calhoun, and Benton.

The art of elocution was ever interesting to him. To the end of his life he was anxious for criticism and suggestion, and was constant in endeavor to improve in style and manner. His success in this had much to do with his ability to preach continuously with acceptance to the same people.

There was nothing to tire or annoy in his delivery. His melodious voice and graceful gesture made it pleasant to hear the truth from his lips, and were in themselves attractive to persons of taste.

Mentally, he was unusually symmetrical. Theological studies and ministerial duties were not allowed to prevent the enjoyment of literary pursuits, and his closest friends were occasionally charmed by poems of rare imagination and artistic structure. His memory was filled with pas-

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sages from the best authors. These were ever ready aptly to adorn or illustrate his thought, and his fine elocution made them most effective.

He reveled in the beauty and glory of God's works, as well as His Word. One was an illumination and revelation of the other to his enraptured vision.

The statuesque hills that encircle York, the summer sunset or mountain view, when interpreted by his poetic insight and illuminated by his chosen quotations, revealed to his friends hitherto unrealized beauties.

Not a tree which he did not recognize and greet with delight, and his intimate acquaintance with the repertoire of the birds made his enjoyment of their concerts most keen and unusual.

Pre-eminently a man of affairs, he possessed the genius of common-sense. His mechanical skill and scientific intuitions astonished mechanics. They found he could give them points in their trades. They opened their eyes to see a minister (popularly supposed to be in a cloud hanging between Eden and Jerusalem) instruct them in a better way to fix a gas-pipe, or furnace, or reveal to them the recondite mysteries of plumbing! He sometimes said, "You see how a good carpenter has been spoiled to make a poor minister."

His financial forethought and exact system made his judgment and counsel much valued and sought. Many a young man was bound to him through life, as with hooks of steel, by gratitude for timely counsel and aid in the uncertain beginnings of business or professional careers.

Dr. Niles enjoyed life. This planet, made bright by the footsteps of God incarnate, and baptized by His blood, was no "howling wilderness" or "vale of tears" to him! He loved to write, he loved to read, he loved to preach. He

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often said, "I would rather have a man eat my dinner for me than preach for me."

The brightest, sweetest, and best of his nature were reserved for the exhibited in his name. Only those who were admitted to the delights of the family circle knew fully the wealth of his mind, the romance of his love, and the strength of his character.

His wonderful memory, with its priceless stores of literature and gems of poetry, was a constant source of elevation and entertainment. The enthusiasm of his nature made each day a new festival to all under his roof.

In care of the children of others he never neglected, in the least particular, the interests of his own. In their manhood, as well as youth, he lavished upon his sons a wealth of affection and wise parental guidance.

He lost nothing in dignity and gained much in pleasure to himself and his children by making them his closest confidants and boon companions. The family circle was an arena where all questions were open for full discussion, and where the strongest logic was cheerfully awarded the palm; but here, without assertion on his part, he was always the honored and beloved king.

His official blessing in the marriage ceremony was doubly sacred; because it came from a manly, tender, faithful husband, whose daily domestic life was a poem of perfect rhythm with no discordant note.

Practical, yet enthusiastic; wise and vigorous, strong, but tender, his life is a sermon the echoes of which will vibrate long upon the air.

"Go where he will, the wise man is at home;
His hearth the earth,—his hall the azure dome;
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road,
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed."

*“Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea!*

*! Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark;*

*For though from out our bourne of time
and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.”*

CHAPTER III

Last Services and Death

IN March, 1900, clouds began to obscure the soft, radiant Indian summer sunlight of life.

On the second Sunday of that month Dr. Niles made his last appearance in the pulpit he had filled for thirty-five years.

Rev. Dr. Joseph T. Smith, of Baltimore, was with him and gave two of his characteristic sermon poems, which Dr. Niles enjoyed as appreciatively and enthusiastically as ever. The social visit was rich with the reminiscences of Dr. Smith's eventful past, and of the leaders in the Presbyterian Church, North and South, whom he had had such rare opportunities of knowing personally. In the exhilaration of congenial companionship the weariness and debility from over-work seemed hardly felt.

Monday evening, March 12, Dr. Paton, the Paul of the Hebrides, addressed a large congregation in the York church. March 13, all attended a missionary convention at Harrisburg, where Dr. Niles presided.

March 14, he led his last Wednesday evening service in the lecture room, where his familiar, scholarly, practical heart-talks had instructed and delighted two generations of hearers.

Thursday, March 13, Dr. Niles, as he had done monthly

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for a score of years, attended a session of the Board of Ministerial Relief, meeting that choice circle of selected men who execute the will of the Church in caring for its disabled servants. It was his last service for the cause he loved.

From Philadelphia he went to Atlantic City to recuperate. But the tonic of the ocean seemed to have no power to brace his system or bring to him appetite or relief from nervous exhaustion.

March 22 he came back to York, feeling that he had lost ground.

Still, when his son met him at the depot with the two spirited horses he so much enjoyed, he said with his accustomed vim, "Ah, Harry! let me once more get hold of the reins and drive these horses and I shall be all right."

His expectation of preaching on the 31st was not realized, and he was never again able to leave the house. For the next four weeks there were the fluctuations of improvement and weakness.

His family were like children, buoyant in the belief that a cure would be attained. All active disease yielded to the skilful treatment and tender devotion of the beloved physicians. There remained simply inability to take nourishment; and the eager hope of love that every new food and tonic was the beginning of restoration was doomed to disappointment.

Although as matter of fact he constantly declined in strength, no one at the time fully realized it.

His family, of which he was ever the sun and joy, around which everything revolved, never for one moment acknowledged, even to each other, discouragement or doubt.

They set themselves religiously, courageously, hopefully, to bring in from the outer world of sense, as well as from

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the unseen spiritual forces, such tides of life and power as should lift the beloved one up out of the quicksands of weakness where he was stranded, to mount the rising waves of new life.

So these weeks were filled with the diversions of comfortable illness. From morning till night sacred and classic writers were read and quoted, and the political and ecclesiastical news discussed. Especially was he interested in the records of the Missionary Ecumenical Council, which he had himself anticipated attending.

The three sunny rooms opening out of his study used by him were daily filled with a profusion of choice flowers, and he playfully suggested that, so far as he was concerned, the love of his people had outstripped the almanac and made April "the month of roses."

The weekly visits and companionship of his devoted son Alfred from Baltimore so enlivened the Sundays he was detained from his pulpit that the true significance of these unusually frequent reunions was not realized.

In the latter part of April his minister boy from New York came, and father and son spent a week talking, reading, comparing notes together in his sick room; enjoying each other as enthusiastically as ever.

He would laugh so heartily and seem so full of merriment over the reminiscences of amusing scenes and experiences in travel that more than once the trained nurse was obliged to interrupt, saying, "Indeed, Dr. Niles, I cannot let Mr. Edward stay any longer with you. You are laughing too much. You must lie down and rest."

On the first day of May the son returned to New York, expecting that his father would soon be able to ride out. "Come back in a week or two, my boy, and we will be able to ride over the hills together," he said in parting.

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“ Ah, happy days refuse to go!
Hang in the heavens forever so!
Forever let thy tender mist
Lie like dissolving amethyst
O'er landscapes of the Past, and shed
Thy mellow glory overhead!
Ah! happy days; refuse to go!
Hang in the heavens forever so!”

In those days and weeks of enforced leisure and uninterrupted communion how near seemed the warm gulf stream of youth and love, with its rosy mists and golden clouds!

The rainbowed arch of June 26, 1850, stood out more radiant than ever in retrospect: the era from which all events were reckoned.

The wedding-bells that had then first rung out their harmony had gathered such fulness with each added year's experiences that their thrilling echoes filled the whole dome of the half-century.

His faith loved to look back on the past and trace how the omnipotent hand of his loving Pilot had steered him safely through stormy seas, over dangerous rocks and treacherous currents, through all latitudes, and under varied skies, to this anchorage on the shores of the Land of Beulah, glowing with celestial light.

From the almost fifty years of blissful wedlock, how many were the garlands of sacred, fragrant memories this bridegroom, with his heart of gold, gathered, to weave into a crown for his half-century bride.

So steadfastly does absorbing affection cling to what constitutes all that is precious in existence, so obstinately does it refuse to perceive inevitable danger creeping on, that it was not until the last four days that the idea of imminent death was allowed to dart its black wing through the horizon.

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But May's sunshine and flowers did not stir the patient's pulses with new energy, nor bring back elastic strength and vigor, as in other spring tides. The coveted rides upon his beloved hills were put off from day to day. But every day he insisted upon his wife and son going out into the resurrection-life and beauty which he so passionately loved.

His oldest son and companion was with him for hours each day. The moment he heard the music of his footstep on the stair, a new strength of life and love inspired him, and his face would glow with expectation. That manly form never crossed the threshold without receiving the radiant smile and welcome.

But that fateful Friday, May 11, 1900, could not be kept back any longer, by love or prayer.

Ever in the Gethsemane agony of supplication, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me," would come to his loved ones the vision of the Head of the Church, standing at the Father's right hand and saying, "I will that they also that Thou hast given me *be with Me where I am*, that they may behold My glory."

God's arrow of suffering, winged by love, had been sent to loosen His servant's hold on this life. Four days before his translation he asked his son, after he had been out with the doctors, "Do the doctors give any hope?" His son replied, "Very little. I know you are not afraid!" He said, "Oh, no!" Harry then said, "Have you anything you would like to say to me?" After a pause he said, "My papers are at the bank. My dear ones I have dedicated to God. He will care for them. I have not been faithful, but Christ will forgive. I have been a poor father, but you are a precious son."

May 13, 1900, was his last Lord's Day on earth. A vestibule of heaven it truly seemed, and each hour's experiences

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of that hallowed time has been lived over again every resurrection day since, by those who shared them.

As his wife came into the room in the early dawn he said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." When asked what made him so joyful, he replied, "O! this glorious Lord's Day and we are all here together!"

His three sons were close around him, taking turns in holding him up in their arms; and as his kingly head rested on their strong shoulders his great magnetic eyes were bent upon them with such ineffable brightness and tenderness that the nurse was moved to say, "O! I never saw such light in any eyes before! How I would love to have seen Dr. Niles when he was well!"

All that holy day his mind was as active as ever, and his reasoning powers, memory, and affections were in full vigor. God's strong, eternal promises, made for such crucial hours of weakness, were poured into his responsive ear.

John's apocalyptic vision and his favorite Psalms and hymns were recited. As he sat up in his sons' embrace, his face shone in the light of the swiftly coming beatification, as well-tried promises and beloved stanzas of noble poetry comforted his soul.

Even then his trained memory would instantly detect a mistake or wrongly substituted word, and his hand would be raised, in his own graceful imperiousness, to rectify the error.

The choir, whose artistic rendering of sacred music he so enjoyed, came in from the church, and, in the parlor below, sang with tender feeling his favorite hymns. The strains of "Rock of Ages," "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me," "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," seemed to bear all up on waves of melody to

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the pearly gates; and to the ringing of the golden harps of the crowned and glorified ones; joyfully expectant, waiting to welcome our beloved to the celestial choir and "new song of the Lamb."

He had expected on this resurrection day of his Lord to meet Him in Paradise. In the afternoon he said to his wife, "Jeannie, what time is it?" When told that it was four, he said, "I did not think it took so long to die. I have been dying all day and I am not yet through. I thought I should be on the other side with my Savior before this." Often he said, "If, when I was well, I had not put my case into the hands of the Eternal God, what would I do now?"

His faith did not electrify, but it sustained. He swung out on the Almighty Arm into the realities of the unknown existence where God took him. The child-like faith the Spirit had wrought made him willing to go alone into the unveiled presence of Him he had loved, walked with, and tried to serve for sixty years.

If it had pleased his Heavenly Father to let him longer enjoy his home, family, church and friends, he would have thanked Him for it; but, since it was His will to take him, he thanked Him, just the same.

Another long night of weakness and suffering lay between him and immortal strength and everlasting youth in the presence of the King in His beauty.

Monday morning he missed for a moment his wife from his side, and said to one of the sons, "Where is your mother?" After hearing the reply, "There she is"—as she was entering the door—he said, "Yes! there she is—and when she comes into the room the Holy Ghost always comes with her to cheer and strengthen and bless."

The last hours he was unconscious.

On the 14th of May, 1900, at four o'clock, the bell of the

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First Presbyterian Church was heard to toll throughout the city. As men, women, and children heard the strange, solemn sound of those seventy-six slow reverberations, they instinctively bowed with reverent heads as they realized that the faithful pastor, earnest preacher, sympathizing friend, courteous neighbor, active citizen, and genial companion, whom they delighted to honor, had finished his earthly course.

One of his physicians voiced thus the sad tidings to his mother: "Dr. Niles has gone to wear his crown."

" He hath gone
To sit down with the prophets, by the clear
And crystal waters; he hath gone to list
Isaiah's harp and David's, and to walk
With Enoch and Elijah, and the host
Of the just men made perfect. He shall bow
At Gabriel's hallelujah, and unfold
The scroll of the apocalypse with John,
And talk of Christ with Mary, and go back
To the last supper, and the garden prayer
With the beloved disciple.
He shall hear the story of the incarnation told
By Simeon, and the Triune mystery
Burning upon the fervent lips of Paul.
He shall have wings of glory, and shall soar
To the remoter firmaments, and read
The order and the harmony of stars;
And, in the might of knowledge, he shall bow
In the deep pauses of archangel harps,
And, humble as the seraphim, shall cry—
' Who, by his searching, finds Thee out, O God! '
There shall he meet his dear ones who have gone
Before him, and as other years roll on,
And his loved flock are gathered up to him,
His hand again shall lead them to the Lamb
And point them to the living waters there!"

*“ At Nain was voice of comfort heard,
For Christ had touched the bier ;
The bearers wait with wondering eye,
The swelling bosom dare not sigh ;
But all is still, twixt hope and fear.*

*E'en such an awful soothing calm
We sometimes see alight
On Christian mourners, while they wait
In silence, by some church-yard gate,
Their summons to the holy rite.*

*And such the tones of love which break
The stillness of that hour,
Quelling the embittered spirits' strife :
' The Resurrection and the Life
Am I ! Believe and die no more ! '*

*Then cheerily to your work again
With hearts new braced and set
To run untired love's blessed race
As meet for those, who, face to face,
O'er the grave their Lord have met.”*

CHAPTER IV

Funeral

THE Wednesday evening prayer-meeting—after the death, before the funeral—became a memorial service for him who, for over a generation, had conducted those peculiarly stimulating services.

The lecture-room was thronged with worshippers when Dr. Jeffers opened the meeting. Rev. P. Anstadt, D.D., for the Lutheran churches; Rev. G. M. Slaysman, for the Baptist Church, and Rev. F. C. Yost, for the Reformed churches, spoke most feelingly of their love and reverence for their departed fellow-worker. The Rev. E. S. Hagen, secretary of the Ministerial Association, told of Dr. Niles's work in that organization.

The Rev. George L. Smith, formerly pastor of Calvary Presbyterian Church, came from Elmer, N. J., to pay his tribute to the memory of his friend.

The Rev. C. A. Oliver, pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, emphasized Dr. Niles's kindness, faithfulness, and attachment to his people; while the Rev. John F. Mesick, D.D., designated him as "the prince of preachers."

The meeting, from beginning to end, was a touching, impressive evidence of the esteem and love of other churches and denominations of York for the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

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In the forenoon of May 17, 1900, the innermost circle of relatives and friends, representatives of three generations, gathered in the sunny manse parlor around the beloved form lying in the nobleness and majesty the Death Angel had stamped upon his face.

It was the last of those family worships which had been so sacred and delightful and characteristic of the home, ever held around the form of their beloved high priest.

His youngest son conducted the tender, strengthening service of prayer and promise, and the beloved niece led in the psalms of hope and victory. The angels' welcoming chorus flooded down in echoing whispers—

“Not a tear must o'er him fall;
He giveth His beloved sleep.”

The casket was borne by the church officers to the lecture-room of the chapel, where an opportunity was afforded for all his friends to look once more on the dear face.

The body was then taken to the church, where the public funeral services were held.

The open grave, lined with flowers and green, was in the church-yard under the trees, not a hundred feet from his pulpit or his study. It is a grave for two; one chamber is still waiting.

“Golden gates of fifty years!
Almost we did your latchet press;
Ah! no golden June for us,
But Death Angel and the pall;
Then, one stepping on, alone!
Soon, two, at the heart of all.”

Ministers from the city and fellow Presbyters from abroad, his relatives, members of his flock and of other con-

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gregations encircled the grave while prayer was offered and a hymn was sung.

Dr. Niles's son in clear, ringing tones of faith committed the precious clay to Him who promised "He that believeth on Me shall never die," and "I will raise him up at the last day."

Over all, the mantle of flowers was laid, on which were piled the exquisite artistic designs of anchors, crowns, pillows, stars, Bible, wreaths, and other floral offerings by which yearning hearts had striven to express their grief and devotion to their pastor and friend.

The newspapers gave a full account of the services, and the funeral addresses were fortunately preserved.

We quote from one of the papers and append the addresses in full.

From the York Daily, May 18, 1900.

In the church plot of the First Presbyterian Church yesterday afternoon, with a simple, yet most solemn and impressive service, the remains of the late Rev. Henry Edward Niles, D.D., were laid away to repose under the green sod. He lies in the shadow of the church in which for so many years he labored with such marked fruitful results. No more fitting spot could have been selected to honor and keep in remembrance "A leader among leaders." While the late pastor is no more with his beloved congregation and with the community, in which he was so highly esteemed, his memory will never be forgotten. As a minister his works shine forth, and as a citizen his efforts were always for the betterment and uplifting of the whole community. This fact was evidenced when he lay in state in the chapel room until the last rites were performed.

From twelve o'clock noon the body lay in the chapel in

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charge of a guard of honor composed of Harry S. Ebert, J. Wilbur Yeats, J. St. Clair McCall, J. Edgar Small, George M. Rynick, H. D. Rupp, Dr. J. McKinnon, Howard Manifold, Jacob Hartzel, Leslie Maxell, George Steacy, Lawrence Mitzel, Roy Canfield, William T. Ong, Norman Foreney, and Philip Stair. A detail of police was present and at the entrances to the building directed the crowd.

From the time the chapel was opened until 2.45 o'clock a continuous stream of people passed around the bier and took a parting look at the form of the one who was so dear to them. Tears filled the eyes of many. At the head of the casket was a large pillow of white carnations from the Sunday-school, suitably inscribed. A number of other floral tributes were also laid upon the casket and around it. It was at the altar of the church the wealth of floral tributes was displayed. Never before in this city was there such a profusion of loving testimonials placed around the bier of one who had departed this life.

The Ministerial Association of the city paid its last respects to the deceased and afterward took seats reserved for them in the main body of the church.

The pulpit arch was beautifully and heavily draped in mourning, as were the two doors on either side of the chancel and also the front of the choir and organ loft.

The edifice was filled to the doors. The assemblage was so large that chairs had to be used to seat the people in the aisles, while at the rear of the church many stood.

At 2.45 promptly, the remains were removed from the chapel to the church, being brought in through the door west of the chancel. The honorary pallbearers were Henry Small, Jacob Weltzhoffer, H. W. Hallock, Peter McLean, Niles H. Shearer, John Hamilton Small and James McLean.

The active pallbearers were also taken from the elders,

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deacons, and trustees of the church, John M. Brown, W. H. McClellan, John H. Small, Samuel M. Manifold, George S. Billmeyer, and Henry R. Kraber.

The immediate family and relatives entered at the front of the church.

The organ in subdued tones wafted out the solemn strains of the Beethoven funeral march, the entire audience standing. Upon the platform were seated Rev. David S. Curry, Rev. Charles A. Oliver, Rev. J. W. Oliver, Rev. E. W. Coberth, Rev. Dr. Mesick, Rev. George C. Heckman, D.D., LL.D., of Reading, Rev. W. L. Ledwith, D.D., of Philadelphia, and the Rev. E. T. Jeffers, D.D.

The service was opened with the singing of that impressive hymn, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," by the choir. A scriptural reading followed by Rev. David S. Curry, who also offered prayer. The choir then sang the hymn, "For All Thy Saints Who from Their Labors Rest."

Address by Dr. Heckman.

Rev. George C. Heckman, D.D., LL.D., of Reading, Pa., made the following address:

The death of Dr. Niles was a great shock to me, as it was to you all, although some of you were looking to such a painful event; painful to us, not to him.

I deem it a privilege to be here to-day, and thank God for health and strength to be here, to mingle my tears with yours, and to offer consolation with this congregation to the bereaved family of our dear friend; praying that the Holy Ghost will sustain them in this their hour of trial. A vacancy has been made among them, such as has never come to them before; and when they are left to their reflection, after the first stunning effects have passed away, they will

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feel more deeply than to-day that the vacant place cannot be filled.

I am asked to say something regarding the student-life of Dr. Niles, of his worth and life in the ministry.

My first acquaintance with Henry Edward Niles was made when fifty-four young men became classmates in the beginning of their post-graduate studies in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. They came from all parts of our country, and many from other lands. This was in the autumn of 1845. The total membership of the class for the three years at the seminary numbered sixty-seven. Of this number forty-seven have departed this life; twelve at least survive with us here; and of eight others, I know not whether they are living or dead; probably most, if not all of them, are deceased. Of the twelve survivors, seven are still in the active service of the Church. Of these twelve, the Rev. Thomas M. Crawford, D.D., has passed his eightieth year. Two others, the Rev. Andrew Shiland, D.D., of New York, and the Rev. Jonathan Osmond, of Tacoma, Wash., if spared a few months, will have passed their four-score years. [Since this record the Rev. Dr. Murphy and Rev. Dr. Shiland have departed.]

This class of sixty-seven has had a most creditable history of honor and usefulness to the Church and country. But this is not the time, nor is it the place, to recite that history. Many of its members have occupied prominent pulpits in our own Church and in other denominations. One still surviving and active is Bishop Littlejohn, of the Diocese of Long Island. [Lately departed this life.] Two others are the Rev. Dr. E. R. Craven, secretary of the Board of Publication, and the Rev. Dr. William M. Paxton, of the Theological Seminary of Princeton. Several others have occupied high places in educational institutions of impor-

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tance. Four have filled the moderator's chair in the General Assembly, North and South. Let this suffice to illustrate the setting Dr. Niles has as to his theological class.

In this class Dr. Niles was peer among peers. From the start he took a high place, which he never lost in his three years of seminary days, and maintained through his long life, reflecting distinguished honor on his classmates and his beloved Alma Mater. I have the combined daguerreotype plates of thirty-five portraits of our class, taken at graduation, two faces on each plate. On one of these are the portraits of Mr. Osmond and Dr. Niles. By an interesting and affecting coincidence, a letter from Mr. Osmond and the news of Dr. Niles's death came to me by the same mail.

To students, life in the Theological Seminary is usually a most happy period, to which they look back with undiminished pleasure. Here you find a body of select young men, of that happy combination of character which is the product of social culture, collegiate training, well-defined religious conviction, and self-sacrificing piety. There is nowhere to be found a finer aggregation of young society, from whatever point of view you look. There's a healthful, inspiring stimulus in the atmosphere, which makes irresistibly for the best social, intellectual, and spiritual development.

Into such society Henry Edward Niles was introduced by his matriculation in 1845. With it he was in most happy adaptation, perfectly at home, in delightful harmony at all points, and by his previous mental and religious training, ready to enjoy it, to penetrate all its advantages, and to develop under it into a larger life.

It was the privilege of the class to enjoy the last unbroken labor of the original faculty, the venerable Dr. Miller retiring with the graduation of the class. The faculty as

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then constituted was one of the ablest the institution has had, and unsurpassed in the theological schools of that day. In this class Dr. Niles at once took a high place, which he easily held and never lost, in the seminary or ever since. He was one of the best students as to scholarly attainments, always faithful in preparation and attendance upon class duties, at devotional exercises, at the seminary and class prayer-meetings, at the afternoon Sabbath conference, and at the church service. No student stood higher in the estimation of his associates and teachers. With his intimates he was more than esteemed; he was loved, and his friendship was cherished as a choice possession. He was not only amiable, but strong in his physical, mental, and moral make-up. In class-meetings he was always heard with attention and respect for his intellectual force and unassuming piety. His prayers were most edifying; and when leading a prayer-meeting, I usually called upon him with others to offer prayer. He was always strong and firm in his opinion, genial and respectful, modest and receptive.

He was a thoroughly symmetrical, all-round man in his professional studies and acquisition, and in his wide reading of other literature. It goes without saying that his was a liberal education, for such an education is the natural, logical outcome of the constant study of the inspired Word of God and the broad fields of knowledge covered by our theological schools.

One of the best commentaries of his life as man and scholar, as citizen and minister, is to be found in his social, literary and civic standing in this large and intellectual community, and in the remarkable growth and prosperity of this important pastoral charge and the strong churches formed from it. But this, and his sweet family life, his valuable educational work, his intelligent, alert, patriotic citi-

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zanship, belong to others who are to follow, and I must resist the temptation of affection and admiration to enlarge upon them.

Dr. Niles has been for thirty-five years under my observation. He was one of those happily constituted men who inspire confidence with first acquaintance. He so impressed me the first time I met him, and my affection for him grew steadily with my ever-growing admiration for the fidelity and usefulness of his life. And this life-long appreciation has been confirmed and illuminated by his last words of humility and faith: "I am not afraid; I have not been faithful, but Christ will forgive."

Only two weeks ago I reminded my family that in the event of my death they must not forget my frequent request that my classmate, Dr. Niles, should be requested to officiate at my funeral. And now instead, I stand by his bier with heart full of pain in pronouncing this faint eulogy of my friend. All the good and noble in his character, relations and work were prophetic in him in his student days. As he was with you for the last thirty-five years in this larger sphere and conspicuity, such also was he in the narrower bounds and shorter period of his seminary days. As he was one of the manliest of young men, so he has lived out one of the noblest of lives. The beautiful blossoming of his youth has yielded the rich fruitage of a long life. To the long lineage of American citizenship and Church life, he has been permitted to add additional honor. "He fought the good fight; he finished the course; he kept the faith;" and now he has been called up to receive the crown of righteousness. May we all possess that faith which makes for obedience, and that obedience which makes for righteousness. And the glory shall be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, our Triune Jehovah, world without end."

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Address by Dr. Ledwith.

A Prince in Israel has fallen. A dear, devoted husband has fallen asleep, but you know, dearly beloved friend, in the loneliness of your widowhood that the God of all comfort will not leave you destitute. A father has been taken from a circle of devoted children, but this blessed consolation to-day is their portion:—"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." A minister of the Lord Jesus Christ has gone to his reward, but his works do follow him. In the holy silence of thoughtful, sympathetic, and loving hearts here this afternoon, the prayer of our lips should be: "I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it." And as we lift up our eyes we recognize the fact that God is with us; that He knows the beginning and the end, and we most devoutly and unreservedly say, "The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

How natural for family and friends to cling to the memories of those that are no more. How natural the desire to be conscious once again of the touch of the vanished hand; to hear once more, in the home or in the sacred desk, in prayer, the sound of his voice, now stilled forever.

You have had the curtain lifted that has revealed to you some of the past days and joys. I stand to-day behind that curtain with the sweet and blessed memories of twenty-two years. As vividly as though it were yesterday do I remember the first time I met Dr. Niles. It was in the city of Lancaster, at a meeting of the Presbytery of Westminster. I was a young man and was making a speech, and as I looked down into the front pew I caught the eye of a stranger, and I instinctively recognized in that gaze that I had a kind, sympathetic, and helpful listener; and at the

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close of the meeting he introduced himself to me, and a friendship was established that knew no change. I felt that we could be congenial the one with the other; helpful the one to the other; and, although a man old enough to be my father, I feel, friends, that I stand here to-day to speak of an elder brother.

Is it necessary for me to dwell on the many qualities that characterized him? Is it necessary for me to lift the veil and enable you to see something that you know as well as I, and some better? How we call to mind that bright, cheerful face, that kind, sympathetic voice! How great was his love for the beautiful, framing expressions from time to time that kindled like admiration in the heart of his listener. How he was loyal at all times and under all circumstances to the truth, as he recognized it, believed it, and lived it. How at all times we find him devoted to Christianity as revealed in the perfection of Jesus Christ, and that he sought to manifest in his daily walk and conversation.

I shall not speak of the relations he sustained to his brethren in the ministry and in the Presbytery. He was well versed in ecclesiastical law, and in all his discussions with his brethren fully persuaded them that he ever had the highest interests of the Church he loved at heart, the honor of the truth, and the glory of his Divine Master.

Is it for me to speak then about his relation as a pastor? He came unto you in the full prime of manhood with rich experience in real life among men. Just as God had endowed him with knowledge and power and courage did he minister unto you of the fold. Ah! had these walls lips, what precious words we might hear! Were these walls, as it were, transparencies through which might come the bright shining of the truth, what conflicts and triumphs we might behold. As is true of most servants of the Lord,

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his own people were near his heart, and his own people had the first claim upon his sympathy and love, and for them he lived and labored.

For thirty-five years he went in and out among you, breaking unto you the bread of life. Do you realize all that is involved in the record of those thirty-five years? Thirty-five years of faithful preaching of the Gospel of our blessed Christ. Thirty-five years of anxious, earnest, loving service in season and out of season. Thirty-five years of rejoicing with you in your joys and prosperity, and in your growth in grace and the divine life. Thirty-five years in lifting up his hands in benediction as you bowed your heads in these pews for prayer. Thirty-five years in ministering beside sick beds. Thirty-five years in following one generation after another to their last resting places. Oh, the memories that rise up about you of the generations that have come and gone. Sweet little babes who came, smiled, and departed. Young men and maidens who confessed their Master in this church, who lived out their allotted time here or elsewhere and then went to their graves rejoicing in the hope of a blessed immortality.

The life of your beloved pastor was fully rounded and complete. He died in the harness, permitted to proclaim the Gospel almost to the end, and as to the last service ministering unto you in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Let it be the desire and hope of all, in the blessed future, to sit together at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

As we tarry for a moment this afternoon beside his casket and look upon the form of our dear friend we say: "Asleep in Jesus"; but is he not alive for ever more? We behold the stillness and the pallor of death, but doth not that face, in the heavenly places, behold and reflect the divine glory? Should there be sorrow in your hearts? Yes, but it will

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be turned into joy. Your sorrow may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. Should there be tears? Yes, but they shall all be wiped away, and to you will be given the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. We look for the last time upon this familiar face now still in death.

“Two hands upon the breast,
And labor's done:
Two pale feet crossed in rest.
The race is run.”

He goeth from us, but shall we not rejoice that there hath been granted unto him an abundant entrance into everlasting habitations? But, though dead, beloved, he yet speaketh, and his works do follow him. Let not his instruction, as you have received it these many years from this sacred desk, be forgotten, but cherish it in your hearts, and let it bring forth a rich fruitage in your lives. Seek to imitate his example, in so far as his life was kind and pure and Christ-like, and so glorify your Divine Lord, whom he, with loving devotion, tried to faithfully serve.

Address by Dr. Jeffers.

In these days of restless ministers and congregations difficult to satisfy, the mere fact that Dr. Niles has held the place of pastor in an intelligent and influential church for thirty-five years is enough to make him remarkable. If we knew nothing else of him save that he had remained here for a thirty-five-year pastorate, we could infer that he must have had many of the qualities which the friends of his earlier days discovered in him and have recalled to-day. But this is not his distinction. This is a result, not a cause. He did more than stay and hold the office. He not only re-

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mained, but he grew. He not only kept the church, but made it grow. The members of Session and Board of Trustees, and those who in active church work came in close contact with him, know how far he was from merely floating with the current. He was busy. He planned the work of others, and it was a rare thing that he failed to bring to pass what he wanted to be done.

I never knew Dr. Niles until he had reached the age when most men are satisfied, if not compelled, to retire from active service. But when he had reached three-score and ten he could say as Dr. Cuyler did, "I am seventy years young."

This was evident in his manner. It seems but yesterday that he rode along our streets as erect as ever. It is but a few days since we saw him moving with the quick, springing step that indicated anything but age. He was young until the last, and worked till the last, and died as he wished to die, when his work was done. He always seemed to me to have all that one could desire. His church thought of him so kindly that nothing they could contribute to his happiness was withheld. His life to its very close was ideal.

I have been asked to say a few words to-day because he and I were both connected with the Collegiate Institute. Twenty-seven years ago, one of the elders in his church, a public-spirited man, decided to form a school where the young people of the city and vicinity could receive a higher education than the public schools gave at that time. He took into his confidence his pastor, whom he made a member of the Board of Trustees. The pastor's name appears in all the early programmes and we could always count on his presence at all our public entertainments. Dr. Niles never lost interest in the Institute. Not that he neglected

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his congregation to advance the interests of the school or of anything else with which he was connected outside of his church. He had time and thought and care for many things.

When he returned from the commencements of Lincoln University he was always anxious to report to me, knowing that I was heartily interested in the work of that institution.

I wish we could have a worthy report of his work as a Presbyterian, especially during the last few years. His chairmanship of the Missionary Committee was only one of the many responsible places he held. Only last year he was sent to the General Assembly as our representative in that body. Many of the members of Presbytery are here today and are ready to speak most affectionately of him.

Two representatives of the "Harrisburg Cleric" are also here to remind us that for some years he was a faithful member of that band of brothers.

Many places are left vacant by his death. Some it will be hard to fill. That in your hearts will never be filled.

As a preacher he maintained a high standard of excellence to the last. I often heard him, but never heard from him a carelessly prepared sermon. From the invocation to the benediction everything was neat, refined, finished. Thoroughness of preparation, and excellent taste were evident no less in the reading of the hymn and the most impassioned exhortation than in the treatment of the main points of the sermon. His work was made to last.

So when we lay him away to rest—all that is mortal of this beloved pastor—his life is not ended, his influence has not ceased. This congregation is what he made it. Being dead "he yet speaketh" most effectively to this whole community through the Church. The Lord has granted

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him a splendid, useful life; and his day has closed with a brilliant sunset."

At the conclusion of the addresses the choir sang the hymn, "Great Lord of all Thy Churches." Prayer was offered by Rev. Charles A. Oliver. The remains were then removed by the northwest door to the church plot, where the interment took place. The grave was lined with greens.

After the mourners had gathered, the committal service, short but impressive and beautiful, was pronounced by Rev. Edward Niles. The choir sang in a feeling manner "Rock of Ages Cleft for Me," Dr. Jeffers offered prayer, and the benediction was pronounced by Rev. Dr. Mesick.

The attendance of ministers from the Westminster Presbytery was large.

Among the others present were Mr. Henry L. Davis, of Philadelphia, representing the Presbyterian Board of Ministerial Relief, of which the deceased was one of the original and active members; Rev. George S. Chambers, D.D., of the Pine Street Presbyterian Church, Harrisburg; Rev. George L. Smith, a former pastor of Calvary Church, this city, now of Elmer, N. J.; Rev. Dr. Joseph T. Smith, Baltimore; Rev. George W. Ely, Columbia; Rev. A. N. Hagerty, Carlisle, and Rev. John A. Crawford, of the Memorial Church, Lancaster.

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“When some beloved voice that was to you
Both sound and sweetness, faileth suddenly;
And silence, against which you dare not cry,
Aches 'round you, like a strong disease; and now,
What hope? What help? What music can undo
That silence to your sense? No voice but God's!
Speak Thou, availing Christ, and fill this pause!”

“God keeps a niche
In heaven to hold our idols; and albeit
He brake them to our faces, and denied
That our close kisses should impair their white,
I know we shall behold them raised, complete,
The dust swept from their beauty,—glorified!
New Memnons, singing in the great God-light.”

*“ Do we count the star lost, that is hidden
In the great light of morn?
Or fashion a shroud for the young child,
On the day it is born?
Yet behold, that were wise, to our folly,
Who mourn, sore distressed,
When a soul that is summoned believing,
Enters into its rest,
Exchanging earthly weakness, with its moan,
For song and service there before the throne.”*

CHAPTER V

Action of Various Boards and Societies

RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEATH OF REV. H. E. NILES, D.D.

AT a special meeting of the Board of Elders of the First Presbyterian Church, of York, Pa., the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, It has seemed best to the All-wise Ruler of the Universe to transfer from earth to Heaven our beloved pastor, Rev. H. E. Niles, D.D., and although we are saddened and grieved beyond expression, yet we bow in humble submission to the Divine Will, knowing, whether joyous or grievous, our Lord doeth all things well.

Resolved, That in this dispensation of Providence our church has lost a faithful minister of the Gospel of Christ. For more than a generation he has stood in his place, preaching, teaching, and exhorting the members of his church and congregation to prepare for their everlasting welfare.

Resolved, That the session of this church, of which he was the head, will greatly miss him. His wise counsel and foresight was ever at his command to guide and direct us aright in all our deliberations.

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Resolved, That the Presbytery of Westminster will miss him. His large experience and thorough knowledge of all that pertained to the advancement of the interests of the Presbytery was cheerfully given to use for the highest good of the whole.

Resolved, That this community has lost a citizen, active and ever ready to do his part in promoting the moral and intellectual interests of the people whom he so much loved.

Resolved, That we commend to the God of Providence and Grace his beloved wife and family, that amid their tears and mourning they may be enabled to say, "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Resolved, That a copy of these minutes be entered upon the sessional records and a copy be sent to the family.

(Signed) JOHN M. BROWN,
 HENRY SMALL,
 W. H. MCCLELLAN,
 JACOB WELTZHOFFER,
 H. W. HALLOCK, } *Elders.*

The following resolutions were passed at a special meeting of the Board of Deacons of the First Presbyterian Church, of York, Pa., held May 18, A.D. 1900:

Whereas, God in His All Wise Providence has seen fit to remove from our midst our pastor and co-worker, Henry Edward Niles, D.D.,

Resolved, That while we bow in humble submission to the Divine Will, we feel that in the death of Dr. Niles we have lost the one who by his energy and progressiveness instituted the first Board of Deacons in the First Presbyterian Church, of York, Pa., and who, through all the succeeding years, never failed to manifest an untiring interest and zeal in the work of the Board, and who by his min-

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istrations to the sick and suffering, and his devotion to all the best interests of the church and the community has well earned the reward of the good and faithful servant.

Resolved, That to the bereaved widow and children we tender our sincere sympathy, and commend them in their sore affliction to the One who can heal all sorrow, and

Resolved, That these resolutions be recorded in our minutes, and be published in the daily papers of the city, and that a copy be sent to the bereaved family.

(Signed) NILES H. SHEARER,
PETER MCLEAN,
S. M. MANIFOLD,
HENRY R. KRABER,
J. HAMILTON SMALL, } *Deacons.*

At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church, of York, Pa., the following resolutions were adopted:

Although Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D., was not a member of our Board, he was our beloved pastor, and we mourn his loss in common sympathy with others in church and community. As those in charge of the temporal affairs of the church, we desire to bear testimony to his interest in all that pertained to the beauty and convenience of our church property.

It was with great interest that he examined the plans and watched the development of our recently enlarged chapel, and we mourn the fact that he did not have the pleasure of seeing the completed and occupied building.

Although we will not see him go in and out before us, and although never again will he stand in the sacred desk and open unto us the Scriptures, we can think of him as engaged in the work of his Master, in the mansions above, in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

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Resolved, That this minute be entered upon the records of the Board and a copy sent to Mrs. Niles with our sympathy to herself and family.

(Signed) JOHN H. SMALL,
 GEO. S. BILLMEYER, }
 HENRY SMALL, } *Trustees.*
 W. H. McCLELLAN, }
 JAS. McLEAN, }

BROTHERHOOD RESOLUTIONS.

Our friend and brother, Rev. Dr. H. E. Niles, has passed before to his eternal home by the path we all must tread. Endowed with uncommon mental gifts, possessed of unusual energy and power of initiative, it has been given to few men to contribute so largely to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual welfare of the community in which their lot was cast. This organization is one only of the evidences remaining of his desire to become an instrument in promoting the welfare of others. To him it owes its organization and, although it cannot perhaps be said that it has attained the degree of efficiency which he had hoped for, yet to him more than to any other person is due its continuation to this time. He was a natural leader, his presence was always inspiring, and his sympathetic appreciation of the efforts of others was always manifest.

Resolved, therefore, That we, the Brotherhood of the First Presbyterian Church, of York, Pa., express our deep appreciation of the loss we have suffered in the death of Dr. Niles, and of the obligation resting upon us to make this the organization which he desired it to be; also that we bear testimony to his faithfulness as a friend, his zeal and efficiency as a pastor, and his worth as a man, and

Memoir of Henry Edward Niles

Resolved, That our sympathy be extended to his bereaved widow and family.

(Signed) H. D. RUPP, }
CHAS. A. HAWKINS, } *Committee.*

JUNIOR CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

Friday Afternoon, May 18, 1900.

DEAR MRS. NILES:

The members of the Junior Christian Endeavor Society want to tell you how much they feel for you, and how desirous they are that their prayers may be answered by their Heavenly Father, which they offer to Him for you, in this time of your deep sorrow.

The words of our dear pastor will be cherished by us, and we love to think of his kind interest in our welfare. The words he tried to impress on our hearts, we hope and pray may never leave us. The verse that we recited for him when he was with us was, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."

May the protecting arms of your Heavenly Father and ours be around you,—for does He not notice the fall of a sparrow, and does He not pity His children more than an earthly parent or friends can?

Into His care we would place you, knowing that He careth for you.

With sympathy and love we sign our names, representing the members of the Junior Christian Endeavor Society.

MISS HARRIS,	BRUCE RAMSAY,
LAURA E. BAKER,	ELSIE SULLIVAN,
JANE F. KELL,	FLORA TAYLOR,
BERTIE S. BATES,	FRANCES MILLS,
MABEL McCLUNE,	MARY MAXELL,
WILLIAM STAIR,	HENRY SMALL.

Memoir of Henry Edward Niles

FROM THE WOMAN'S HOME AND FOREIGN
MISSIONARY SOCIETIES OF THE FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
YORK, PA.

“ Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ”; so

DEAR MRS. NILES:

Your sisters of the Home and the Foreign Missionary Societies, being one with you in Christ, mourn in your sad bereavement. Our hearts are filled with tender sympathy and our eyes dimmed with tears, as we remember you—stricken in your dearest tie; the light of your home, the partner of your joys and your sorrows, the strong arm and loving heart taken from you, and you left in the loneliness of widowhood.

Lonely—but not alone; “ cast down, but not forsaken.” We thank God that you have found the “ Everlasting Arms ” a sure support, and that the blessed Jesus has made you “ His in the espousal of His love; ” so that thy Maker is thy Husband.

We do, we can sympathize with you, for we belong to the great household of the sorrowing. Most of us know what it is to wait and weep for the “ touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still.”

Mourning as we do with you, we can yet rejoice that our great *loss* has been our beloved pastor's eternal *gain*.

To our dear pastor:

“ The cross left, the crown won;
His work ended, his reward begun.”

“ Knighted on the field ” by the Great Captain of our salvation. “ Crowned in Palm Land,” he rests among those

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“ who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Trusting in the Christ whom he served, death to him was but “ the gateway to glory.”

The long years of loving, faithful service given to the church cannot fail to leave an impression on the town and community; and only the roll-call of eternity will reveal the results of his labors and prayers.

“ Since thy Father’s arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
If He wound thy spirit sore,
Trust Him more.
Whatsoe’er betideth
Night or day,
Know, His love for thee provideth
Good: alway.”

Affectionately yours, in the bonds of Christian sympathy,

RACHAEL K. MCCALL, } *Committee.*
MARY E. KELL, }

May 24, 1900.

LADIES’ AID SOCIETY, FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH.

To our beloved sister, MRS. H. E. NILES:

We, as a society, extend to you our heartfelt sympathy in this your time of sore bereavement in the loss of your dear husband and our beloved pastor. We desire to send this letter of sympathy as a token of our affectionate regard and esteem and our sense of the loss as a society we have sustained in his death.

We feel that he was always devoted to the best interests of his people, and we recall his zeal and devotion to duty

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which he manifested. His presence was always an inspiration.

We know that he was at all times true to his convictions, and we shall miss him as our guide and adviser. We commend you to the All-wise and loving Father, whose messages of peace and love our pastor so often carried to other suffering hearts.

MRS. E. P. STAIR,
MRS. I. C. GABLE, } *Committee.*
MRS. W. F. WEISER, }

WESTMINSTER CHURCH.

Resolutions Adopted May 15, 1900.

Resolved, That in the death of Rev. Dr. Henry E. Niles, the oldest Presbyterian minister in the city of York, and pastor for thirty-five years of the First Presbyterian Church, the parent church has sustained a loss and sorrow in which we deeply share.

Resolved, That not only have all the churches of our denomination met with a sad bereavement, but our entire Christian fellowship, of whatever name, has lost a constant champion of its common faith and an illustrious minister of its broadest charities, and the community at large has suffered in the death of an exemplary citizen and a good neighbor, and a friend and helper of every worthy cause.

Resolved, That the affliction in his own family, while it is a matter into which we may not intrude, is yet not beyond the compass of God's rich grace and tenderest blessing.

Resolved, That we commend the stricken church and family to that Holy Comforter, the Spirit of grace, whose

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messages of light and hope our departed brother so often carried to other suffering hearts.

Resolved, That these resolutions be placed upon our minutes; that a copy of them be sent to the family of the deceased, and that they be published in the daily papers.

Signed by the Session,

REV. CHAS. A. OLIVER, *Pastor*.

H. S. MYERS, *Clerk of Session*.

ROBERT J. DICK,

ALBERT B. CARNER.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the York Collegiate Institute, held on May 17, 1900, the following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, God in His inscrutable providence has called from this Board one more of our number,

Resolved, That in the death of Henry Edward Niles, D.D., the York Collegiate Institute has sustained the loss of one who was actively and closely allied to the Founder in every step taken to bring into being this institution's corporate existence, and who for more than a quarter of a century watched its growth and advancement with the kindest regard, and for a like period served its interest as one of the charter members of its Board of Trustees. In the death of Dr. Niles the community suffers the loss of an eminent citizen whose influence was active and far-reaching, and the members of his parish the services of a beloved pastor, upon whose intellectual attainments and many virtues their memory loves to dwell.

Resolved, That to his bereaved widow and family we extend our sincerest sympathy, and commend them in this

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hour of deep affliction to the care and guidance of that Master to whose service the husband and father had dedicated his earthly life, and

Resolved, That these resolutions be spread upon our minutes; that they be published in the daily papers of the city of York, and that a copy be sent to the family of the deceased.

GEO. S. SCHMIDT,
*Secretary pro tem. of Board of Trustees
of the York Collegiate Institute.*

RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEATH OF REV. HENRY E. NILES, D.D., ADOPTED BY THE YORK MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION ON JUNE 11, 1900.

Whereas, Almighty God in His infinite wisdom has called away one of the beloved members of our association, the Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D., from his labors on earth to his rest in heaven, and

Whereas, Dr. Niles has been from the very beginning of our Ministerial Association to the end of his life a constant and active member of the same, and

Whereas, We have learned to love and esteem him for the deep interest which he manifested in the moral reforms in our city and the spiritual progress of our churches, and also for his wise counsel and active co-operation in every important undertaking, therefore,

Resolved, That, while his death is a great loss to our association, and we sorrow most of all that we shall see his face no more on earth; yet we rejoice in the firm belief that the step between his life and death was but the step between earth and glory, and that when earth's separations shall be

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at an end, we shall meet again in the unclouded sunshine of God's presence.

Resolved, That we regard the large and flourishing congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of York, gathered during his ministry of thirty-five years, as his most eloquent eulogy and enduring monument.

Resolved, That we attribute his success, under God, to his powerful orthodox, biblical preaching, his judicious, prudent leadership, and his faithfulness as a pastor, whereby souls were won for Christ, and which gained for him the love and respect of his people.

Resolved, That our Ministerial Association will greatly miss the presence, wise counsel, and active co-operation of Dr. Niles; that the city of York has lost a useful and law-abiding citizen; that the First Presbyterian Church of York has sustained a great loss in the death of their beloved pastor, and his family has suffered an irreparable loss in the death of the husband and the father; yet they need not mourn as those who have no hope, for he has only gone before to that home which the Savior has prepared for those that love Him in the mansions of our Father's house, where there shall be no more separation, no more sickness, and no more death.

Resolved, That we assure the bereaved family of our heartfelt sympathy, and that these resolutions shall be engraved on our minutes, and a copy of the same be sent to the family.

By the Committee,

P. ANSTADT,
A. G. FASTNACHT,
U. F. SWENGEL,
E. S. HAGEN, *Secretary*.

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TRIBUTE TO THE LATE REV. H. E. NILES, D.D.

Following is the report of the committee appointed by the Presbytery of Westminster at its late meeting at Middle Octoraro Church, to prepare a minute upon the death of Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D.:

It is with profound sorrow we record the death, on the 14th of May last, of the Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, of York, called to this church in April, 1865, while it was connected with the New School body. He became a member of this Presbytery at the time of the re-union and has responded to its roll-call for the long period of thirty years. The omission of that familiar name at this meeting was deeply impressive and the thought of his absence saddening. A life so long and useful and a pastorate so prolonged and successful is instructive and inspiring.

He was a man of positive convictions, enterprising and progressive, genial and kind toward his brethren, and in his home most hospitable. He was esteemed and honored as a brother and as a presbyter, his counsel valued and his services trusted, whether acting upon its committees or as a representative in the higher courts of the Church. He was chosen moderator of the Synod of Philadelphia in 1874, and was an associate member of the Ecumenical Council at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1877, and for many years was a member of the Board of Ministerial Relief and a Trustee of Lincoln University.

He was deeply interested in the Church at large, was jealous for the honor of Presbyterianism, and toward the

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questions of doctrine agitating the mind of the Church maintained a liberal attitude.

As a pastor his heart was closely knit to his people—the First Church, York, was his love and his pride and its prosperity his supreme joy. As love begets love, so he won a near place to the hearts of his people.

He was a sincere man, a man of prayer and deep spirituality. He was a conscientious evangelical preacher. He honored the Word of God and so fed his people with the bread from Heaven. He had the aggressiveness and the prudence which made him an effective leader, enabling him to command the confidence of his people and their cooperation in his enterprises and led their activities with unabated zeal to the last. The large accessions to his church upon profession of faith and the extensive material improvement completed during the year just past testify to his sustained vigor and efficiency at the advanced age of seventy-six. There was no dead line in his ministry. He was an illustration of the fact that youthful spirit can survive the years and increase the value and attraction of maturity.

We thank God for the life and service of our brother, for all he was to this Presbytery, and to that church and to that community in whose life he had enabled this church to become so important a factor.

We, to-day, affectionately and tenderly commend that church and the afflicted companion, so fully one with him in his labors and whose wisdom and devotion were a constant inspiration, to the care of a faithful God, and our thoughts follow him to a higher sphere and still wider ministries, while we feel ourselves as ministers and elders called to greater fidelity in feeding the flocks of God, thankful that God has counted us worthy, putting us in the ministry, and hopeful that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, that we,

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together with our brother, shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

GEO. WELLS ELY, *Chairman.*
D. R. WORKMAN,
H. W. HALLOCK.

The above report, after remarks by Rev. J. Y. Mitchell, D.D., and Rev. Joseph D. Smith, and after being led in prayer by Rev. W. G. Cairnes, was unanimously approved by Presbytery.

Attest:

W. G. CAIRNES,
Stated Clerk.

RESOLUTIONS OF LINCOLN UNIVERSITY, OXFORD. DR. I. RANDALL, PRESIDENT.

The Trustees of Lincoln University unite in expressing their sense of the great loss which has befallen this institution by the death of our beloved Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D.

In his office among us he was always considerate, earnest, hopeful, and he was ever a deviser of liberal things for our great work.

God has taken him from his labor in this institution and from all his earthly labors to his heavenly reward. He has joined the goodly company that in former years planned and labored with us here and have entered into the joy of their Lord.

The Board of Trustees present to the widow and family of our departed brother and to the church and congregation over which he had so long presided as a faithful and beloved pastor their heartfelt sympathy in their sore bereavement. And we prayerfully commend them to the loving sympathy of our loving Savior and to the comfort of His grace.

We all unite in saying of our absent and beloved brother,

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“Very pleasant hast thou been to us.” And we pray that He who made him such a joy to all his earthly relations may soothe the sorrow of his friends and kindred by the comfort of the same faith in which he lived when he moved among us.

J. M. GALBREATH,
Secretary.

BOARD OF MINISTERIAL RELIEF OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

WITHERSPOON BUILDING, PHILADELPHIA.

The special committee of the Board of Relief appointed to prepare a minute on the death of Dr. Niles presented the following, which was adopted:

Dr. Niles was born in South Hadley, Mass., August 15, 1823, and died at York, Pa., May 14, 1900, aged seventy-six years, nine months and twenty-nine days. He was graduated at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., in 1844, and at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1848. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Columbia, and installed pastor of the church at Valatie (Kinderhook), N. Y., October 24, 1848. June 26, 1850, he was married to Miss Jeannie E. Marsh, at Lowell, Mass. His widow and three sons survive him. Two of his sons are lawyers, and one a minister of the Gospel. His health failed him in 1855 and he resigned his pastoral charge for a year's rest and travel. When he regained his health he supplied the church at Angelica, N. Y., from 1856 to 1859. He was called in 1859 to the North Church of St. Louis, Mo., where he supplied as pastor-elect. In 1861 he received and accepted a call to Albion, N. Y. In 1865 he was called to the First Church, of York, Pa., and was installed as pastor there April 16, 1865, and continued as pastor up to the time of his death, a

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period of thirty-five years. In 1875 the honorary title of D.D. was conferred upon him by Wooster University. We are not surprised that he remained so long in the pastorate of one congregation, when we consider the elements which entered into the make-up of his character. He had the witness, in a very unusual degree, that he was counted worthy of the high calling of an Ambassador of Christ. He was a man of fine intellectual abilities, a conscientious student, an earnest Christian, a dignified gentleman, a sincere friend, a warm-hearted and sympathetic pastor, ever faithful in all his work; a forceful preacher, a wise and prudent counsellor, possessing rare executive ability, and altogether, a man who won the confidence and affection of his people, and was a tower of strength in the midst of his congregation. He was a trustee in York Collegiate Institute and also in Lincoln University. He was a good presbyter, and took an active part in the business of our ecclesiastical assemblies, and in 1874 the Synod of Philadelphia honored him with the moderatorship of that body. He was elected a Director of the Board of Relief in 1876, and became a charter member, and served most faithfully as a member of this Board up until the time of his death. He brought with him to the Board all the fine qualities which made him successful as a pastor. He was regular in his attendance, wise in counsel, and always manifested a heartfelt sympathy for the needy and worthy annuitants of the Board. His presence was a benediction. He won our love and we deplore our loss, but God has taken him to a realm of higher usefulness, near Himself.

B. L. AGNEW,
Corresponding Secretary.

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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

York, Pa., March 16, 1901.

Mrs. Dr. H. E. NILES, York, Pa.:

DEAR MADAM—I beg to present herewith the resolutions adopted by the York County Historical Society at the last regular meeting. I trust it may convey to you our high appreciation of your deceased husband's great worth and at the same time our condolence with you in his separation from us. I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,

REINHARDT DEMPWOLF,

Corresponding Secretary.

Resolved, That this society place on record its appreciation and sense of obligation to our deceased member, Rev. H. E. Niles, D.D., for his vigorous and continuous assiduity in seeking to make it what it was originally designed to be, a useful institution now and hereafter to the community at large; and that we express our sense of the fact that, whatever may be the future developments with respect to the society, it will owe much to Dr. Niles and his forceful participation in its counsels during its inception and throughout what we hope may prove to be the least encouraging period of its existence.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

The following resolutions on the death of Rev. H. E. Niles, D.D., the president of the Advisory Board, were passed unanimously by the Board of Managers of the Crittendon Home:

Memoir of Henry Edward Niles

Whereas, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to promote from earth to Heaven our friend and co-worker, Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D.,

Resolved, That we, the members of the Board of Managers of the Crittendon Home, do humbly bow in submission to His will.

Resolved, While deeply grateful for the evidence of God's infinite love in all our association, that in this dispensation of our all-wise Ruler our home has lost a wise counsellor and guide, and one who has never failed to manifest his untiring interest in the welfare of those whom we are seeking to rescue.

Dr. Niles was the first person selected to serve on our Advisory Board; always in his place and always equal to the occasion.

Resolved, That these resolutions be entered in our minutes, and a copy be sent to the bereaved family.

In deepest sympathy,

THE BOARD OF MANAGERS,

OZELLA L. BOYD,

Corresponding Secretary.

May 25, 1900.

ACTION OF LITERARY CLUB, "UTILE CUM DULCI."

DEAR MRS. NILES:

At a special meeting of the members of the "Utile Cum Dulci," called May 17, 1900, to take action in regard to the death of Rev. Henry E. Niles, D.D., late a member of that literary society, the following minute was adopted.

D. E. SMALL,

Secretary "U. C. D."

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In the death of Rev. Henry Edward Niles, D.D., another link has been broken in the golden chain that binds together the members of the *Utile Cum Dulci*.

In his life and character assembled a rare combination of virtues and abilities. He was genial and sympathetic, wide in experience, mature in judgment, and facile with tongue and pen; distinguished alike for literary attainments and ripe scholarship. His devout Christian character influenced all with whom he came in contact. The memory of the pleasant associations and delightful intercourse enjoyed by the members of the *Utile Cum Dulci* as they together communed with the master spirits of the past and present, the great and good of all ages, will be a source of lasting enjoyment, though tinged with sadness in view of the vacant seats in the circle.

One by one our beloved workers cease from their labors, and familiar faces fade away from sight. Yet, death is only the door between the daylight here and the undecending light beyond. It is only a little way across, and when sunset came to our dear departed friend there was a golden path all the way over to the Celestial country.

To the sorrowing household we extend our loving sympathy in this sad bereavement. While we mourn the loss of our venerated and beloved friend, Dr. Niles, we will ever cherish his memory with affectionate regard.

(Signed) MARY E. KELL,
RACHAEL K. MCCALL,
MAGGIE M. SMALL.

DAVID E. SMALL, *Secretary*.

Memoir of Henry Edward Piles

“ It singeth low in every heart,
We hear it one and all;
A song of those who answer not,
However we may call.
They throng the silence of the breast,
We see them as of yore,—
The kind, the true, the brave, the sweet,
Who walk with us no more.

'Tis hard to take the burden up
When they have laid it down;
They brightened all the joy of life,
They softened every frown.
But oh! 'tis good to think of them
When we are troubled sore.
Thanks be to God, that such have been,
Although they're here no more.

More home-like seems the vast unknown,
Since they have entered there;
To follow them were not so hard,
Wherever they may fare;
They cannot be where God is not,
On any sea, or shore;
Whate'er betide, Thy love abides,
Our God! forever more.”

CHAPTER VI

Letters of Condolence

THE hundreds of letters sent after Dr. Niles's death, containing expressive appreciation of his traits and influence, would of themselves make a volume.

One unvarying testimony to his wonderful symmetry of character, magnetism, great capacity for affection, genius for friendship, ripe scholarship and forcefulness, runs through them all.

A few specimens are given here of the epistolary cordials God sent by the hands of His servants to minister to fainting lips and bleeding hearts by the open sepulchre.

They were such heavenly manna, such balm of healing, such elixirs of immortal hope, such soul tonics, that it seems grossest selfishness not to share some of them with other sorrowing ones in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, through which sooner or later all must pass.

From the Rev. Edward Taylor, D.D., of Binghamton, N. Y.:

“ My long-time and beloved Friend:

“ And Henry is translated in peace! This morning I have devoted to a careful perusal of the varied reports of his life, departure, funeral exercises, letters, etc. What a tender laying of his temple of the Holy Ghost in God's Acre!

“ With the jealousy of love I read and am more than sat-

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isfied; could kiss the hem of the robe of the many who so appreciatingly spoke and acted. He was worthy.

“ You and he entered largely into my life in the earlier years of his ministry. His devotion to you was beautiful. The memory of things said and done has been perennial. And how replete with cheery memories must your life be!

“ He and I were only two years apart. Now I am seventy-eight years young! Health perfect! Never more privileged with opportunities for fruitful service for Christ. In four days last month met nine public appointments. Knowing it is seven o'clock in the evening with me, I propose to make the most of myself for our Saviour. He understands me and enters into the plan, prompt with His ‘As’—to which I aim promptly to fit my ‘So.’ That same, only in a completer measure, was Henry E. Niles.

“ He was a Man—written with a capital M. He was white-souled, high-caste, consecrated to the person and world-purpose of Jesus Christ. Into his being was bedded a large bit of the Rock of Ages!

“ The bells of the Heavenly City must have pealed right joyfully when he entered its holy gates.

“ Grief is medicinable, divinely compounded—is the prescription administered to your stricken heart.

“ Such a long and happy union! Such children! Such memories! Such hopes! Such a Paraclete! Such a little while!”

From the Rev. Wilmer McNair:

“ You are in the years of fruitage, rather than planting. No new duties, experiences, and associations stand between you and the one who has gone.

“ A clearer vision of our Father's house and face given through our earthly loves and longings.”

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From the Rev. David M. Skilling, Central Church, Allegheny:

“His was truly a noble life. It was lived for the Master, and was a blessed walk with God. He bore a heavenly testimony and made the Gospel beautiful and attractive, as well as powerful in the salvation of souls, because of his pure life and his scholarly presentation of the truth. The world is better and purer because he lived in it, and Heaven has crowned him with a rich reward. His cheerful presence always refreshed me, and I shall never forget his gracious courtesy.”

From the Rev. M. L. Haines, D.D., Indianapolis:

“I remember how I saw you last, one year ago in Minneapolis, in Westminster Church. Your noble husband seemed then so young, vigorous, cheerful, and genial as of old in our European trip, that I felt he had long years before him in this world.

“What precious memories are yours! What an exceptionally happy and prosperous life has been your lot! What fruitage have you already gathered!

“The fragrance of that beautiful life has gone out far and wide through our churches in America, and how many are scattered all over the world who have special reason to thank God for the influences of his life and ministry.”

From the Rev. John M. Galbreath, Presbytery of Westminster:

“He was one of God’s noblemen. He was my ideal of a pastor and minister of the Word. His interest in the Kingdom was always an inspiration to us all. We shall sorely miss him in our councils. He has entered into the higher service above.

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“The word that comes continually to me since I heard of his ascension is: ‘If any man serve Me, him will My Father honor.’ The time for his promotion had come. He continued faithful to the end. He is now on his throne.”

From the Rev. George Wells Ely, of Columbia, Pa.:

“This is the one time in your life when while you suffer he rejoices. He has only stepped into another sphere, hidden from your view, beyond reach of voice or touch, but serving the same Master we are. Such a husband can never in one sense be taken from you. * * * They continue to influence our lives and conduct to the last breath. I wonder to what extent they carry our influence with them—if it affects their thoughts and condition in Heaven.

“He was summoned from his post where the messenger found him with his harness on. It always cheered me to just think of him in his successful prolonged ministry. His loss will be felt in a wide sphere; how wide will never be known here.”

From Rev. Dr. Herrick Johnson (McCormick Theological Seminary), Chicago:

“I hasten to tell you of our sympathy both in your sorrow and your joy, your trial and your triumph. Surely the sorrow is swept through and through with joy, and the trial is lost in the triumph.

“It will be hard for you to walk on alone, but with such memories and such hopes the cross will be borne with a chastened cheerfulness, and some day—not far off—one more silver cord will be broken; and you will be together, will be forever with the Lord.

“Your husband and I touched each other in the sixties. He was one of the first I knew and one of the first I loved

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in the early ministerial days. We have not met so much of late, but I have always thought of him as one of the life-long friendships, and his death comes to me with peculiar tenderness.

“We pray God’s blessing of peace on your home and heart and know that this shadow, however dark, will only usher you into a more beautiful day with God.”

From Rev. Dr. William S. Freas, Pastor Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church, Baltimore:

“It is wonderful how Dr. Niles has fastened himself in the warm affection of his friends. I find myself as much saddened by his unexpected death as if I had received the news of the loss of a dear relative.

“Through the fifteen years we were co-pastors in York, his friendship has been an honor, his sympathy and encouragement a stimulus to noble and honorable service.

“He always seemed one of us. Just as young, just as keenly alive to present issues, and never to the last showing any signs that intellectually or physically he felt the burden of years.

“It will be a sweet thought when my day of parting with time shall come that this genial friend and lover of his kind will be among the welcoming host that wait our coming home.

“I deeply sympathize with you in the bitterness of your cup and the pain of your loss. But I know you will show all about you how one who has the Everlasting Arms underneath can bear sorrow.”

From Rev. Dr. George Smythe, East Orange:

“Sorely Bereaved One:

“Knowing how truly you were one in all that little word

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implies, I can understand how unusually keen and desolating must be your sorrow. My whole heart goes out to you in prayerful sympathy, and to the dear boys who are now deprived of the best of fathers.

“The pleasant and profitable memories the departed has left, the comfort in the fact that unerring wisdom and infinite love took him at the right time, and that there is soon to be a meeting time where there will be no more separations; these facts have helped me through desolating bereavements. May they console you.”

From an old college friend and co-presbyter in St. Louis,
Rev. Dr. J. Germain Porter, Watertown, N. Y.:

“What precious memories throng and thrill me at Henry Niles’s name! Union College! Old Princeton! Angelica! St. Louis! Albion! York! Though younger, Henry is first translated.”

From Rev. Dr. George S. Chambers, Harrisburg, Pa.:

“I had learned to have a great admiration for Dr. Niles, as a pastor, a scholar, a public-spirited citizen, a Christian gentleman, and a personal friend.

“He has done a grand work for the Master whom he loved and served with an enthusiastic devotion.

“You have the memories of a beautiful life, the assurance of the perfect life into which he has entered, as well as the presence of the dear Redeemer to whom your beloved husband was loyal in every fibre of his being. His hosts of friends will miss him; his church will miss him; the Presbyterian Church will miss him.

“Sympathy for you takes the form of fervent prayer for the abiding presence of Him whom Dr. Niles loved to preach, and with whom he will be forever.”

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From the Rev. Dr. B. L. Agnew, of Philadelphia:

“I dearly loved Dr. Niles. To me he was so very lovable. His soul was so pure, sincere, and noble. We shall miss him greatly in the Board of Relief! O! what a vacancy his removal has caused.”

From Rev. Dr. T. H. Robinson, Allegheny Theological Seminary:

“When I read of your honored husband’s death I felt like stealing away to some secret place and giving way to my grief.

“O! I would like to tell you the many dear things my heart whispers of Dr. Niles. Through all the years of our acquaintance, beginning in 1865, I have found him so courteous, genial and true, so ready in all friendly and brotherly attentions, so sympathetic mentally and spiritually, that I tied myself to him.”

From Rev. Dr. S. W. Dana, West Philadelphia:

“I can scarcely believe the telegraph of the death of your noble, beloved husband. Only a few days ago I was reading an historical sermon of his, and was reminded anew of his long and fruitful ministry.

“My friendship with him extends over many years. We met so often at Lincoln University, and it was always a joy to see him. His deep, strong life has been such a blessing to others.”

From Rev. Dr. W. R. Bingham, Oxford, Pa.:

“I was looking forward to a pleasant meeting with your dear husband in the near future, when I was shocked by the unexpected announcement of his departure from earth.

“We have had many pleasant meetings together on earth,

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but these are past. The next one, I trust, will be before the throne above. I can say of him as David of Jonathan, 'Very pleasant hast thou been unto me.'

"I am bereaved by this translation, and am better prepared by it to sympathize with your sons who weep with you. But why should we weep for one to whom Jesus has said, 'Come up higher, blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you.'

"His life-work was well done. The fruit gathered and to be gathered is precious and plentiful. Many sick beds have been made bright and cheerful. Many sorrowing hearts taught to rejoice. Many strong Christians edified and enlarged. Many wayward lives have been made Christ-like, aided and directed by his ministry. His home and the homes of his children were made pleasant by his presence.

"Though you are lonely, you are not alone. Say to your sons their father's friend is afflicted in their affliction."

From Rev. Dr. F. J. Sauber, Emporia, Kan.:

"My last letter from Dr. Niles was full of hope and cheer, a beautiful reflection of his bright, happy spirit. He was telling me about his beloved First Church of York, and how in two days after he had mentioned to them his desire for an assistant they had with loving alacrity raised the salary and empowered him to select one. He wrote of his plans.

"Ah! how little we know of the honor and glory the Father has so near for His own.

"How we continue to use the language of Askalon and Philistia even after our Joshua has led us into the Land of Promise. The word came, 'Dr. Niles is dead!' How unlike God's language. Such words may be true in Ekron, but they should not be used by those dwelling in Jerusalem. Your dear husband could not die. Jesus said, 'Whosoever

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believeth in Me shall never die.' I read in the paper they held a funeral! Surely not for such as he.

"I am sure you joined with the angels in a glorious coronation ceremony. They had finished his crown above and he was called from you and all who loved him so to wear his crown. But though we rejoice in his immortal glory, how we miss his manly presence, the wise and loving counsel, and the strong, cheery words he gave so generously.

"You know the Father so well I am sure you are hiding in Him all the time, and so are at rest and peace. I know you will want to hear poems of victory and songs of rejoicing instead of dirges. For twenty-two years he was my loving counsellor, my wise and sympathetic friend.

"At Atlantic City last summer he was the same cordial, courteous brother he ever was in York. We shall not soon see his like. How fortunate I was to have been blessed these years with his friendship."

From Rev. Dr. J. B. Rendall, Lincoln University:

"My thoughts are turned to a 'manse' in York. It has been one of the ideal homes it has been my privilege to visit. An inspiration and a blessing to all who have felt the influence streaming from it. Surely it has made many other homes happier, brighter, better, just to have seen how two loving hearts can, by sharing, multiply the joy and mitigate the sorrows of life.

"I know it is a picture painted not in oil or on canvas and hung on the walls of other homes, but in more enduring and brighter colors on the walls of memory in many a human heart.

"We thank God that He spared your true, tender, noble husband so long; that He had owned him so richly and royally, and that He filled his life with such large measures of

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usefulness and happiness. Not a place that he did not adorn. How courtly and gracious at home. How princely in the pulpit. How wise and welcome his counsels in all positions of trust, and in none more than in this 'school of the prophets.'

"A life full of nobility and crowned with honor has passed into spheres of greater service. By and by, you, and we all who loved him, will again meet and greet him; and these are consolations in the pain of parting. Heartfelt sympathy with the stricken sons in the loss of such a father."

From Rev. Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock, New York:

"Dear Mrs. Niles:

"I do not know how you and Dr. Niles had wished it about who should go first, but we know now how God thought best. It must be better that you should live here without him than the other way. How he loved you, does, and will forever!

"Some time the enclosed may be a little comfort.

"Why be afraid of Death? As though your life were breath!
Death but anoints your eyes with clay. O! glad surprise!

Why should you be forlorn? Death only husks the corn.
Why should you fear to meet the Thresher of the wheat?

Is sleep a thing to dread? Yet sleeping you are dead
'Till you awake and rise, here, or beyond the skies.

Why should it be a wrench to leave your wooden bench?
Why not with happy shout run home when school is out?

The dear ones left behind! O foolish one and blind,
A day, and you will meet, a night, and you will greet!

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This is the death of Death, to breathe away a breath
And know the end of strife, and taste the deathless life,

And joy without a fear, and smile without a tear,
And work, nor care to rest, and find the last the best."

" Mrs. Babcock joins me in loving thoughts and happy hopes.

" Ever your friend,

" MALTBY D. BABCOCK."

[Died in Naples, May 18, 1901.]

One year from the day this busy minister turned from his rush of duties and engagements to draw a cup of cold water to hold to widowed lips, his own idolized wife passed under the eclipse of widowhood and needed the same ministering.

From T. L. Cuyler, D.D., Brooklyn:

" I have been reading of the last honors paid to your beloved husband and my beloved brother, Dr. Niles.

" He is one of the few survivors whom I knew in the student days at Princeton Seminary. Every year increased my admiration and affection for him.

" The strongest proof of his rare power as a preacher and a pastor and of his noble qualities as a Christian was that he held his place in the hearts of his loving flock and of all the people of York for more than a whole generation. No one thought of York without thinking of Henry E. Niles.

" He was the ideal of a faithful, devoted minister of Jesus Christ, true to his Master's Word and his Master's work. What a blessed memory for you and his sons. What a rich inheritance is his honored name.

" I can mingle my congratulations with condolence. Thank God for him! Thank Him for sparing your precious

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husband so long and crowning his glorious work with such manifold blessings.

“The hour of reunion is not far off. You can sweetly say,

“Each minute is a swift degree
And every hour a step towards thee.”

“Accept these few honest words of tribute from the heart of his and your brother in Christ Jesus.”

From Rev. Dr. James A. Worden, Philadelphia:—

“My dear friend in sorrow:

“May the Father of all consolation be with you now. There has gone from your heart and from your home one of the noblest ministers of Christ that ever breathed. Earth is poorer and Heaven is richer, and never again will this earth be to you what it was while he breathed this air.

“The present Christ, the indwelling Comforter, and the exceeding great and precious promises of His Word is the only consolation I can bring. How I loved, honored, and revered your departed one.

“May God in His infinite mercy take care of that church which is your beloved husband’s best and enduring monument.”

From Charles P. Arnold, Angelica, N. Y.:

“When I saw in the *Tribune* that my early pastor had gone home, such happy memories flooded my soul! Ah, those golden days of life! Yes! and the golden age of our church. I saw again our young minister in that old church where Dr. Marcus Whitman and Miss Narcissa Purtus were married on the eve of their starting on the mission that has made their names famous and honored through all the world.

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“ I saw your husband again planning for and building the new church. I saw him in all his youthful promise at the dedication in the afternoon, the sunbeams stealing through the west windows, resting on the prisms of those beautiful chandeliers and hurrying on to flit and dance on those rich damask curtains of the pulpit. How admirable the arrangement! Strangers always expressed their delight at the artistic effect—and it was his! I wonder if anyone else ever saw or dreamed of a design so beautiful and fitting for a village church?

“ Do you remember those morning gatherings for prayer in the cosey lecture-room? We boys and the girls began our day there while on our way to school. Boys and girls do not go to prayer-meetings at everyone’s beck, especially so early in the morning. They crowded the room for him.

“ When he was here all the seats in the church were filled with attentive worshippers. The Allegheny hills and beautiful Angelica vale remain, and the church that you and he built, and a few of the people. His influence, too, and his work remain in lives here, and in the lives of others moving in wider spheres.

“ What a wonderful thing that the result of a good, strong Christian life is so enduring. What a blessed thing that its memory is so cheering and inspiring.”

From the Rev. Samuel T. Lowrie, D.D., Philadelphia:

“ I beg the privilege of expressing to you and your family my sorrow at the death of your beloved and honored husband. I may speak also particularly for his fellow-members of the Board of Relief.

“ We feel that we have sustained a severe loss in what concerns the administration of that sacred trust, for Dr.

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Niles has been very wise in counsel and very helpful by reason of the high esteem in which he was held by the Church at large.

“But we most keenly feel the grief of the thought ‘that we shall see his face no more.’ You will not fail to bless God for so much love and happiness that have been yours so long, but that God has now taken away.”

From the Rev. Dr. George B. Stewart, Auburn Theological Seminary:

“As I have been away I have just heard of your sore bereavement and the great loss the Church has sustained in the calling home of dear Dr. Niles. I hasten to send you my heartfelt sympathy in this hour of darkness. It is truly a great affliction and one which falls heaviest on you, though the whole Church feels the loss.

“A good man has gone home and the earth is poorer. I loved him and I sorrow with you.”

From the Rev. Dr. James W. Rogan, Flemington, N. J.:

“I esteem it an honor and a privilege to have known your husband and to have had the right to call him friend.

“As I write the memory comes to me of our pleasant intercourse at Saratoga, our enjoyment together of the World’s Fair in Chicago, visits in Baltimore, and exchanges, games of croquet, trip down the Hudson, and other scenes enjoyed together.

“I had hoped he would be one of our next party to Europe, as I knew he was planning the trip. Now he has gone forever to that other shore.

“I see from the paper he was more than thirty years my senior, but I would never have dreamed it. To all intents and purposes I ever found him my own age, in thoughts and

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feelings. Dr. Henry E. Niles was a man who could never grow old, because he kept young in heart and young in the keenness and freshness of his sympathies for those around him and for what was transpiring in God's world.

“As I write these things I am aware of the fact that they will be told over to you again and again, for your husband was a man who must have had a host of friends. He was ever so genial, so cordial, so kind-hearted, so courteous, so thoughtful for others, that he inevitably attracted men to him.

“He was ever ready to say a hearty, kind word of another brother's sermon and of the brother himself. I do not remember ever hearing him speak ill of anyone, though he was a man of such strong, decided convictions, and not afraid to speak them out. But his broad Christ-like spirit ever pervaded all he did.

“I am glad and grateful that our pathways crossed in life, and that it was my privilege to know him so intimately. I dare not think how dark and empty this world is to you now. Was ever so devoted and happy a husband?

“The star of Dr. Niles's life has been removed from these lower skies; but he has left his light behind him and—best of all—the star is not blotted out. It has only seemed to sink, but to rise and shine in other spheres.

‘Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still travelling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.

So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.’”

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From the Rev. T. B. Nichols, Germantown, Pa.:

“ Dr. Niles was so much to me in the pulpit and in private intercourse, during the two years I was in the Y. C. I., that I cannot refrain from bearing witness to my own sense of loss.

“ It will be said of him as of Barnabas, ‘ He was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.’ His influence will abide.”

CHAPTER VII

Sermons

THE three sermons here printed have been selected out of the 1,200 which he left behind, as typical of his style, thought, theology, and catholicity.

The sermon on "Meditation" was preached in one form and another twenty-five times, and greatly changed with each repetition.

The last sermon given was one of the last he wrote. How full of special significance his words of warning and exhortation, as, reading them now, we realize that his work was well-nigh ended, his reward to be entered into with the New Year!

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Eph. iv. 16 : "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

The Apostle is speaking in this chapter of the constitution and order of the Christian Church and of the mutual relations and duties of those who are connected with it. However imperfectly the science of anatomy may have been understood in his time, certain it is that under guidance of inspiration he has here drawn from it one of the most beautiful and instructive figures by which to illustrate spiritual truth. In this animal body with which we are endowed, what a number of distinct parts are "joined together and compacted" for securing the greatest harmony and efficiency. Two hundred and sixty-three bones in the human frame, 180 joints, several hundreds of muscles; so numerous the blood-vessels that you cannot perforate the skin anywhere without piercing one, so minute the ramifications of the nerves that wherever the point of a needle penetrates it touches one, and so multiplied the absorbents that millions of them are employed in taking up the chyme of the food and conveying it to the veins. How different in structure and function are the various organs, the hands and the feet, the stomach and the lungs, the heart and the liver, the eye and the ear, the nose and the mouth! How unlike are the muscles and the arteries, the nerves and the veins, the bile and the chyle! Yet no part is useless, none is idle, none to be overlooked. Connected with the head, where, as if enthroned in eminent security, the brain exercises regal functions and sends out vitalizing influence, these solids and liquids complete an organism which has been for ages the

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wonder of science and often has awed arrested skepticism into reverence!

“The undevout astronomer,” says a familiar adage, “is mad.” But with equal propriety may it be said, “No one can study the delicate, complicated, and unequalled mechanism of the human frame without recognition of an Infinite Creator, unless such an undevout anatomist be mad!” “I will praise Thee,” exclaims the Psalmist, “for I am fearfully and wonderfully made! Marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well!” And now, the Apostle’s illustration is, that as the human body is made up of various parts, compactly joined together, and is nourished and increased by the effectual working of every part, according to its measure or power, so in the Church of Christ there are different officers and members, with every variety of gifts and influence, yet closely connected with one another, and all united to Christ, their common head!

United to Him, “in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, by whom were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the Church Head of that mystical organism which is made up of saints on earth and in Heaven; yea, and of all who shall hereafter live and believe on His name! The true Church does not consist of any one order or denomination of Christian people, but of those in every age and clime who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, according to His word. And what a mighty multitude they will form, from Abel, the first martyr, down to the last polished jewel that shall be set to sparkle in the Redeemer’s

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crown! "Who can count the dust of Jacob or the number of the fourth part of Israel!" Who can estimate that redeemed company which shall be gathered out of all nations, countless as the atoms that float in a summer's sky, as the drops that fall in a summer's shower, as the vapors that rise on a sun-illumined earth, as the stars that sparkle in the firmament of heaven!

From Him, their Infinite Head, they shall derive life and nourishment, strength and vigor, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. United by faith to Him, they shall partake of His fulness and be sharers of His glory. United closely to each other, they shall contribute "according to the effectual working in the measure of every part" to each other's growth and welfare.

At present we see only dim foreshadowings of such perfection; for the body is yet incomplete. Part of the members are in Heaven, part in this world, and part yet to be born. And even of those now on earth some have not yet been "quickenened" from spiritual death. Some are just waking into life, some have had a little experience, and some are further advanced, but none are perfect! None yet wear their singing-ropes, nor wave the palms of victory, nor are crowned with immortal glory. None appreciate, as they will hereafter do, the dignity of their privilege, nor their obligations for redeeming mercy, nor what manner of persons they ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness!"

Nevertheless, even in this imperfect condition of the Church, may we not discern clear prophecies of what her final glory is yet to be? May we not see good reason why no member should be regarded as useless or should remain idle and unemployed? We see ministers variously gifted, church officers variously endowed, and private members with their different qualifications and spheres of influence. Some

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are logical in argument and others eloquent in speech. Some mighty in interpretation of Scripture and others in the analysis of Christian experience. Some are eminent in prayer and others in active labors. Some are burning with zeal for public usefulness, and others, like the quiet sunbeams or silent dew, gently diffuse their blessed influence in more retired circles. Some are educated and ready to teach. Others ignorant and glad to be taught. Some affluent and willing to give, others needy and thankful to receive. Some bold and fitted to lead, others timid and anxious to be led. Some bounding with hope and others drooping with fear. Some fitted for one station and others for another. But who shall say that they all are not needed, each in his appropriate place, doing his appropriate work, and helping on the common cause? And, if each professing Christian were actually and experimentally one, animated with regenerate dispositions, and striving for the sake of Jesus to do his whole work; if, in his appointed place, he were so manifestly living in union with Christ, the Head, that all could take knowledge of him, then how evident would be the importance of each one!

Then would it appear, that though this spiritual body is "not one member but many," yet that each member has his own office, and is essential to the perfection of the whole! That "the eye cannot say to the ear, I have no need of thee nor the hand to the foot, I have no need of you." Nay, further, that those members of the body which seem to be more feeble; those Christians who are most retiring and concealed from public gaze; the humble, the meek, and the prayerful, those who are much confined by sickness and infirmities, but who bear the interests of Zion on their hearts, and abound in intercession for her advancement, like the lungs and heart and brain of the physical body, are even more

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necessary than the comely parts which are prominent and visible!

Were such the spiritual condition of Christians, how soon would the importance of each one be recognized! What anxiety would be felt if his pew was empty for a single Sabbath!

How would his absence from the prayer-meeting be mourned, from the Sabbath-school, and from the scene of associated duty! How would his removal be deplored, his death lamented, his memory cherished, and his name be held in sacred remembrance! But now, alas! in each local church and throughout the entire visible body, how imperfectly is the vital power yet exhibited! Though there be some life and warmth apparent, how many paralytic arms, and halting feet, and deafened ears, and bleared eyeballs are also visible. How much torpidity and imperfect action! What poor digestion of the truth! What partial assimilation! How little growth of bone and muscle, and all that constitutes moral stability, promptness, and efficiency! Ah, these weak, dyspeptic organs! These rheumatic, shrunken, powerless limbs. With what heavy burden do they weigh down and impede the action of others that may be full of life! Oh! that the power of the Holy Spirit might be felt upon them! That He who could breathe upon the dry bones seen by Ezekiel, and cause those grim and ghastly skeletons to stand forth a marshalled army of living men, might with his heavenly breath impart vitality and power to every branch and every member of the visible Church! O that throughout the Church the heavenly influence might be felt, quickening that which is dead, warming that which is cold, strengthening that which is feeble, stimulating that which is torpid, uniting all in the bonds of Christian sympathy, and guiding all to labors of Christian love. Then,

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whatever might be done with reference to organic union between different branches and different denominations; results for which so many are praying and hoping; what is far better, spiritual union, would certainly be more fully realized. Then would the whole body of Christ, the great visible Church, appear as one, though with many parts! Then would be no more jealousies, nor brooding suspicions, nor denominational prejudices, nor sectarian exclusiveness, but with fraternal harmony would each division of the Church and each individual be contributing to the moral force and beauty of the whole.

Then in every station of life would be found a larger number of stalwart wrestlers at the throne of grace, like Daniel, and Bradford, and Payson, who should contribute immeasurably by their prayers for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause. Others would be especially noted for their godly example and affectionate devotion, like John the Beloved, and Melancthon and McCheyne, and others for their patient continuance in well-doing, like Stephen and the Wesleys and Judson and Scudder. Others again would contribute especially by the force of their logic and the wealth of their instruction, like Paul and Butler and Edwards. Others by a scholarly display of the Christian "evidences," like Paley and Hopkins and Wayland. Others by their fearless denunciation of error, like Nathan the Prophet and John Knox and Martin Luther. Others by the eloquence of their preaching, like Whitefield and Guthrie and Spurgeon. Others, like Milton and Heber and Watts, by their poetic inspirations, exponents of the noblest thought and most fervent piety of the Church.

And again others would contribute by their official prerogative to the establishment of Christian institutions. Others by the cheerful consecration of their property to

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Christ in open-handed benevolence. Others by dedicating themselves to the work of missions. And, better still, because more numerous and everywhere at work—such as by God's grace may be raised up in every city and town and hamlet and home—the multitude of private Christians who shall occupy well their several stations, and in the scenes of ordinary life make manifest the spirit of Jesus. Men who shall carry their religion with them into the circles of daily business, into politics and social life wherever they are called to move. Women, too, young and old, rich and poor, who shall show forth the praises of their Lord. Women like Mary Mother, Salome, Susannah Wesley, Mrs. Booth, Frances Willard, and hosts of mothers and sisters and daughters all around us who are making manifest how pure, gentle, self-effacing, and benignant Christian women can be.

Thus in the golden age of the Church will all the members be at work, some in one way, and some in another, according to their several circumstances and abilities, but each contributing, as is most fitting, to the life and development and growing strength of the mystical body of which Christ is the living head.

And now the text declares what shall be the result of such co-operative and consecrated effort: "Increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Just as the animal structure grows when there is healthful union of all parts with the head and reciprocal communication with the different parts, so it is in the spiritual body! United by faith to Christ, the source of all wisdom and grace, believers must also be united to each other in the bonds of Christian affection, sympathizing with, comforting and strengthening one another, and so growing up together towards the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

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In nature there is such a law of interdependence and growth. And the God of Nature is Head of the Church. He has appointed her component parts, with their various relations and offices. And He has determined that His Church shall grow, her cords be lengthened, her stakes strengthened, and all her interests advanced. Truth shall conquer error, light shall dispel darkness, order shall prevail over confusion, and love shall lay her olive branch upon the grave of buried hate! As in His earthly ministry Christ laid all nature under tribute to His purpose, made the lilies which breathe their fragrance in the summer air, the harvest field with its golden sheaves, the birds providing for their young, the forests with their pillared arches and cathedral anthems, the mountains with their solemn shadows and hoary cliffs, and the ocean with its chimes of resounding billows, all sources of illustration for spiritual truth; so, in the accomplishment of His future purposes with reference to the Church, which is His body, will He make all things subservient to His ends, until the stars in their courses, the winds in their currents, the ocean with its tides; until science with its discoveries, and invention with its novelties, and art with its wondrous achievements; until all the powers of nature, all the energies of the human mind, and all the gushing affections of the human heart, shall be united to promote the symmetry and beauty and power of the Redeemed Church.

Whether this glorious consummation be destined to approach the world by the same gradual and apparently tardy steps as in days that are past, or whether the Great Head of the Church is preparing to bring about more rapidly the final result, the practical lessons are very plain.

1st. That no member of the Church should regard himself, or be regarded by others, as of little account. Old or

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young, male or female, rich or poor, learned or illiterate, every true Christian holds an important place in Christ's plans, and has an important work to do in His service.

Everyone, therefore, should be in his or her place, like the heart, the lungs, the eye or the hand, the minutest nerve or the smallest blood-vessel, else there must be derangement and imperfect service. The humblest member has no more right to be unemployed than the most conspicuous and prominent. If he withhold his sympathies, his prayers, his contributions, his personal influence, and his active efforts—anything which he is appointed and fitted to give, then does he by so much destroy the healthful action of this spiritual body and introduce paralysis and inefficiency!

Secondly. Union in the Church is absolutely necessary for her prosperity; union in love. Like the human system, we have seen that the body of Christ is made up of various materials, differing greatly from each other, but love is the bond of perfectness by which all the parts may be closely conjoined and made to co-operate in beautiful harmony. Where envy and strife are there are confusion and every evil work, but where Christian charity prevails there peace and prosperity are ensured.

Like oil upon machinery, so is love between the different members of Christ's body. To the feet of love soft and flowery is the path which leads to a brother's house where Christian communion may be enjoyed or Christian kindness bestowed. To the hand of love soft is the palm of one who has touched even the hem of Jesus's garment! To the eye of love beautiful is the countenance of one who bears the likeness of Jesus! To the ear of love musical are the tones of one who is ready to speak of Jesus, and to the scent of love refreshing is the smell of one who has been with Jesus to the Mountain of Myrrh and to the Hill of Frankincense!

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Then let us strive for greater nearness to Jesus, and to be more possessed with the spirit of Jesus. So shall we, as parts of His mystical body, be more consciously united to all that are His.

Our hopes, our fears, our joys, our aims, would be more fully harmonized and our utmost energies be ready to cooperate in every good work. So while gaining increasing evidence of personal salvation we would each be contributing to give to the world a deeper impression of the truth and loveliness of Christianity.

The Church would so convince all that the religion of love is an emanation from the skies, an exotic on these cold, bleak shores of time, its origin celestial, its power irresistible, its final triumph universal.

Is not this the acme of human privilege; to grow up into Him in all things who is the Head even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love?

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Psalm civ. 34: "My meditation of Him shall be sweet. I will be glad in the Lord."

The age in which we live is one of activity rather than of thoughtfulness. It is easier to act than to think, much easier to be taken up with the whirl and excitement of the nineteenth century occupations than in quietness and carefulness to fix the mind on the truth of philosophy and religion.

But it is thought that moves the world, and men of thought are they on whom the world's progress really depends. Horace Greeley once said, "For forty years I have been trying to find time to go a-fishing, but I have not found it yet!" In that he represented the spirit of our age. He was the type of a large class of busy workers, hurried along under constant pressure, with no opportunities for needful recreation!

As a people, Americans are in altogether too much haste. Thirty, forty, fifty miles an hour is not favorable for long inspirations and good digestion. The patriarchs dwelled in tents and travelled on foot, or with mules and camels, but we wonder how they could have endured to make only six miles an hour!

With them the chief end of life was not to go ahead! In our day it is different, when so much energy seems spent in "catching trains," in hurrying through whatever is present and possible, for the sake of reaching some prizes in the future, which at best are contingent and doubtful! On the score of physical health this must be a pernicious habit. Observant physicians tell us that such railway style of living causes hurtful strain upon all the faculties, especially accelerated action of the heart, which often leads to fatal results.

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You cannot run an engine fifty miles an hour without wearing it out in half the time for which it might otherwise be serviceable. Neither can the complicated human machine be overworked without similar results.

This is true of our mental and spiritual being, quite as much as of the physical. In order to sound and healthy action an essential requisite is meditation. By this is meant faithful direction of the mind to worthy subjects, pondering their nature, tracing their relations, and yielding to their appropriate influence.

Meditation is a kind of spiritual rumination by which nourishment is extracted from ideas, sweetness and soul vigor from the very aliment which supplies them. Reading and hearing are for the higher nature what eating is to the body. Meditation is the digesting process which extracts essential elements and incorporates them into the spiritual being. Judging by the number of books which are read and of newspapers circulated, and of sermons and lectures delivered, the present generation might be supposed full of sages. Judged by the stricter standards, the estimate might be very different. Better if there were less reading and hearing, but more thinking, more deliberate and thorough examination of even a little truth, than trifling with or half understanding so much! Men of masterful power have usually been men of patient thought. From the lonely heights of meditation, they have gained wider vision of existence, and from thence have come down to educate the ideas of their fellows, to touch the springs of popular action, and to change the destinies of the world! Such men as Moses among the legislators, David among the kings, Daniel among statesmen, Paul among preachers, Luther among reformers, whose souls were lifted above the range of material interests, sanctified by prayer and ennobled by com-

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munion with Heaven. Their meditation of Him was sweet, they were glad in the Lord.

How is it with you, my hearer? Have you found this habit delightful and soul-profitable? Or are you so little accustomed to the exercise that it seems irksome, bewildering, and unsatisfactory when you try to engage in it? It is difficult and unsatisfying just in proportion to the infrequency of its performance. King David "loved the law of God" all the more because in that law he did "meditate day and night." But Philip Henry, speaking of the natural aversion to patient thought, said, "It is easier to go six miles to hear a sermon than to spend one-quarter of an hour in thinking it over when we have reached home!"

Many, moreover, there is reason to believe, shrink from the habit not only as difficult, but also as gloomy and depressing. They associate it with the dark experiences of human life, rather than with those which are bathed with sunshine and vocal with the music of joy. They think of it as appropriate to the dejected, not the happy; for funerals, not for festivals, for burials rather than bridals. But the Psalmist evidently did not think so, for he speaks of meditation as "sweet" to his spirit, as an exercise that made him "glad in the Lord." He did not find it "a gloomy thing" to turn aside from the cares of kingcraft and the distractions of worldly engagement, to hold communion with the sovereign of the universe, the centre of excellence, the fountain of purest joy!

Neither did our Savior show that the spirit of religion is inconsistent with the purest of earthly pleasures. At the marriage in Cana of Galilee He mingled with the happy before He went to weep with the sorrowing.

There is reason to believe that the Savior's presence greatly enhanced the gladness of that festive scene. And

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so it ought always to be. It ought to be esteemed the highest privilege to have communion with that Divine Friend who is revealed in so many aspects of goodness and beauty, and in the celebration of whose glories the highest intelligences in the universe rejoice. Of Him ought every Christian to say, "My meditation shall be sweet."

1st. My meditation of Him as made known in His works. Throughout the kingdom of nature are evidences of divine wisdom, power, and skill sufficient to command the attention, and stimulate the researches, and excite the wondering praises of every intelligent beholder. "The heavens declare God's glory, and the firmament showeth His handiwork." "The earth is full of His riches; so also is the great wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts!" This world is one vast panorama of beauty, grandeur, and mystery.

"These are Thy glorious works, Parent of Good!
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then!"

It is a blessed privilege thus to recognize God in Nature! to go forth amid the evidences of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness and be lifted up and purified by contemplation of them. But how often when the opportunity is given is the lack of ability plainly manifest! So unused to Nature as not to know how to enjoy it! Look at the men, jaded, worn, driven almost to death with business cares, yet who have so little knowledge of Nature that they are awkward and unsympathetic, amid her most enchanting scenes.

As someone has said, "They have plenty to retire on, but nothing to retire to!" So they stand in their tracks, grind away at the mill, starve their souls as to noblest aliment and support, and at length are snuffed out in premature exhaustion!

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Or, of those that do go on vacation, how many who know not how to improve it?

See them in the rail car, men and women, young and old, gliding, it may be, through some of the loveliest landscapes of earth, yet scarcely bestowing a glance upon them! Some engaged in commonplace talk. Some poring over the daily newspaper, even to the advertisements. Some reading cheap novels, some discussing matters of business or politics, or amusements, and some often fretting because the train does not whirl them more rapidly along the way! High pressure all the time! Putting their vacations through in a feverish, extravagant style that destroys both the pleasure and the profit! They must go in the fashionable routes, stop at the fashionable places, tire themselves out with fashionable amusements, till they return home at length perhaps more jaded and unnerved than when they went away! How different the case of those who, "in the love of Nature, seek communion with her varied forms," and are led by them up to Nature's God!

Secondly. Another field for meditation is God's works of providence. "Most holy, wise and powerful, preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions!"

Wonderful doctrine! Laden with suggestions of comfort and encouragement for the devout Christian! God's counsels are of old, from eternity. His providence is but the execution of those decrees. Oftentimes obscure or inexplicable, that providence is always wise and just and good. It is directed by infallible wisdom for the accomplishment of noblest ends. In prosperity the Lord tests our gratitude, in mediocrity our contentment, in misfortune our submission, in temptation our steadfastness. At all times our obedience and trust.

"Blessed is that disciple who has been in the school of

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Divine Providence and has learned his lessons well!" As the Psalmist wrote, "I will remember Thy wonders of old! I will meditate on Thy work and talk of Thy doings!"

Thirdly. In the next place meditation upon the Word of God is, to an appreciative soul, very sweet. Milton's "Paradise Lost" is poetry, Bacon's treatises are philosophy, Burke's orations are eloquence, but the Word of divine inspiration is supreme with wisdom, purity, and power. Written as no other book has been written, published in more languages than any other, circulated in so many forms, tested by so many unanswerable evidences, this Bible of God is destined more and more to be acknowledged as the text book and standard for all people. What does the Infinite declare concerning His own Word? "It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."

The empire of the Cæsars has passed away, the conquering legions of Rome have been disbanded, the Imperial Guards of the great Napoleon are no more. Princely Tyre is now a barren rock. Babylon, Carthage, Thebes are as if they had never been, but "the Word of the Lord abideth forever!"

Fourthly. In this Book of books, the central figure is Christ. Concerning Him, every Christian may say, "My meditation shall be sweet." What name in any language so musical and full of meaning, what name so sweet on earth or sweet in Heaven as this, before His wondrous birth, to Christ, the Savior, given? "Thou shalt call His name Jesus," said the angel, "for He shall save His people from their sins." From the penalty of sins, because He hath borne punishment in our stead. From the power of sin; that native tendency and wayward habit which would, otherwise, govern with tyrant sway and lead the captive subject, con-

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trary to his better convictions, often contrary to his real purposes and aims. For this He loved the Church and gave Himself up for it, "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Is not that the very consummation for which every true disciple of Jesus aspires? Is not that "the kingdom" for which earnest believers continually pray? An empire, every subject of which shall appear clothed in the spotless robe of redemption! A Paradise through whose fadeless bowers not a single trail of the Old Serpent shall be seen! Well may His name be called "Jesus," who is the Head of such a Kingdom, and concerning Him our meditations may ever be "sweet."

There are other titles also applied to our Savior by the inspired Word, each of which is full of significance. When oppressed by conscious guilt and ruin we may meditate on His name, "Jehovah Tsidkenu (the Lord, our righteousness!)." When disquieted with trouble, on His name, "Jehovah Shalom (the Lord, send peace!)." When struggling with spiritual adversaries, on His name, "Jehovah Nissi (the Lord, our Banner!)." When enfeebled by sickness, on His name, "Jehovah Rophi (the Lord, our Healer!)." When anxious about future comforts, on His name, "Jehovah Jireth (the Lord will provide)," and when the thought of darkest experiences, even as the valley of the shadow of death, confronts us, we may meditate on that name, "Jehovah Shammah (the Lord, is there!)."

Finally, every believer may think of Jesus as a personal friend, one that sticketh closer than a brother. Look at that record in the Gospel history! What illustrations

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does it give of His unmeasured kindness and readiness to help! See Him, from the beginning of His life work, manifesting tender sympathy for the suffering and needy, breaking over the conventionalisms of society, sitting at the Pharisee's table, going to the house of the publican, conversing at the well with the Samaritan woman, becoming a guest of Zaccheus, no sanctimoniousness in His bearing, no exclusiveness in His habit, willing to eat and drink with notorious sinners, and to be called "their friend," if only He might do them good and save their souls!

O! He never seemed so tender as when He was dealing with such! He never preached so sweetly as when He was expostulating with such, or when inviting them, weary and heavy laden, to come to Him for rest.

And, as He preached to sinners, so He prayed for them, prayed all night, sometimes on the cold mountains and in the garden shades! Prayed until He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. At length He died for sinners, received the fiery sword of justice, which otherwise would have fallen upon them! He went into the grave for them! For them submitted three days to the dishonors of the tomb! For them He rose again, and finally ascended, angels escorting Him to His heavenly seat.

" They brought His chariot from on high,
To bear Him to His throne,
Clapped their triumphant wings and cried,
' *The glorious work is done!*' "

'Twas done for sinners! The scattered gifts of His coronation, the royal bounties of His Kingdom are for us! And now, on the throne, He ever liveth to give repentance and remission of sins to those who turn to Him in the appointed way.

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How is it with you, my hearer? Is the Lord Jesus Christ your Savior? Do you love to think of Him through whom alone any lost child of Adam can be delivered from ruin and admitted to the Kingdom of Heaven? Are you resting implicitly upon Him who "executeth the offices of prophet, priest, and king" in behalf of his people? If so, you have reason to delight in Him whose works are perfection, whose word is wisdom, whose names are glorious, and whose smile is life for the soul.

As to the time for meditation I can only add it may be any time, at midnight, or cock-crow, or in the morning, just whenever the spirit desires communion with God and with noblest truths. Meditation before prayer is especially appropriate. It is like the tuning of an instrument and setting it for harmony before the anthem begins!

As to the place for meditation, it may be anywhere.

Devout souls can think and pray and praise in the closet, in the parlor, in the office, in the shop, on the street, on the mountain side, in the leafy forest, by the shore or the sounding sea, just wherever circumstances suggest. You have only to recall your mind and seclude your spirit, and give yourself up to the guidance of the Great Teacher, the Holy Ghost. So shall you feel God's presence anywhere. So shall your meditation of Him be sweet, and you shall be "glad in the Lord!"

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Genesis xlvi. 8: "How old art thou?"

The scene pictured before us in this chapter is a presentation at court. A gray-haired, venerable man who had not been accustomed to such splendor is introduced to a royal palace, adorned with all the barbaric magnificence of the most ancient and, at that time, the most powerful monarchy in the world. Far away from courts his life had been spent, guarding flocks on the hills of Palestine, caring for his numerous household and listening to those mysterious, awe-inspiring, yet gracious revelations that came down to him from the Infinite. Sorrow and sin had been mingled with his experience, with much of piety and exalted privilege. He had often erred and bitterly suffered. Yet he had maintained the character of one who sincerely chose the service of Jehovah, and as such he had been abundantly rewarded. He had seen visions of the Almighty, and had dreamed golden dreams. He had slept at Bethel, and beheld a ladder reaching from earth to Heaven. He had so journeyed as an exile in Padan Aram, and had been prospered under the smile of Divine Providence. He had set up the heap of witness at Mizpah, and met the angels of God at Mahanaim. He had wrestled with the angel of the covenant at Peniel, and set up an altar at El Bethel. He had buried his beloved Rachel at Bethlehem, and had, by a series of painful domestic experiences, been separated from his son Joseph, for whom he had mourned as one dead. At length he had learned that, instead of having been "devoured by wild beasts," that long-lost son had, by the leadings of mysterious Providence, been taken down into Egypt and become exalted as governor, under King Pharaoh. When the tidings of this wonderful fact were brought to

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him and that he had been sent for to leave his famine-stricken country and go and dwell in that land of plenty, where he might enjoy the society and filial care of his honored son, it seemed almost too good to be true! But when he saw the wagons which Joseph had actually sent to carry him and his household down to his new home, we are told that the spirit of Jacob revived, and he said: "It is enough! my son is yet alive. I will go down and see him before I die!" Now, the journey has been made! The one whom he had supposed long dead has met him on the borders of the country riding in a royal chariot to bring him to the place appointed for his future residence!

Wonderful experience! What a throng of tender recollections and emotions must have rushed into his mind! How the form of his loved Rachel must have appeared before him, as he caught her features imprinted on that manly face! How the promises of God must have been remembered then, as he saw more clearly their progressive fulfilment! And, when that noble son "fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while," no wonder that the heart of Israel was full almost to bursting, so that he exclaimed, "Now let me die, for I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive!"

In due time, when recovered a little from his agitation and accustomed somewhat to his new surroundings, this patriarch was brought to the royal palace to be introduced to the king. And Pharaoh said to Jacob (just what he thought natural to say to a venerable old man—what we often want to say when delicacy seems to forbid): "How old art thou?" And Jacob replied (mark how it always seems when one looks back across the fleeting experience of past life!): "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years. Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days

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of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage!"

Yes! However long and attractive life may seem in prospect—as one looks forward to the sunny heights of youth, how different it appears in review, as contemplated in nearness to the grave! How noiselessly, how almost imperceptibly, have the years glided by! From youth to manhood, how short the step! From manhood to middle age, shorter still! From middle to old age, we hardly know the change!

“No snow falls so lightly as the snow of age,
None rests so heavily, for it never melts.”

We all are growing older! In a few hours the knell of 1899 will tell us “one year less to live!” Compared with that eternity toward which we are hastening how short the period, whatever it be, which we have passed! Compared with our original plans and ambitions, how little have we done. We, at least, who are furthest advanced and have but small opportunity to repair our mistakes, what reason have we for regrets and shame?

Even if, by the good Providence of God, we have been spared from great disappointments and crushing sorrows, in how many respects have we brought evil upon ourselves. In view of so many failings and shortcomings, what can we say? In view of the objects eagerly longed for, but never gained, of noble attainments descried in the distance like far-off islands of the sea, but which change to clouds as they are approached, what a sense of incompleteness and unsatisfactoriness we must feel. When we think of friends once cherished but now separated from us forever and prospects once pleasing now blighted forever, how natural the patriarch's expression, “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.”

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At such times and with such convictions, what do the aged need so emphatically as the power of the Gospel, as the comforts of our holy religion, with its pleasing meditations, its delicious acts of confidence, its soul-satisfying experiences! Sad, indeed, is the spectacle of infirmity and decay unaccompanied by the hopes of religion! It is like the going down of a sun that is to be succeeded by no rising, or like the gathering shades of a night which will be followed by no returning day! The aged Christian, when about finishing his journey, and the aged sinner in the same case, present a most impressive contrast. The one has what he most needs, the other most needs what he does not possess! He is a hopeless wanderer on the desert of life with no provision for that to which he is going. But the Christian, confessing himself a "pilgrim and a stranger" here, goes confidently forward, his pathway illumined by the grace of God and by the light of the heavenly glory. Of him only can it be said,

"Then weaned from earth, he turns his steadfast eye,
Beyond the grave whose verge he falters nigh,
Surveys the brightening regions of the blest,
And, like a wearied pilgrim, sinks to rest."

An old adage says, "That life is long which answers life's great end." As true as it is familiar. According to this rule, let each one ask himself, at this close of another year, "How old art thou?"

It is a solemn question to you and for me; and for every intelligent person who knows that he is an accountable being. To this question I reply: *First*. There is none of us so old as Jacob and none of us expects to live so long.

"One hundred and thirty years" he had already seen, and nearly twenty more would be added to his age! But, in

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later generations, the usual limit has been three-score years and ten, perchance four-score, possibly ninety!—in only a very few cases any more, or if there be more, “yet is their strength, labor and sorrow!” As for the majority in any congregation, it is sure that they will not live to be “old.” The flood will carry them away before that term can apply to them.

How short the time seems since last we exchanged the New Year salutations! The sands of the coming year will fall yet more swiftly into the glass; and so it will be with each recurring one until the last! Story is told of an Italian state prisoner who, after some weeks’ confinement in his cell, became aware that the apartment was every day becoming smaller. He saw with horror that a movable iron partition was gradually encroaching on the space, and that if the movement went on it must at length certainly crush him to death against the opposite wall! Similar to that is our condition. True, we cannot, like him, see the limits of life growing narrower and narrower every day, nor can we calculate just how soon will be the crisis, but we know that each day we live makes the number less that we have to spend! If so, the argument for living well becomes stronger and stronger every day! If so, how thoughtful we ought to be at the close of another year!

In the *second* place, to everyone who is a Christian comes the question: “How old art thou?” When were you born into the kingdom of grace? What was the date of your spiritual birth? Or, if you cannot tell the very moment when you “passed from death into life,” how long have you been conscious of real desires to be Christ’s and to serve Him in newness of life? What attainments have you made in knowledge of truth, in the cultivation of faith, in patience, in self-control, in Christian love, and joy and peace?

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What good have you done? Who has been benefited by your labors, your gifts, your prayers, and your sacrifices for Christ and His cause?

Surely, you are old enough to have been more useful in this world. You and I, each of us, ought to have been more watchful for opportunities, more prayerful for wisdom in improving them, more careful in discerning what are the best agencies to be employed. There have been around us many gnawings of hunger to be fed, many pangs of loneliness to be allayed, many tears of sorrow to be dried, many shadows of ignorance to be lightened, many inquiries after truth to be answered, many burdens of guilt to be brought to the Savior of sinners. Oh, my brother, my sister, what can we say in review of the past, what must we say when our real record is compared with the possibilities which were before us, and with the obligations under which we have lived!

Are we not old enough to be better Christians, more pure, more prayerful, more spiritually minded, more truly Christ-like?

Ought we not, by the help of divine grace, to have "added to our faith, virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience," yea, the whole list of Christian graces, that with these abounding in us, we should be "neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Oh, how much nearer we might have come to the standard of worthy living, how much more into sympathy with angels and "the saints made perfect" around the throne. Surely we have reason to be humble for the past and to "redeem the time" that remains in more assiduous consecration to the Master's service.

We have reason to consider what is the type of piety espe-

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cially needed at the present day. Not a spasmodic, emotional, world-compromising religion, but that which is steady, principled, practical; a kind of religion that has in it some of the stern, self-denying, sin-hating spirit which apostles and martyrs showed in former times. A religion which turns away from the blandishments of worldly temptation and prefers the ways of truth, purity, and holiness. A religion which has fire in it that consumes sin, and mercy in it that pities sinners, and love in it that leads them to the cross of salvation.

Yes, indeed, we are old enough to put off quiescent, negative qualities, and to put on the whole armor of active, aggressive godliness.

We are old enough to be more "spiritually minded" and to act it out in all the ways of godly living. We are old enough to enjoy a confirmed Christian hope; carrying that hope, not as a boy carries a bird's nest containing unfledged nestlings which can scarcely peep, much less sing; but rather as a full-grown songster, ready whenever the cords of worldly occupation are loosed to rise and sing and soar toward Heaven.

Thirdly. And now to those who do not point to any spiritual birthday comes the solemn, searching question. Have you not begun the real life? Not yet turned to Christ the Savior? Not yet taken any decided steps toward Heaven? Oh, my friends, whoever you are, whatever your ages or circumstances, you are old enough to know that you are sinners, to realize the dreadful fact; and to feel what work you have for repentance. You are old enough to stop acting unwisely, to stop violating the decisions of conscience and grieving the Holy Spirit.

The youngest here is so great a sinner that he cannot do without Christ, the loving Savior, and for the oldest it is

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not too late if he will make haste to enter the open door of salvation. To everyone the warnings, invitations, and promises of the Gospel are, alike, addressed; and for each it is madness to neglect. The importance of life as a period of probation (wrote Albert Barnes) "steadily increases as we come toward the end, and see a vast eternity not far before us. The interests at stake grow larger and larger, while earthly things which usually occupy the attention of mankind dwindle almost to nothing. Suppose our earth which, now, moves in an orbit of 95,000,000 of miles from the sun, should leave that orbit and make its way in a direct line towards the sun, how rapidly would the sun seem to enlarge its dimensions. How much greater and brighter would it appear and, by comparison, how would our earth sink into insignificance! So, it appears to me, is human life. In earlier years, eternity seems far away in importance. But, at the period which I have now reached, it seems to me as if the earth had left its orbit and the objects of eternity, toward which I am being swiftly carried, rapidly enlarge themselves. They seem overwhelmingly bright and grand. They fill the field of vision while all that is the common object of human ambition seems retiring in the distance and vanishing away!"*

"How old art thou?" Old enough, I am sure, to feel the truthfulness and the pathos of such an utterance from one who has long been within the veil! Old enough to consider the supreme importance of those invisible realities, toward which with the swiftness of time we are all hastening! This is the last day of 1899! At the coming midnight the gates of eternity will open to admit into the irrevocable past, the old year! "At the stroke of 12 the patriarch will fall dead and the stars will be his funeral torches!"

* Barnes's "Life at Three-score," p. 26.

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Then another "New Year" shall be ushered in—the last of the century. What its history for each one of us, God only knows. "Our times are in His hands," and we want grace to trust Him with implicit confidence.

But for ourselves it is a practical question, "What shall the New Year be?" Are we willing to say, "No better than the past?"

Could we take the old record and write down against its pages, "Such is my standard. That is the way I fain would spend my time, be it longer or shorter, until I am called to the final account?"

If the very suggestion is appalling, if you shrink at the idea of such self-righteousness, then what is the practical conclusion? Review! Repentance! Resolutions for better living! Yes, "Resolutions"! Don't allow that cheat of Satan, "Afraid to make new resolutions lest they be soon forgotten and not kept!" You need not forget them! As an intelligent moral being you must not forget them! Trusting the promises of Divine grace you should depend on help of the Almighty. Looking to Him who is the hearer of prayer, this should be the attitude of your spirit, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"; that wisdom which ensures everlasting life and blessedness, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

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