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PART V.

EULOGY ON

PROFESSOR GEORGE HOWE, D. D., LL. D.,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,

BY PROF. JOHN L. GIRARDEAU, D. D., LL. D.,

MAY 9th, 1883.

EULOGY ON
PROF. GEORGE HOWE, D. D., LL. D.

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ABOUT one year and a half ago the Alumni Association of the Columbia Theological Seminary convened in this city on a glad and festive occasion. They met to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the connexion of the Rev. GEORGE HOWE, D. D., LL. D., with their *Alma Mater*. It was then determined that they would hold annual meetings at the close of the respective sessions of the Seminary. We have now come together in pursuance of that resolution, but alas! a deep shadow falls upon our present assemblage. The great and good man, to whom at our last gathering peculiar honors were paid, has recently been summoned to the eternal world; and it has been deemed proper that at our present meeting we should record the main facts of his life, commemorate the virtues of his character, and express our estimate of the influence which he exerted upon the history of this Theological Seminary and upon the cause of theological education in this Southern land.

Reluctant as I was, albeit at the instance of esteemed brethren, to undertake this delicate duty, I could not refuse it. Bred in this institution at the feet of our venerated Professor in the school of sacred criticism, associated during life with him as a younger member of the same Synod and the same Presbytery, and for several years past honored by a still closer intercourse with him in the sweet and precious communion of these sacred cloisters, I take a mournful pleasure in weaving a garland for his grave. Others there are who would have brought greater ability to the performance of this office, but there are none who would discharge it with a profounder admiration or a sincerer affection for our distinguished dead:

“Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit;,
Nulli flebilior quam mihi.”

In doing honor to those who have attained to eminence, there is a tendency unduly to exalt the perfection of human nature,

from the indulgence of which we are restrained by the principles of Christianity. It can never be forgotten by those who are imbued with its instructions and possessed of a consciousness illuminated by its light, that all men, even the greatest and best, are sinners; and that, whatever advancement in mere moral culture may be effected by the force of natural resolution, neither the beginning nor the development of holiness is possible without the application of the blood of atonement, and the operation of supernatural grace. To signalise, therefore, the virtues of a departed Christian is to celebrate the provisions of redemption, and to magnify the graces of the Holy Ghost.

There exists, however, in the breasts of every people an instinctive sentiment, or rather a group of instinctive sentiments, which impels them to rescue from oblivion, and place on enduring record, the heroic deeds and the exalted characters of their worthies who have fallen under the stroke of death. Some of the finest specimens of both ancient and modern composition have been eulogies upon departed statesmen, patriots, and warriors. Orators and poets, French, German, English, and American, as well as Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, have kindled into lofty eloquence in rehearsing the fame of their illustrious dead. Every noble emotion of humanity comes into play in the discharge of such offices. Gratitude for benefits conferred upon a commonwealth by self-sacrificing toil in the public councils or valor exerted upon the field of battle for the deliverance of a country from an invading foe; a natural admiration for intellectual or moral qualities which illustrate the genius or the virtue of a nation; the disposition to emulate and copy the examples of those who had risen by their efforts above the level of the multitude; the desire to transmit to posterity the traditions connected with representative and historic names in a form suited to redeem them from evanescence and integrate them as permanent elements into the corporate life of a community—all these motives have combined to induce the eulogistic commemoration of departed worth.

To these feelings the Church is not insensible. Nor is there any legitimate reason which would compel their utter extinction. Properly restrained, and held in subordination to the great law

that all glory is to be ascribed to God for everything good, great, and noble in human nature, she is at liberty to give them the fullest expression. The Scriptures abound with biographical portraits of the saints of old. And the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews enforces his inculcation of a vigorous and triumphant faith by citing from the history of former dispensations glorious examples of its power, the recital of which still falls upon the ear of the Church like the thrilling blast of trumpets.

The conviction of the impropriety of celebrating to the same extent the acts and attainments of the living, is one which requires but little explanation. The temptation to the indulgence of pride and the lust for applause is too strong in its influence upon their poor, imperfect natures to allow of its being urged to greater vehemence by the laudation of their virtues and the rehearsal of their praises. And this obvious consideration is enhanced by the contingency which attaches to the good repute of all who are still struggling with infirmity and sin. The danger is always imminent of some lapse from integrity which would render unwise and premature the tributes which could only be warranted by unblemished reputations.

When, however, we stand at the graves of Christ's eminent servants, we feel that death has impressed an inviolable seal upon their characters. Their records are closed and lie forever beyond the peril of stain. The grief occasioned by their death is mingled with emotions of triumph. The battle, with them, has been fought and the victory won. There is no risk in recounting their virtues and in pointing to them as distinguished exemplars of the grace of God. They are jewels which the Church wears upon her breast, as they are gems which her Saviour shall set in his mediatorial diadem. While, then, it is true that every sentiment of piety impels us to render all praise to God and to exclaim: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory," our hearts at the same time respond to the justice and the beauty of the inspired utterance: "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." Is it not meet that his surviving brethren, and especially his former pupils, should, as far as in them lies, perpetuate the remembrance of that righteous man who

for so protracted a period taught the blessed word of God in this seat of sacred learning?

It is true that it is not the circumstances of one's origin which impart to him real dignity and honor. To have acted well his part in the solemn drama of life—this it is which entitles him to grateful remembrance when dead. It was beautifully said of an illustrious Roman who owed nothing to his ancestors, "*Videtur ex se natus*—he was the son of himself alone." But while this is true, it is a matter for devout thankfulness when one is able to trace his descent from a line of progenitors who were in covenant with God, and to whom and their seed peculiar promises of divine blessing were vouchsafed.

Dr. Howe was born at Dedham, Massachusetts, November 6th, 1802. His father was William Howe, of Dedham, who was born August 10th, 1770, the son of Thomas Howe, of Dedham, a godly and conscientious man, born August 24th, 1735, and Hannah Leeds, the daughter of Comfort and Margaret Leeds. The genealogical line ran back to one of the pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock. His mother was Mary Gould, the daughter of Major George Gould and Rachel Dwight. Major George Gould, of Sutton, his maternal grandfather, was born in 1738. He served in the old French war, and afterwards in the Revolutionary war, first as Captain, and subsequently as Major; and was with Gen. Washington when that commander occupied Dorchester Heights. After the war he became a farmer at West Roxbury, then a part of Dedham. He lived a life of great piety, and died January 6th, 1805, aged sixty-seven. Rachel Gould, his wife, and maternal grandmother of Dr. Howe, was the daughter of Samuel Dwight, of Sutton, and Jane Bulkley, and was of the family to which the celebrated Dr. Timothy Dwight belonged. "She is described as having been a woman of great energy, fortitude, and perseverance. When over ninety, she visited one of her daughters in Dorchester, and observed with her family a religious fast-day very comfortably to herself in entire abstinence from food. She was very spirited, and patriotic beyond many around her in the Revolutionary war. Her faculties were clear and bright until near the very end of her life." She died March 15th, 1834, at

ninety-five years of age. Her daughter, Mary Gould, afterwards Mrs. William Howe, who as has already been mentioned was Dr. Howe's mother, was born at Sutton, May 29th, 1772, and died at South Braintree, Massachusetts, October 31st, 1859, at eighty-seven years of age.

Dr. Howe, when quite young, was led to begin the study of the Latin language in consequence of reading Dr. Cotton Mather's *Magnalia*, a copy of which he found among his father's books, and encountering Latin sentences interwoven with the text. He prosecuted the study of that tongue at the school of Mr. Ford, in his native town; and, to use his own words, "said his *hic, hæc, hoc* in his trundle-bed."

At twelve years of age he removed with his father to Holmsburg, near the city of Philadelphia, and attended a school kept by Mr. Scofield in that village. The teacher having transferred his place of labor to Philadelphia, his pupil followed him. In that city he was favored of providence in listening stately to the faithful preaching of the Rev. Dr. James Patterson, the pastor of the First Presbyterian church in the Northern Liberties. It was the custom of this minister to converse with each member of the families which he visited in regard to the interests of the soul. On the occasion of one of these visits, he asked young George whether he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. This question caused him great distress; it was used by the Holy Spirit in bringing him under conviction of sin, and the result was that he shortly afterwards made a public profession of his faith in Christ in connexion with Dr. Patterson's church.

After this he received instruction from the Rev. Thomas Biggs, near Philadelphia, until he was sufficiently advanced to apply for entrance into College. Acting under the advice of his friend, the Rev. Dr. Joshua Bates, his father sent him to Middlebury College, Vermont, in connexion with which institution he was graduated with the first honors of his class, in 1822, when he was twenty years of age.

He then entered Andover Theological Seminary, where he pursued the usual course of three years' study, and at his graduation in 1825, was rewarded for his attainments by being appointed

Abbott scholar. Having studied for about a year and a half on that foundation, he received the singular distinction of being elected, in his twenty-seventh year, as Phillips Professor of Sacred Theology in Dartmouth College, then under the presidency of the Rev. Dr. Bennett Tyler, who became prominent in the discussions occasioned by the New Haven Theology, and was the founder of East Windsor Seminary, which was afterwards transferred to Hartford.

He was ordained to the gospel ministry, August 7th, 1827.

In the Professorship at Dartmouth he continued about three years, when he was threatened with ascites and consumption, and, by medical advice, came to the South in the hope of securing a restoration to health. He sailed from Boston in a packet vessel for Charleston, S. C., and passed the month of December, 1830, in that city. Some time during the same month, the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia held its sessions at Augusta. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Goulding, who was in charge of a few theological students, wrote to that body asking for the appointment of a teacher of Hebrew and Greek. The Rev. Joseph C. Stiles and the Rev. Aaron Foster, who had been classmates of Professor Howe at Andover, were present at the meeting of the Synod and warmly recommended his appointment to the discharge of that office. At the same time, he was the recipient of an invitation from the First Presbyterian, commonly known as the Scotch, church of Charleston, to become its minister. He deemed it to be his duty to enter into an engagement with the Synod to teach for the winter at Columbia. After he began the performance of this office, in connexion with the incipient Seminary, the first matriculation of students took place. The exercises were then conducted at the parsonage in Marion Street, opposite to the Presbyterian church. It thus appears, from this account furnished by Dr. Howe himself, that his first connexion with the Theological Seminary occurred in January, 1831, so that the whole period of his labors in the institution, with a slight interruption, was fifty-two years and about three months.

At the expiration of this temporary engagement, he returned in improved health to the North. He was married, August 25th,

1831, to Mary Bushnell, who was born June 25th, 1808. She was the daughter of the Rev. Jedediah Bushnell of Cornwall, Vermont; a man, according to Dr. Howe's own description of him, of singular piety and wisdom. His wife having become consumptive, he brought her to Columbia, where she died September 18th, 1832. Her remains were buried in the cemetery of the First Presbyterian church, and the slab which covers her grave bears an affecting tribute from her husband to her piety and worth.

In the fall of 1831, the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia met in Columbia, and at that meeting he was elected Professor of Biblical Literature in the Theological Seminary. This call he accepted, and at once entered upon the duties of his chair. Thus began his relation as Professor to the Theological Seminary of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, which continued unbroken for more than fifty-one years.

He presided with grace and dignity as the Moderator of the General Assembly in the year 1865—a year in which the struggle of the Confederate States came to a disastrous close, and the tears of a people were falling for such an affliction as seldom crushes the hopes and breaks the hearts of men.

In November, 1881, a year and a half ago, the semi-centennial commemoration was had by the Alumni Association of his inception of his professorial work in our Theological Seminary, and he received the congratulations of his former pupils. The tribute was one which was eminently due to his noble character, as well as his prolonged and untiring devotion to the interests of the institution, and it was rendered with a unanimity and heartiness which were peculiarly grateful to his feelings. The scene was one which will never be blotted from the memory of those who witnessed it. From different sections of the Southern country those who had sat at the feet of this Nestor of theological instruction had gathered to do him honor. The Presbyterian church edifice was crowded with an intelligent and distinguished assembly. The music was inspiring. An eloquent opening speech, which thrilled all hearts, was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer. That veteran preacher of the gospel, the Rev. J. H.

Saye, a member of the graduating class of 1837, delivered to him a congratulatory address, while he courteously stood to receive it. It was a picture for the brush of a painter. The light fell upon a grand and massive head which had grown white in the service of his Master and the Church. Saintly and venerable was his appearance. The dense auditory was hushed into profound silence, and many an eye was dimmed with tears, as with unaffected humility and grace, in rich and melting tones, and in a manner simple but sublime, he acknowledged the kindness of his brethren, and dwelt upon the wisdom and the goodness of that holy providence which first led him to cast in his lot with theirs, and had conducted him through all the vicissitudes of so protracted a term of labor to that auspicious hour.

On the evening of his last birth-day—the eightieth—his colleagues of the Faculty and the students of the Seminary called in a body to offer to him their congratulations and good wishes. He was taken by surprise, and made a most touching response. Moved to tears by this expression of the affection of his brethren, he tendered his thanks, alluded to the approaching end of his labors, expressed his joy at the near prospect of his heavenly home, and of appearing in the presence of the glorious Saviour whom he loved, and paid a beautiful and affecting tribute to the companion of his life who was standing beside him, as having been his chief earthly support and solace under the trials to which he had been subjected in that long pilgrimage which was now drawing to a close.

During the last year or two bodily infirmities and distempers multiplied upon him. None but those who intimately knew him were aware of the sufferings through which he daily passed. But his industry never flagged. His indomitable spirit spurred the yielding frame to usual exertion. With undeviating punctuality he met his classes, and after consuming the day in work, toiled on far into the night until tired nature clamored for repose. Like his Master he felt himself pressed to finish the work which had been given to him to do, and acted under the conviction that the hour was nigh which would put a period to all earthly labor. Nor did he mistake. The clock was soon to strike the moment

when he would lay down his pen upon the manuscript for the last time, and pass to that sphere where there shall be no more curse—where the sweat of toil is wiped from the face, and work and rest, service and joy, are the same. No doubt the soul is slow to part with a body which had been its partner in the journey of life, the sharer of its pleasures and its pains; and we may well conceive that it would linger at the instant of departure, to bid its old companion a reluctant farewell. But when it has dropped its clog of clay, with what transports must the burning, disembodied, deathless spirit begin the free and unimpeded, the untiring and blissful energies of heaven!

On the first Lord's day in April, which was the first day of the month, Dr. Howe partook, in the sanctuary, of his last communion on earth. On his way home, the carriage which bore him broke down at the crossing of Bull and Taylor Streets, throwing him suddenly and violently to the ground. By the fall the leg was fractured which had been for so many years a source of pain to him. The accident—so we term it in our human dialect, but it was ordered of God—hardly seemed at first to threaten a fatal result; but after the lapse of nearly a fortnight, he was seized with a chill and hemorrhage from the lungs. These dangerous symptoms recurred on the next day, and it became evident that his end was approaching. On the evening of Sabbath, April 15th, 1883, he grew suddenly worse, and, in a few moments afterwards, without being able to speak, but without a struggle or groan, in the eighty-first year of his age, he peacefully breathed out his spirit into the hands of his God, and fell asleep in Jesus.

There is not much of interest to record touching his experience in his last illness; for the painful injury which had disabled him rendered it necessary that opiates should be administered, and the consequence was that for a good part of the time his noble faculties were clouded. Still there were intervals when he was free from that influence, and then he gave most touching evidence of the prevailing bent of his thoughts and affections. On one occasion he asked his beloved and venerable companion, who had so often before ministered to his necessities, and now with tenderest assiduity was nursing him on what was to prove his bed of

death, to bring the Bible and read to him the last two chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. When she had finished this office of love, he took the Holy Book into his own hands, and remarked that he would read those same chapters to her. This he did, and interspersed the reading with many interesting comments. Then closing the sacred volume, and clasping his hands upon his breast, he poured out his soul in fervent prayer, first for her and then for what he affectionately called "the dear Seminary." This was his last connected prayer on earth which fell on human ears; one, the remembrance of which will console his fellow-pilgrim as, now parted from him for a while, she follows him at no distant interval to the brink of Jordan, and will affectingly recall to its friends the love he cherished for the institution to which his life had been devoted—a love which the many waters of death could not quench.

At another time when his brain was influenced by the illusions created by partial delirium, he saw seated before him his class in exegesis, and in broken sentences, and with muffled utterance, he proceeded to deliver to them a lecture. One is reminded of a similar fact in the dying experience of the great Neander and of our own lamented Thornwell.

Such incidents are strikingly impressive. It would seem that the last efforts of expiring nature spontaneously heave up to the surface of the mind the latent energies which by long exercise have become habitual elements of one's being, the most deeply imbedded in its structure. No exertion of the will is required to give them expression. They are the very mould into which thought and feeling are cast, and in all probability constitute the type of their future and everlasting manifestation. Their unbidden utterance in the last moments of life are indexes of those principles which dominantly characterise our intellectual existence, and enforce, with an emphasis which only death can give, the pregnant maxim of Christ, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." May it not be, that we have in these spontaneous activities of the dying a sort of prophetic intimation of the employments of the eternal world? Death may make no cleavage, open no impassable chasm, betwixt the sancti-

fied exercises of intelligence in this sublunary state, and the glorified energies of our heavenly home. May it not be that both the quest and the inculcation of truth may be carried over with us to that transcendent sphere? Delightful thought! The gains of painstaking labor which the student of divine mysteries has here amassed may constitute imperishable attainments, which shall survive the wrecking change of dissolution—permanent accomplishments, destined to become a point of departure for the immortal progression of thought in the eons of the future.

And if we may hope that these things are so, may it not also be true that we shall not bear with us to heaven the mere discipline of our faculties, but the actual results of toil—that we shall transport with us in our emigration to that celestial shore the whole furniture of truths which we had here acquired, the jewels for which we painfully mined, the rich spoils won on many a field of conflict, which once suspended around us shall be worn as amaranthine adornments and trophies of our souls? And while every serious pursuit, in the temper of pious reverence, of truth as well physical as spiritual, as well natural as redemptive, must enstamp an abiding character upon our intellectual being, it may without extravagance be supposed that the student of the divine word, the preacher of the gospel, and the teacher of the Holy Scriptures, will have the incomparable advantage of having incorporated into his intelligence elements which will peculiarly adapt him to the employments and the services of heaven. Such a possibility is suited to stimulate our flagging zeal, and inspire us with ever freshening ardor in the prosecution of those sacred studies which asserted themselves in the dying utterances of our departed brother.

There is, moreover, impressively suggested by the warm outgoing of his social affections in his last hours, the thought that our love for kindred and friends in Christ is not extinguished by the dreadful shock of death, but that, on the contrary, purified and heightened they will go with us into the inheritance of the saints in light. It cannot, without violence to our deepest instincts, and the whole analogy of Christian culture, be supposed that the dearest bonds of human affection, the most precious rela-

tions and covenants of earth are forever sundered by the blow of death—that its hand as it smites the harp-strings of the soul which had emitted sweetest harmony at the touch of human fingers, so rudely snaps them that they shall be eternally silent. These gushes of sanctified affection at the very verge of life—are they not eloquent predictions of a future condition in which the social affections, purged from the dross of carnality, shall find their highest expression, their destined consummation? Do they not anticipate that home of beauty, glory, and bliss which Jesus, our elder Brother, called his Father's house, and into which he gathers all his Father's children; a home, beatified by a joyful communion of saints, a convivial fellowship of the redeemed, who, collected from every kindred, tribe, and tongue of earth, shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, at the banquet of the Lamb?

In the early part of his illness Dr. Howe, notwithstanding the desire of his attending surgeons, Dr. George Howe, his son, and Dr. B. W. Taylor, that he should be kept quiet, expressed an earnest wish to see his brethren of the Faculty. They accordingly repaired to his chamber, and, having expressed their sympathy with him, knelt at his bedside and commended him in prayer to the tender mercies of his God and Saviour. The students of the Seminary evinced their love for their venerated preceptor by watching nightly with him, and ministering to his necessities. During one of these vigils a student heard him say, "The Lord afflicts his people for wise ends; blessed be his holy name!"

To the question addressed to him by one of his colleagues: "My dear brother, do you trust in Jesus?" he promptly replied: "Yes; what would I do, did I not trust in him?" The interrogator construed the answer as not only containing a clear and positive affirmation of his faith in his Redeemer, but also a spontaneous protest against the implication that under any circumstances, much less the present, he could do otherwise than trust in him. It was as if he had been asked, whether he loved his wife and children, or confided in their affection for him; whether the profound habit of faith in Christ, which pervaded his whole

being and had regulated his life, were under those trying circumstances unaccountably placed under arrest, or it were possible that the Saviour in whom for years he had trusted could forsake him in this season of emergency. Still, it is to be remembered, that there is no fixed necessity, no mechanical and undeviating law of divine operation in the processes of an applied redemption, by which the dying believer is exempted from the agitations of doubt and the transient darkness of spirit which may be directly caused by Satanic malice, or may spring from the weakness of a soul in which sanctification is not completely matured. To the last, he is exposed to the temptations incident to the conflict with the devil, the flesh, and an evil heart of unbelief. To the last breath, he needs the infusions of grace, the witness of the Spirit, and the assuring smile of the Lord. The inquiry, therefore, was not wholly gratuitous. It was suited to elicit an outspoken confession of faith, which by a reflex influence would contribute to the conscious comfort of the expiring saint, and would furnish unspeakable consolation to those who were weeping at his side, and yearning for those final words of trust and hope which the memory never suffers to die.

Nor was this assurance of his reliance upon his Saviour a solitary one. Whenever a similar question was propounded to him, he never failed to return a decided and satisfactory reply. By a providential coincidence, his Presbytery were holding their sessions in Columbia during the last days of his illness. Of course, their warmest sympathies were drawn out towards him, and earnest supplications were offered in his behalf. On being informed of this fact, he expressed his gratitude, and desired that they should know that he was passing through suffering; and when he was asked whether they should be assured of his reposing trust in Jesus, he replied in the affirmative. The Presbytery adjourned on Saturday afternoon, and he died on the following day. On Sabbath morning, the Moderator, the venerable S. H. Hay, preached a sermon which was touchingly appropriate to the afflictive circumstances which were casting a shadow upon the congregation and the community. A few hours only before the final summons came, the suffering saint was told that his brethren and

friends had been praying for him, when with the wonted courtesy of a Christian gentleman—and such he emphatically was—although hardly able to speak, he expressed his thanks for the information. Prayer having been then offered by one of his fellow-professors at his bed-side, he was asked whether he heard it. His answer was: “Yes; and I was delighted.” This was his last coherent expression of his religious feelings; and not long afterwards his disprisoned spirit, like an eagle breaking through the bars of its cage, took its flight to that land where its groans of anguish will be lost in shouts of triumph, and it will be everlastingly delighted with praise. Brother, not for thee we weep. Thou hast fought the good fight, thou hast finished the course, thou hast kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for thee a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give thee at that day. Thy God has wiped all tears from thine eyes, and thou hast entered into that rest which shall never be clouded with a shade of doubt, and never broken by a shock of conflict, or a throb of pain.

On Tuesday, April 17th, 1883, his body was carried to the Presbyterian church, where a large congregation was assembled to pay a last tribute to his memory. The funeral services were conducted by the members of the Faculty of the Theological Seminary—Professors Woodrow, Hemphill, Boggs, and Girardeau. Addresses were made by the two last named, and the Rev. Dr. J. B. Mack. Tears flowed freely from the eyes of those present, attesting the sincere love as well as the profound esteem in which the departed servant of Christ was held. The remains were then interred in the church-yard, near the spot where the dust of his first wife and of his dead children is sleeping, and only a few rods from the grave of his gifted colleague, the Rev. Dr. A. W. Leland, who preceded him to the eternal world. For many years they were closely associated in labor. Here let them repose together, till the unconsciousness of their neighborhood shall be broken by the shout of the Lord, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God.

Dr. Howe, December 19th, 1836, married as his second wife, Mrs. Sarah Ann McConnell, the daughter of Andrew Walthour,

of Walthourville, Liberty County, Georgia, and Ann Hoffnire. Mrs. Howe was born October 5th, 1803, and survives her husband, being now in the eightieth year of her age. She outlives him, not because she was less meet for heaven than he. They had for nearly half a century trod hand in hand the road of life, and bowed together at the mercy-seat in prayer; and they might fitly have soared in company to the gate of the celestial city and begun together the triumphant anthem of the skies. But God had heard her petition to be allowed the mournful privilege of ministering to him on his last bed, and smoothing his dying pillow. To say that she has discharged the self-denying offices assigned her with the purity, the gentleness, the patience of a saint is true, but it is hardly enough. This venerable mother in Israel seems to have anticipated that final transformation by which the followers of Jesus will be made "like unto the angels."

In person, Dr. Howe was above the middle height. His eyes were bluish gray, his features strongly marked, and his frame was massive. His presence was unassuming but imposing. In early life he suffered from an affection of the right knee, which ended in permanent stiffness of the joint. This occasioned his walking with a crutch. It was a thorn in the flesh which was never extracted, but his Master gave him grace which was sufficient for him, and made the divine strength perfect in his weakness. He has left his crutch in his dying chamber, and he will leave his lame knee in the grave. In God's eternal Paradise he will only remember them as the instruments of a wholesome earthly discipline. He might well have cried while listening to the whispered invitation of angels to come away from these shackles of the flesh:

"Lend, lend your wings, I mount, I fly."

As a preacher, Dr. Howe, although not possessed of the superficial but attractive and useful graces of elocution, was evangelical and able, and sometimes rose to the heights of the sublime, and to flights of oratory by which his hearers were thrilled. He was no sensationalist who aimed to tickle the ear or please the fancy. He had himself been taught of God, both in the school of Moses and in that of Christ. He had, in his inmost soul, felt

the terrors of the law, and had experienced the sweetness of that rest which the troubled conscience finds alone in Christ, and the result was that he strove to lead his fellow-sinners to the fountain of consolation from which himself had drunk. Penetrated with the conviction of eternal realities he preached "as a dying man to dying men." The poor taunt that such preachers fail to address themselves to the requirements of living men, was one that could make no impression upon his serious spirit; the arrow fell harmless at the feet of one who carried engraved deeply upon his consciousness, the solemn words of the great preacher to the Gentile world: "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." It was to have been expected that one who was habitually engaged in the exposition of the originals of the Scriptures would often deliver sermons which were exegetical and didactic in their cast. While this was true, it was by no means exclusively so. Frequently he discoursed with oratorical freedom upon the beneficent and attractive aspects of the scheme of redemption, and his gentle and affectionate heart led him to urge them upon the attention of his hearers. With persuasive and pathetic accents he would dwell upon the love of Christ, and with wonderful fluency of utterance would depict the rich provisions of redemption. On such occasions tenderness was the chief characteristic of his preaching. But there were times when he would be roused to impassioned fervor, and his deep and powerful voice would become a fitting vehicle for the conveyance of sublime sentiments, a suitable organ for the proclamation of awful and majestic views of the character of God, the greatness of the human soul, and the endless destinies of eternity. A few instances may suffice to evince the power with which he would occasionally pour out the burning feelings of his heart, and the striking results which would then be produced upon his audience.

When Professor Howe made his first appearance before the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, at its meeting in Augusta already mentioned, and the question was raised in regard to his

appointment as teacher of the sacred languages in the Seminary, some doubt was felt growing out of the Synod's want of acquaintance with him. Among those present who hesitated was the famous Dr. Moses Waddel. Professor Howe was invited to preach. He did so, and discoursed upon the power of faith. In an eloquent passage he compared the fluctuations of that grace as consistent with its final fixed and assured direction to Christ, with the oscillations of the magnetic needle which are sure to be followed by its settling down to a steady point towards the pole. The effect was electric, and Dr. Waddel, with an emphatic gesture of his arm, exclaimed so as to be heard all around him, "Sublime!" The sermon made a marked impression upon the Synod, and his election was unanimous.

On one occasion, being in Philadelphia, he went on Sabbath night to hear the Rev. Dr. Wadsworth, whose preaching was then attracting crowded audiences. Another minister, with whom the distinguished preacher had engaged to exchange pulpits, was expected to officiate that evening; but he failed to appear. After a consultation of the elders, one of them approached the pew in which Dr. Howe was sitting, and inquired if he were a preacher. Having learned that he was, he pressed him to take the pulpit. The request was declined. Another consultation was had, and the same elder again came to Dr. Howe, and asked him to go forward, explain the circumstances to the congregation, and dismiss them. This he consented to do, but, as he walked towards the pulpit, his conscience impelled him to preach. Announcing a hymn, he collected his thoughts, and then preached with such unction and power that the elders and others pressed around him to thank him, and he was afterwards told by a friend from home, who chanced to be present, that he had on that occasion delivered himself with extraordinary force and impressiveness.

At another time he was invited by some of his Methodist brethren to preach at a camp-meeting held a few miles from this city. He consented. On Sabbath, when the communion of the Lord's Supper was to be administered, he was asked to follow the sermon, which was to be delivered by another preacher, with an exhortation. The sermon, inappropriately enough, had for its sub-

ject the human eye. At its conclusion, our preacher arose, and remarked that they had listened to a discourse on the human eye, but that he would direct their attention to the human soul. As he grew warm in the discussion of his great theme, the congregation began to shout. This led him to raise his voice louder and louder, so as to be heard, and the effect became overwhelming. The multitude present were shouting and weeping, and when he sat down, the ministers came into the pulpit and embraced him, while tears rolled down their cheeks, and exclamations of joy burst from their lips. It was characteristic of Dr. Howe that he said afterwards: "They made me ashamed, and I did not know what to do."

When, and under what circumstances, he first became connected with the Synod of South Carolina and the Charleston Presbytery, I am not now able to say. His introduction into those bodies must, however, have been contemporaneous with the contraction of his relation as Professor to the Theological Seminary. An association with those judicatories lasting for more than fifty-one years, has been terminated by his death. His venerable form will no more be seen in the assemblies of his brethren on earth. Although not inclined by constitutional bias to be, strictly speaking, an ecclesiastic, nor addicted in practice to the discussion of questions pertaining to church order, he took a warm interest in all measures contemplating the extension of gospel knowledge, and was a powerful advocate of those schemes of policy by means of which the Church endeavors to build up the kingdom of Christ in a world of sin. At a time when the Southern Church was surrounded by a dense mass of slaves who were dependent upon her for the preaching of the gospel, he was ever the earnest and able advocate of their systematic instruction by the ministry of pastors, and their evangelisation by the labors of missionaries. For years he was the chairman of the Committee of Domestic Missions in his Presbytery. Nor was he less zealous in behalf of Foreign Missions. Whenever the opportunity was afforded, he was ready to plead for that great cause. There is an extant sermon of his, preached at Salem, Black River, church, and published, in 1833, which most eloquently defends

and urges the effort to evangelise the benighted tribes of earth. In that discourse he alludes to the circumstances under which Dr. John Leighton Wilson went to the "Dark Continent" as a missionary. "When," says he, "did we send our first missionary to the heathen? In 1833. He went away amid misconceptions, sneers, and bitter words on the part of many, and but a few months ago planted his feet on barbarian shores." That such a state of things would now be impossible among us upon the departure of a missionary for a foreign shore is, under God, largely due to the able and persistent efforts of Dr. Howe and men of like spirit with him in the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia—Church, Talmage, and Hoyt, Leland, Smyth, and Thornwell, who died before him in the Lord, and are now followed by their works. His departure has opened another gap in the ranks of faithful laborers for the advancement of Christ's cause and kingdom. It affords reason for thanksgiving that those who hear the call of their Leader to close up the ranks are not under the necessity of contending for the theory of Foreign Missions. That is now admitted, and it only remains for them to prosecute its enforcement. Happily, the cases are rare in which a hearty echo would not now be given to the closing words of the sermon to which allusion has been made: "Let him who is opposing missions think what he is doing. He is opposing the best interests of his beloved country. He is making the churches dwarfish, inefficient, and selfish. He is opposing the object Christ had in view in dying for men. He is opposing the cause in which apostles bled. He is saying to the primitive Christian and modern missionary that they are fools. He is opposing fulfilling prophecy. He is fighting against God. He is filling hell with joy."

Six months ago the Charleston Presbytery was called in the providence of God to mourn the departure of a venerable servant of Christ, the spotlessness of whose character attracted to him universal esteem. Remarkable as was the exhibition of holiness furnished by his life, it was not singular. Another there was, a fellow-presbyter whose head was hoary with age, and who shared with him the reputation of uncommon sanctity. It was he whose removal we now deplore. The Presbytery had scarcely adjourned

their following semi-annual sessions when they were summoned to lament a loss similar to that which had so recently afflicted them. But although their tears stream forth afresh, they cannot refrain from acclamations of thanks to God that a glorious testimony has been furnished to his grace by another protracted life of holiness, and another peaceful death. Their traditions are graced, and their records illuminated, by the sainted names of Palmer and Howe. The Synod had just before placed upon its obituary calendar the name of the aged William Brearley, a synonym for devoted piety in the churches of Harmony Presbytery. Noble triumvirate! In life they were united in labors for Christ, and in death they were not long divided. "The fathers, where are they?" Their vacant seats at our council-board are the mute response to the inquiry. But why do we grieve? The dirge of the militant Church at the biers of its fallen heroes precludes the pealing anthem of the Church triumphant.

The life of Dr. Howe as a Professor, has, as we have seen, been coincident with the existence of this Theological Seminary. At the early age of twenty-nine he was called to undertake the exacting duties of the exegetical chair. It was a high attestation of his scholarship, but it was one which was not undeserved. He had, in the providence of God, been prepared for the position by the discipline to which his faculties had been subjected. At Middlebury and at Andover he had received the distinctions awarded to superior proficiency in study, and at Dartmouth the opportunity was afforded him of maturing his training and increasing his acquirements. Acquainted with the methods adopted in the already existing theological institutions of this country, he was prepared at the very origin of our Seminary to draft a curriculum of study. He delivered his inaugural address at Columbia, March 28th, 1832, being in the thirtieth year of his age. In that discourse, he sketched the duties of the chair to which he had been assigned, discussed the false methods which had been pursued in interpreting the sacred writings and indicated the true, pointed out the advantages which accrue from acquaintance with the tongues in which the Scriptures were originally composed, and concluded with advice to the student to seek the wisdom which the Holy

Ghost imparts, and to cultivate simplicity and godly sincerity in the investigation of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Golden words! They struck the key-note of his own career, and deserve to be inscribed upon the heart of every theological student.

Starting with a good foundation of classical scholarship, and pursuing with unremitting energy the studies to which he had now peculiarly devoted himself, it was not long before he was abreast of the demands of his department, heavy as they were. He became intimately acquainted with the Greek and with the Hebrew and its cognate dialects, and mastered, in the language which was their chief organ, the critical controversies concerning the sacred text, in the forms in which they were developed in his day. His learning was extensive, his attainments varied; but they were so veiled by his native modesty, that it may well be doubted if he ever displayed to the full the measure of his resources. Characterised by a quality of mind which irresistibly impelled him to take the path of historical exposition, his carefully prepared lectures presented critical hypotheses in a comparative view which covered the whole field over which they ranged. It was the student's fault if through negligence or inattention he did not become possessed of the complete literature of the subjects discussed. If there were a defect in his method of instruction, it lay in his want of sympathy with the attitude of the student's mind and the difficulties which it experienced. Perhaps he took too much for granted in regard to the amount of knowledge possessed by the pupil, and did not sufficiently inculcate his own views with that minute precision, that definiteness and positiveness of dogmatic utterance, which as with an incisive edge carve them upon the inquiring and forming intelligence of youth. But there was no deficiency in his own sympathy with the topics which he handled, and no lack of adequacy in their treatment. He spoke with the accuracy and fulness of an expert. Nor did his learned prelections give any uncertain sound in reference to the great and vital doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the sacred writings. From first to last he stood by the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the genuineness and authenticity of all the canonical records. He heartily and unreservedly

subscribed the declaration of Paul: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." May the day never come when that fundamental truth shall be shaken in this institution! Better would it be that its invested funds should be withered up, its doors be bolted, and that the youthful seekers of truth should repair for instruction to the pastors of Christ's flock who remain faithful to his word.

It might be supposed that as he drew nigh the close of so prolonged a term of labor Dr. Howe relaxed the rigor of study and rested upon past acquisitions. He did not. He did not make so signal a mistake. He was emphatically a man of studious habits, and his industry in the pursuit of knowledge continued unabated to the end of life. There is no calculus by which can be estimated the value of that influence which for fifty years he exerted upon the minds which he directed in the study of the sacred Scriptures. But his was not the influence of mere scholarship and learning. Deeply imbued himself with the precious doctrines of grace, he impressed them with constancy and earnestness, in the lecture-room and in the chapel, upon the minds of the students, while, at the same time, his instructions received double force from the blameless sanctity of his character and the consistent godliness of his walk and conversation. No pious student could ever have left the halls of the Seminary without carrying with him the hallowing remembrance and the salutary influence of such a life. For he was a man of prayer, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. He needed not to be a rigid disciplinarian. His own gentleness won for him that love which is the soul of obedience, and the saintliness of his spirit secured him a respect approaching to veneration—approaching to veneration, I say, for the meekness of his spirit, and the exquisite modesty of his bearing were hardly suited to inspire in the beholder the sentiment of awe. They attracted esteem mingled with affection. In these regards his loss to the Seminary cannot be over-estimated; and the Church which is bereaved by his death may well exclaim a his grave: "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the

faithful fail from among the children of men." He has ascended to heaven, and these sacred shades will know him no more; but God grant that the mantle of the departing prophet may fall upon each of his surviving brethren, as, gazing after him, he exclaims: "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

Such a life and such labors as those of Dr. Howe could not fail to exert a powerful influence upon the theological education in this Southern land. There have always been those who, in view of the practical demand for preachers growing out of the spiritual destitutions of our territory, favored a curtailment in time of the course of preparation for the ministry. And there have been others who were controlled by the extraordinary opinion that a thorough-going education, instead of adapting preachers to the wants of the uneducated classes, actually hinders their success; that it induces a habit of thought and expression which lifts its possessor out of sympathy with the masses, or constitutes a barrier to their sympathy with him. Against these views the whole life of our departed Professor was a standing protest. Nor was he content with the unaggressive resistance of such a testimony. He was outspoken in maintaining it. From the day on which his inaugural address was pronounced until death closed his career and sealed his lips, by the pen as well as by the tongue, in the courts of the Church, in the pulpit, on the platform, in the conferences and debates of the Seminary, he raised his voice in favor of a high order of ministerial education, and in opposition to the tendency to depress the standard of qualification for the sacred office. Some of his most recent utterances in the meetings of the Faculty were those in which he strenuously contended against a depreciation of ministerial culture. This is his latest as it was his earliest testimony, and, coming from one who was competent to judge in the premises, it deserves to be seriously pondered by the Church.

That the long-continued connexion of Dr. Howe with this Seminary was not necessitated by the absence of inducements to enter other and inviting fields of labor, but was the result of deliberate choice, is proved by the fact that he was the recipient of

several calls to important churches, and of one from another theological institution in which a flattering tribute was rendered to his abilities and learning. In 1836, when he was thirty-four years of age, he was elected by the Board of Directors of Union Theological Seminary, New York, to the Professorship of Sacred Literature. The letter in which the election was communicated to him is among his papers, and is signed by Thomas H. Skinner, Knowles Taylor, and Ichabod S. Spencer. "Permit us, Rev. and dear sir," these gentlemen said, "to express the hope that you may see it to be your duty not to decline the appointment, which in the name of the Board of Directors we have the honor to tender to you. There was great cordiality in your election, and your acceptance, we are confident, will give general satisfaction to the friends of the institution throughout the community." In his answer, under date of December 7th, 1836, he says: "In reply to your letter, I alluded to the circumstances of my situation which prevented an immediate decision of a question so important. I must now say, that it appears still my duty to cast in my lot and earthly destiny with the people of the South, among whom I have made my home. When I accepted the Professorship I hold, it was with the hope that I might be the means of building up the wastes, and extending the borders, of our Southern Zion. This motive still holds me here. Though our institution must be a small one through the present generation, and yours will be large, it is important, it is necessary, whatever be the fate of our beloved country, that this Seminary should live. If I leave it at the present juncture, its continuance is exceedingly doubtful. If I remain, though the field of my effort must be small, and I must live on in obscurity, we may yet transmit to the men of the next generation an institution which will bless them and the world."

We have here a glimpse of the early struggles of the Seminary to maintain an uncertain existence, and a proof of the tenacity with which he clung to it amidst difficulties which were little less than appalling. He lived to see its prospects brighten, and then darken again amidst the disasters which followed in the wake of a great war; but at last he was permitted to close his eyes upon

his beloved Seminary—the darling of his heart—emerging from its troubles and entering upon a new career of usefulness and hope. It might well have been conceived, in response to such affection, as exclaiming in the words of the faithful spouse of the hero of Ithaca:

“Tua sum, tua dicar oportet
Penelope: conjux semper Ulixis ero.”

Its history and his are plaited together; its name and his will go down together to succeeding times. For more than half a century our venerable brother, without intermission, except that which was recently occasioned by the suspension of the exercises of the institution, through trials many and formidable, devoted himself to the instruction of those who sought in its halls their preparation for the sacred work of the gospel ministry. Not a few of them died before him; and his colleagues, Goulding, Jones, Thornwell, Leland, and Plumer preceded him to the eternal world. Is it extravagant to suppose that they have welcomed him to those higher seats of learning, where teachers and pupils will study in the clear light of heaven the profound problems of providence and redemption?

The Synod of South Carolina, at its meeting November 19th. 1849, appointed Dr. Howe to prepare a history of the Presbyterian Church in its bounds. The labor imposed upon him by this appointment was arduous and protracted. Materials had to be collected from all the churches occupying the territory of the Synod, and these had to be examined and corrected, in many instances to be reduced in bulk, and to be digested into something like systematic order. Steadily and persistently he worked upon the difficult task assigned him. The first volume was completed and issued in 1870, covering the period ending with the close of the last century. The second volume, which was expected to embrace the first half of the present century, has occupied his attention for several years past, and recently he wrought night and day to bring it to completion. Just before he received the injury which alas! proved fatal, he sent off the concluding sheets to the press. With the exception of a part of the index, and a few corrections of *errata* in the first volume which he intended to insert, he had

finished it, and his brethren congratulated him upon the prospect of rest from his toil. Yes, the period of repose had come, but it was not destined to be enjoyed on earth. "Rest!" said the great Arnauld, "I shall rest in eternity!" That is the rest which our dear brother now enjoys. He has ceased at once to labor and to live: he rests in heaven.

He often expressed the apprehension, that in performing this office, he had to an undue extent diverted his energies from the proper duties of his professorship. But he has accomplished for the Church, and at its bidding, a work of incalculable value; and his name cannot perish from her memory as long as she reads in these volumes the record of God's dealings with her in the past. He is dead, but he shall yet speak in these invaluable productions.

Besides this history, the theological and literary remains of Dr. Howe, so far as could be ascertained, are the following: A volume of 243 pages on Theological Education, published in 1844—a learned and valuable production, which merits re-publication; a volume of 48 pages, being An Appeal to the Young Men of the Presbyterian Church in the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, issued in 1836; "Thy Kingdom Come:" A Missionary Sermon, preached before the Presbytery of Harmony, at the Brick church in Salem, South Carolina, 1833; A Sermon, occasioned by the death of the Rev. Robert Means, of Fairfield District, S. C., preached in the Salem church, on the second Sabbath in June, 1836; A Eulogy on the Rev. Joshua Bates, D. D., former President of Middlebury College, delivered on Commencement Day, August 9th, 1854; Early History of Presbyterianism in South Carolina: a Sermon preached at the opening of the Synod of South Carolina, in Charleston, S. C., November 15th, 1854; The Early Presbyterian Immigration into South Carolina: a Discourse delivered before the General Assembly in New Orleans, May 7th, 1858, by appointment of the Presbyterian Historical Society; The Value and Influence of Literary Pursuits: an Oration delivered before the Eumenean and Philanthropic Societies of Davidson College, N. C., on Commencement Day, August 13th, 1846; The Endowments, Position, and Education of

Woman: an Address delivered before the Hemans and Sigourney Societies of the Female High School at Limestone Springs, July 23d, 1850; Introduction to the Works of the Rev. Robert Means, with a Note on the Genuineness of the Pentateuch; The Secondary and Collateral Influences of the Sacred Scriptures: a pamphlet; Articles published in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*: On the Holy Spirit, 1847; on Ethnography, 1849; on the Unity of the Race, 1849; on the Mark of Cain and the Curse of Ham, 1850; on Nott's Lectures, 1850; on the Genuineness of the Pentateuch, 1850; on the Unity of the Human Race, 1851; on the Types of Mankind, 1855; on the General Assembly of 1858; on Renan's Origins of Christianity, 1866; on Jean Calas, the Martyr of Toulouse, 1874; on Dr. Charles Colcock Jones's History of the Church, 1868.

It only remains that somewhat be more particularly said with reference to the character of our departed brother, which has already, to some extent, been delineated in the preceding remarks. Not that any information upon that subject needs to be furnished to you, my brethren, who knew him so well; nor is an office so superfluous, so gratuitous, now attempted. But it is not improper, it is right, however inadequate may be the attempt, to give expression to the common estimate of a character which may, in all sobriety, be represented as an illustrious specimen before the eyes of men of the sanctifying grace of God.

It is but simple justice to say that our lamented friend was faithful in all the relations which he sustained. He was the incorruptible patriot, the useful citizen, the affectionate husband and father, the true and sympathising friend, the compassionate benefactor of the poor, the hospitable entertainer of the stranger, the catholic lover of all Jesus's people, the sincere and earnest ambassador of the cross, the conscientious teacher of scriptural truth, the meek yet intrepid servant of Christ.

One of the most prominent traits of his character was purity. It marked his life and dwelt like a law upon his lips. Who of us, however intimate with him, ever heard him utter a word which would cause a blush upon the cheek of modesty, or unworthy of insertion upon the most stainless page? His ordinary conversa-

tion was as delicate and refined as his discourses from the sacred desk. Another distinguishing characteristic was his profound humility. I speak not of an intellectual humility merely which springs from a just sense of the limitations imposed upon the human faculties. That he possessed. He had measured the short tether of human thought, and had learned the lesson that whatever may be its attainments, it is surrounded by a boundless ocean of unknown and it may be unknowable realities. But I speak of that spiritual grace which is born of a deep conviction of human sinfulness and divine holiness. This led him ever to express implicit dependence upon supernatural grace and to abjure the conceit of vanity and the arrogance of pride. Hence, too, his unselfishness—a quality which prompted him to sacrifice personal comfort and ease, to prefer others to himself, and to rejoice without any alloy of jealousy in the gifts and honors of his brethren. He never, perhaps, was known to breathe a syllable of depreciation in regard to the achievements even of an opponent. Always ready to join in encomiums upon the laudable qualities of others, he blushed at receiving the praise of his own. Shining as were the graces by which he was adorned, he seemed to know them not. He could not see what all besides himself beheld. Every compliment which was paid him he transferred to his Saviour, and hastened to lay upon that Saviour's feet the crown of his endowments and his toils.

Akin to this lovely feature of his character was his proverbial gentleness. No dulness of a student drew from him flashes of irritability, no unkindness of opponents provoked him to expressions of acrimony or even of impatience. Whether this was a constitutional quality, or whether it was the result of a discipline induced by grace, he seemed to have put away all bitterness and wrath and clamor and evil-speaking with all malice; and to fulfil the injunction: "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving others, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Severe towards himself, he was charitable towards others. Ready to make allowance for their imperfections and even for their faults, prone to place the most favorable construction upon their motives, did he not present as near an approach as we have ever

known to a realisation of the picture drawn by the inspired apostle of the noblest grace of our religion: "Charity suffereth long and is kind: charity envieth not: charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth: beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" ?

But although thus humble, gentle, and charitable, it would be doing injustice to his memory to suppose that his character was neutral and undecided, that his virtues were purely negative, and that he was deficient in tenacity of purpose and courage in action. Unaggressive and unpolemical, he was given to seeking the things which make for peace, but where principle was involved or arduous work was to be done, he was positive in maintaining the one and resolute in performing the other. To assure him that some labor desired of him was facile of discharge, was to lead him to hesitate; to paint its difficulties was to ensure his undertaking it. Diffident and retiring in ordinary circumstances, in seasons of danger and exigency he was as dauntless as a lion. On the fearful night when a storm of fire was ravaging this beautiful town, and a rampant soldiery was let loose to sack it, he displayed the courage of a hero, and it was a remark of Dr. Thornwell that he who met him in debate had no easy victory to win.

Eminent catholicity of spirit was not the least conspicuous of the graces which adorned him. All God's people, of whatever name, he owned as his Father's children; every servant of Jesus he recognised as a brother beloved. The fact that for years he was the President of the Columbia Bible Society, was an index of his cordial affection for his brethren of other evangelical denominations than his own. Esteemed as he was by them in life, he is lamented by them in death.

Marked by transparent simplicity of character, he was lifted immeasurably above the arts of the politician and the wiles of the trickster. He was no engineer of measures. What could not be accomplished by direct and overt means, he used no other instrumentality to effect. Truth was his end, and truth his road to reach it. He was a man, of whom we might ask :

"Cui Pudor et Justitiæ soror
 Incorrupta Fides nudaque Veritas
 Quando ullum inveniet parem?"

To say that he had no weaknesses and imperfections would be to say that he was not human; but "e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side." They were the exaggerations of those lovely and self-denying qualities which have been designated as his principal attributes. Little is risked when it is said that there has not lived among us in this generation one more pure, more unselfish, more free from self-seeking and from ambitious aims than he over whose grave we now shed our tears. In a character moulded and polished by grace there seemed to be gathered into unity whatsoever things are true, venerable, just; whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report. To sum up all in a single word, Dr. Howe was a godly man, a man of prayer and faith, of devotion to the ordinances of the Lord's house, of zeal for the glory of God and compassion for the souls of men. Confessing himself to be a sinner, he repaired for pardon to the blood of atonement and leaned for support upon free and sovereign grace. Christ to him was all. He gloried only in the cross, and in that face of a dying Saviour which was covered with spittle and reddened with gore. Jesus he owned to be his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Him he loved and delighted to honor and adore. And having testified to him in life, in death he explicitly declared that in him alone he trusted.

It is a law of Christ's kingdom that in the world his followers shall have tribulation. This would be, in view of the fact that he suffered in their stead, an inexplicable mystery were it not cleared up by the light which the gospel pours upon it. The penal feature has been extracted from the sufferings of the believer, which are transmuted into the benefits of a salutary discipline. He not only knows Jesus and the power of his resurrection, but the fellowship of his sufferings and conformity to his death. The consideration of his communion with his Lord in the bitter school of trial, is sufficient to reconcile him to every pang of suffering, and he is sustained by the assurance that his light afflictions which are but for a moment shall work out for him a

far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He who walks with Jesus and with whom Jesus walks in the fiery furnace, will sit down with Jesus on his throne and reign with him for ever. We need not therefore be disturbed by the spectacle of suffering which the most eminent servants of Christ afford. Although our venerable brother pursued the even tenor of his way amidst the quiet of academic shades, he was no exception to the law that the disciple is not greater than his Master, nor the servant than his Lord. He endured a constant fight of afflictions. He was acquainted with grief, and literally walked with pain as an almost inseparable companion. He had wept over the graves of some who were as dear to him as his own soul—one a noble boy who sacrificed his life for his country. But, conscious of a Saviour's sympathy, supported by the invisible but almighty power of grace, and cheered by the hope of immortal bliss, he more than conquered every earthly ill, and rose superior to every tempest of life:

“As some tall cliff that rears its awful form,
 Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm ;
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

His duties are done ; his pains are over ; his afflictions are past. The grand old man has been gathered to his fathers, full of years and full of honors ; having left a reputation without a blemish and a record without a spot. That body which was the home of suffering shall sleep as in the bosom of Jesus until the morning call of a descending God shall wake it from its dusty bed. Those bones which once ached and broke shall lie undisturbed by “the drums and trappings of conquests,” the revolutions of earth, and the shaking of thrones.

That noble spirit, which so lately held converse with us in this vale of tears, now disembodied and glorified, expatiates in realms of joy, approaches the throne of God and of the Lamb, and unscales its vision at the fountain itself of heavenly light. With what seraphic love does it pour out its praises to that Redeemer whom it adored and magnified below ! With what transports of affection does it salute sainted kindred, brethren, and friends !

With what ecstasies of joy does it commune with "the spirits of just men made perfect"—the great, the good, the sanctified, who have been gathered out of every tribe and tongue of earth! To that rendezvous of holy beings we, too, aspire; to that communion which shall realise the idea of a perfect society. The accusations of conscience silenced, the stains of defilement washed out from the soul, the notes of discord hushed, truth, justice, and love reigning in every heart and controlling every relation, the sobs of the dying chamber stilled, and the tears of parting for ever wiped away, we shall comprehend, as now we cannot, the import of those sublime and thrilling words: "We are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels: to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven."

Voicing, brethren of the Alumni Association, your common sentiment and that of all who ever sat at the feet of this master of Israel, and survive to lament his departure, I exclaim: Well done, servant of Jesus: veteran soldier of the cross, well done! Farewell, brother beloved, for a season, farewell! "What there is of separation is but for a while. This reconciles us to the grave, that our greatest hopes lie beyond it."