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**From the Southern Literary Messenger.**

**SKETCH OF THE REV. STEPHEN B. BALCH, D. D. BY A CITIZEN OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, VA.**

How sweetly sleep the brave, who sink to rest  
How all their country's honors bleed—*Colley.*

In the following memoir, I design to recall to the memory of surviving friends the virtues of a patriot and the ministerial usefulness of a man, who, while living, was beloved by all, and whose death was deplored by a sorrowing community.

Stephen B. Balch was born in Hartford county, Md. April 7th, 1746, and at an early age emigrated to Georgia. Of his boyish days little is known. But in the fall of 1772, he became a student of Princeton College, at that time under the superintendence of the learned Dr. Witherspoon, a member of the first Continental Congress, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Here he first saw the late President Madison, Brockhrook Livingston, recently judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, and Aaron Burr, who soon left the classic fields in which he then walked triumphant, to aid in the chivalric attempt of storming the walls of Quebec, and the snows of a Northern winter. At this time, the military spirit was running high and strong in the bosoms of the young men of that day. Often did the College students meet in the campus, where Leake of Trenton, or some other popular favourite would harangue the multitude, and depict in most glowing colours the long catalogue of oppressions inflicted by Great Britain on the unoffending Colonies. Accordingly some of the bravest officers of our army belonged to this band of young heroes.

In 1774 he graduates, and bids adieu to the companions of his youth—to the fields where he had so often rendered his services in the blood of Merceus and his gallant associates in arms. Mr. Balch is now on the wide world, without a shilling in his purse; and walks to Lower Marlborough, Calvert county, Md. to take charge of an academy of young men, sons of the wealthy farmers of the neighbourhood. His ardent spirit must have been busily exercised on the thrilling scenes passing before him, as he trudged along his lonely way. In the Eastern States, the unrivalled oratory of Warren had electrified the hearts of all who heard or read the powerful effusions of his gifted intellect. Henry had aroused the Ancient Dominion, and his mighty voice had shaken the thrones of England's monarchs. He had laid the foundations of our liberty—war with all its calamities was about to visit our peaceful country—and our sires had resolved to do or die.

On the 1st of October, 1775, the schoolmaster receives from the Council of Safety at Annapolis a commission of captain, authorizing him to raise and discipline a volunteer company consisting of the young men in his Academy able to bear arms, to harass the enemy whenever he appeared on the peninsula between the bay and Patuxent. The field officers under whose orders he acted, were Major Patrick Smith and Col. Alexander Somers. For several years, whether by night or day, he was alternately employed in the double duty of teaching and training his troops, and annoying the marauding parties of the British, who were capturing negroes and carrying off cattle and other provisions. He often appeared in full dress the leader of his company on the green before the Academy, giving the word of command—firing every bosom with impatient desire for danger—appealing to their honour and courage to avenge the wrongs of their country, saying that their brows would be encircled with the laurels of victory—that death was preferable to slavery. His influence on his extended family, and the Captain was greatly instrumental in inducing the neighbours to stand by their country in those dark and perilous days.

In 1778 he sets out for Georgia, where he commenced the study of divinity; and in the fall of 1780, was commissioned by the Presbytery to travel as a missionary through the Carolinas as far North as Georgetown, now in the District of Columbia. In this enterprise, he encountered many arduous trials. The disastrous route of our Southern army under the unfortunate Gates, had just occurred. The victorious legions of Cornwallis now overwhelmed all opposition. Tarleton, like Attila, suffered not the grass to grow under the hoofs of his cavalry, but was carrying death into every family, and dismay into every heart. Three states had returned to their allegiance under the proclamation of the British Chief—our shattered troops flying for safety all hope of independence extinct—more than all else, war raging with unmitigated fury—fathers, sons, neighbours, arrayed against each other—the flames of their dwellings, in the darkness of midnight, illuminating the surrounding country—famine doing her dreadful work—and desolation had become the inmate of every household.

In this journey through Carolina, he travelled one exceedingly sultry day without any refreshment for himself or horse. Night came on; alone, hungry, fatigued, ignorant of the road, he urged on his jaded animal, until at length a distant light is seen. It issued from a large mansion belonging to General Isaac Williams, who afterwards fell at King's Mountain. When he rapped at the front door, a female from within inquired if he were Whig or Tory. He replied that he was a preacher of the Gospel, lost in a strange country, and implored protection and refreshment for the night. He was immediately welcomed to all the comforts of the house. At dawn of day, the General having returned from a reconnoitering excursion during the night, entered the missionary's room, and with all the courtesy and civility of an accomplished soldier, greeted his arrival. He was about thirty years old—six feet high, and admirably framed—lofty carriage—noble, animated countenance—eyes of a piercing blue—hair curling over an expanded intellectual forehead—dressed in full regiments—wearing a sword in his belt, and sword in his scabbard. "Sir," said he, (sitting down familiarly on the bed-side), "I am the leader of the Whigs in this vicinity, and our land is sad and desolate with the ravages of the enemy. A few nights ago, a party of Tories burnt one of my neighbours to the pole of his fiddler house, another

was shot while clapped in the arms of his wife, for no other offence than love of liberty; they came here recently to inflict a similar fate on myself, but the whole gang was routed, and here am I, resolved on independence or death, incessantly engaged in carrying on a war of extermination against our ruthless invaders. I have only to regret that I can die but once to save my country. But our cause is just. Heaven is on our side.

At this delightful residence, the missionary remained until the morning of the ensuing Sabbath, when he rose with the sun to ride ten miles, where by previous appointment he was to preach at 11 o'clock, A. M. A chariot and four appeared, in which he took a seat with the General and his charming lady, and soon arrived at the church. A large concourse of people was assembled, and Williams urged the missionary to concentrate all the powers of his mind and the force of his eloquence on the vital, paramount, absorbing topic of American independence, and to arouse his hearers to the rescue of their country, whatever might be the result. Accordingly when the hymn was read, the General rose to full uniform, and led the music with as much ease as he would have commanded his brigade in the day of battle. The divine now dwelt on the horrors of war and the cruelty of the enemy, but cheered the flock with telling them that the race was not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. "Your country, it is true, is laid waste by a ravening enemy, and your fathers and daughters are outraged, your firesides and altars are desecrated, your churches in ruins—the blood so recently shed at Beaufort's defeat, cries for vengeance, the bones of our countrymen are bleaching alike amid the snows of Canada and the sands of Carolina. What though victory perchance be not our standard, yet see the stripes and stars unfolded to the breeze at Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth. The God of Hosts led the armies of Israel; to them he was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; he is now the same Almighty protector of all who trust in His divine help, and He will yet rescue us 'out of the hands of our bondage.' Soon our armies will regain their good fortune. The dark prospect now before us will be succeeded by the smile of inspiring hope; the misfortunes of defeat and disaster will yield to the shout and joy of victory; the scourge of war will cease, and peace will soon gladden every heart, and we shall become a great and prosperous people."

So spoke the missionary. On descending from the pulpit, Williams embraced him with the most ardent affection, urged him to return to his house, where he might be free of expense, to teach school and preach the Gospel, and render his valuable services in the most efficient manner. It was in vain. His promise to perform the tour of missionary labour prevented his acceptance; and when the moment of separation arrived, the stern and fiery eye of the General was filled with tears.

Should the reader ask whether the minister of the Gospel had violated the precepts of meekness and lowly Saviour, which inculcate forgiveness of injuries, I reply that those principles apply to individuals, not to nations as such, and that the revolution was a case *sui generis*. We then saw the Rev. Mr. Muhlenberg, pastor of a Lutheran congregation in the Shenandoah Valley, resigning his charge, and his ministerial office, and engaged as his successor in many of the best fought actions of the seven years' war, and in 1814, when our army was beleaguered at Plattsburg, a preacher of Vermont took under a large portion of his congregation, and after the return of peace, resided in the "Omphala splendid" to commemorate the courage and virtue of the patriot band.

We return to the missionary. He now quits the very interesting scenes in which he lately participated, and is alone in a solitary room, travelling to Maryland, and arrives in Georgetown, to preach the word of life. The flock consisted of ten members only, but the words grew to be the most flourishing in the district. He also took the care of a small congregation in Fredericktown, and every fortnight rode there on horseback to promote their spiritual welfare. Here he saw Wayne's division in full march for the South, to enter on the arduous duties of that campaign, which terminated in the 19th of October, 1781, in the surrender of the royal army at York Town. They had been encamped for some weeks on the banks of the Monocacy to obtain rest and health. Their chief now appeared at their head, mounted on a white charger, and every soldier seemed proud to serve under the hero of Stono Point, and the soldier's esteem for him from the most ardent affection and unbounded veneration. From year to year, during his long life, did this amiable man with untiring assiduity, dispense the Gospel to his people—instruct the young—counsel the middle-aged—cheer the old with consolations of the Holy Scriptures—beal divisions in the church, reconcile neighbours and families, and whose kindness to each other had been interrupted—uphold every good institution—the life of the social circle, an enemy to all vice and the friend of virtue. It was his pleasure, during his ministry, to seek out the lonely widow and orphan, in order to assuage their sorrows—to penetrate the hovels of misery and want, the wretched inmates might enjoy comfort and plenty; and notwithstanding his own path through life was not free from thorns, yet he did, in adversity, display a faith like that enjoined in the 11th chapter of the Hebrews—for nearly fifty years, he stood unrivalled in the hearts of his flock; and then "fell where he fought," a soldier of the cross, without leaving an enemy behind.

As to the honours of the world, he coveted none, and received but one—the degree of D. D., conferred on him by the trustees of New Jersey College in 1818.

Likewise Howard, he sought for the honour which is not of this world—like him, the snows of winter and heat of summer prevented not the discharge of duty—like him, he shunned all human praise. Dr. Balch lived in an extraordinary age. He saw a nation born not in a day, but amid the throes and agonies of a long protracted war—our soldiers laying down their arms and returning to their peaceful occupations. He saw the retirement of Mount Vernon—the sword turned into a ploughshare—a republican form of government presented to the people in 1787, and the Father of the Country setting up with his own hand, a Constitution which is the admiration of mankind. He saw his country seated aloft among the nations of the earth—her commerce whetting every sea—her agriculture extended throughout this wide extended confederacy—her arts and sciences spread

ing their benign influence over the land—the rising generations trained up in Colleges, Academies and Common Schools, splendid cities springing up in the valley of Mississippi like magic, and temples dedicated to God, where lately the beasts of the forest kept their den. He saw too in 1812, the second war of independence. He beheld with his own eye, the conflagration of our Capitol, and blushed for his country; but his aged heart bounded with joy, when his ear heard the roar of artillery on the coast, and our Northern Frontier. He saw the second war terminated, and peace once more reign throughout the land. All this was enough for one man to behold; and on the 23d September, 1838, he was summoned before the Judge of the quick and the dead.

I recollect the last conversation I ever held with this good man—about six months prior to his death. It was on a raw, cold gusty day in April. At his request we walked to the grave yard, where slept in undisturbed repose, the wife of his youth—a son who had fought at French Mills in 1813—many connexions, and a long list of friends and parishioners. He was now in his eighty-seventh year. Pulling off his hat his long grey curls fell down on his shoulders—his eye beamed with almost prophetic fire—his countenance was ruddy. Standing on the confines of both worlds, he seemed as though neither apostle nor martyr could present a more sublime and enrapturing appearance. "Behold," said he, "the ravages of death, temperance. 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THE PRESBYTERIAN.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1841.

TERMS—Three Dollars if paid within six months; Two Dollars and Fifty Cents in advance.

NOTICE TO A CORRESPONDENT.—We would inform a ministerial brother, that we have been unable, after search made, to find our copy of Thorneval on the doctrine of election.

INDEX.—The paper of to-day being the last for this year, we insert an Index on the fourth page.

DR. MILLER AND THE EPISCOPALIANS.—The article in our present number from the pen of Dr. Miller will be read with interest. By every candid reader it must be regarded as a most satisfactory refutation of the ungenerous insinuations of the Banner of the Cross.

MINISTERIAL LABOURS.—The thoughts on this subject might have appeared invidious from a layman, but as they come from a city pastor, we have no right to withhold them.

COMMITTEE ON PALMODY.—The Committee on Palmody will meet in the Committee room of the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, on the 4th day of January, 1842, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

BOARD OF PUBLICATION.—The Board of Publication, have just issued three additional volumes; Missionary Tales, a very interesting little work, suitable for Sabbath school libraries; Traditions of the Covenanters, containing thrilling incidents of the Scotch Covenanters, when pursued to the death by a relentless persecutor; and Sibb's Christian's Portion, a delightful little book, in which the Christian may see how rich is his inheritance.

RECORDS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—The volumes containing the early records of the Presbyterian Church, is one of great value, and it will be constantly increasing in value, as the present edition is selling off. There is no probability that a second edition will be printed, and this should excite a desire to procure a copy of the present one.

CLOSE OF THE YEAR.—How quickly does a single year glide away, and yet it takes but seventy to transmit us from infancy to old age! This however is a matter of but little importance were it not for another consideration, that the lapse of each year brings us so much nearer our unalterable state in eternity.

SABBATH-BREAKING BY RAILWAYS.—The London and Birmingham Railway Company which countenance the habitual breach of the holy Sabbath, have by way of compromise with the religious public, established a school and built a chapel at one of their stations for the use of those in their employ.

DEVOTIONAL HABITS.—The Scriptures represent such habits by such expressions as these, "set your affections not on things on the earth, but on things in heaven."

of their engineers, guards, drivers, porters, purveyors, steadily break the Sabbath; opening up far wider vents than ever, by which the irreligion and profligacy of the cities are poured over the rural districts of the country, and are in truth (with the owners of the pleasure steam vessels), the chief panders to the drunkenness, the seductions, and all descriptions of immorality, which through their instrumentality, keep higher holiday on God's sacred day than during all the week besides.

A NEW PAPER.—The Protestant Banner, is the title of a new paper issued in Philadelphia, in quarto form, edited by the Rev. J. F. Berg, who is already known as a forcible writer against the papacy.

DEATH.—In Philadelphia, suddenly, on the 12th of December, the Rev. William Bryant, of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

SINGULAR SENTIMENT.—As if the Bible in itself were destitute of a devotional spirit, the Witness, a high toned Episcopal paper, of Boston, says, "The prayer book is the Bible in a devotional form."

LONG SERMONS.—That eminent pious man and truly eloquent preacher, Toplady, in one of the entries in his diary, says: "My liberty, both of spirit and utterance, was very great in the afternoon. Looking on my watch, I was surprised to find that I had detained my dear people three-quarters of an hour!"

POPERY IN THE FIELD.—The New York Tribune says:—"We learn that a new daily paper will shortly be established in this city under the patronage of the Roman Catholics, and edited by one who has been prominent in the support of their school claim."

A NICE DISTINCTION.—Popish writers rebut the charge of persecution alleged against their Church, by saying, that although the holy Church may recommend and urge the extermination of heretics by fire and sword, yet it is the secular power alone which executes the sentence! Thus the priestly power enjoins it upon the secular to commit these murders, which the latter disregards at its peril, and yet the instigator of the foul deed pretends to wash his hands in innocence!

THE WRECK.—A noble vessel lay stranded on the beach, the sea sweeping over her decks, and her helpless crew and passengers clinging to the rigging, and directing their imploring eyes to the shore for help. The storm raged, and ever and anon, a strong wave beating upon the shattered wreck, loosed the grasp of some unfortunate mortal, whose strength at length had failed, and sunk him beneath the waters to rise no more.

missionary enterprise is as yet but like a small life-boat, poorly manned, able only to pick up one here and there, of the drowning thousands, as they struggle in the agitated ocean. When will the listlessness of Christians be overcome? When will they be induced to make adequate exertions to save the millions who are perishing without hope?

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agitated through the press; and by the time the General Assembly meets, the minds of the brethren may be so far directed to the matter, that a resolution may be sustained in the Assembly, directing or recommending the Stated Clerks of Presbyteries, and Synods, to prepare such Charts of their respective jurisdictions, to be brought to some central point, from which an Ecclesiastical Chart of the whole Church, may be compiled and published.

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ationally looking up on his Sunday School, with sometimes a Bible-class. A funeral requires his attendance now and then. The marriages need not be mentioned, for I have never seen them entered on the list of pastoral burdens, as to my regret, funerals sometimes are. The incidental calls of boards, societies, public meetings, &c., are among the ordinary engagements of a minister, and may be more properly classed with his amusements and pleasures than tasks.

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seven and twelve years ago, when the paragraph in question was published, a large number of Episcopalian, in this country, as well as in Europe, formally disavowed, and even denounced the offensive doctrine alluded to. It would seem, indeed, that some who, ten years ago, were on this low church ground, have since given in their adhesion to the opposite theory, and are now reckoned among its ardent advocates.

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Thus explained, where was the harm of my resolution to hold up to public odium, whenever I had occasion to speak of it, the offensive doctrine described? Believing, as I sincerely and confidently do, that Presbyterian parity in the Gospel ministry, is plainly taught in the New Testament, and ought to be every where adopted, how ought I to regard the teaching of those who, in the face of Scripture, deny that Presbyterians make any part of the family of Christ, and insist that they must, with the heathen, be turned over to "unconvenanted mercy"? Ought I to approve of such doctrine? Ought I not to abhor it, and embrace every fit opportunity to express my abhorrence? Had I done this gentleman regard the Popish doctrine, which proclaims that he, and the whole Protestant Episcopal Church, is to be given over to Satan, because they do not acknowledge the Pope as their spiritual sovereign? Does he approve it? Does he not think it his duty, whenever he has occasion to speak of this offensive doctrine, to express his abhorrence of it, and to hold it up to "public odium"? The offensive claim of the Protestant Episcopal, is just as anti-scriptural and baseless as that of the Papist.

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