

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY

ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY

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Presented by Charles W. Dabney.

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Dabney, Charles William,
1855-1945,
In memoriam

Shelf.....



ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY,
Hampton Sidney, Va., 1872 or '73

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IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY

Born, March 5th, 1820

Died, January 3rd, 1898

“Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good.”

The University of Tennessee Press
Knoxville,
1899

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR.

BY REV. DR. BENJAMIN M. PALMER.

[In the Southern Presbyterian of January 20, 1898.]

The recent death of Dr. Dabney distils the tear of sorrow from many a suffering heart. He was truly a Prince in our Israel, a pillar of strength in the House of our God. How we shall miss him, who leaned upon him for defence in the great battle for truth in this sinful world! He was mentally and morally constituted a great Polemic; with a massive intellect capable of searching into the foundations of truth, and with an intellectual as well as moral indignation against every form of falsehood—we find in these natural attributes the secret of his strong convictions and the fearless utterance of them which distinguished him through life. A great writer of our own time has said that “love of truth is honesty of reason, as love of virtue is honesty of heart.” It was this twofold honesty that made Dr. Dabney the Christian warrior that he was. Loving truth for herself, he sought her as one might seek to win his bride; and so his convictions went down into the substance of his whole being. His holy reverence for truth wrought in him a holy intolerance of error; and he fought for the one, and against the other, with a passionate earnestness which many mistook for bitterness of spirit.

Yet with these sturdy qualities were united the gentler traits which, oftener than is generally supposed, are blended in the character of those who are truly great. All who were admitted into the repose of Dr. Dabney’s inner life recognized those amiable virtues which endeared him to his pupils and to his friends of every degree. The sweet simplicity of his character, and the genuine modesty which veiled while it did not conceal his greatness, made it easy for others to rejoice in his pre-eminence without the infusion of jealousy. It is only the loftier natures, which look upon their own achievements as being such, that others might have wrought as well.

The departure of this loved and honored brother falls upon the ear of the writer of these lines, like a chime from the upper

world to which he has gone. Whilst Dabney sleeps with the honored dead in the rural grave-yard in Prince Edward, those who stood by his side, fighting for the truth of God in his generation, are standing at the edge of their own graves opening at their feet. Together with their departed brother they will awake in the triumphant resurrection morn. Will those who take their place be faithful to the trust, and hold the truth for God in this age of empiricism, in which human devices are substituted for the power of Divine truth, and artificial combinations usurp the functions of the Church of God? The generation to which Dabney belonged is passing away; may God bring stronger and wiser men to the front, who shall be equal to the heavier responsibilities devolved upon them!