

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

No. 28—October, 1896.

I.

THE REVEREND TALBOT WILSON CHAMBERS, S.T.D., LL.D.*

SUMMARY OF EVENTS.

TALBOT WILSON CHAMBERS was born at Carlisle, Pa., on the 25th of February, 1819, and was the third in a family of nine children. His parents were W. C. Chambers, M.D., and Mary Ege. He was baptized June 6, 1819. He entered Dickinson College in his native town when eleven years of age. On May 15, 1831, he was received into the full communion of the Presbyterian Church of Carlisle. In the spring of 1832 he entered the Sophomore class of Rutgers College, New Brunswick, N. J., from which institution he graduated in 1834, sharing with two others the second honor in a class of twenty. The year following graduation from college he spent in the theological seminary at New Brunswick. His diary indicates that a few weeks in the middle of the year following were also spent in New Brunswick, when sickness interrupted his studies. The middle year of the seminary course was taken by him at Princeton in 1836-37. At the close of this year he was offered the benefit of a three years' scholarship, as having shown the "most zeal and ardor in the study of sacred and Oriental literature." This he was obliged to decline. From the fall of

* The author, in addition to acknowledgments made in the course of this article, wishes to express his very great obligations for material aid in its preparation, to the Rev. D. D. Demarest, D.D., LL.D., the Rev. J. F. Mesick, D.D., the Rev. J. M. Ferris, D.D., John C. VanDyke, L.H.D., the Rev. B. B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D., and especially to the Rev. E. B. Coe, D.D., LL.D. and the Rev. Theodore F. Chambers.

VIII.

OBITUARY NOTE.

ANSON DAVIES FITZ RANDOLPH.

I.

A MAN of mark has gone from us in the recent decease of Anson Davies Fitz Randolph. A gap wide and deep is left not easily filled. Not only will he be long and sadly missed by the craft among whom he had come to be recognized as "the last of the old booksellers," but a host of personal friends of every rank and station, whom he had won and bound to himself in bonds never to be broken, mourn his loss; and a still larger company scattered all over the land, who never knew him in person, but to whom his name is as a household word by reason of his books that have fallen into their hands, more especially his "verses" as he used so modestly to style them, will deeply regret his departure, as of a very dear friend and companion, so helpful has he been to them in the varied experiences of their lives. There are a few who were admitted not only to the privacy of his "sanctum" at his place of business but to the more sacred seclusion of his home and fireside in his hours of leisure from toil, who feel lonely indeed without him. Earth is truly poorer for his departure, albeit heaven is the richer.

The acquaintance of the writer with Mr. Randolph began in the winter of 1858, some six years after he had ventured on doing business for himself. His place of business was then located on the corner of Amity street and Broadway. His home was in Houston street, at that time a desirable residence portion of the city. The store was small, but unique in its arrangement and appointments, and very attractive in its make-up and general appearance. One visiting it was continually finding some choice book or booklet in dainty binding, or little engraving neatly mounted, or some tempting bit of the useful or ornamental for the book or writing table. But quite the most taking thing about it was the unique personality of Mr. Randolph himself, as in his young manhood he came from his den, as he called it, to wait upon a customer or to chat with a personal friend. He was magnetic then as in after-years, and that without effort; it was natural. Who that has looked upon his genial face with its noble forehead, half concealed by that refractory lock of hair, underneath which peered deep-set flashing eyes with a merry twinkle lurk-

ing in them, a frame well proportioned but slightly stooping, and a little limp in his walk from stiffness of one knee, as he came to you giving you a hearty shake of the hand accompanied with some pleasant remark which at once put even a perfect stranger at his ease, can ever forget him, or find it difficult to call him up in imagination? There was ever manifest in him a readiness to serve to the utmost, not for the money he was to receive, but for the pleasure of it. He was very quick in his apprehension of the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of those with whom he had to do, and possessed the happy faculty of easily adapting himself to them.

He was indeed a model bookseller of the olden type. He loved to meet people, to talk of books and their authors, and in the meantime study his customers, draw them out, make them givers of their best to him, as well as receivers of what he could impart. He had a genius for penetrating people whom he met either in a business or a social way, getting at their inner selves, possessing himself of what they thought and felt, acquiring and making his own their knowledge of men and of affairs. His was a peculiarly absorbent nature. Books were a kind of atmosphere to him, which he breathed. Almost without effort, certainly without the necessity of laboriously poring over each page, he got at the purpose of the author, caught his spirit, and possessed his train of thought. Much the same was it with those whom he met in familiar converse. He drew them out, gleaned from them the results of their study and observation, and drank large draughts from the living fountains of their deepest and richest experience.

Happily he attracted to himself, in his place of business, more as personal and intimate friends than customers, some of the foremost men of his time, both in and out of the city. Among them were such men as the saintly James W. Alexander and his brother, Samuel D. Alexander; the learned theologians Profs. Hitchcock and H. B. Smith; the marvelously erudite Philip Schaff; and such eloquent preachers as Drs. Bethune, Tyng and Paxton, and later on the genial and gifted Dr. William M. Taylor, who became one of his closest friends. Men of note in other walks of life, especially of his own profession, were also in the habit of making his store their place of resort, and were not satisfied to leave it until they had spent a few moments in his company. He easily digested and incorporated into himself and made his own what was received from these various sources. That helped greatly to make him the man he was, so cultured and refined, with such breadth of knowledge on all subjects, and with such well-trained and disciplined faculties—a man who was really highly educated, though he never attended school but three years in his life, and that at the early period when he was between seven and ten years of age. Never was the degree of M.A. more worthily bestowed on any college graduate, than that which Princeton College honored itself in granting him at a later period. Though profoundly grateful for it and for the recognition of scholarship and literary culture implied, he never paraded it or cared to have it connected with his name, so modestly he wore his honors.

He was not a bookseller alone, though he honored and loved that as his special calling to the very end of life. He began the making of books from the start, publishing as his first venture *Hints to Christians*, by the combined authorship of Drs. Skinner and Lyman Beecher, "which hardy offspring is still in print." Then followed *Essays Written in the Intervals of Business*, by a writer at that time anonymous, but afterward well and widely known as Arthur Helps. At the breaking out of the war and during its continuance he helped on the cause of the North, which physical disability alone prevented him from fighting for in person as a soldier, by printing and extensively circulating pamphlets and addresses which kindled and kept alive patriotism in the hearts of others, and roused their courage for the stress of the great conflict, whether they were in the ranks or passing through the sterner exigencies sometimes of home support. But his chief and more noteworthy publications were distinctively religious. It was he who put into the hands of the youth of our day that wonderfully suggestive and helpful book of Mrs. Prentiss, *Stepping Heavenward*, which has moulded and given right direction to so many lives in this and other lands. To other publishers it was offered by its author, and declined on the ground that a book of that sort could not be made to pay. But Mr. Randolph, aided by the excellent judgment of his cultured wife, saw in it a book of rare power for good, and was willing for the sake of what might be accomplished by it, to take the pecuniary risk that others shrank from assuming. Well was he fitted by his exquisite taste and poetic gift for rightly appreciating and aiding to give to the world that superb collection of hymns ranging through the whole Christian era, *Christ in Song*, compiled by that master in so many literary fields, Philip Schaff. A hymn of his own, of no mean order, at the urgent request of Dr. Schaff suitably closes the volume.

Many poems of his own, of literary merit but of special worth because they were the outflow of his own inmost and deepest experiences, found their way into print from time to time. He wrote because he must. For months his verses sang themselves in his heart, voicing to his own ear at first the working process in him of some sorrow or joy, or hymning his thought of God or his appreciation of His works and ways. Often he printed these for private distribution among his friends before giving them for publication. Nor did he then publish them himself, but usually through others at their request. By the insistence of his fellow-publisher and intimate friend, Mr. Charles Scribner, a volume entitled *Hopefully Waiting* received the imprint of that widely known publishing house, and had from the first, and still has, an extended circulation. Though reluctantly giving anything of his own to the public, he has done great service to the Christian world in the publication of others' productions in such books as *The Changed Cross* and *The Shadow of the Rock*, made up largely of fugitive religious poems, clipped from newspapers and magazines and carefully edited by himself. Occasionally something from his own gifted pen would find a place in these little books, but never in a way to attract particular attention, yet adding greatly to their value.

Without particularizing further, suffice it to say that no publisher has done more to establish and build up that branch of the trade which consisted of distinctively religious books. Though warned against it from the start by his fellow-publishers, as sure to be a failure, one of them predicting that it would so result inside of six months, he persisted in the attempt, evidently from a sense of duty and with an earnest desire to make himself useful in that direction. It required courage and much of self-reliance and a large faith in the religious sentiment of the people, and an earnest purpose to foster that sentiment. He had the satisfaction of winning for himself an enviable name and fame thereby. But that was by no means his chief satisfaction or greatest reward, as appears from a remark made in later years to one of his most intimate and confidential friends: "Well, I've not made a fortune in trade, but I know many hearts have been comforted, and lives made brighter and brought closer to the Lord Jesus, by my being in the book business, and I am content."

He was exceeding friendly as a publisher to any literary enterprise which had for its object the promotion of religion, the upbuilding of the Church, and the extension of Christ's kingdom among men. For many years he maintained a special department of Sunday-school books, with the avowed purpose of doing what he could to raise the standard of religious reading among the young. He gave to the selection of books for libraries his own personal attention, so as to assure his patrons that only the choicest publications should be furnished them. He was a pioneer in the introduction of hymn and tune books for use in congregational singing as a part of public worship, being the publisher of almost the first book of the kind—that compiled by the venerable Thomas Hastings, one of the fathers of sacred music in this country, aided by his son, Dr. T. S. Hastings, then the pastor of the old Carmine Street Church, where the book was used in public worship for many years under the leadership of its author. He greatly aided by his valuable advice and active efforts the inauguration of several theological Reviews, whose purpose was the open discussion in popular form of some of the great questions in theology, esteeming it of greatest importance that there should be right thinking on these vital themes of our holy religion, under the guidance of Christian scholars who otherwise could not have found access to the popular ear and heart. He even undertook the task of publishing some of these Reviews. The editors of the PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW, in which this paper appears, have been moved to solicit its preparation for the purpose of thus expressing and fittingly recording their sense of loss in his death, and of the loss also of the Presbyterian Church in general, whose interests he was always so willing to aid in promoting. At the outset of its career he became its publisher, and in every way lent it his cordial assistance.

In like manner he freely gave his services to the Missionary Boards of the Presbyterian Church, as one of a Committee appointed by the General Assembly for the inauguration and supervision of *The Church at*

Home and Abroad, by which in one compact and readable volume missionary intelligence of every kind might be introduced into the homes of the people. The success of that effort is due in no small degree to his cheerfully rendered advice and counsel, as is manifest from what its present editors say of him: "His death removes from that Committee one of its most diligent, vigilant and wise members. His cultivated taste and judgment in literature and his large experience as a publisher made his counsels invaluable to the Committee and to the Editors." For many years prior to his death Mr. Randolph was a most useful and highly esteemed member of the Board of Directors of the American Bible Society. To aid in the multiform publication and world-wide distribution of the Word of God, which was in his estimation as the "tree of life" of Apocalyptic vision, "which bare twelve manner of fruits, and whose leaves were for the healing of the nations," was reckoned by him as one of the greatest privileges of his life.

Of his Christian character, standing and influence it is not easy to speak in few words, or to give any adequate representation. One needed to know him intimately in order to understand and appreciate the depth, genuineness and fervor of his piety. He was blessed with a deeply religious nature to begin with—a real aptitude indeed for sacred things. How or when he became a follower of the Lord Jesus it is doubtful if any one ever heard him say. He may not himself have known. And if he had would have shrunk from speaking of it. For he had always a great distaste for so-called religious experiences, especially of the emotional and demonstrative sort. Notwithstanding he was deprived of the nurture and training of his Christian home in his boyhood and was exposed the more on that account to the temptations and perils incident to life in a great city, the influence of his godly mother lost none of its power over him. Doubtless the environment of the Sunday-school Union, in whose service he spent so many of the formative years of his life, had much to do with the development of his religious nature. He early connected himself with the Presbyterian Church, which became to him in after-years very dear as a Church home. He loved its creed, its polity, its forms of worship. For some years he was a member of the old Spring Street Church. Later on he transferred his membership to the West Presbyterian Church, of which the Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Skinner was the pastor, who was succeeded by Dr. T. S. Hastings, now the President of Union Theological Seminary. With that church he remained until some time after its removal to Forty-second street. Finding the distance from his home on Twenty-second street too great for his convenience in attending its services, he joined, with his family, the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, then under the pastorate of Rev. Dr. Crosby, where he remained in active service, as time and strength would permit, until his death. He was ever a faithful friend and ardent supporter of his pastor, kindly in his criticisms and charitable in his judgment. Each one of those under whose ministrations he sat

was accustomed to come freely to him for counsel and sympathy, and never failed to receive a helping word and hand. He would never consent to take office, except perhaps that of a trustee, though the office of elder was often offered him and urgently pressed upon his acceptance. For a man of his rare gifts and fine qualifications in every way for public service, he shrank, unnecessarily perhaps, from the publicity of all official positions. He was none the less active and effective on that account in promoting church interests.

In early life he gave himself enthusiastically to the work of the Sunday-school in the church of his choice. For many years he was its most efficient superintendent. He loved children and young people. They were drawn to him and fascinated by him. He was the life of any youthful company in which he chanced to mingle, even when among strangers. His solicitude for young men in particular took on a practical form in the way of meetings for them, which he and others under his lead instituted on Sunday afternoon over on the West side of the city, particularly destitute at that time of religious privileges. He sought out in person those who were homeless and especially exposed to temptation, mindful of his own early life of a similar sort. He was never content to be idle, even when going away from his business for rest and recreation. The services of the church nearest at hand both Sunday and weekday, found in him, with his family, most faithful and helpful attendants.

He was accustomed to spend the summer in his later years beside the beautiful waters of Lake George, where, in the midst of a pine grove on the hillside, giving him a commanding view of lake and mountains, he built a cottage, to which he gave the name of "Grey Nook." No more active supporter, both personally and pecuniarily, among all the summer residents of that far-famed resort, did the little Presbyterian Church in Caldwell and its pastor have than he, in the many seasons he spent in this quiet resting place. But that did not satisfy him. He soon found a somewhat neglected neighborhood a mile or so away from his cottage in another direction, and a country schoolhouse in the midst of it which could be utilized for religious purposes. There, with such aids as he could summon from the neighboring summer visitors, he established a Sunday-school and a preaching service. The work of ministering to this neighborhood both as pastor and preacher rested chiefly on his shoulders, and many a lay sermon did he prepare for the people who delighted to hear him. It came at length to be known as his bishopric, and it was styled, not inappropriately, among his friends, "St. Anson's on the Mount." Very fitting was it that after his death a memorial service should be held in this little schoolhouse, and many a loving tribute paid to the memory of one who had so graciously and kindly watched over and cared for these "other sheep" of the fold of the Good Shepherd.

As an all-round and appreciative estimate of Mr. Randolph there seems to the writer nothing more fitting than the words of another who,

like himself, enjoyed the closest intimacy with him, and had the freedom of his home and heart for many years, who says of him: "Every one who came within the radius of his fascinating, magnetic, quaint and original personality called him friend. Genial in nature, gifted in intellect, rippling with humor and wit, reverent in spirit, quick in the appreciation of the good, the true, the beautiful in every thing; sympathetic, generous and helpful, even those who came into contact with him in a prosaic business way were inspired with almost personal regard. No one could come into close contact with him and not feel that underlying his character, and permeating his whole life, was the one sterling quality not often met with, of genuineness. Policy and artificiality and sham he had no use for. He was genuine in his attachments, genuine in his religious life. He believed in God; he rested upon His promise so genuinely, that it mattered little what storm of trouble or sorrow broke upon him, his little bark rode safe and undisturbed. His simple, uncomplaining acceptance of the divine will (and oh! the crushing sorrows, the galling limitations of his life), evidenced a soul in wonderful harmony with it. His prayers were worship, incense poured forth, a genuine offering in a holy place."

The ending of this well-spent life was far from being what he had planned or his friends had hoped. Habituated as he was to business ways of the olden time, it was hard for him to readjust himself to more modern methods. Nor was it easy for him, partly on that account, to weather the fearful business depression everywhere so prevalent in these last years. Cares and burdens and anxieties thickened upon him, and made life a daily struggle in his declining days, rather than a season of leisure and comfort to which he had longingly looked forward. When suddenly bereft of the strong staff and beautiful rod on which he had leaned for support, in the person of the wife of his youth—a woman of singular beauty of character, sweetness of disposition, depth of faith, strength of will, courage under difficulties, finely cultured, gifted with every grace, making her a tower of strength—he could not withstand the shock. Though he bowed beneath the blow with sweetest submission, in full acknowledgment of a Father's wisdom and goodness in laying it upon him, the flesh was weak and failed him. His working days were over. Nought remained but the loosening of the tent pins and the taking down of "the earthly house of this tabernacle" that his freed spirit might enter into that "building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Though the process of dismantling was long and wearisome, yet it was accomplished without much of apparent suffering. At length, down by the fathomless, mysterious sea, whither his loved ones bore him in the vain hope of partial recovery, he passed over into the "land of the leal," where there is no more sea.

His son and two daughters, all who remained of his immediate household, with a few relatives and near friends, gathered for a simple service of prayer and praise and the reading of the Word beside his worn and

wearied body, ere it was borne to Greenwood to be laid with those of his beloved wife and the five children who had gone on before. Was it not as he, so modest and retiring, would have had it? Without pomp or parade of any sort he went away home—for home it was whither his loved ones had already gone, so many of them. For them and for him it was a glad home-coming.

WORCESTER, MASS.

ELDRIDGE MIX.

II.

The death of Mr. Anson D. F. Randolph, the well-known publisher, has been noticed widely and with much kindness, both by the secular and religious press. His life and work were connected with the public interest in so many ways as to occasion a general regret. His book store was the favorite resort of ministers of all denominations, and when they had received his genial welcome and listened to his witty replies and his lively and discriminating comments upon books, authors and matters of passing interest, they never failed to return. As a publisher and bookseller he had a long career. The other publishers of the city felt his personal attraction, and delighted to do him honor. At their trade-conventions it was their pleasure to appoint him Chairman, and this was a guarantee that the meeting would be lively and interesting. When any one of their number was removed by death, it was often his silver tongue that pronounced the eulogy, or his facile pen that wrote the resolutions of regret and sympathy.

As a publisher, Mr. Randolph established an enviable reputation. At a time when rapid sales and pecuniary gains were secured by pandering to a vitiated public taste, he never issued a doubtful book or printed an immoral sentiment. His beautiful typography and skillful execution secured him a large patronage for the publication of literary addresses, special sermons and occasional pamphlets. His tasteful and expressive title pages were often the occasion of laudatory approval. In his religious publications the public owed much to his intelligent and discriminating selection of books. His imprimatur upon a volume was a sufficient guarantee to parents that the book might be introduced without question into the family. As a bookseller his recommendation of a book gave much confidence to the purchaser as to its value. He was not simply a printer of books—he knew what was in them. He could tell all about the author, sometimes relate interesting circumstances about the book, and his criticism of its contents was always reliable. The editors and friends of this REVIEW, as of its predecessor, *The Presbyterian Review*, have much reason to remember Mr. Randolph with interest and affection. He was the first publisher of them both, and to the former especially he gave much time and attention. He carried it on his heart as one of his cares and solitudes, and felt the strongest interest in its prosperity. We retain tender remembrances of his fellowship, and feel it a privilege to express our deep regret at his death and our warmest sympathy with his afflicted family and friends.

Mr. Randolph was also a poet of no ordinary ability. With him poetry was a natural gift which developed itself at intervals in times of trial all through his life. He had an experience of bitter sufferings from many causes, and it was when his heart was smitten that his thought and feeling flowed forth in those tender strains that have soothed and comforted so many other hearts. His poems consist of fugitive pieces, written at many different times, occasioned by deep feeling, and published in the religious papers and magazines. His lifelong friend, Mr. Charles Scribner, under the inspiration of his friendship, collected these fugitive pieces and published them in a small volume entitled *Hopefully Waiting*. This was done without Mr. Randolph's knowledge, and he was greatly surprised and delighted when he received a copy of the volume as a present, with Mr. Scribner's compliments. Mr. Randolph frequently mentioned this circumstance to the writer, accompanied with expressions of the warmest affection for Mr. Scribner, and he always ended by saying that Mr. Scribner was the "noblest man he had ever known." His volume expresses on every page a high sense of the sovereignty of God, and a spirit of entire submission to the divine will. It is evidently written by one who had had a deep experience of divine grace in his own heart, and no one who has had an experience of sorrow can read it without a tearful interest. Mr. Randolph had a special facility for that difficult species of poetic composition—the sonnet. After the death of Mr. Seward, whose life was assailed on the same night on which our martyr President fell, Mr. Randolph wrote and published a sonnet which so touched the hearts and commanded the admiration of Mr. Seward's family and friends that they had it inscribed upon the marble shaft that perpetuates his memory; and again, when Dr. Charles Hodge died, Mr. Randolph wrote a sonnet which has been given a prominent place in his Biography.

Mr. Randolph had a conversational gift and a flow of pleasantry that enlivened everything he said. He attracted and interested both old and young. His humor came out in flashes and the hearer was waiting and hoping for something more. Children would gather around and listen with intense interest and would never leave the company while he remained. His wit was entirely spontaneous, and he was most brilliant in repartee. His friends would often tease him in order to draw out his genial and happy answers. His wit was so innocent that he never wounded any one's feelings. He always reminded the listener of a pure crystal fountain pouring out streams of refreshment.

In this estimate of Mr. Randolph's life and work it is still more important to say that he was an earnest Christian worker. No one could look over the shelves and book-tables in his store without feeling that here was a man who was aiming chiefly at doing good to the souls of men. His books were not only evangelical, but practical and spiritual—even the stories which he published for children were calculated to draw young hearts to Christ. He studied to prepare little books of Scripture texts, daily thoughts for closet exercises, instructions to young communi-

cants. He spent untold labor in gathering and selecting from the religious poetry that appeared through the year the most beautiful and unctuous pieces and in printing them in tasteful small volumes, hoping to win the young to religion through the charm of poetry.

His Sabbaths were days of active effort to save souls. In early life he joined Dr. Hastings in his mission work in Carmine street, New York, and was one of his most efficient helpers. Twenty-odd years ago he built himself a small cottage for a summer home among the pines on a hilltop overlooking Lake George, and from that cottage went forth beneficent Christian influences which have told upon the whole community. About a mile from his home, on the top of a hill, is a schoolhouse, and to this he struggled up the hill with his lame foot, under a broiling sun, every Sabbath afternoon, in order to teach in the Sabbath-school, and after the school had closed to conduct a prayer meeting to which the people along the mountain assembled. At a later period, when several ministers became permanent summer residents in the neighborhood, this Sunday afternoon prayer meeting was changed into a Sabbath night preaching service, and was placed under Mr. Randolph's superintendence. The schoolhouse, as a matter of pleasantry, was called "St. Anson's on the Mount," and Mr. Randolph was styled "Bishop of St. Anson's." He frequently, in his pleasant way, issued his "Episcopal orders" to his "inferior clergy," directing one and another to officiate on certain evenings.

As Mr. Randolph had been accustomed to speak to the people at the prayer meetings, the ministers insisted that he should take his place in the preaching service. This he did with great acceptance. His sermons were carefully written and read. They were simple and earnest presentations of Gospel truth, strongly experimental and highly spiritual. Sometimes they were very beautiful; his soul poured itself out in prose poetry with an unction and pathos that reached every heart. The people who attended these meetings were highly respectable, intelligent, native Americans, living along the mountain slope. He knew them all by name, and at the close of the meeting he was careful to go around and shake hands with them all. This work, continued more or less for many years, gave him a warm place in the hearts of the people. Since his death it is a common remark among them, "Mr. Randolph loved everybody." His loss will be felt in New York, but in no place more than at Lake George. Shortly after his death a public meeting of the citizens of the village and surrounding community was called in the Presbyterian church, which was largely attended by people of all denominations, and speakers representing many classes expressed their sorrow and paid admiring tributes to his worth. It is not often that the death of any man calls forth such a spontaneous expression of sorrow. It shows that he still lives in the hearts of the people, and that the memory of his works will follow him.

PRINCETON.

WILLIAM M. PAXTON.