

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY

OF THE LATE

JEREMIAH EVARTS, ESQ.,

**SECRETARY OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.**

DELIVERED AND PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF

**THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AUXILIARY FOREIGN
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PASTOR OF THE BRICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

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At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Auxiliary Foreign Missionary Society of New York and Brooklyn, on the 11th of June, 1831, the following record was entered on the minutes:

In view of the mysterious providence which has deprived the church of the invaluable services of Jeremiah Evarts, late Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, it is unanimously

Resolved, That as a Committee we deeply sympathize with his bereaved family, and with the parent institution, in this heavy affliction. And while we submissively acquiesce in the will of Him who doeth all things well, we would record our fervent desire and humble prayer, that the spirit which animated Mr. Evarts, in the whole course of his labors, may rest upon his successors in office, and upon all who may be associated with them as agents or missionaries.

It is not for the dead, but the living, that we pay this tribute to the memory of a man in every view entitled to the love and honor of the American churches. "The dead know not any thing." The pious dead have finished their course with joy; they have left the present state of existence; have gone from this world and all its labors; have bid farewell to all its trials and sins; and have entered upon a state of being where our eulogy cannot reach their ear. Our reproaches could not depress them, nor can they be encouraged by our applause. *We* are the gainers by such a service. It gratifies some of the better feelings of our hearts: and one right feeling—right in the view of conscience, and of Heaven—is worth all the material world. The material world shall die, but every holy affection shall exert an influence on our character and joys, that shall endure forever. And we move so sluggishly in our way to heaven, and it is, at best, such a zigzag course, that we need the stimulus of bright example. When we contemplate, we feel encouraged. There is a radiance that gleams upon us from the grave of a child of God, that alleviates our gloom, and lifts our eye to mansions in the skies.

It is the allotment of some men to "live after they are dead." Antiochus did; Alexander and Tamerlane did; Napoleon did; and in deeds of horrid tragedy, and direful influence upon successive generations of men. And so did Howard and Clarkson, Venning and Sharpe, Watts and Howe, Edwards and Dwight; and by a career so exalted; and in deeds of such extensive benevolence, that their very history has meliorated the condition of mankind. And who will not feel the obligation of living for those who come after him? Who *may* not do it—as men of letters, as men of power and influence, as men of wealth, as men of piety? Who, that

looks at the condition of the world, the shortness and frailty of life, the activity and pernicious influence of wicked men, and the command of God, will not aim at being useful after he has descended to the tomb? And why should not the name of such a man be embalmed in the recollection of those he has left on earth? And why should

“ ——— History, so warm on meaner themes,
“ Be cold on this ?”

Among the distinguished men who shall be had in everlasting remembrance, is the late Jeremiah Evarts. There are few men in this land who have sustained a more honorable character, or whose biography may be recited with more unmingled gratification.

Mr. Evarts entered upon his career at a most eventful period of the world—a period about to be distinguished by changes in this land, and other lands, in the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of men, and especially in the great movements of Christian benevolence, which eminently indicated that the Redeeming God and Savior, by a series of dispensations, alternated by success and disaster, confidence and alarm, hope and fear, was about to gather together the nations of the earth, and the kingdoms of the nations, to the last moral conflict which should agonize this guilty, suffering world. Think of the events that have taken place on the earth within the last fifty years. The youth and manhood of Mr. Evarts have occupied nearly the whole of this wonderful period. Just as this new and splendid era was about to be introduced, he was cradled on yonder mountains. The first missionary society was established; the first revival of religion, in a series thus far unbroken, commenced; and the first memorable calamity began to fall on the nations which had given their power and strength to the Beast; while he was a youth, and preparing for the part he was about to act in these moral revolutions. He entered on active life at a period when he was called extensively to influence the opinions of men, and to exert an agency in originating and carrying forward designs that were to elevate the character of the church,

and fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Whoever hereafter writes his history, will find it in those developments of light and love which illumine the history of the American churches within the last thirty years. The God of heaven raised up this his servant for a great and special work, and eminently qualified him for the high service to which he was destined. In some respects, he seemed most unfitted for it; for, from his youth up, he was apparently fitted for any thing rather than hardship. But he was like the bush in Horeb—consuming, but not consumed. And we would here distinctly and gratefully acknowledge the goodness of God, in thus making him, for so long a period, the favored instrument of accomplishing his designs of mercy.

Mr. Elvarts was born of respectable, but humble parentage, in the town of Sunderland, Vermont, on the 3d of February, 1781. At the age of ten years, he removed with his father to Georgia, in the same state, where he completed the usual English education, and entered upon the study of the Latin language. In January, 1798, he was sent to East Guilford, in the state of Connecticut, with the view of preparing for college, under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Elliott, the minister of the place; and in October of the same year, he entered Yale College, then under the superintendence of the late President Dwight. His journal at this period, though very brief, exhibits many indications of a thinking, independent mind, that felt the responsibility of guiding and forming itself upon a high standard of excellence. His conversion took place during a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the College, during his senior year, in the winter of 1801–2; and in the April following, he made a public profession of religion, and united himself with the church in the college. At the time his class graduated, in 1802, he united with those of his classmates who were professors of religion, in a *mutual covenant*, a copy of which has been found among his private papers, to pray for each other, to learn one another's circumstances, and to correspond with, and counsel one another, in subsequent life. After leaving college, he engaged in no settled employment till April, 1803, when he became the instructor of an academy, in the town of Peacham, in

his native state, and continued in this charge till near the close of March, 1804. Shortly subsequent to this, and after a short visit to his father's family, he returned to New Haven, and entered himself as a student at law in the office of the late Judge Chauncey. Early in the summer of 1806, he took the oath of admission to the bar, and opened an office for the practice of his profession in the city of New Haven. In May, 1810, he removed to Boston, for the double purpose of taking the editorial charge of a literary and religious monthly publication, and pursuing the duties of his profession. He continued in the editorial department of the *Panoplist* till the work was discontinued in 1820, and was himself the author of a large part of the original articles and reviews in that highly respectable work. Every one who is acquainted with the religious and ecclesiastical controversies of Massachusetts, knows with what ability that work was edited; how rapidly it rose in character and extent of circulation; and how important an agency it exerted, in stemming the tide of error, and in restoring an enlightened, scriptural, and active piety to many of the declining churches. At the third annual meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Mr. Evarts was elected a member of that body, and at the same meeting was chosen their treasurer, and a member of their executive committee. In September, 1821, he was also appointed their corresponding secretary, in which office he remained to the time of his death. In the discharge of the duties of this office, he visited the Cherokee and Choctaw nations, in 1824, and the Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickesaw nations, again in 1826. In the duties of this office, also, he spent three or four winters in the city of Washington, during the session of congress, where his principal object was to exert an influence in favor of the education and civilization of the Indians, and especially their protection from oppressive legislation.

The health of Mr. Evarts had been declining for more than a year previous to his decease. During the winter of 1829-30, though feeble, and evidently needing the benefit of relaxation and a warm climate, he continued his labors at the missionary rooms till about the 1st of April, when he repaired again to the city of Washington. The debate on the Indian bill was just commencing. The

excitement and labor of the months of April and May were intense ; and he returned to Boston, with his health little, if at all, improved. During the summer and early part of the autumn, he was laboriously employed in preparing the annual report of the board, publishing the speeches on the Indian bill, writing on the Indian question, and attending to the common business at the missionary rooms. After the annual meeting of the board, these, or similar labors, continued ; and added to these, he spent a fortnight at New Bedford, superintending the embarkation of a reinforcement to the Sandwich Islands mission. Here he was exposed to cold and storms, and exerted himself in writing and addressing public assemblies in the vicinity on the subject of missions. He returned from New Bedford, December 29th, much debilitated, and could labor only at intervals afterwards. He, however, wrote the memorial of the board to congress, in behalf of the Indians, while he was so weak, as every hour or two to be obliged to lie down and rest. He wrote, also, a number of important letters. His last letter, as corresponding secretary of the board, was written to the missionaries in the Cherokee nation, relative to their removing, or remaining, and exposing themselves to the penalty of the laws of Georgia. The part he took in behalf of the Indians, was such as might be expected from such a man. He was early applied to, to second the effort that was about to be made to effect their removal beyond the Mississippi, but he saw no good to come from it *to them*, and he abhorred and detested the means used to secure it. He was present when the bill to effect their removal passed the house of representatives—a bill that marks this republic faithless toward its dependents. And when the vote was passed, Mr. Evarts remarked to a member of congress who sat near him—“My comfort is, that God governs the world ; and my hope is, that when the people of the United States come to understand the subject, there will a redeeming spirit arise ; for I will not believe that the nation is yet lost to truth and honor.” His anxiety and labors on this question, the distress he felt in view of the violation of the good faith of the nation, and of the rights of the Cherokees, his apprehensions of the suffering which would come on the Indian tribes, and of the judgments of Heaven which would visit this country for their treachery, kept his mind in a state

of exhausting excitement for the last year and a half of his life, which, together with the accumulated labors which he sustained in consequence of this great effort, without doubt sunk him to his grave.

These, with previous trials not a few, had exerted a powerful influence in the formation of a character every day becoming more meet for the rest and joy of a higher world. God had chosen him in the furnace of affliction. He possessed a maturity of personal religion, a meetness for heaven, which was the result of long moral training, and by which the Spirit of God was preparing him for an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. As his strength declined, and he became entirely unable to attend to business, he seemed to possess a mind remarkably detached from earth, and to enjoy peculiar fellowship with God. He spent much time in reading Buxter's *Saints' Rest*, and in contemplating that "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" on which he often used to dwell with delighted interest, and for which his light affliction, which was comparatively but for a moment, was preparing him. He himself had made arrangements for a journey by land, with some hope of recovering his health, at least for a season, and with this view, attended minutely to his secular affairs. His own plan was to proceed to Washington, and endeavor to exert his influence in favor of the Indians till congress should rise, and then go on an agency for the board in the middle or southern states. This expectation he continued to cherish, till advised by his physician that a voyage to a warmer climate was the only probable means of restoring his health. In this he cheerfully acquiesced; and in an interview with his associates in office, with great tenderness and affection, told them to proceed in their work without reference to him. This, to his own feelings, was probably the most trying moment of his life. But he did not faint in the day of adversity. God was with him. Before his embarkation, he was, to an uncommon degree, even for him, calm, serious, and affectionate. A cheerful acquiescence in the will of God, an entire and joyful trust in him, a bidding adieu to the solitudes of time, and a tenderness in his intercourse with his family and friends which cannot be described, and that were painfully foreboding, seemed to say that he should see them no more. And had he been assured of it, his parting from them could not have been

more appropriate. He took passage for the island of Cuba, on the 15th of February, and reached Havana, after a favorable voyage, on the 2d of March. But his health was not improved. After spending some time at Havana and Matanzas, and in the interior of the island, enjoying every advantage of climate, exercise, and kind attention of friends, he took passage for Savannah, and arrived there on the 24th of April, much exhausted by the voyage. In a few days his symptoms became alarming, and he proceeded to Charleston, where he arrived on the third day, much exhausted by disease and pain. Up to this time, both he himself and his physicians had mistaken the nature of his disease. There were now evident indications of his being in the last stages of a consumption. While in Charleston, he received every possible attention from eminent physicians, and numerous friends. He continued steadily to grow weaker, often enduring great bodily pain, till 11 o'clock on the 10th of May, when his spirit was permitted to leave her frail, earthly, dissolved tabernacle, and enter on a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

As a testimony of the approbation of his Divine Master to his work of faith and labor of love, he was permitted to enjoy a most triumphant death. I have seen wicked men die, and have dwelt with melancholy interest on that emphatic description of the inspired preacher, "the wicked is *driven away* in his wickedness." He goes unexpectedly; he goes unwillingly; he is forced to go; he goes unreformed, unpardoned, unsanctified; he goes in the very practice and love of sin, and with nothing but his wickedness; and he goes to be forgotten. "I have seen the wicked," says the Psalmist, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree; yet he passed away, and lo! he was not. Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." There are those who die

" Forlorn of heart, withered and desolate,
As leaf of autumn, which the wolfish winds,
Selecting from its falling sisters, chase
Far from its native grove to lifeless wastes,
And leave it there alone, to be forgotten."

It was not so with Mr. Evarts. His death-bed exhibits a scene long to be remembered. Come, gather around it: yes, come, see

him die. But rush not rudely, "just on the verge of heaven." It is an atmosphere beyond the common atmosphere of earth. There is a deep solemnity, and afflictive tenderness here : for death is cold, and inexorable ; and yet there is a sweetness, a placidness, which seem reflected from purer skies. There is no alarm—no dismay—no withered hopes—no deep, impenetrable gloom. Recollection rolls not its dark waters by ; nor sin its tempest ; nor God his thunder ; nor eternity its woes. Long ere this, has memory washed its stains, and fed its streams in the pure river from the throne of God. Guilt and ill desert, those conscious fires within, have long ere this been quenched in fountains of atoning blood. God speaks, but it is in tones of mercy, in messages of love, that fill the soul, and consummate its hopes. And eternity, through that dark and narrow vale, reveals its cloudless sky, its world of light, its Lamb, once slain. And yet the "chamber where the good man meets his fate," is a scene of conflict. The spirit struggles ; the immortal spirit struggles for release and victory. She would fain get near the throne. She is striving to break her chains, and range those fields of light. She is restive to be unclothed and clothed upon, with her house which is from heaven. And through him that loved her she conquers.

" A feeble worm shall win the day,
" Though death and hell obstruct the way."

Mr. Evarts did not die suddenly, but had sufficient time for deliberate thought. He did not die in such a state of physical debility, or intellectual tumult, as to be incapable of estimating things according to their real value ; but, on the other hand, he possessed a large share of sobriety of mind, and cool reflection. It was his happy privilege to have a clear view and strong impression of the scenes that were before him, and they animated and invigorated all his hopes.

When he was told that medical attendance could do little more than mitigate the violence of his disease, he requested that several ministers of the gospel might assemble in his chamber. "I know," said he to them, "that my case is extremely critical, but I find it pleasant to be in the hands of God, who will do all things well. I have no painful solicitude as to the result of my sickness ; but I think it my duty to use every means for my

recovery ; and I desire an interest in your special and united prayers, that, if consistent with God's will, I may recover ; that I may have a sweet sense of pardoned sin, and an unshaken confidence in the Savior ; that, if God should spare my life, I may be *wholly* and *entirely* the Lord's—consecrated to his service ; and that, if it should please God to remove me by this sickness, I may be enabled to glorify him on a bed of languishing and pain, and that his precious cause may be promoted by my death."

"The following day, toward evening, he remarked, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath. I may be in eternity before it arrives." Those who know how much he loved the sabbath, and how much he valued and enjoyed its precious rest, can easily imagine what must have been the state of his mind, when the thought occurred to him that a day so near—the day which had been his jubilee on earth—might shed its first rays upon him in a brighter and purer world. And the thought obviously dwelt upon his mind. He seemed to make an effort to enlarge upon it, but he hesitated, and added, "My mind is so weak, I cannot pursue a train of thought ; but, I bless God, it is tranquil. Not my will, but thine, O God, be done !"

I distinctly recollect to have heard him express the sentiment, some years since, that he wondered why such men as Dr. Priestly, and other modern Unitarians, were not ashamed of their miserable self-righteousness, and indignant rejection of the gospel, when such men as Paul and Edwards, and Fuller and Martyn, placed their whole trust in the atoning blood of Christ. We might add, when such men as Evarts feel the need of a righteousness infinitely better than their own, and take refuge in the blood of the cross, what shall be thought of men who are at an unspeakable remove from his integrity and self-denial, and yet tread that blood under their feet ? He expressed a firm and abiding hope, but it was in the *Lord Jesus*. To one who, remarked, "We hardly know how to spare you from the missionary cause," he said, "Do not mention it, do not *mention* it ; the Lord knows best." And in a few moments after this, remarked, "My work is almost done ; Jesus reigns : blessed be He ! I wish to lie as a *penitent sinner at the foot of the cross*." This appeared to be his spirit, in an eminent degree. In the course of the evening, he breathed out, in interrupted and broken petitions,

a short and comprehensive prayer, making a full and entire surrender of body and soul into the hands of the gracious Redeemer, and at the close of it was distinctly heard to say, "O! dear Savior! if this is the last night I have to pray on earth, let my unworthy prayer be exchanged for praise in thy kingdom above! Amen, amen!"

The following day he conversed considerably, though his appearance was greatly changed, and he was gradually sinking into the arms of death. Those who knew him, well recollect his high standard of Christian character, and the deep and tender interest he felt in youthful Christians. I perfectly remember that these topics occupied much of his time, and many of his thoughts in the early part of his Christian history;* and they were topics that lay with great weight upon his mind during the last days of his life. To a young professor of religion, who was in his chamber, he said, "You have professed religion while young; so did I: I rejoice in it. All I have to say to you, is, endeavor to aim at great attainments, the present age demands great things of Christians. Be not satisfied with being half a Christian—be *entirely* consecrated to the service of Christ. There are some things I could do, if it be the will of Providence that I should recover, but I have no will of my own. I can rejoice that I am in the hands of the Lord. My mind is perfectly clear." To several young Christians who stood by, he said, "I feel a great interest in *young Christians*. I want to exhort you to *help* each other. Live near to God. Be *bold* in his service—it is *the only thing worth being bold for*: do not be afraid—the Lord be with you!" In the evening, he requested a friend to read to him the 13th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, after which he spent some time in silent meditation, and again conversed with great interest, and remarked, with emphasis, "I am willing to go; I have given *myself all away*."

It is not surprising that at such an hour the world should seem as nothing. At such an hour, it is nothing even to the worldling. But the worldling lets it go, because it is torn from his heart; while the Christian yields it, because he has chosen God and hea-

* A series of numbers, entitled "An address to young persons who have lately made a profession of religion," which appeared in the Panoplist for year ending in 1811, is the production of his pen.

ven as his supreme good. Mr. Evarts had long felt and acted as a "pilgrim and stranger on the earth." The prospect of leaving the world behind him, did not seem, in the least degree, to disturb his tranquillity. His treasure was not here. The next morning, his symptoms of approaching dissolution increased, and he felt that the time was near. He spoke of it with great sweetness and familiarity, and simply said "I am going *home*."

Death has, with great force and propriety, been called "*the last act of human life*." As he saw his hour of departure approaching, he endeavored to collect his thoughts to perform this *last act* in such a manner as became him, as the creature of God, and the humble follower of the blessed Jesus. Being told that he had but a short time to live, he replied, "The will of the Lord be done!" And then he seemed deliberately and solemnly to address himself to the trials of the dark valley. "Attend," said he, "to what I now say, as to the words of a dying man. I wish, in these dying words, to recognize the Great Redeemer as the Savior from sin and hell; able and willing to save all that come unto God by him. To him I commend my spirit, as to an all-sufficient Savior. He is the great champion and conqueror of death and hell. And I recognize the great Spirit of God as the renovator of God's elect. And herein, if I gather strength, I wish to recognize and acknowledge the church of God, containing all who have truly dedicated themselves to him, in a new and everlasting covenant." How true it is that men usually die as they live! How perfectly characteristic was this of Mr. Evarts!

His love to the saints had been strong and ardent; and his obligations to them, as the servant of Christ and the missionary cause, were not few. And it is pleasant to see that he had so sweet a remembrance of these obligations in his dying moments. "And here permit a poor unworthy worm of the dust," said he, "to give thanks to many of the children of God, from whom I have received confidence, kindness, and favor, as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ." Here, for the moment, he felt as though he had uttered all; but, recollecting himself, he added, "And one more duty." Who, that knew him, has read the following sentence without tears? "One more *duty*: if in any respect I have offended the children of God, I ask their forgiveness. If I have grieved them by impatience, or any other way, I ask their forgiveness."

About two hours after, a clergyman came in, and asked him if his mind was in a happy state, and he replied, with great emphasis, "*It is.* Christ is precious—he does not fail me." After some brief conversation, he requested to be alone. His pain became severe, his breathing laborious, and the hour of his release was just at hand. About 9 o'clock in the evening, he requested to be laid in a position suitable for dying; and here began the shout of victory. For a short time, he seemed to lie, like a little child, waiting to be removed, and expecting every moment to be translated into the immediate presence of God. But suddenly the vail was drawn aside, and his joys seemed like those of Stephen, when he exclaimed, "I see heaven opened, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Unexpectedly to all around, his eye kindled, his clay-cold lips glowed with praises, and he burst forth with expressions of rapture that cannot be described—"Praise him!" said he "praise him! praise him! in a way you know not of!" He then made a short pause, and said, "Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful glory! We cannot understand—we cannot comprehend—wonderful glory! I will praise him—I will praise him!" A moment after, he inquired, "Who are in the room? Call all in—call all—let a great many come." And then he exclaimed again, "Wonderful—glory—Jesus reigns!" After this, he sank down exhausted, and fell asleep in Jesus.

Thus he died, in the fifty-first year of his age, and descended to his grave like a shock of corn; in his season, fully ripe. Thus he died, like a rich, luxuriant tree, "broken down and killed by the fruit." Thus he died,

" And with the everlasting arms embraced
Himself around, stood in the dreadful front
Of battle high, and warred victoriously
With death and hell; and now was come his rest,
His triumph day, _____
Waiting the promised crown, the promised throne,
The welcome and approval of his Lord."

Such are the triumphs of Jesus' love. "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor." Such are the trophies of missionary grace. Such are the honors of the missionary cause. Hall wore

them, fresh and vivid, and they decked his grave. And Newell wore them; and Fiske and Parsons wore them; and Nichols, and Warren, and Mills wore them, in all their fragrance and splendor.

“ A noiseless band of heavenly soldiery,
From out the armory of God equipped,
High on the pagan hills, where Satan sat
Encamped, and o'er the subject kingdoms threw
Perpetual night, to plant Immanuel's cross ;
————— and in the wilderness
Of human waste, to sow eternal life.”

“ He that will lose his life for my sake, the same shall find it.” Eternity alone can tell how much such men loved the heathen. And by how much they loved the heathen, by so much will the measure of their joys increase, when they go up with the “ nations of the saved” before the Son of man. O ! what a scene is that, when pagan nations and the missionaries, and men that have been the means of their salvation, shall stand before the throne of God ! What a song is that, when they raise their melody of grateful hearts to Heaven ! There is Worcester. And there is Evarts.

“ See where he walks on yonder mount, that lifts
Its summit high on the right hand of bliss,
Sublime in glory, talking with his peers
Of the incarnate Savior's love, and passed
Affliction, lost in present joy. See how
His face with heavenly ardors glows, and how
His hand, enraptured, strikes the golden lyre,
As now, conversing of the Lamb once slain,
He speaks ; and how from vines that never hear
Of winter, but in monthly harvest yield
Their fruit abundantly, he plucks the grapes
Of life.”

But I shall not meet your expectations, nor gratify my own wishes, without attempting to present a brief outline of the character of this great and excellent man.

The *intellectual character* of Mr. Evarts was distinguished for strong powers of reasoning, great clearness and precision, and remarkable soundness and comprehensiveness of judgment.

He possessed large and rich treasures of original thought, and great powers of illustration. He had great activity and copiousness of mind. He was remarkably capable of making his existing stock of ideas extensive materials of knowledge. Every thought he acquired added to his capital, and was immediately put out at interest. He had a taste for literary and scientific pursuits, and engaged in them with great ardor and zeal. He was fond of speculation, and yet he was no theorist. Rarely do habits of abstraction and habits of business unite, as they were found in him. His talent for minute and rapid observation was not exceeded even by his talent for comparison and arrangement. But what was peculiar in the intellectual character of Mr. Evarts was the exact adjustment of the several faculties of his mind to each other. He once said to a friend, that, in early life, he was inclined to be hasty and positive in his judgment. But a remarkable balance was observable in the powers and operations of his mind. At almost any moment, he could apply his mind to almost any subject; could pursue that subject at pleasure; could change it for another, and resume it at any time, and almost in any place, and in the same strain of sentiment, however elevated. His memory was remarkably tenacious—very remarkably so for dates, considering the strength of his powers for general analysis, reasoning, and judgment.*

He had a great taste for statistical observations and calculations, and indeed for the whole science of political economy.† Such was his genius and taste for illustrating, and inculcating a Christian system of political economy—a system founded on the

* He was rarely mistaken in dates; and there was a surprising number of events, of which he could state in a moment the precise time of their occurrence. He once allowed one of his associates at the missionary rooms, to question him as to the day of the month and of the week, on which he entered different places on a journey he had taken, some years before, in the southern states: and he invariably answered promptly, and without any apparent calculation. When he was asked, by what process of mind he contrived to associate so many places with the day of the week and of the month in which he visited them, he replied, that the only account he could give was that *it was easy*.

† He made a calculation of the probable results of the census of the United States for 1820, which was early published in the Boston Recorder, which came so near the actual result, for each distinct state in the union, that it was scarcely credible that the calculation was merely a conjectural one.

great law, "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them"—that some of his friends seriously thought it might become his duty to relinquish his particular connection with the Board of Foreign Missions, and devote himself to the conducting of a paper, which should have for its leading object a reformation in the maxims, rules, and administration of civil government.

He made a frequent and vigorous use of the pen, on a great variety of topics, and was among the best writers of the age.* He wrote the essays on the Indian question, signed William Penn: a fact which enrolls his name among the friends of humanity, and will give it a place in the history of his country, when the oppressors of the Indians shall have passed away like the chaff of the summer thrashing-floor. A glance at the list of his publications, with a knowledge of their character, will show any one, that he had accustomed his mind to investigate and reflect upon a great variety of subjects, and with uncommon accuracy and force. It was in this school of actual labor that he acquired the ability to write with the accuracy of thought, extent of knowledge, variety and appropriateness of illustration, and force of diction, which characterized his productions during the last years of his life. In composing for the press, which he did to a great extent, his page was usually fair, seldom interlined, rarely copied. His most celebrated compositions were written amid many interruptions. The faculties of his mind operated with so much ease to himself, that a great mental effort in the use of his pen did not produce that degree of bodily exhaustion, which is frequent in men, even of a more vigorous frame. After writing intensely for hours, he was perfectly fresh for conversation, for which he had a peculiar relish, whenever he had access to minds congenial with his own. This balance of mind, with the strength of its several powers, enabled him, although of a slender constitution, to write more hours a day, taking one day with another, than almost any other man.

As a public speaker he was manly and energetic. In deliberative assemblies and in extemporaneous discussion, he was very justly celebrated. Though he was by no means distinguished for an easy

* His published pieces, in June, 1814, amounted to 229. From 1814 to 1831, though no account of them has been found, they were still greater in number, and far more voluminous and weighty.

and mellifluous utterance, or for those charms of person and action, which constitute eloquence ; yet every man listened to him with the deepest attention, and felt that he was listening to a bold and commanding orator. He had a thin, spare, person ; there was nothing in his manner facinating or even popular ; yet he never spoke without indicating the masculine texture of his mind, and rarely without an energy that made deep, and sometimes overwhelming impressions.

Mr. Evarts was a man of *great diligence and untiring energy*. This was his habit from his youth. From the commencement of his course in the preparatory school to the day of his death, he possessed the amazing advantage of unbroken habits of industry. I cannot easily fix my thoughts upon the man, of whom it may be so truly affirmed that he was incessantly occupied. It was not by his superior talents merely, but by his indefatigable diligence, that he accomplished so much greater amount of good, than has fallen to the lot of men of high intellectual endowment. He appears to have had no contest with inactive and sluggish habits, and was never happy, unless actively employed. He seemed to feel that what he had to do for God and his fellow-men was to be done in a limited period of time, and that period was very short. It was his privilege, too, to be occupied to some good account. The celebrated *Grotius*, the father of the modern science of the law of nations, and one of the greatest scholars of his age, is said to have exclaimed on his death-bed,

“Heu ! vitam perdidit operose nihil agendo.”

“Alas ! I have trifled away life, laboriously doing nothing !” It was not so with Mr. Evarts. The greater part of his life was full of labors and events that were intimately connected with the best interests of men. In his estimation, it was no hardship to spend his strength, and wear out his life, for the benefit of others. For the last thirty years, he uniformly acted like a man who steadily kept his eye upon the glorious consequences of living and dying in the service of his Divine Master. And let not his example in this respect be soon lost sight of. Laborious and unwearied piety is the piety of the Bible. A slothful Christian is a contradiction which it is difficult to reconcile with the lowest standard of holiness.

With this view of his intellectual endowments and diligence, it is natural to conclude that his *scholarship was of the first order*. It was during his junior year, as a member of Yale College, that I first knew him. And he was proverbially the severest student in the college. The class to which he belonged, was at that time one of the largest and best that had ever graduated at that venerable institution, and was publicly complimented as such by its late president. And I believe I do no injustice to the living or the dead, when I say, that while in some departments of literature, he had some superiors, yet as a general scholar, distinguished for the extent, accuracy, and utility of his attainments, he had none. He was the compeer of men who now hold some of the first places in the confidence and gift of the American community. But he was inferior to none of them. I well recollect the oration he pronounced when he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. His theme was the Execution of Laws. And when at the close of it, in a strain of commanding eloquence, he introduced Lord Mansfield as rebuking the British community, it seemed as though every heart anticipated in the youthful speaker some future champion of liberty and law that should be the pride of his country. And it may not be uninteresting to some, here to state, that this performance subsequently appeared in a series of numbers from a weekly paper printed in Portland, Maine, and was publicly attributed by the editor, to the pen of *Dr. Dwight!* Mr. Evarts was a fine specimen of character, founded on first rate scholarship. Science had given him an enlarged view of the works of God. One such man, in the pulpit, at the bar, in the senate-house, or in the infirmary, well qualified by thorough intellectual discipline and literary attainment, is worth more to the church and the world than fifty men, whose self-sufficient and erratic course is marked by little else than honesty and zeal, and who leave twice as much to be unlearned by their successors, as they themselves ever learned.

Of the *character of Mr. Evarts' piety*, much ought to be said. It was strongly built upon fixed principles. No man could be long in his company without observing the connection between his principles and conduct. This was one of the lessons which his every-day deportment practically taught, and with great clearness

and strength. Religion with him was not an empty notion, nor an external form, nor the usage of a sect or party. Human opinions were a very little matter to him, when opposed to the declarations of the Bible. To these he gave implicit confidence, without reserve or qualification. If there was a class of truths to which he felt peculiar attachment, they were those which have ever been most obnoxious to a world lying in wickedness ; which are most discriminating in their moral influence ; which give God the throne and prostrate every creature at his footstool. I have not the means of knowing extensively his theological views in the latter part of his life ; but in his early reading he was strongly attached to the works of Calvin, Edwards, and Hopkins. There was nothing of bigotry or intolerance about him. If he judged any man with severity, it was himself. He possessed, to an unusual degree, a *candid* mind. I have rarely met with a man who so habitually desired that every doubtful opinion and measure should be freely and fully discussed. And hence it was, that there was nothing boisterous in his religion, and nothing transient. It was no fitful and momentary thing, but seemed inwrought into the very temper of his soul. It was the religion of intelligence, system, and zeal ; and seemed to pervade with its vital influence all his habits of thinking and principles of action.

His piety also was remarkably uniform. From the first commencement of his Christian career, he possessed several strong and prominent characteristics, and they remained in all their strength and prominence to his dying hour. The same steadfastness and sobriety which led him to form so just an estimate of moral objects, the same high standard of piety, the same solicitude for young Christians, the same interest in benevolent institutions, the same self-renunciation which shone in such sweet and amiable lustre in his dying hours ; were exhibited in bold and strong relief in the bright morning of his hopes. I was familiar with his early history ; and when I first read the narrative of his death, I could not help saying, 'It is such a death as I should expect Mr. Evarts to die. He has finished his course as he began it. His light never waned, but was strong and steady to the last.'

During his whole course, his religious character was marred by comparatively few blemishes. He was every where circumspect and watchful. The lustre of his Christian reputation has never

been obscured, nor his usefulness abridged by any real or alledged deviations from moral correctness and propriety even in little things.

He possessed a remarkably kind and fraternal spirit. There was nothing harsh or unamiable, nothing rigid or unrelenting, about him. Though his temperament was naturally of a mercurial cast, and though he was capable of kindling when unreasonably opposed, yet he very rarely overstepped the bounds of Christian meekness. In the conduct of the missionary enterprise, his opinions were sometimes controverted, and his measures were sometimes overruled; but he bore the opposition with mildness, and cheerfully submitted to the judgment of his brethren. One of his associates in office has remarked, "In all our intercourse, for ten years, I do not remember receiving from him a single harsh or unkind word."

His piety too was eminently practical. It was the business of every day; and accompanied him wherever he went, and appeared in whatever he did. It was not the religion of the imagination, but of cordial obedience to the divine commands. Nor was it a fitful religion, but a course so steady, that, to the eye of men, he rarely hesitated and faltered. And yet, he had no small degree of the inspiration of Christian feeling. There was an order about him that rebuked and put to shame slothful and cold professors.

He was the decided friend of revivals of religion; and until he became immersed in the great subject of missions, labored much and actively to promote them. In the memorable revival of Yale College in the summer of 1802, and in the subsequent revival in the city of New Haven, in the winter of 1807 and 1808, his fervent prayers, and indefatigable efforts, in season and out of season, in the city and in the adjacent villages, will be long and gratefully remembered. He was in the habit of frequently remarking, and his prayers and whole conduct were in accordance with the remark, that he saw no way in which our nation could be saved from infidelity and utter ruin, except by revivals of religion, more numerous and powerful than any heretofore experienced; and for the accomplishment of this object, his whole hope was in the effusions of the Holy Spirit.

He was also the firm friend of the sabbath. The sabbath was to him a day of very great enjoyment. The profanation of it he regarded as a great national sin, ruinous to

the moral principles and virtue of individuals, the parent of crimes, and certainly drawing after it national judgments, and final national corruption, and the extinction of our free institutions. He took a most active part in the measures adopted to prevent the transportation of the mail on that sacred day ; wrote circulars and petitions, and presented them for signatures ; conversed extensively with members of congress on this subject ; and compiled and published the pamphlet, consisting of extracts from memorials to congress from different parts of the country on this matter, together with an introduction and conclusion written by himself. This was attended with much labor and pecuniary sacrifice. He fully believed that the observance of the sabbath and other religious institutions could be permanently and advantageously secured in no other manner than by the diffusion of religious knowledge and the enforcing of religious motives.

The practical usefulness of his Christian character consisted preeminently in his simple benevolence. This was its beauty and glory. While his mind was awake to the general condition and prospects of the church, and while he took a deep interest in her literary institutions and the learning of her ministers, and while with an eagle eye, he watched the operations of the press and whatever might influence the religious and moral opinions and habits of the community, he did not overlook those silent and unostentatious deeds of mercy, which every where distinguish the benevolence of the gospel. As he was often called to urge the claims of Christian liberality, so he felt them. His business in the profession of the law, during the four years he resided at New Haven, was very limited, and his income from that source did not much exceed the mere expenses of his office, the expenses of his family being defrayed principally by keeping boarders. Yet here, and under these circumstances, he began that system of giving in charity which he continued through life. He resolved to give one tenth of his income, however small. His accounts on this subject, were kept with scrupulous accuracy ; and as his income increased, from his salary, and his publications and some other sources, the proportion given in charity was much increased. His religion seemed to consist in escaping from the dominion of a selfish mind, and in seeking, not his own, but the things that are Christ's. Few men have

done more to raise the standard of Christian liberality in the American churches than he.

And with all these excellencies his piety was of the sweetest and most humble kind. Rarely was his good evil spoken of, for a self-complacent and self-sufficient spirit. From his commanding talents and from the official responsibilities which devolved upon him, he may be supposed to have been proud and domineering ; but one of the greatest charms of his character was his unfeigned humility. This he found by frequent intercourse with the mercy-seat. He was a man of prayer, and cultivated the self-denying graces by intimate fellowship with God.

With these characteristics, it is not surprising that his piety was fearless and firm. He had an uncommon share of original independence of mind ; and it was elevated and fortified by grace. Natural resolution and firmness, however unyielding and indomitable, become weak and variable, where they are not directed and sustained by the principles and spirit of the gospel. Christian boldness aims invariably at truth and duty. It is not the boldness of Cæsar, but of Christ. Heroes and statesmen may be men of fearless intrepidity, because they have a seared conscience and a hardened heart. Christian boldness cannot live without great benevolence of spirit and honesty of intention. No wonder a good man should be a coward, when he acts contrary to his conscience. So intimately inwoven are the decisions of conscience with all our impressions of obligation, that it is only when conscience is obeyed, that he can summon his strong and ardent affections, and in defiance of difficulty and danger, adventure upon daring enterprises with quenchless zeal and perseverance. With an honest heart and an honest conscience, he may be "bold as a lion." His boldness then deserves the name. It is a paramount attachment to truth and duty ; and he has nothing to fear. This is the mainspring of all Christian decision. Duty is its object, without regard to smiles or frowns ; and duty it will follow, through evil report and good report, to the cross and the crown. This is the stimulus to all moral courage. This is the spirit which is every where cool and undisturbed ; every where undaunted and prepared to do and suffer ; every where unmoved, however wild the tempest, and universal the convulsions. This

is the spirit which renders the soul superior to calamity and peril ; and enables the man in whose bosom it dwells, to anticipate without dismay every indication of alarm however ominous, and every possible issue, however fraught with ignominy and terror. This is the spirit which draws all the affections of the soul toward its object ; which, while it seizes, absorbs ; and which abandons its purpose, only when it has lost the power of exertion, or the hope of success. This was the spirit of Paul, before Felix ; of Daniel, before the den of lions ; of Luther, before the diet of Worms ; of Knox, before Mary ; and of the Prince of Condé, before Charles the IX. of France. This is the spirit, which is nurtured by prayer, and cherished by strong confidence in God. It is fearless amid the moral earthquake, because God is there. It is triumphant over principalities and powers, because it is strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. It is happy amid scenes of danger and devastation, because the Eternal God is a refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Christian boldness was the prominent trait in the character of Mr. Evarts. If he had lived in the days of persecution, he would have been among the first to have gone to the stake. "Be bold in the service of God. It is the only thing worth being bold for." This was the spirit of the man.

"Justum et tenacem propositi virum."

He possessed a bold and undaunted decision of character. He was often placed in situations which gave him a noble opportunity of exercising this spirit, and he did it. Neither flatteries nor frowns could move him.

"Where'er he went,
This lesson still he taught, to fear no ill
But sin, no being but Almighty God."

It was not an assumed and fictitious independence that he possessed ; it was not founded in caprice and passion ; nor put on for the sake of differing from others ; but it grew out of a deliberate, steadfast regard to God and duty, and to these he adhered, whatever might be the consequences. He was as much above the opinions and customs of the world, as any man I ever knew. When once he had formed his purposes, he did not stop to ask what others might

say and do in relation to them, but vigorously carried them into execution, and left observers to speculate, and opposers to complain afterward. I have known him, especially about the time he began the world, to suffer severely both in his reputation and property, from his unbending rectitude. But nothing would induce him to make a compromise with conscience. The unexpected pressure of difficulty may have disturbed him for a moment, but it was only to inspirit him with fresh resolution and fortitude. Who that intimately knew him, cannot look back upon a multitude of incidents in his history, in which his conduct seemed to say, "Be bold in the service of God. It is the only thing worth being bold for!" When his mind had once taken a strong view of the great object he was pursuing, it was in vain to embarrass and resist him, unless you meant to stimulate him to growing ardor and activity.

Few men were so well able to sustain this determined character, because few possessed his judgment and discrimination, and his remarkable balance of mind. Men there are of unbending integrity and firmness, but they have little judgment to direct and govern them. Right or wrong, wise or unwise, they will not be diverted from their designs. But this is not Christian boldness, but unchristian obstinacy. There was nothing from which Mr. Evarts was at a greater remove than this. Though he often formed very important decisions almost intuitively, he was, to a remarkable degree, freed from imprudence and rashness. Very rarely, if ever, did he adhere to his purposes at the expense of practical wisdom. It was his characteristic discretion, as well as his zeal and intrepidity, that so sensibly promoted his usefulness, and secured for him the confidence and co-operation of the churches, in the great enterprise to which his life was so faithfully and successfully devoted.

It was a circumstance of deep interest to the pagan world, that such a man as our deceased friend was called to the executive department of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. When the enterprise of foreign missions was set on foot by the churches of Massachusetts, he was engaged in the profession of the law, in a neighboring state. But he was by no means an indifferent observer of this novel undertaking. The missionary cause was one singularly adapted to his expansive and benevolent views. And it is in his high and intimate relation to this cause, that his

friends and the friends of Zion love chiefly to regard him. He was useful in other spheres, and in some greatly useful. As a scholar, as a jurist, as an editor, as the patron of all Christian and benevolent institutions, as an abettor of the cause of temperance, as an advocate for the Christian sabbath, and the fearless defender of the rights of the Indians, he was the benefactor of his country. But the cause of missions to the heathen was the great sphere of his usefulness. For this he was eminently fitted by his talents, his scholarship, his untiring activity, his Christian character, and his acquaintance with men and the world. And his mind and heart seem to have received a new impulse, and to have been enlarged and transformed, by coming in contact with this great object. Perhaps there is not a finer example of the influence of benevolent operations upon the mind and heart, than he himself presents; and there is scarcely a finer example of the amount of good which can be accomplished by one man of humble origin, when his efforts are directed toward an object adapted to his capacity, and worthy of all his energy and ardor.

The amount of business at the missionary rooms is much greater than is generally known, even by the friends of missions. The number of letters there prepared, many of them long and requiring much thought, exceeds *twenty-five hundred* a year. On the secretaries of that office devolves all the correspondence of the board, foreign and domestic, except what relates immediately to the treasury. On them also devolves the preparation of the annual report, of missionary papers, instructions to missionaries, and other public documents; the editing of the *Missionary Herald*, the general superintendence of the missions, the obtaining and directing of missionaries and agents, the collection of information which shall lead to the establishment of new missions and the enlargement of those already established; the preparation of business for the prudential committee, the arrangements for the meetings of auxiliaries, together with the deputations to attend them; and also a very extensive and personal intercourse with the friends of missions from all parts of the country. No one man could possibly attend minutely to this multifarious concern. For several years Mr. Evarts had little to do in conducting the *Missionary Herald*. Much of the correspondence, foreign and domestic, was also written by his

associates. He was also occasionally absent from Boston, for considerable periods of time, when all the business of the rooms devolved on his associates. His absences always had some reference however to the missionary cause, and were laboriously devoted to the formation of auxiliary societies, to the inspection of the missionary stations, and to modify, if possible, the measures which he feared the national government might pursue in relation to the Indians. Here, perhaps, it may be proper to remark, that it may be doubted whether the necessity of official visits to the missions is well understood by the public, or their utility appreciated. The saving of money, of labor, of time in the prosecution of the missions, and the promotion of zeal in the missionaries, have almost invariably, perhaps always, been of far greater value, than the expense of the visit. Indeed, such visitations, occasionally made, are indispensable, cost what they may. And with what fidelity, and advantage, and rigid economy; this service was performed by Mr. Evarts, is well understood by the prudential committee of the board.

The first ten annual reports of the committee were written by the Rev. Dr. Worcester; the last ten by Mr. Evarts. The conclusion of the report in 1826, and of the last in 1830, are among his most eloquent productions, especially the last. Few productions do greater honor to the American character. It deserves to be noticed, that each of these secretaries should have written just ten reports. Mr. Evarts himself noticed this circumstance and dwelt upon it, with a significant foreboding in a conversation with one of his associates, and desired him to remember the circumstance if he should be called to his rest before another annual meeting of the board. The instructions to missionaries on the point of going into the field, were also generally written by Mr. Evarts. His untiring diligence and energy of action during the last ten years of his life, and while sustaining the office of secretary of the board, were beyond all praise. It was an *eventful* period of his life; fruitful in benevolent results, and has left its indelible impression on the heathen world.

There is one very delightful feature in his character developed in the performance of his official duties. He appeared to feel deeply, and was anxious that his associates should feel their entire in-

sufficiency for the enterprise in which they were embarked, without divine aid. It was his custom for years, with some interruptions, after the labors of the week were ended, to meet his associates at his own house, for the purpose of reviewing the business of the week past, and anticipating that of the week to come : and in general of spending an hour in the evening in conversation and prayer, with reference to their official duties. His solicitude for the proper discharge of his duty was sometimes very intense ; and so was his solicitude for the missionaries ; but nothing occasioned him so much solicitude as the backwardness of the churches to furnish pecuniary means for sending the gospel to the heathen.

But the days of his toil and solicitude are over. He rests now. He speaks to us from the grave ; or rather from those high worlds of light and joy. I seem to hear him say to the friends of missions in this assembly and in this land,—‘Remember the nations that know not God. Sectional distinctions, party interests, local enterprises, wealth, fame, pleasure,—all, all must be forgotten in the great, the common enterprise of *converting the world*. There is a beauty and sublimity in this mighty object, that transcend all the beautiful and sublime of the moral creation. When the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; when the earth with all its magnificence shall be wrapt in flame ; this glorious cause will but just have begun to commend itself to the intelligent universe. When the ransomed of the Lord shall return with songs and everlasting joy upon their head ; when the gates of perpetual praise shall be opened to the redeemed from every nation, and kindred, and tongue, under heaven ; then, and not till then, will it be fully seen, that it is just as important that the gospel be carried to the heathen, as that the heathen should be saved. Tremble not for the missionary cause. God will protect it when all the nations die. It is by his Almighty power and grace that it has been sustained, and by the same energy it will be still sustained.’—Let the friends of missions listen to this timely counsel. Though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, God is a refuge for us, and we need not fear. Evarts may be silent and forgotten in the grave ; but the Lord liveth, and blessed be our Rock, and let the God of our salvation be exalted ! Changes in men and events there will be ; but there is

none in God. Be it ours to increase our faith, to enlarge our plans of benevolence, to redouble our efforts—for the diffusion of the gospel among all nations—for the destruction of every false system of religion—for the conversion of the world—and the God of heaven will take care of the missionary enterprise. The great work of turning the world from Satan unto God is begun, and it shall be accomplished ; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Let there be no division in our counsels and no relaxation of our efforts, and the cause will prosper in our hands and through our unworthy instrumentality. Let not difficulties discourage us ; let not reproaches provoke us ; let not disappointments depress us.—*“Be bold in the service of God. It is the only thing worth being bold for.”* Difficulty and peril there are in the path of duty, but be bold for Christ. Every where prove yourselves the uncompromising friends of truth and righteousness. If fiery trials await you, they are designed to test your integrity, and prove your patience and submission. It is always safe to be bold and intrepid in duty. Do not be afraid. “Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ? They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, that shall not be removed, but abideth forever. Fear not them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do ; but fear Him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell : yea, I say unto you,—fear him.” In his cause you can afford to suffer. He could afford it, and so can you. Sacrifices for Christ are infinite and eternal gain.

And to every man in this dying assembly, I seem to hear him say, and with all the silent eloquence and persuasion of the grave, ‘Think of eternity and heaven. Think of the glorious character and everlasting career of the righteous, and of the debased and hopeless character and miserable end of the wicked.’ Looking out from that immeasurable eternity, he proclaims, ‘The world is emptiness and illusion. Life is frail and perishing. Soon you will be numbered with the congregation of the dead. In a little while you will mingle with the amazing multitude that shall stand up before the judgment-seat of Christ. In a little while, you will be acquitted or condemned ; you will rise to heaven, or sink to hell.’ Such are the issues of your brief and uncertain pro-

bation. Never were they more palpable, and never did they assume greater magnitude and importance, than at such a day as this. God is arising to shake terribly the earth. His fan is in his hand. He is rapidly preparing all things for the final harvest. His sword is upon his thigh, and he is gone forth, conquering and to conquer. And who will enlist under his banner? Who asks no better portion, than to be identified with his successes and triumphs? Who will bind his eternal destiny to the wheels of his chariot, and rise or fall with the conquests or defeat of his empire? Who is on the Lord's side? In this day of conflict, who is for Christ and his cause? In this day of wonders, who will stand forth for the millenium and for heaven?