

THE
PRESBYTERIAN
HISTORICAL ALMANAC,
AND
Annual Remembrancer
OF THE CHURCH.

FOR
1867.

BY ✓
JOSEPH M. WILSON.

VOLUME NINE.

PHILADELPHIA:
JOSEPH M. WILSON,
123 SOUTH FOURTH ST.
1867.

men as lost and ruined, but redeemed by Christ, with a singleness of purpose and elevation of aim rarely attained. This ever-present estimate of the value of man made him jealous of human rights, civil and spiritual, and indignant at the wrongs inflicted upon so many in our own and other lands; and with an intense yearning he looked for the day when civil, intellectual and religious freedom should be universal. If his aims were too high to be realized during his life, he so impressed his views upon hundreds of his pupils that they will aid in their realization hereafter.

"In his domestic and social relations he was gentle and loving as a child. His home was the centre of the tenderest affections, and none came within its enclosure but to feel the power of his Christian heart. In the wider range of social life, and in all variety of circumstances, he exhibited that true courtesy which springs from a noble and refined nature, while for his personal friends he had the strongest affection. If his guileless simplicity of character allowed the designing to impose upon him sometimes, this never weakened his faith in the trustworthy nor shook his confidence in those he had proven.

"With these traits of gentleness, humility, independence and philanthropy were combined other qualities, which made him one of the noblest of men; and in his early death, the seminary, the Church of God and the country have suffered a great loss, while many who sat at his feet as learners will long mourn his departure as a personal bereavement."

James L. Merrick

MERRICK, JAMES LYMAN—The son of Gideon and Beulah (Stebbins) Merrick, was born at Monson, Mass., Dec. 11, 1803. He went to school in the academy of his native town, and was graduated at Amherst College, Amherst, Mass., in 1830. He made a profession of faith in his twenty-second year, and henceforth had the ministry in view. He entered upon the study of divinity in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J., but on account of his health—which required a warmer climate—he went to Columbia, South Carolina, and entered the Theological Seminary there in January, 1831, and graduated in the first class of that institution in December, 1833. In April, 1832, he was licensed by Charleston Presbytery. After his licensure he preached as opportunity offered, and after his graduation for about three months in Savannah, Georgia. He was ordained as an evangelist by Charleston Presbytery, April 15, 1834; and soon after returning to his native State he received his commission as a missionary to the Persians in the chapel of Amherst College, Mass., Aug. 10, 1834. He arrived at Tabreez Oct. 15, 1835, labored, traveled and explored among the Mohammedans of Persia somewhat less than two years, and then joined the Nestorian Mission at Oroomiah, where he remained till June, 1845. He returned to the United States Oct. 1, 1845, was installed pastor of the Congregational Church in South Amherst, Mass., June 21, 1849, and dismissed Feb. 17, 1864. He transferred his presbyterial relations from Charleston to Connecticut Presbytery in April of 1854, and though he labored as pastor of a Congregational church, he retained his connection with the Presbyterian Church.

He was a close student, even after he had withdrawn from the active duties of the ministry. Without any special disease, save a general breaking down of his system, he died at his residence in South Amherst, Mass., June 18, 1866.

He married Miss Emma Taylor, a native of Portsmouth, England, at Tabreez, Persia, who survives him. They had no family.

A friend writes as follows: "His heart was devoted to the missionary cause whilst he was in college, during which time he began the study of the Persian language, and he eventually became one of the finest Persian scholars. His recall from the mission by the A. B. C. F. M. was a great disappointment to him, and on his return to his native land, he published 'An Appeal' from their decision in abandoning the mission. And though this rested heavily upon his hopes and plans, and placed an irreparable blight upon his life-work, it never took away his heart from his beloved Persia; and he left a large sum of money at his death to found four Persian scholarships in the four institutions where he had received his classical and theological education, in the inextinguishable hope that the work he began in Persia might be carried forward."

WM. S. TYLER, D.D., professor in Amherst College, Mass., writes thus: "He had a strong mind, was a good scholar, hard student, lover of study and of books; wrote much for the press and the pulpit; a zealous patriot, especially during the war, he gave a bounty to every soldier who entered the army in his own parish; an ardent philanthropist, a devoted Christian, a faithful pastor, an earnest missionary. A man of marked character, with a mind of his own and positive opinions—and, as such men are apt to be, perhaps a little impracticable—it was difficult for him to work with others. He left his property for four 'Persian Scholarships' in the four institutions where he was educated."

REV. WALTER BARTON, of Suffield, Conn., writes as follows: "I was Brother Merrick's successor at South Amherst, Mass., and was his pastor for nearly three years. He was certainly an exception to the remark that ex-pastors make the worst parishioners: my relations with him were very pleasant. He was an able and faithful minister, though it might be thought that he did not preach man's duty and responsibility as often as he ought. He was strongly self-willed, which was natural to him, and which he mourned over as a snare and trouble."

A friend, who knew him many years, writes thus: "He was a man with genial temperament and kind, social disposition. He had a superior mind, finely cultivated and endowed. He was a constant and laborious scholar from early youth, and had stored his mind with learning from books, by extensive travel and large and general observation. He was a minute thinker and close reasoner, always deciding all questions for himself after right examination, and faithful in the last degree to his convictions of right and duty. He was regarded a Persian scholar of the finest type, and well read in the Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Greek, Latin and French tongues. He studied, wrote and labored to the last of life, and died without a defined disease, wearing out a fine constitution with hard study and hard work, with a mind clear and intensely active to the last, trusting wholly and joyfully in Christ as his Redeemer and Saviour."

He was the author of "The Pilgrim's Harp," 8vo., pp. 628, Crocker & Brewster, Boston, Mass., 1847; "The Life and Religion of Mohammed," translated from the Persian, 12mo., pp. 483, Philip Sampson & Co., Boston, Mass., 1850; "Keith's Evidences of Prophecy," translated from the Persian, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1846. He left in manuscript, "A Full Work

on Astronomy, Selected and Compiled," "A Friendly Treatise on the Christian Religion," and "A Treatise on Orthography and Grammar of the English language, with a new alphabet of forty letters—eighteen vowels and twenty-two consonants." He also contributed largely to the religious and secular local press.

MUNSON, JOHN—Was born in New Jersey in 1783. But little is known of his early history, save that he was a child of pious parents, and that his father died while he was very young. His mother married Mr. Joseph Grady, and the family removed to New York State, thence to Lycoming county, Pa.; and in 1808 they removed west of the Allegheny mountains, and settled near Greersburg, Beaver county, Pa. In the academy of that town he received a fair education. He studied theology privately under Rev. Thomas E. Hughs, and was licensed by Hartford Presbytery. He joined Erie Presbytery in 1817, and was ordained by that body, at Plain Grove, Feb. 25, 1818, and installed as pastor of the congregations of Plain Grove and Centre, Pa. He was dismissed from the former, Feb. 6, 1838, by Allegheny Presbytery, and gave all his time to the latter charge, where he labored till June 28, 1859, when he resigned. He subsequently removed to London, Mercer county, Pa., where he died Dec. 18, 1866, of paralysis.

He was three times married—first, to Miss Jennie Allen; second, to Miss Elizabeth Clark; third, to Mrs. Brandon. They had no family. His last wife died in 1860.

R. B. WALKER, D.D., of Plain Grove, Pa., writes as follows:

He was a man of superior intellect. Subjects which others could master only by study and severe mental application he comprehended almost at a glance. He was a great reader, especially of standard works, such as Bates, Edwards, &c. He always made himself master of the subject treated, and could tell all about it. In this way he treasured up stores of useful knowledge, from which, in discussing a subject, he could draw with great pertinence and force. He was an able theologian. He was familiar with all the great questions in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, and could present these difficult subjects in the most clear and convincing manner. No one who ever read his debate with the Rev. Brunson, at Plain Grove, on the subject of Predestination, or heard his sermon preached before the Synod of Pittsburg from the text, "And the government shall be upon His shoulders," could fail to be convinced that he was an able theologian.

He was an excellent preacher. His preaching was mostly textual, and yet in his discourses he explained a great deal of Scripture, his expositions being clear and satisfactory. We have heard him say, that on entering the ministry, if there was any one thing he sincerely desired of God it was that he might be enabled to understand the Scriptures. He sincerely loved and revered God's word. He was strongly attached to the doctrines of our Church. He preached sound doctrine. He laid it down as a rule for himself never to advance a doctrine or idea which he could not "back up by a text of Scripture." Indeed, his preaching was very much of this sort. It was eminently scriptural. In speaking of the great themes of redemption, of God's great love and rich mercy, of Christ and his cross, in pointing sinners to the Lamb of God, and in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, he often became truly eloquent, and spoke with great freedom and power.

He was remarkable for his conversational powers. His conversation flowed easily, and was always interesting, instructive and useful. No one could be