

CHAPTER XX.

DEATH, BURIAL, EULOGIES AND TRIBUTES.

D R. and Mrs. Dabney had returned, as has been shown, to Victoria, in the early part of December, 1897. During that month he had not been very well; but was able to go about his premises; and, as if anticipating his death, had been active in fitting his place more to suit Mrs. Dabney's convenience. On Sunday, the 2nd of January, he had proposed to attend church, but suffered himself to be dissuaded, as the day was raw and chilly. On Monday, January 3rd, he arose, dressed and went to breakfast. After family worship he dictated for the *Union Seminary Magazine* a short biographical sketch of the Rev. Professor Francis S. Sampson, D. D., who had been his most honored and helpful teacher while a student in Union Seminary, later a colleague in the faculty of the same institution, and whose biography he had published. He spent the rest of the day in arranging some of his papers. He was suffering somewhat, but no uneasiness was felt by his family until about 9 o'clock P. M. The end was much nearer than they thought even then. He suffered sharp pain in the chest. The minutes ticked away. He showed less of restlessness. When Mrs. Dabney asked him whether he felt easier, he said, "A little easier; but the blessed rest is here." The mighty worker was weary of pain. Like his great military chief he yearned for rest from it. He had long prayed that when the release should come, it might come quickly; and it came as he had prayed. At ten minutes before 11 P. M. of that third day of January he was dead.

He had commanded his sons to bury his body in the little cemetery belonging to the Union Theological Seminary at Hampden-Sidney, Virginia. He had fought with tongue and pen for all the South, but specially for Virginia, his mother, who had made him peer of her noblest, most heroic, sons. He loved no other soil as hers. He loved old Hampden-Sidney, where he had poured himself out in manhood's prime, and turned multitudinous eyes upon the place because he had his

workshop there. He loved the homely little cemetery because there lay the dust of John Holt Rice, and George Baxter, and Samuel L. Graham, and Samuel B. Wilson, and James Fair Latimer, and Benjamin Smith, and Thomas E. Peck. He loved a particular spot in that cemetery because his great heart had broken once, twice, thrice at a child's grave. He would have his body sleep beside the bodies of his three little sons till the resurrection morning. So to Hampden-Sidney came his body, attended by his stalwart, dutiful sons. It reached Farmville on Friday morning of the 7th of January. For several days a gloom had pervaded the whole village, and especially the Faculty and students of the Seminary. They thought no honor too great to be paid to one who had done such service to his country, his church, and to that institution. A delegation of the students met the funeral cortege at Farmville and attended it to Hampden-Sidney. As the body lay in state at the church from eight until three o'clock, it was guarded by relays of students, each relay acting one hour.

The funeral service was in the College Church, at 3 P. M., Friday. A procession of professors and students of Union Theological Seminary and Hampden-Sidney College came with solemn tread and occupied a considerable portion of the building, a large congregation filling up the rest.

Amongst those from a distance to attend these last rites was the venerable Dr. Clement R. Vaughan, of Roanoke, for a time a successor of Dr. Dabney in the chair of Theology in the Seminary they both loved and so greatly honored. He had come to see what was left of his classmate, his life-long, admiring and admired friend, his "father-brother," laid away. He and one or two other peculiarly close friends appeared seated with the family at the funeral services.

Dr. Givens B. Strickler had been asked to serve as Master of the funeral services, and, also, to make an address appropriate to the occasion. He announced the hymn—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me!"

and read a selection of appropriate Scriptures. The Rev. Professor C. C. Hersman, D. D., at his request, led the congregation in prayer. Dr. Strickler then delivered the following eulogy on his honored teacher:

“‘A prince and a great man has fallen in Israel.’ On such occasions it is proper to take account of our loss, that we may rightly estimate what the Lord gave, and what the Lord has taken away. That our departed friend and brother was, indeed, a prince and a great man in Israel—made so by God’s gifts of nature and grace—all would agree. That he was a great teacher, scores and hundreds of our ministers, who have enjoyed the privilege of his instruction, have always cordially testified. That he was a great theologian, his numerous works, left as an invaluable heritage to the church, make abundantly evident. That he was a great philosopher, his frequent and important contributions to the philosophical discussions of the last thirty years in our country clearly demonstrate. That he was a great preacher many present can bear witness from their own delightful experience, as for years they sat under his pulpit ministrations. That as the result of thirty years’ teaching in the Seminary, and of the contributions he has made to our religious and ethical and theological literature, he has left a deeper impression for good on our Southern ministry and Southern Church than any other man who has ever been connected with our denomination, few, I suppose, would question. That he was a great man in the excellence of his character, in conscientiousness, in integrity, in courage, in his supreme devotion to truth and to duty, and in zeal for the church and for God, none can doubt. That he was one of the most valuable gifts God has ever made to our church and our country all would admit. While, therefore, we to-day mourn over our loss (for God would not have us so lightly esteem so great a gift as not to be profoundly affected when it was withdrawn), we should mingle with our lamentations the most sincere thanksgiving to God that he ever made us so great a gift; that he preserved it to us so long, and that now our brother, after faithfully serving his generation until vital forces failed under the growing infirmities of advancing years, has gently fallen on sleep, and been received to his reward, and that those eyes, so long closed to the beauties of this world and to the faces and forms of earth by love and friendship, have been opened to the glories of the heavenly kingdom, and to behold the loved ones gone before, and the general assembly and church of the firstborn, and to see the King in his beauty. Let us, then, be profoundly grateful, while we are, at the same time, tenderly sorrowful.

“But it is not my purpose even to attempt to give you an adequate conception of Dr. Dabney’s life and character. I leave that for the more competent brethren, who will presently address you. I only wished, in introducing this part of the service, to avail myself of the privilege and opportunity of laying a little flower upon the bier of him to whom I am more indebted than to any other man, living or dead.”

Having thus spoken, Dr. Strickler introduced the Rev. Dr. Henry M. White, of Winchester, Va. Dr. White spoke of Dr. Dabney’s generosity in dealing with his fellow-men. In

particular he emphasized the fact that, though a controversialist all his life, Dr. Dabney never indulged in personalities, and never knowingly offended either a colleague or a brother minister during the whole of his long life. He dwelt eloquently on the Christian and the gentlemanly aspect of Dr. Dabney's life.

The last speaker was Dr. Moses D. Hoge. Dr. Hoge commenced by saying that it was not his purpose to attempt any portraiture of Dr. Dabney, or even an outline of the work he had undertaken and accomplished in the world, further than to remark—

“that a man was ordinarily regarded as having fulfilled the great end of life when he had been successful in any one department of useful labor, but that it had been the privilege of the man whose loss we mourn to-day to be distinguished, first, as an able and impressive expounder of the Word in the pulpit; second, as one of the strongest writers on philosophic, secular and theological themes; and, third, as one of the most successful of teachers in a Seminary devoted to the training of young men for the gospel ministry; that it was his rare lot not only to win distinction in each, but to combine and nobly employ all three of these great instrumentalities for wide and permanent usefulness.

“The loss of such a man makes a great void in the world, and all who appreciated his worth bemoan the bereavement and say, ‘How is the strong staff broken and the beautiful rod.’

“The Bible contains a record of the regnant men of the race—the kingly men of the world—not because of hereditary rank and power, but because of commanding influence through services rendered by which the intellectual and moral progress of mankind has been advanced.

“But outside of that inspired register, and continually adding to its length and numbers, are the men of distinguished influence, who in the providence of God are raised up from age to age. Some are endowed with such genius, and their natural capacities have been so strengthened and illumined by vast and varied learning, that they are compelled to occupy conspicuous positions. Their own modesty might induce them to seek private stations, but those who appreciate their worth and power will not consent, and insist that they shall not be allowed to abandon the high positions to which they have been elevated.

“Such men are the acknowledged leaders of the State; they are the lights and land-marks in the church; they are the grand pillars in the temple which God is rearing in the world to the glory of his grace. Among the gifts of God are the gifts of such men to the church and to the world; for they are the instruments by which society is moulded, and the moral and spiritual influence of mankind strengthened and ad-

vanced from age to age. When such men are snatched away we attempt to console ourselves by saying, 'The workmen die, but the work goes on.' It does go on in the sense that God cannot be thwarted in his purposes; that he is never at a loss for instruments to carry them on to completion. Moses and Aaron may drop out of the ranks on that magnificent march of the tribes to the Land of Promise, but Joshua is there at the river to conduct them on and to establish them in their inheritance. Then Samuel comes to lay the foundation of justice and order; then David, to give them an inspired liturgy and to frame a wise constitution of religious worship. One by one the lights in the golden candlestick are extinguished, but the temple still glows with the radiance of the glory of the Lord. The church still lifts up its voice, though tremulous and full of tears, and cries, 'Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations,' and is measurably comforted. But there is another sense in which it is true that when the workman dies the work does not go on as successfully and steadily as before. Indeed, the death of a single man often arrests that progress temporarily, and cripples, though it does not stop, the work.

"During the last decade great has been the loss of the church of eminent men. To say nothing of our own continent, I may look abroad and remark the blanks that have been made by the removal of such men as Christlieb, of Bohn; and Bersier, of Paris; Liddon, of England, and Spurgeon—of what country shall we call him? Let us say Spurgeon, of Christendom, for all claim him as their own.

"The places of such leaders may be occupied without being filled. And where are the champions who are ready to take up the weapons fallen from their hands and cheer on the church to renewed victories? We all know how the loss of one great statesman has sometimes defeated measures by which the progress and prosperity of a nation might have been promoted for generations. And who does not know that in a great crisis in national history, the death of a single distinguished leader has made the independence of that people impossible for all time? So, in the church, the work goes on haltingly, wearily, and is often temporarily crushed.

"It was so when the reformations which attempted to spring up often before Luther was born were put down, such as that of Arnold of Brescia, and that of Savonarola, and that of John Huss. It was so when Coligny and Conde fell. It was so when other reformers were put down; their fall was the signal of the decline of the great work they undertook.

"Among the lessons to be learned from the bereavements that make the world poorer and the church emptier is this: The need of earnest prayer to God that he would raise up and qualify men who can take the places of the departed and efficiently hasten the accomplishment of his great purpose of mercy and grace, by which this revolted world is to be brought back to its rightful allegiance—men who, if not inspired men,

like Moses and Isaiah, or like David, who composed the Psalms, which animated the sacramental army on its march to final victory; or like Paul, who girdled the earth with a zone of light and glory, and wrote the epistles, which have shaped the theological thought of the world; at least, like their successors, who, though uninspired, yet possessed the consecrated genius and learning to meet the great exigencies which are always arising in the history of the church. Who can say that such men are not needed now to combat great errors, and arrest the tide of secularism, false philanthropy, and assaults upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, which prevail even in the lands where Christianity is supposed to exist in its purest form? Let us beseech the Great Head of the church to bless it with more power in the pulpit, power with the pen, power in the professor's chair, the power of sanctified scholarship, the power of consecrated lives in every department of church work and Christian enterprise. The scholar is the product of slow growth, of patient toil, and a rare product, even after the most protracted toil. Every day we have new illustrations of the difficulty of finding men qualified for the high positions which death makes vacant by the removal of the great and good, although there never was a time, perhaps, when the church was fuller of men of average ability.

"Our Southern Church has been dignified and adorned by an illustrious triumvirate. Born amidst the throes of the greatest revolution in modern history, it needed the wisdom and experience of men qualified by nature and grace for the responsible task of giving to it symmetry and scriptural form, of conserving the principles embodied in the Westminster Standards, and of grafting upon them whatever might give these honored truths new applications and new efficiency. No church on this continent has been more favored of Heaven than our own, in having at its very organization three such men as Thornwell, Palmer, and Dabney, each fitted, by splendid genius and profound scholarship—alike consecrated to the noblest uses—to give direction to its future life, and to enrich it for all time by their published contributions to theological science.

"Two of this illustrious triumvirate have been called to a higher service. One still remains, every succeeding year to be crowned by fresh benedictions.

"In deploring such a loss as the one which makes us mourners this afternoon, we will not forget the most blessed of all consolations—heaven gains what we lose, and becomes richer and more attractive to us. True, the Lamb is the light thereof, but our departed ones stand disclosed in that light, and reflect it down to us. We love them all the more because they shine in the beauty of their Lord and ours. We remember our brother, beloved now in the rest and peace and blessedness of the true home. We remember those whom he has left behind for a while, and it comforts us to know that there is one hand gentle enough to wipe away the tears of bereavement, One who is the husband

of the widow and the father of the fatherless, One who is able to sanctify to us our deepest distress, and to bring us all by ways of his own choosing to the end of life's journey, and through the bright gate of paradise into the land of eternal light and glory."

At the conclusion of Dr. Hoge's address, the hymn

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,"

was sung, and the funeral procession wended its way to the little cemetery of Union Theological Seminary. So they laid away the body of Robert L. Dabney amongst the bodies of a goodly number of sainted and able men, and beside the dust of his three little boys—

"Far off from busy toil of city life,
Nor in the gloom of vast cathedral wall,
In quiet church-yard, there they laid him down,
Beneath the stars—the fittest tomb of all.

"His head laid softly in the lap of earth,
He gently sleeps, a monarch of mankind;
For noblest heroes in this living strife,
Are ever these, the heroes of the mind.

"His mighty soul, clear-sighted, soared aloft,
As clouds transcend the earth, and garnered there
Rich trophies of great thoughts, a look beyond,
An insight to the infinite, born of prayer.

"For do not mighty ones converse with God
As friend with friend? They by his side recline,
Drink in his words, gaze on his perfect face,
And learn of him, the source of light divine.

"And shall we mourn a glorious warfare done,
A race well run, a heavy cross laid by?
We thank thee Lord, for such a monarch's life,
His thoughts that live, though mortal man must die.

"Death to his soul is as the vessel's port,
Where, tempest toss'd, it gladly hails for rest;
The soul, long captive, bursts its prison bonds,
To contemplate the bliss of spirits blest.

"Farewell, thou giant prince in Israel,
Defender of our faith, to whom was given,
In life, a glimpse beyond remotest stars;
Thy faith hath turned to perfect sight in heaven!"¹

Dr. Dabney's death was widely noted and lamented by the papers and periodicals, religious and secular, in all sections of our own country. In Canada, and in Great Britain, also, it was remarked and deplored. Many just and beautiful tributes were paid to his memory.

Dr. B. M. Palmer wrote in the *Southwestern Presbyterian*:

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

"Yet with these sturdy qualities were united the gentler traits which, oftener than is generally supposed, are blended in the character of those who are truly great. All who were admitted into the repose of Dr. Dabney's inner life recognized those amiable virtues which endeared him to his pupils and to friends of every degree. The sweet simplicity of his character, and the genuine modesty which veiled while it did not conceal his greatness, made it easy for others to rejoice in his pre-eminence without the infusion of jealousy. It is only the loftier natures, which look upon their own achievements as being such, that others might have wrought as well."²

¹ These fine lines were written on The Burial of Dr. Dabney, by P. Josephine Baker, Baltimore, Md., and published in the *Central Presbyterian*, January 13, 1898.

² *Southwestern Presbyterian*, January 20, 1898.

The *Christian Observer*, of January 12, 1898, says:

"Dr. Dabney has been a man of great and distinguished power. His activity in the acquisition of knowledge was remarkable. . . . His powers of penetration were yet more remarkable. . . . Dr. Dabney's penetrative power enabled him to look further into the future than other men. Often, when we heard him telling how far the logical outcome of present facts and events would extend, we felt like saying, God forbid. But he has lived to see his prophecies fulfilled in many respects. . . . More than thirty years ago, Dr. Dabney foresaw the insinuation of infidel errors into the theological seminaries of the land—such errors as evolution and the destructive criticism of the Bible. Well do we remember his reiterated prayer that God would preserve the theological seminaries of his church from becoming fountain heads of error. We wondered then at his prayer; we do not wonder now."

The Rev. S. Taylor Martin wrote, in the *Southwestern Presbyterian*:

"The Commonwealth and the nation has sustained an irreparable loss in the withdrawal of a man whose philosophic mind, enriched by the history of nations, governments and constitutions, recognized the only statesmanship that can secure perpetuity and prosperity and peace, the statesmanship that is founded on truth and righteousness. The rapidly vanishing remnant of the old Confederacy mourns the loss of one of the ablest defenders of a cause as true and principles as just as any for which a sword was ever drawn or the sacrifice of human life ever made. The church of God, of all denominations, has lost the labors of a mighty champion, who with unswerving fidelity advanced and defended these fundamental truths, without which there could be no true church, no religion, no gospel of salvation, no glad tidings, no hope for lost and ruined man. All through the ranks of God's servants in the ministry there is a painful sense of loss of a faithful comrade and fellow-laborer, of a revered father in Israel. In many a quiet study in the manses of the Southern Church, as God's servants ponder their work and its difficulties and obstacles, as they look out upon the hosts of the enemy and see the danger to the flock, there is a feeling of overwhelming loss, of almost helpless dismay, and of the keenest personal bereavement, as they realize that their revered instructor, the faithful guide, the sympathizing friend, is no more; but there is mingled with their grief profound gratitude for the privilege of having enjoyed the instructions, the fellowship, the friendship of such a man.

"The versatility of Dr. Dabney's genius was one of his most striking characteristics. Had he occupied Calvin's position, he might have done Calvin's work. Had he been substituted for John Knox, he could have performed the part of Knox. If during the war, instead of being on the staff, he had been in the line and a leader of men, we know of no

man who, in our humble judgment, would have so nearly approximated the renowned career of Stonewall Jackson.

"His range of study was broad and his scholarship accurate; his discussions were characterized by absolute candor and frankness. There was no attempt to obscure the strong points of his adversary, nor was there any evasion of the objections to his own position. His modesty added a charm to his greatness. His pupils were his brethren; he seemed to ignore the difference between the planes on which his students and their teacher moved. There was doubtless less need for formality with the half dozen of us that constituted the *post-bellum* class. Certain is it when a student was reciting that the class-room was the arena in which was exhibited a free fight. It was 'give and take'; the student had to take, and he was at liberty to give with all his force. The Professor often played the roll of the objector. Probably the mental foundation for his excellence in every department of human activity was his extraordinary power of analysis. In dealing with the most intricate and complex subjects, he seemed to separate from it all its accidentals, and reveal its essence in its perspicuous nakedness.

"Dr. Dabney's ability as a profound theologian, his power as a preacher, his extraordinary gift as a teacher, his accurate analysis and keen acumen as a metaphysician are readily recognized, but there was one trait not observed by the multitude, but known by those in personal contact with him: that was his gentleness. He abhorred all meanness, all trickery, all that was false. When, with his native vigor, he denounced these traits, men would naturally count him severe. He lived in a period when, in the church, men were willing to barter away their independence, their professed convictions, for material advantage, or for a sentiment of unity that was a deceitful form, a hollow sham. He lived in a period when men who had won military renown, renounced the cause, the principles for which they professed to fight, took or sought office under the conquerors of their country, and supported an administration and a party that was persecuting a disarmed and honorable people, with a more cruel and relentless hatred than had characterized any period of open warfare. Dr. Dabney's clear analytic mind enabled him to see that the adoption of one set of principles during their prosperity, their renunciation in adversity, and the espousal of another set as much the contradictory of the former as light is of darkness, or life is of death, was an impeachment of personal integrity. Ostracism of such men was not due to difference of political convictions, but to the recognition of a lack of principle. He recognized the fact that war was not only a calamity, but a crime. That no man could vindicate his right to engage in war, except when it becomes his solemn duty to fight. He saw clearly that no matter how brilliant the achievements of such men, *their warfare was brigandage*, their capture of property, *robbery*, their killing of men *murder*. Their proper category was that of deserters. In the face of all the menaces and oppressions

of the trying period of *destruction*, Dr. Dabney maintained his integrity. He spoke the truth. It hurt. Some thought him austere and harsh, but, with all his contempt for truculence and meanness, he was a man of profound and tender affection. It is the memory of his gentle sympathy, his affectionate friendship, that causes us to bow in grief, that fills our heart with sorrow, because we have lost not only the revered instructor and guide, not only the faithful friend and brother, but also another tender, loving father."

The *Presbyterian Banner*, Pittsburg, Pa., of January 12, 1898, says:

"Several times we have heard the late Rev. Archibald Alexander Hodge, D. D., say that he regarded Dr. Dabney as the best teacher of theology in the United States, if not in the world."

The *Philadelphia Presbyterian*, of January 12, 1898, says:

"Dr. Dabney was undoubtedly a great theologian—one of a generation of men which seems to have disappeared. He was an earnest and profound student of the questions which emerge in philosophy, and pass into theology. He was a sincere man, never professing the belief of a truth which he did not thoroughly understand, and for which he was not able to give an adequate reason. He was a strong Calvinist, ready always in its defence, and never afraid always to avow his sincere faith in its doctrines."

The *New York Evangelist*, in quoting from and commenting on Dr. Palmer's tribute to Dr. Dabney (see it on page 531 of this book), pronounced him "the foremost scholar and polemic of all the South," and said:

"He was without doubt one of our greatest writers and teachers, thoroughly at home in the fine drawn distinctions of scholastic theology."

Many similar notices of his death and tributes to his memory appeared at this time. One characteristic of these was their concession to him of extraordinary mental power, acuteness, profundity and vigor of activity, and equally extraordinary moral character—honesty of mind and heart; nor were the secular papers behind the religious in noting his death and paying tribute to his memory.

In the *Richmond Dispatch* of January 5, 1898, Dr. Moses D. Hoge is quoted as saying:

"He was the most versatile and accurate scholar in the South. As a theological teacher he had no superior in the United States. His *Life of Stonewall Jackson* is known to all the readers of history. His published works on philosophical, secular and religious subjects make several volumes, and will give him enduring fame."

In the *Richmond Times* of January 9, 1898, Col. L. S. Marye wrote:

"Dr. Dabney possessed a mind of the very highest order, and of the most far-reaching powers. It is the opinion of many sedate and competent judges that the present century has not produced a more vigorous and penetrating intellect, certainly on this side of the Atlantic. . . .

"But it was not alone for his great powers of mind that his memories will be cherished. In elevation of character, and in attributes of heart, he was equally to be admired and more tenderly to be loved. His was stalwart strength blended with ineffable sweetness. His fit symbol was the mighty monarch of the forest that towers high above its fellows, companionless in the azure concave, its imperial crown fanned and caressed by the sweet-breath and soft kisses of that pure atmosphere; and as the fall of such forest monarchs shakes the solid earth, and sends for countless leagues resounding tumult in the troubled air, so will the death of this great and good man excite an all prevailing sense of distress and bereavement throughout the Southern Assembly of the Presbyterian Church; nay, throughout the bounds of the South, without distinction of sect, for much of his life-long labor and service of heart and head was devoted to the defence and vindication of his beloved South. But it is, of course, in the ecclesiastical denomination in which he was the foremost figure and acknowledged leader that his death will be most keenly felt and deeply deplored. These his peculiar friends in the ties of ecclesiastical association feel the extinguishment of this great light, as we may imagine the seafaring dwellers on the coast of Cornwall felt when the mighty Eddystone light-house was swept away by the angry sea, and when that steady, far-reaching beacon went out in darkness and dismay.

"It is pleasant to know that Dr. Dabney's mental powers remained to the last unimpaired. There was no touch of decadence to be seen or felt in the working of the glorious machinery. Although he had for four years been totally blind, there was no abatement of his intellectual labors. . . .

"When a man like this is stricken down, it seems that in the eclipse and extinction of such powers and such erudition an irreparable loss has been suffered; and in a certain sense so it is; and yet in the benign arrangement of Providence, such men prepare others to take their places, and the cause of truth and learning is thus preserved and transmitted, even as in the Grecian games the swift runners of the

torch race, delivering the blazing brand from one to another, imitated the successive generation of mankind, who hand down the fire of knowledge which the crafty Prometheus stole from heaven. The year that Galileo died witnessed the birth of Sir Isaac Newton. The truth I am endeavoring to present is conspicuously illustrated in the case of Dr. Dabney. Year by year, for almost half a century, he sent forth from the Theological Seminary, at Hampden-Sidney, and from the University of Texas devoted bands of young men to enter the fields of Christian labor and of splendid scholarship. In the lives and labor of these his pupils, as well as in his many published volumes, the learning and acquisitions, which in one aspect are buried with him, are, in another sense, snatched from the grave, and endued with the power of endless life. In such instances we may truly say:

“Alike are life and death,
Where life in death survives,
And the uninterrupted breath
Inspires a thousand lives;

“So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.”

In the (Columbia, S. C.) *State*, of January 9, 1898, Mr. James Henry Rice, Jr., says:

“As Dr. Dabney sat in the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church, the other day, and preached a sermon long to be remembered by those who heard it, his appearance was both venerable and patriarchal. As Dr. Joynes admirably expressed it, ‘He symbolized the union of a Christian apostle with old Homer.’ The towering figure (majestic though recumbent), the flowing locks and the sightless eyes of the speaker, and withal the fire and passion of his utterance, proved the justice and aptness of the characterization. That, in a few words, pictures the great Virginian as he was. The old heroic poetry lived in him, and found a vent in the beauty and worth of his long and illustrious life; and the deathless spirit of the Berserkers fired him to the last. He was a born gladiator, though he combated principalities and powers, and not foes of flesh and blood. Dabney never waited for evil to mass its forces; he fell on it with savage fury in its camp, tracked the beast to its lair, and there laid hold with the dauntless courage of his kind.

“And there was that in him that cannot perish. The lesson of such a life deserves close reading and diligent consideration. In a material sense, he would have bettered his fortunes by a more temperate tone in dealing with the many questions which his intellect grappled. But it was the nature of the princely man to spurn anything that savored of a

compromise of principle. He fought long and hard, and died unconquered and not convinced of the efficiency of gunpowder and the bayonet to control reason or subvert truth."

Mr. Rice asks of the Old South, of which Dr. Dabney was an embodiment, whether it has "perished utterly," and answers:

"No bad cause ever had men like Lee and Jackson to fight its battles, nor intellects like Calhoun, Thornwell, Hammond, Bledsoe, Dabney and Laws to settle its problems. All these honest souls are the warrant that truth was there; and just so sure as truth itself is eternal, will the cause endure to the end—not, perhaps, in the form we knew it, for truth has many faces, but in its essence."

He cites an instance of "prophecy" on Dr. Dabney's part, *already fulfilled*. He pronounces Robert Lewis Dabney "the 'knightliest of the knightly band' of great Virginians, who have shed honor and renown upon their native State," and then concludes:

"What we intended to illustrate in the foregoing was the value of the life-force of such a man; it transcends in worth and importance all the systems of all the schools, and will lie on this generation like a benediction. On all departments his keen eye rested; on every abuse descended his malediction like a whip of scorpions. For over half a century he had borne himself in the heat of the battle, and had passed into the dim half-twilight of age a stern, splendid figure, with eternal youth in his heart and with the joy of hope on his lips. Remember, the old South made such as these. They were her jewels; they remain her monuments; they were nurtured on her bosom, and they depart with her blessing. They 'kept the faith of men and saints serene and pure and bright.' As Taine wrote of Shakespeare, 'Only this great age could have cradled such a child.'"

On Sunday afternoon, January 30, 1898, memorial services were held in the Opera House, at Sherman, Texas, by the Mildred Lee Camp of United Confederate Veterans, to commemorate the patriotism and virtues of Gen. L. S. Ross and Major R. L. Dabney, D. D.

After the address had been made in honor of General Ross, the Rev. Dr. Thornton R. Sampson, President of the Austin College, and a pupil of Dr. Dabney while he was professor in Union Theological Seminary, spoke, in part, as follows:

"Dr. Dabney was a born teacher, and he loved his work. It has been my privilege, as a student, to sit at the feet of some of the most distinguished scholars and teachers of America, Great Britain and the continent of Europe, such as McGuffey, Gildersleeve, Davidson, Delitsch and Luthardt; but Dabney was the peer of any, and in some respects the superior of them all. He always left his impress upon the mind of his students. One might differ with him in conclusions, but could never deny the force and aptness of his reasoning. His thorough mastery of the subject, his clearness and thorough analysis of it, his forceful, apt illustrations, and his sympathetic recognition of the students' difficulties, gave him most remarkable force as a teacher. No one who desired to learn could fail to make progress or get profit under his lucid, inspiring tuition.

"It is, however, chiefly of another striking side of Dr. Dabney's character that I wish to speak. Some who knew Dr. Dabney only through his publications, have formed the idea that he was a stern, severe man, lacking in sympathy and affection. It cannot be denied that some expressions, in a certain class of his articles, especially those concerning the civil war, have given just ground for such inference.

"But it should be stated, and it can be asserted with all positiveness, for it is a fact to which all who came in contact with him can testify, that such was not the case. He was a kind neighbor, a tender and most affectionate husband, an over-indulgent parent and a most faithful friend. In fact, he scarcely seemed, with all his acumen, to be able to see the faults of a friend, and his judgment possibly failed him oftener in speaking or writing of those whom he loved than at any other time."

Many resolutions and formal expressions of appreciation were offered, adopted, and sent to his family, by the institutions with which he had been connected, bodies of students, camps of Confederate Veterans, etc., attesting at once the widespread esteem for his character and admiration for his great parts, and sense of loss in his death. Scores and hundreds of letters of the same great character poured in on his widow and his sons.

More recent tributes have been paid to the same effect. Dr. S. A. King, of Waco, Texas, wrote on April 11, 1901:

"Dr. Dabney's greatness was known and recognized in all the English-speaking world. His geniality, his gentleness, his modesty, could be known only by those who had the privilege of personal acquaintance and intercourse."

The Rev. P. P. Flournoy, Bethesda, Md., wrote, February 27, 1901:

"Dr. Dabney has been recognized, for a generation past, as in some respects the first preacher in the Presbyterian Church. There may have been others with oratorical gifts which he lacked, who were, *for the average audience*, more popular preachers; but as a preacher for preachers and educated thinkers of all professions, I think there can be no question that he stood without an equal. His position, too, as a theologian is unquestioned. He certainly stands among the first of all our country has produced, and, in the opinion of some, holds the first place. But it is as a philosopher that his intellectual powers appear to their greatest advantage. Indeed, his greatness as a theologian is due, in large part, to his powerful hold on the fundamental principles of philosophy."

The death of few men has been followed by such concessions of admiration on the part of those, in some grave matters, opposed to him, by such prevalent lamentation in his communion and section, the great Southland, by such genuine and general feelings of irreparable loss. Few have called forth more spontaneous and generous and noble expressions of regard for character, or esteem for talents.

Shortly after his death, his devoted widow erected over his grave, in the little cemetery of Hampden-Sidney, a simple, but massive monument of granite. The inscriptions on the two faces are, respectively: ^a

(1)

ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY, M. A., D. D., LL. D.,

BORN MARCH 5, 1820.

DIED JANUARY 3, 1898.

Minister of the Gospel, Professor of Theology in Union Seminary, and of Philosophy in the University of Texas, Major in the Confederate Army, and Chief of Staff to Stonewall Jackson.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

(2)

DABNEY.

In unshaken loyalty of devotion to his friends, his country, and his religion, firm in misfortune, ever active in earnest endeavor, he labored all his life for what he loved with a faith in good causes, that was ever one with his faith in God.

^a For copies of these inscriptions we are indebted to Dr. H. P. Lacy, of Hampden-Sidney.

The three sons left behind are each going on prosperously in his own chosen profession to-day. Their homes are blessed with children. Amongst them is one, restless, active, virile little fellow, called Robert Lewis Dabney. The devoted wife, whose vocation it had been for years to wait on her blind and physically infirm husband, felt, at first, that her vocation was gone. Ever used to going to him as a strong tower in time of trial, she mourned for him as she had not for little children even; but the Christian in her triumphed. She found other forms of service to do, and has lived not unhappily. She was left with a competence for her modest needs, including a comfortable cottage near her son Samuel's home, in Victoria, Texas. In this summer of 1902, she has reached the advanced age of seventy-eight and a half years. She has retained the full possession of all her faculties, but recently has sustained an injury to one of her lower limbs by a fall, and has been confined for some weeks to her bed. The youngest son, Lewis M., writes: "She has marvellous heroism and genuine religion to support her. I never saw any one, male or female, exceed her in either quality."