

ANNALS

OF THE

AMERICAN PULPIT;

OR

COMMEMORATIVE NOTICES

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN CLERGYMEN

OF

VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS,

FROM THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE.

WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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SAMUEL MILLER, D. D.*

1791—1850.

SAMUEL MILLER was the fourth son of the Rev. John Miller, and was born October 31, 1769, at the residence of his father, a few miles from Dover, De. His early literary training was under the parental roof; but in due time he was removed to Philadelphia, and became a member of the University of Pennsylvania. After passing through this institution, he graduated with high honour, July 31, 1789.

Having formed the purpose of devoting himself to the ministry, he entered upon the study of Theology, shortly after his graduation, under the direction of his father. But his father being removed before he had completed his theological course, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Lewes,—of which his father had long been a leading member,—on the 15th of October, 1791, and immediately after put himself, for the residue of his course, under the instruction of the celebrated Dr. Nisbet of Dickinson College. Here he continued for a number of months, and during this time not only enjoyed the best opportunities for literary and theological improvement, but formed an intimacy with his venerable instructor, which was a source of great pleasure, not only to himself, but to those to whom he imparted his cherished recollections, as long as he lived.

At a meeting of the Presbytery in April, 1792, a call was put into the hands of Mr. Miller to take the pastoral charge of the Congregation at Dover, then recently vacated by the death of his venerable father,—which, however, he ultimately declined. In the course of this year he was invited to visit a Church on Long Island, with a view to being heard as a candidate for settlement. On his way thither he stopped in New York, and preached to great acceptance. The result was, that, in the autumn of that year, he received a unanimous call from the united Presbyterian Churches of New York to become the colleague of Dr. Rodgers and Dr. McKnight. He has been heard to remark that he had never at that time aspired to anything beyond an ordinary country charge; and that nothing could have surprised him more than that he should have been thought of for such a public and important sphere of labour. He, however, after due deliberation, accepted the call, and was ordained and installed June 5, 1793. The Sermon on the occasion was preached by the Rev. Dr. McKnight.

From the commencement of his ministry in New York, he enjoyed a reputation in some respects peculiar to himself. Though Dr. Mason, and Dr. Linn, and Dr. Livingston, and other great lights were there, yet the subject of this notice was far from being thrown into the shade. Besides having the advantage of a remarkably fine person, and most bland and attractive manners, he had, from the beginning, an uncommonly polished style, and there was an air of literary refinement pervading all his performances, that excited general admiration, and well nigh put criticism at defiance. He was scarcely settled before his services began to be put in requisition on public occasions; and several of these early occasional discourses were published, and still remain as a monument of his taste, talents, and piety. One of his earliest published sermons was before a Society in the city of

* Communication from himself.—Presbyterian, 1850.

New York for the Manumission of Slaves; and it may well be doubted whether a more discreet, unexceptionable, and dignified sermon has been written on the subject since.

At the beginning of the present century, Mr. Miller preached a sermon appropriate to the time, reviewing some of the more prominent events and works of the century then just concluded. This sermon formed the nucleus of a work published in 1803, in two volumes octavo, which contained the most thorough account of the various improvements of the eighteenth century, which was then to be found in the English language. In executing this work he brought to his aid many of the most gifted and accomplished minds in various departments of learning; and in the favourable manner in which the book was received on both sides of the water, he had the most gratifying testimony that his labour had not been misapplied.

He was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, from the University at which he was graduated, in the year 1804. At that day it was uncommon, if not unprecedented, for a person so young to receive that honour; and he used sometimes, in sportively referring to it, to relate the following anecdote:—

He was travelling in New England with a clergyman who was well acquainted there, and they called, at the suggestion of the Doctor's travelling companion, to pay their respects to a venerable old minister, who lived somewhere on their route. The Doctor's friend introduced him as Dr. Miller of New York; and as the old gentleman knew that there was a distinguished medical practitioner of that name living there, and as he had not heard that the clergyman had been doctorated, and perhaps it had never even occurred to him that so young a man as he saw before him *could* be, he took for granted that it was the medical doctor to whom he had been introduced; and, after a few minutes, wishing to accommodate his conversation to the taste and capabilities of the stranger as well as he could, he turned to him, and asked him whether he considered the yellow fever, which had then just been prevailing in New York, contagious. Before the Doctor had time to reply, his friend perceiving the old gentleman's mistake, said, "This is not a medical doctor, Sir, but a Doctor of Divinity." The venerable minister gathered himself up, as if in a paroxysm of astonishment, and lifting up both hands, exclaimed, with a protracted emphasis upon each word, "*You don't!*"

In 1806, Dr. Miller was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

In May, 1811, died the Rev. Dr. Rodgers, with whom Dr. Miller had served in the ministry, as a son with a father, for nearly twenty years. He preached a touching and impressive Sermon on the occasion of the death of his venerable colleague, and two years after published it, with an extended biography of him, in an octavo volume. As Dr. Rodgers had been identified with the Presbyterian Church more prominently, and for a longer period, than any other man, Dr. Miller, in writing an account of his life, was led almost of necessity to detail many events and scenes with which he was connected in common with many others; and hence there is probably more of the general history of the Presbyterian Church to be found in this volume than in any other biographical work that has been published. Independently of the peculiar interest that attaches to the subject, the work is quite a model in its department.

Dr. Miller is understood to have taken a deep interest in the establishment of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, from the first inception of the enterprise, though without the remotest idea that he was destined to be more intimately connected with it than many others of his brethren. When Dr. Alexander was inaugurated, in August, 1812, Dr. Miller preached the Sermon—and an appropriate and admirable sermon it was. When the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government was to be filled, the eyes of the Church were directed to Dr. Miller; and in due time the judgment of the Church was pronounced in his being formally elected to that responsible place. The appointment was made in May, 1813; and having accepted it, he was inducted into office on the 29th of September following.

Here Dr. Miller continued discharging the duties of his office with great fidelity and ability, and to the entire acceptance of the Church, during a period of more than thirty-six years. Though he had not, in his latter years at least, any great vigour of constitution, and was obliged to nurse himself with more than ordinary care, yet he was able to go through with his prescribed duties in the Seminary, besides performing a good deal of occasional literary labour, until within about a year of his death. In May, 1849, the General Assembly accepted the resignation of his office, testifying, at the same time, in the strongest manner possible, their grateful appreciation of his services, and their high respect for his character. His health, which had been waning for a considerable time, failed after this more perceptibly, until at length it became manifest to all that his period of active service was over. He lingered a number of weeks, suffering not so much from positive pain as from extreme exhaustion and difficulty of respiration, but without a cloud to intercept the clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness. He felt that his work was done, and he was ready to enter upon his reward. The few friends who were privileged to see him during the period of his decline, especially after he had nearly reached the dark boundary, were not only edified but surprised at the expressions of humble, grateful, joyful triumph, that fell from his lips. He gently passed away to his reward, on Monday evening, January 7, 1850. His Funeral drew together a large concourse of clergymen and others from the neighbouring towns and cities, and an appropriate and characteristic Sermon was preached on the occasion, by his venerable colleague, Dr. Alexander.

In the autumn of 1801, Dr. Miller was married to Sarah, daughter of the Hon. Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant, a distinguished lawyer and member of Congress, of Philadelphia. They had ten children, one of whom died in infancy, and only six survived him. The eldest daughter became the wife of the Rev. Dr. John Breckenridge. Two of the sons are ministers of the Gospel, one is a surgeon in the Navy, and one a lawyer,—practising in Philadelphia.

Dr. Miller, as I have already had occasion to intimate, had much more than common advantages in respect to personal appearance. Of about the middle size, he was perfectly well proportioned, with a fine, intelligent and benignant countenance, which would not be likely to pass unnoticed in a crowd. His manners were cultivated and graceful in a high degree, uniting the polish of Chesterfield with the dignity and sincerity of a Christian minister. He was remarkably exact in his attention to little things; and though this may have sometimes given him, to a certain extent, an air of formality, it had undoubtedly much to do in giving a finish to both his

manners and his character. His work on "Clerical Manners" could never have been written by one who was less considerate and exact than himself; and, indeed, but for his exceeding modesty, one might almost suppose that in writing it he was taking his own portrait. He was never thrown into any society so polished but that he was entirely at home in it, and while he was as far as possible from being enslaved to worldly usages, or cultivating a habit of too indiscriminate worldly intercourse, he never thought it beneath him to appear on all occasions as the accomplished Christian gentleman.

Dr. Miller's intellectual and moral character partook of the same beautiful symmetry that characterized his external appearance. How far this grew out of his natural constitution, and how far it was the result of discipline and habit, it may be difficult to decide; though he has been heard to say that he was originally of an impetuous turn, and that it had required severe efforts to school himself into all that moderation and self-control of which we saw him in possession. He had evidently by nature a kindly, sympathetic and generous spirit. His heart beat quick to the tale of distress, and his hand opened instinctively to administer relief. He had warm social affections, and received as well as imparted great pleasure in his intercourse with his friends. His mind was not, like that of Dr. Mason—bold, startling, I had almost said terrible in some of its demonstrations; but it was perfectly well balanced in all its faculties, calm and deliberate but certain in its movements, and worthy of being trusted wherever good taste, sound judgment, and high intelligence, were demanded. He might not have been selected as the man to electrify the multitude by a single effort, but there are few men who have an assemblage of intellectual and moral qualities, so well fitted as were his to form a dignified character, or to secure a course of honourable and enduring usefulness.

I have already alluded to the fact that Dr. Miller early took rank with the best preachers of his day. His sermons were generally written, but in the earlier periods of his ministry, as I have heard him say, were almost always committed to memory,—as the prejudice against reading in New York was so great, that it was at the peril at least of one's reputation as a preacher that he ventured to lay his manuscript before him. At a later period, however, especially after he went to Princeton, he generally read his discourses, but he read with so much ease and freedom, that, but for the turning over of the leaves, one would scarcely have been aware that he was reading at all. His voice was not strong, nor yet particularly musical, but it was pleasant notwithstanding; and so perfectly distinct was his enunciation that he could be heard without effort at the extremity of the largest church. His attitudes in the pulpit were extremely dignified, though perhaps somewhat precise; and his gesture, which was never otherwise than appropriate, was yet not very abundant. His utterance was deliberate,—possibly too much so to suit the mass of hearers; but it was marked by an evident sincerity and solemnity that were well fitted to make an impression. He would occasionally deliver a sentence with an air of majesty, and a degree of unction that would make it quite irresistible. I remember, for instance, to have heard him relate in a New Year's sermon on the text "How old art thou?" the well known anecdote of the Roman Emperor, exclaiming at the close of a day which had gone to waste, "Oh, I have lost a day!" and it seemed scarcely possible that the exclamation should

have been uttered in a way to secure to it a higher effect. Still he could not be considered an impassioned preacher; and his manner was characterized rather by quiet dignity, and occasionally by genuine pathos, than by any remarkable versatility or vigour. But his discourses were decidedly superior to his manner of delivering them. He never shot at random: he always had a distinct object in view, and he went deliberately and skilfully to work to accomplish it. There was the same symmetry about his sermons as there was about his character—every thing was in its right place. If you did not expect to be thrilled by such overwhelming passages as you might sometimes hear from Mason or Chalmers, you knew that you would never be shocked by any thing of doubtful propriety. You expected that every thing in the service would be fitting and reverent, and every way up to the dignity of the pulpit; and you were never disappointed. No man was farther than Dr. Miller from that miserable affectation that throws together dry and doubtful speculations,—at best the refuse of philosophy, and then calls the heap of chaos that is thus produced a Gospel sermon. While his preaching was not common-place in any worse sense than the Bible is so, he had no ambition for originality that led him to stray beyond the Bible for the material of his discourses; and while he was satisfied with what he found there, his object seemed to be to work it up in a manner which should best subserve the great objects of his ministry.

As a Professor in the Theological Seminary, Dr. Miller was alike able and faithful. He gave to his work all the energies of his mind and body; and even after the infirmities of age had so accumulated upon him that he might have reasonably found an apology for relaxing, if not altogether discontinuing, his labours, he still continued to perform the full amount of service demanded by his Professorship. His lectures were always highly appropriate and instructive; and while they were evidently the result of much thought and investigation, and were so admirably perspicuous and well arranged that they could easily be remembered, they were written with excellent taste, and sometimes, where description was called for, were marked by great rhetorical beauty. In his intercourse with the students of the Seminary he was quite as much the Father as the Professor; and if a record of all his kind offices towards his pupils, many of which were a matter of profound secrecy, could be displayed, I doubt not that it would greatly exceed any estimate which those who appreciate his beneficence most highly, have ever formed.

Dr. Miller was an honest, vigilant and devoted friend of what he believed to be the true interests of the Presbyterian Church. In the controversy which issued in its division he was inflexibly with the Old School, though he had many warm friends on the other side with whom he continued to maintain the most friendly relations. Indeed it was impossible for him to be otherwise than bland and courteous even towards an adversary. Not a small part of his writings are, in a greater or less degree, of a polemical character; but they are generally marked by great caution and dignity, and I have never heard a more hearty tribute paid to him as an author, than by one eminent man who held with him a somewhat vigorous controversy.

Dr. Miller's highest attraction, after all, was that he was great in goodness. Not only was he endowed by the God of nature with superior moral qualities, but these qualities were moulded by the God of grace into an exalted specimen of Christian excellence. He was eminently conscientious,

disinterested and devout. Condescending in indifferent matters, he always stood firm to his own convictions, where any thing important was involved. He was meek, humble, patient and forgiving. He moved about in society, exhibiting the graces of nature in attractive combination with the higher graces of the Spirit. In his latter years, he was revered as a Patriarch, and there was wide-spread and hearty mourning when he went down to his grave.

The following is a list of Dr. Miller's publications:—

VOLUMES.

A Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century, 2 vols. 8vo., 1803. Letters on the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry, addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Churches in the city of New York, 12mo., 1807. A Continuation of Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry, being an Examination of the Strictures of the Rev. Doctors Bowden and Kemp, and the Rev. Mr. How, on the former series, 12mo., 1809. Memoirs of the Rev. John Rogers, D. D., 8vo., 1813. Letters on Unitarianism, 8vo., 1821. Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits, 12mo., 1827: An Essay on the Warrant, Nature, and Duties, of the Office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church, 12mo., 1831. Letters to Presbyterians on the Present Crisis in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 12mo., 1833. Infant Baptism scriptural and reasonable, and Baptism by Sprinkling or Affusion the most suitable and edifying mode: Two Sermons [originally preached at Freehold, N. J.], 12mo., 1834. Presbyterianism the truly Primitive and Apostolical Constitution of the Church of Christ, 1835. Life of Jonathan Edwards, (Sparks, American Biography,) 12mo., 1837. Memoir of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, D. D., 12mo., 1840. The Primitive and Apostolic Order of the Church of Christ Vindicated, 12mo., 1840. Letters from a Father to his Sons in College, 12mo., 1843. The Warrant, Nature, and Duties, of the Office of Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church: A Sermon preached in Philadelphia, with an Appendix, 18mo., 1843. Thoughts on Public Prayer, 12mo., 1849.

PAMPHLETS.

A Sermon preached in New York, on the Anniversary of American Independence, 1793. A Discourse before the Grand Lodge of the State of New York, 1795. A Discourse Commemorative of the Discovery of New York, by Henry Hudson, (New York Historical Collections,) 1795. A Sermon delivered in New York, on the nineteenth Anniversary of the Independence of America, 1795. A Discourse delivered before the New York Society for the Manumission of Slaves, &c., 1797. A Sermon delivered in the city of New York, on a day of National Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer, 1798. A Sermon delivered in New York, on a Day of Thanksgiving, Humiliation, and Prayer, observed on account of the removal from the city of a malignant and mortal disease, 1799. A Sermon occasioned by the death of General Washington, 1799. A Sermon before the New York Missionary Society, 1802. Two Discourses on Suicide, preached in the city of New York, 1805. A Sermon for the Benefit of a Society in New York, for the relief of Poor Widows with Small Children, 1808. A Sermon preached in New York, on the Divine Appointment, the Duties, and Qualifications, of Ruling Elders, 1809. A Discourse delivered in New York, on the Burning of the Richmond Theatre, 1812. A Sermon delivered at

Princeton, at the Inauguration of Rev. Archibald Alexander, D. D., as Professor, &c., 1812. A Sermon delivered at Baltimore at the ordination and installation of Rev. William Nevins, 1820. A Letter to the Editor of the Unitarian Miscellany, in reply to an attack on the Sermon at the ordination of Mr. Nevins, 1821. A Sermon delivered at New Haven, at the ordination of Rev. Messrs. William Goodell, William Richards, and Artemas Bishop, as Evangelists and Missionaries to the Heathen, 1822. Reply to Professor Stuart on the Eternal Generation of the Son, 1822. A Sermon entitled "The Literary Fountains Healed," preached in the Chapel of the College of New Jersey, 1823. A Sermon delivered at the opening of the new Presbyterian Church in Arch Street, Philadelphia, 1823. A Sermon preached at Newark, before the Synod of New Jersey, for the benefit of the African School under the care of the Synod, 1823. An Introductory Lecture addressed to the Theological Students at Princeton, on the Utility and Importance of Creeds and Confessions, 1824. A Discourse delivered at Princeton, before the Literary and Philosophical Society of New Jersey, 1825. A Letter to a gentleman of Baltimore, in reference to the case of the Rev. Mr. Duncan, 1826. A Sermon delivered in Baltimore, at the installation of the Rev. John Breckenridge, 1826. Two Sermons in the National Preacher, (Nos. 8 and 9,) on the Evidence and Duty of being on the Lord's Side, 1826. An Introductory Lecture addressed to the Students of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, on the Importance of the Gospel Ministry, 1827. An Introductory Lecture to the Students of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, on the Importance of Mature Preparatory Study for the Ministry, 1829. A Sermon preached at Albany, at the installation of the Rev. W. B. Sprague, 1829. Two Sermons in the National Preacher, (Nos. 98 and 99,) on Religious Fasting, 1831. A Sermon on Ecclesiastical Polity, (one of the Spruce Street Lectures,) 1832. A Sermon in the Presbyterian Preacher, (Vol. I. No. 1,) on the importance of Gospel Truth, 1832. A Sermon entitled, "A Plea for an Enlarged Ministry," preached in Philadelphia, before the General Assembly's Board of Education, and published in the Presbyterian Preacher, (Vol. III. No. 1,) 1834. A Sermon delivered at Pittsburg before the Association of the Alumni of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, 1835. Two Sermons in the National Preacher, (Nos. 198 and 199,) on the Importance and Means of Domestic Happiness, 1835. A Sermon preached at Baltimore, before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1835. A Sermon preached at Princeton, in memory of the Rev. George S. Woodhull, 1835. A Sermon preached at Baltimore, at the installation of the Rev. John C. Backus, 1836. Two Sermons in the National Preacher, (Nos. 230 and 231,) on Christ our Righteousness, 1836. A Sermon on the Dangers of Education in Roman Catholic Seminaries, preached in Baltimore and New York, 1837. A Sermon preached in Philadelphia, before the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, 1838. An Address delivered at Elizabethtown, at the dedication of a Monument to the memory of the Rev. James Caldwell, 1845.

In addition to the preceding, Dr. Miller published a Biographical Sketch of Edward Miller, M. D., prefixed to his works; an Essay introductory to Lectures to Young People, by W. B. Sprague; a Letter appended to Lectures on Revivals, by W. B. Sprague; Contributions to the Biography of Mrs. Margaret Breckenridge, &c., &c.

FROM THE REV. JAMES CARNAHAN, D D

PRINCETON, February 16, 1855.

Rev. and dear Sir: Several months ago you did me the honour to request that I would furnish you with some of my reminiscences of the late Rev. Dr. Miller of this place. You are aware that personal affliction and consequent derangement of domestic affairs have since occupied my attention, so that I could think of little else. And now, though I would gladly pay my tribute of affectionate respect to the venerable man, whose virtues and usefulness you wish to embalm, I confess I am at a loss where to begin and what to say. For half a century Dr. Miller occupied a very prominent place in the Presbyterian Church in this country, so that his biography in his public relations would be, to a great extent, the history of his denomination, for more than fifty years. It is to be hoped that this important service to the Church will ere long be performed by some competent hand—all that I can attempt, and I suppose all that you desire, will be a few general remarks.

Fifty years ago, I knew Dr. Miller from reputation and from his published works, especially from his Review of the Eighteenth Century and his Defence of the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination. Since that time the productions of his pen have been numerous and various, so that, as a writer on theological subjects, he is as well and as favourably known in Europe and America as any author in our country of the same period. In every thing he has written there is a clearness of thought, and a purity and precision of diction, which render his style as fair a specimen of good old English as our country affords. We find in his writings no laboured effort to involve in mist a common thought, in order to give it the air of novelty; much less do we find, as is too much the fashion of the present day, involved sentences consisting of high sounding words laboriously strung together, in order to give to the superficial reader the idea of profound thought, when in truth there is no intelligible meaning conveyed.

If Dr. Miller proposed no new theory on the subject of religion or morals, and stamped his name on the doctrine taught, he did all that we have a right to expect any one to do at the present day for the benefit of the Church—I mean that he stated in a perspicuous manner the teachings of the Bible, and met what he regarded the prevailing errors of the day, with the courtesy of a Christian gentleman. In this respect he may be considered as a model controvertist. He never substitutes personal abuse of an opponent for argument in refutation of his doctrines. While he states with all fulness, and maintains by fair argument, what he believes to be the truth, he never attempts to render ridiculous or odious those who hold different opinions.

Until 1823 my personal acquaintance with this excellent man was transient. From that time until his death, a period of twenty-seven years, it was my happiness to live in his neighbourhood, and to have frequent and almost daily intercourse with him; to see him in the pulpit, in the Presbytery, in the Board of Trustees of the College, in the social circle, and in private interviews; and I must say that the respect and admiration with which I regarded him both as a man and as a Christian, increased every year until he was removed from this world.

In the pulpit, I have heard men who, by the ardour of their utterance, the brilliancy of their imagery, and the energy of their action, would rouse the attention and excite the feelings of a popular audience in a higher degree than Dr. Miller; but for solid Gospel truth, presented in a distinct and logical manner, and expressed in chaste and appropriate language, he was certainly distinguished above most of his brethren. He loved to preach,—not for the sake of human applause; for he continued to occupy the pulpit, whenever an opportunity offered, long after he had reached the zenith of his fame. When his services were not

required in the Seminary, or College, or Church in Princeton, he would frequently ride to some neighbouring congregation, and volunteer his services, which were always acceptable both to the pastor and to the people. In leading the devotions of the large congregation, or of the social meeting, he was peculiarly happy. There was a simplicity and reverence in his manner and language, and an appropriateness in the topics which he introduced, which were admirably fitted to awaken devout feeling in the hearts of his auditors. Though he was not given to repetition in prayer, he sometimes, from the fulness of his heart, violated the rule which he prescribed to his pupils on this subject—*to be brief*. No matter at what time or place he was called on, he was always ready to engage in prayer in a solemn and devout manner; nor was it difficult for him to make the transition from social and cheerful conversation, in which he greatly delighted, to acts of devotion. His whole demeanour in public and in private indicated that he habitually acted under a sense of the Divine presence; but his devotional spirit was as far as possible from any thing like a gloomy habit of mind. He was a most genial and cheerful companion, abounding in rich and appropriate anecdotes, while he never descended to any thing unbecoming a Christian or a minister of the Gospel.

For several years the Professors of the Theological Seminary and the officers of the College were in the habit of meeting at each others' houses once in two weeks, for the purpose of spending the evening in easy and familiar conversation on subjects chiefly connected with the interests of education and religion. In these meetings Dr. Miller took a lively interest; and he contributed greatly to make them profitable and pleasant, not only by drawing largely from his own rich and varied stores, but also by eliciting from others whatever each one might know on the subject under consideration. I remember with what skill he would touch the key-note which would open the lips of his distinguished and venerable colleague, Dr. Alexander, or of the gifted and lamented Professor Dod, or of others whose presence helped to give interest to the meeting. He delighted to receive and to impart instruction by oral communication; yet it is remarkable that his fondness for social intercourse, and the solicitude of his friends to enjoy his company, were never allowed to interfere with his studies. The pleasant companion neglects his books—the student becomes a recluse. In Dr. Miller both these characters were most happily blended. Whoever has read or even glanced at his numerous publications, must be convinced that he was a laborious and successful student; and when we take into view his preparations for the pulpit, and for the daily instruction of his class in the lecture room, it is just matter of surprise that any man could perform so much intellectual labour, especially when it is remembered that Dr. M. did not enter on the performance of any public duty without full and accurate preparation. The great secret of his being able to do so much and to do it so well, was that he did every thing systematically. He had a time for every duty; and one duty was not suffered to encroach upon another. In his study he did not lounge, and permit his thoughts to wander from the subject before him. For the purpose of preserving his health, or perhaps as an excitement to mental exertion, he did all his writing, standing at his desk. In early life, and indeed to the close of life, he had a tendency to pulmonary disease. To counteract this tendency he was temperate in all things. Before he came to Princeton, and for some time after, he was in the habit of taking a single glass of wine at dinner, believing that it assisted digestion and promoted health. But he considered that his example might be injurious to others; and at that period of life when many think that artificial stimulants are necessary to sustain declining nature, he denied himself his former moderate indulgence, and abstained entirely from all kinds of intoxicating drinks. He adopted this practice, not because he thought the moderate use of alcoholic drinks in all cases in itself wrong, but from an apprehension that his example

might have an injurious effect upon others. He, however, often remarked that he never experienced the least injury or inconvenience from the change.

Believing that daily exercise in the open air was necessary for his health, he permitted no weather or engagement to prevent his walking or riding out, at least once every day. I have seen him in the most inclement weather in summer and winter, wending his way to the Post-office, or to make a necessary call, or to breathe the fresh air without any other object. While he carefully avoided a current of air coming upon him from a window or a door, he dreaded neither cold nor heat, nor snow nor rain, in an atmosphere freely circulating on all sides. I cannot doubt that this daily contact with the open air, connected with regular and temperate habits, was the means of sustaining to an advanced age a constitution not naturally strong.

In his personal habits and dress he was remarkably neat, without any thing, however, of undue precision. From the use of tobacco in all its forms, it was a matter of conscience as well as of *taste* with him carefully to abstain; for he believed not only that it was positively injurious to health, but that it tended to create a thirst for intoxicating drinks. In his manners he was polished and graceful, and duly attentive to all those proprieties which confer dignity upon social intercourse. Of the "clerical manners" which he recommended in his invaluable work on that subject, he was himself an admirable example. His own fine manners were no doubt to some extent the effect of culture—of having been accustomed from early life to mingle much in refined society; but they were still more to be referred to the legitimate acting of his benevolent affections. His words and actions were the unstudied expressions of a warm and generous heart. He was ready to assist a friend, not only when it was convenient to himself, but at the expense of his own convenience; and he did it with a heartiness and good will which made the kindness doubly valuable.

In the management of his secular and domestic concerns, he was well worthy of imitation. Economy in all his personal and household expenses was conspicuous; and if his creditor could be reached, he permitted no debt, great or small, to remain unsatisfied a week or a day. His private means, independent of his salary as a Professor in the Theological Seminary, were probably equal to the frugal expenses of his family; yet he did not permit his property to accumulate—he acted on the principle which he frequently inculcated—namely, that a large inheritance is generally a curse to children. It is impossible to estimate how much he distributed every year to good and charitable purposes; because he made no display of his charities by giving to particular objects large sums, worthy of being displayed as examples of liberality. But it could not be concealed that he refused aid to no object that he considered worthy of public or private beneficence. He used to say that he loved to have a nail in every building intended for the glory of God or the good of man.

At the time of his decease, Dr. Miller had been forty-three years a Trustee of the College of New Jersey, and he had seldom been absent from the meetings of the Board, and was always an active and influential member. A short time before his death he attended a meeting of the Trustees, and, before the business was finished, he rose, and, on account of the feeble state of his health, asked leave of absence the remainder of the session; at the same time stating that he did not expect ever to meet the Board again. His work, he said, was done; and, lifting his feeble hands, he prayed that the blessing of God might rest on the Trustees, the Faculty, the students, and all connected with the venerable and beloved institution. This was the final benediction of one who for several years had been the Senior Trustee. It was truly an impressive and solemn scene—not to be forgotten, I am sure, by any one who witnessed it.

Leaving it to some one of Dr. Miller's numerous pupils to say what he was in the Lecture room, I will only add that the crowning excellence of his character

was his humble and devoted piety, his attachment to the great truths of the Gospel, his earnest desire to honour his Lord and Saviour, and to extend to his fellow-sinners that precious Gospel by which he was himself so wonderfully sustained and comforted in the evening of his days.

I am, my dear Sir, with great respect,

Yours very truly,

JAMES CARNAHAN.

FROM THE REV. NICHOLAS MURRAY, D. D.

ELIZABETHTOWN, January 15, 1853.

My dear Sir: I cannot possibly refuse your request for my recollections of our late beloved and venerated Dr. Miller; and yet, as I am well aware that your own long and intimate acquaintance with him qualifies you to render every testimony that could be desired concerning his character, I shall limit myself to an account of an interview that I had with him a short time before his death—an interview rendered memorable to me not only by the fact that it was the last, but from its having witnessed to one of the most remarkable exhibitions of the very sublimity of Christian triumph, that have ever come within my knowledge.

The Historical Society of New Jersey had met at Princeton, now a place of patriotic, and classic, and sacred associations. It was a noble gathering of men distinguished in their various professions as Jurists, Advocates, Professors, and Divines; and there was a most cordial greeting and commingling of these historic associates. All differences in sentiments, professions, and politics, were laid aside, while in the pursuit of the one common object of honouring New Jersey by collecting materials for its history, and rescuing from oblivion the names of her many heroic and distinguished sons.

But one was absent who had rarely been absent before, and who was one of the founders and Vice President of the Society; one whose bland and polished manners always attracted regard, and whose venerable aspect always left an impression. His absence from the meeting, and in the town of his residence, excited inquiry; and when it was announced that Dr. Miller was very seriously ill, there was a universal expression of sorrow and sympathy. It was solemnly felt by all that in those historic gatherings we should see his face no more.

Dr. Miller's son conveyed to me a message from him that he would like to see me on the morning of the next day, if convenient. The hour of our interview was fixed; and, as other engagements required punctuality, I was there at the moment.

But, as the barber had just entered the room, he was not quite ready to see me, and he sent a request that I would wait half an hour. This my other engagements absolutely forbade; and, on sending him word to that effect, he invited me to his room. As I entered it, the scene which presented itself was truly impressive. The room was his library, where he had often counselled, cheered, and instructed me. There, bolstered in a chair, feeble, wan, and haggard, was my former teacher and friend,—one half of his face shaven, with the soap on the other half, and the barber standing behind his chair. The old sweet smile of welcome played upon his face, and having received his kind hand and greetings, he requested me to take a seat by his side. His communication was a brief one: he had written a history of the Theological Seminary for the Historical Society, which was not yet printed, and he wished an unimportant error into which he thought he had fallen to be corrected; and that there might be no mistake, he wished me to write it down,—thus showing his ruling passion for even verbal accuracy. When

his object in sending for me was gained, he then, in a most composed and intensely solemn manner, thus addressed me:

“My dear brother, my sands are almost run, and this will be, probably, our last meeting on earth. Our intercourse, as Professor and pupil, and as ministers, has been one of undiminished affection and confidence. I am just finishing my course; and my only regrets are that I have not served my precious Master more fervently, sincerely, and constantly. Were I to live my life over again, I would seek more than I have done, to know nothing but Christ. The burdens that some of us have borne in the Church will now devolve upon you and your brethren—see to it that you bear them better than we have done, and with far greater consecration; and as this will, no doubt, be our last interview here, it will be well to close it with prayer. As I am too feeble to kneel, you will excuse me if I keep my chair.”

I drew my chair before him, and knelt at his feet. The coloured barber laid aside his razor and brush, and knelt by his side. As he did not indicate which of us was to lead in prayer, I inferred, because of his feebleness, that it would be right for me to do so; and while seeking to compose my own mind and feelings to the effort, I was relieved by hearing his own sweet, feeble, melting accents. His prayer was brief, but unutterably touching and impressive. He commenced it by thanksgiving to God for his great mercy in calling us into the fellowship of the saints, and then calling us into the ministry of his Son. He then gave thanks that we ever sustained to one another the relation of pupil and teacher, and for our subsequent pleasant intercourse as ministers of the Gospel. He thanked God for the many years through which He had permitted him to live and for any good which He had enabled him to do. “And now, Lord,” said he, “seeing that thine aged, imperfect servant is about being gathered to his fathers, let his mantle fall upon thy young servant, and far more of the Spirit of Christ than he has ever enjoyed. Let the years of thy servant be as the years of his dying teacher; let his ministry be more devoted, more holy, more useful; and when he comes to die, may he have fewer regrets to feel in reference to his past ministrations. We are to meet no more on earth; but when thy servant shall follow his aged father to the grave, may we meet in Heaven, there to sit, and shine, and sing, with those who have turned many to righteousness, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Amen.”

I arose from my knees, melted as is wax before the fire. My full heart sealed my lips. Through my flowing tears I took my last look of my beloved teacher, the counsellor of my early ministry, the friend of my ripening years, and one of the most lovely and loved ministers with which God has ever blessed the Church. Every thing impressed me—the library, his position, the barber; his visage, once full and fresh, now sallow and sunken; his great feebleness, his faithfulness, his address, and, above all, that prayer, never, never to be forgotten! He extended his emaciated hand from under the white cloth that hung from his breast to his knees, and, taking mine, gave me his parting, his last benediction. That address—that prayer—that blessing, have made enduring impressions. It was the most solemn and instructive parting interview of my life.

When I next saw him, he was sleeping in his coffin in the front parlour of his house, where he often, with distinguished urbanity and hospitality, entertained, instructed, and delighted his friends. That parlour was crowded by distinguished strangers, and by many of his former pupils, who mourned for him as for a father—for a father he was to them all. And as they passed around to take a parting view of his countenance, from which even death could not remove its accustomed placid, benevolent smile, their every bosom heaved with intense emotion, their eyes were suffused with tears; and could the tongue have uttered the emotions of the heart, it would have been in the language of Elisha when he gazed

on Elijah ascending before him into Heaven,—“My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!”

His death was as calm and triumphant as his life was pure, disinterested, and lovely; and as pious men carried him to his burial, and as we covered up his remains under the clods of the valley, the prayer arose at least from one heart, “May I live the life of this righteous man, and let my last end be like his!”

There are many scenes in the life of Dr. Miller that memory frequently recalls—scenes in the class-room, in the General Assembly, in the Synod of New Jersey, in the pulpit, in the social party—scenes which occurred during the conflicts of parties, and in the frank and unrestrained intercourse of social life. In them all Dr. Miller was pre-eminently like himself. But the scene by which I most love to recall him, and which memory most frequently brings back, is that parting scene in his study. Oh, may that last prayer be answered!

With great regard, very sincerely yours,

NICHOLAS MURRAY

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.*

1791—1851.

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER was of Scotch Irish extraction,—his grandfather, Archibald Alexander, having emigrated from Ireland to Virginia in 1737. His father, William Alexander, was a person of great worth and respectability, and was one of the original Trustees of Liberty Hall Academy, which has since become Washington College. The subject of this sketch was born near Lexington, Rockbridge County, Va., April 17, 1772, and was the third of nine children. Among the incidents of his early life, he used to relate that, on his arrival at Liberty Hall, where he went to pursue his studies, he found, on unpacking his trunk, a copy of Soame Jenyns on the Evidences of Christianity, which his mother had placed there without his knowledge. He became at once deeply interested in the work, and did not lay it aside till he had finished reading it.

In 1788, a very unusual attention to religion prevailed in the Congregations in Virginia, South of the James River, and East of the Blue Ridge. In August, 1789, the Rev. William Graham, Rector of Liberty Hall, in compliance with an invitation from the Rev. John Blair Smith, then President of Hampden Sidney College, made a visit to Prince Edward, to attend a Communion in the Briery Congregation. He was accompanied by several of his young students, who, he hoped, might find the visit profitable to them. Archibald Alexander was one of the number; and the following incidents of the visit are related by himself:—

“The sermon of Mr. Graham on the text—‘Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,’ &c., was the first sermon that he preached, on his first visit to Prince Edward, when I accompanied him. It was preached at Briery, immediately after the administration of the Lord’s Supper; and Dr. Smith said to me that he had never heard more than one sermon which he liked as well, and that one was preached by the Rev. James Mitchel. I did not

* Memoir by his son, Rev. J. A. Alexander, D. D.—Presb. Mag., II.—Foote’s Sketches of Va., 2d Series.