



REV. A. M. FRASER, D.D.

Doctor Fraser and His Sermons

EDITED BY
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Staunton, Va.



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Church and State, and has never been openly active on political questions, nevertheless, "no one citizen of our city has had a more beneficent influence on the thinking people than he."

As an illustration of his leadership in the movements which concern the highest welfare of his city, he was Chairman of the Citizens Committee for raising the funds for the construction of the magnificent Y. M. C. A. building which cost over \$100,000, at a time when building was inexpensive. It is remarkable how the whole city rallied to his leadership. He was also chosen by the citizens of Staunton to introduce President Wilson on the occasion of his visit to the city.

There are few busier men. He makes as many visits as the average physician, he writes as much as the average editor, he makes as many addresses as the average lawyer, he is at the head of an institution that collects and disburses as much money as the average business establishment, he is personally responsible for as many people as the average college president.

He has stood in his place doing the full work of a man and great citizen in the town of his adoption these twenty-seven years, loved and honored by all.

H. W. McLAUGHLIN.

VII

A POTENT INFLUENCE FOR GOOD THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AN American writer has said that if a man can write a good book, preach a good sermon, or make a good mouse-trap, though he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten track to his door. It is a striking statement of the inevitableness of the general recognition of merit however modest. If a minister is a man of sterling character, sound judgment, consecrated talents, ample knowledge of the history, doctrines and work of the church, and power of clear thought and clear statement, then no matter how little he may desire prominence the church at large will seek him out and place him in positions of responsibility and influence. Dr. Fraser is universally honored and loved in his own community, but it was impossible that the influence of a man of his character and gifts should be limited to his own town or his own presbytery or his own synod. It has been felt and felt powerfully throughout the church.

Self-seeking is foreign to his nature. He has

not sought places; places have sought him. More than once colleges and theological seminaries have called him to professorial or administrative positions, and, while he has always felt obliged to decline such invitations and to continue his ministry in the pastorate, these calls to educational work afford striking proof of the wide reach of his influence and the estimation in which he is held by representative institutions of the church.

In other ways, however, he has been an important factor in educational work, having served on various college boards and committees, and having always been himself a liberal contributor and active leader in campaigns for the endowment of church institutions, while as chaplain of Mary Baldwin Seminary he has touched hundreds of young lives which have carried the influence of his pure character and strong teaching to every part of our land.

With his pen also he has exercised a far-reaching influence. Though daily pressed with the thousand and one things which in a large pastorate claim the minister's attention, he has found time to contribute to the church papers and reviews occasional articles on subjects of importance in connection with the doctrines of Scripture and the work of the church which are always characterized by cogent reasoning and clear expression. One of his tracts entitled "What is to be your Life Work? Why not the Ministry?" has had a very wide

circulation among the young people in our schools and colleges and has doubtless influenced many of them to devote their lives to religious work.

In the courts of the church he has long been recognized as a man of rare wisdom, poise and power. With none of the propensity for publicity and controversy which afflicts some ecclesiastics, he is always a man to reckon with in a deliberative body, and under constraint of conscience and zeal for truth he nearly always takes part in the debates that are precipitated on really important questions, especially those which touch the sphere and functions of the church. Whenever he takes the floor he is listened to with profound respect, alike by those who agree with him and those who differ with him, because all know that he is absolutely sincere and absolutely free from personal ambition and intrigue. The authority with which he speaks is the authority that goes with unquestionable purity of motive and unyielding independence of thought. Moreover he is a model of courtesy in controversy. There is never anything petty or personal in his contribution to a discussion however heated on the part of others. He discusses principles not men. He argues not for victory but for truth. I do not mean that he is always right; that would be too much to claim for any man. And I do not mean that he always carries his point. As was said of a great English statesman, he has often been on the losing side:

sometimes perhaps on the wrong side: never on the side of wrong. He is

True as a dial to the sun,
Although it be not shined upon.

He values the approval of other men of course, but when he believes he is right and is expressing his matured convictions popular approval is not considered. "They say. What say they? Let them say." His loyalty to truth as he sees it, his purity of character, his earnestness of purpose, taken with his power of broad comprehension, his gift of lucid statement, and his never-failing sweetness of spirit and courtesy of speech have made him an honored figure in all our councils and a power for good throughout the church—all of which has been fittingly recognized in his election to the highest honor within the gift of the church, the moderatorship of the General Assembly, a position which he now occupies—and adorns.

W. W. MOORE.

PART II.

SOME OF HIS MESSAGES