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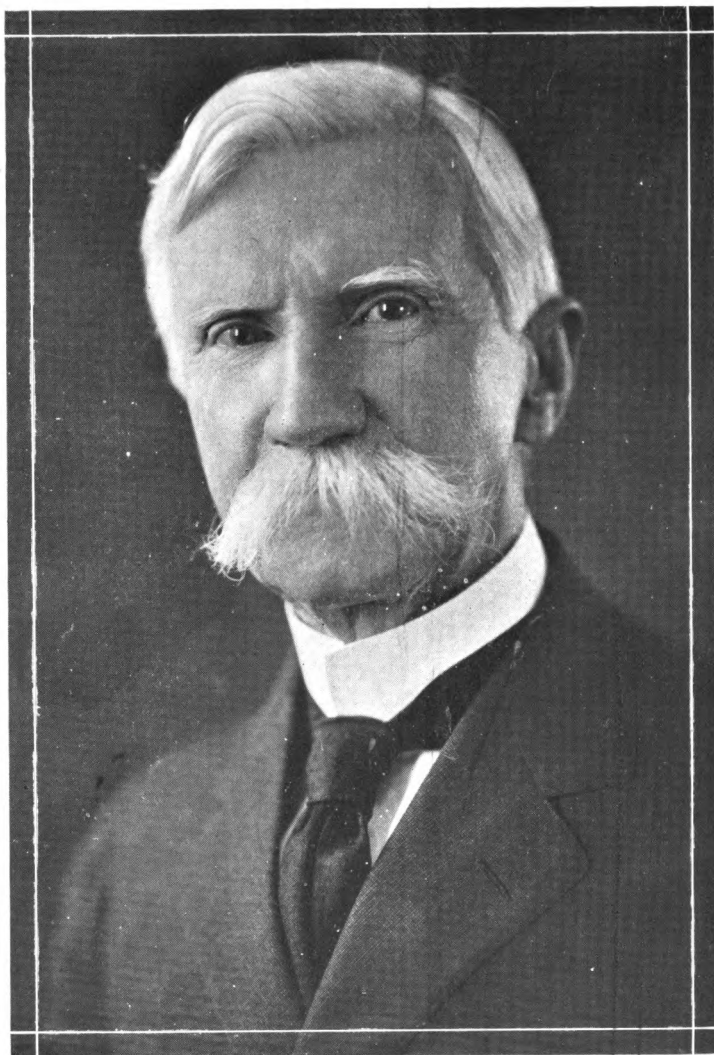
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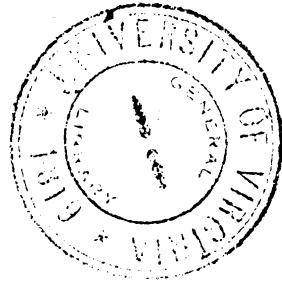
To *University of Virginia*

JAMES SPRUNT



JAMES SPRUNT

A TRIBUTE FROM THE CITY
OF WILMINGTON



RALEIGH

EDWARDS & BROUGHTON PRINTING COMPANY

1925

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This volume is a silent tribute
from the
City of Wilmington, North Carolina
to the Christian Life and character of
her honored citizen
JAMES SPRUNT, LL.D.
and is an expression of the love and affection
in which he was held
by the community

FOREWORD

The contents of this volume consist largely of Tributes and Resolutions passed by assembled bodies. Individual expressions are omitted.

In times of sorrow and trouble, when one feels overwhelmed by "the rivers of woe," there is granted a sustaining help in the consciousness of the sympathy of friends. This was so lavishly given to the family of Dr. Sprunt by rich and poor, white and black, of every creed and calling, from far and near, that it seemed not only unwise, but proved impossible to select from the mass of letters, telegrams and cables those to be included in this memorial. The letters are of so intimate and personal a nature, so lacking in cold formality of expression as to verify the truth that "he who soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

It may not be amiss to remark that in reading the letters from the representatives of the Sprunt firm the impression is made that these men, most of whom began their business careers as lads in the home office, are not merely lamenting the death of the senior member with whom they maintained business contacts, but they are sincerely and deeply mourning the loss of one who had been a sympathetic companion, a wise counselor, a true friend.

Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

JAMES SPRUNT

AN APPRECIATION

The passing away of James Sprunt, whose life has been a benefaction to the community, leads to a consideration of those particular characteristics that distinguished him while among us.

Trained in morals and manners by his cultured and religious parents and well taught at school, while still young he passed three years in perilous adventure at sea; an experience that largely contributed to the development of his character. Said the Psalmist: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, those see the works of the Lord and his wonders on the deep."

There they learn to "praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

And so in those days the soul of James Sprunt was drawn into close communion with the Creator.

"In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of the sea . . . in weariness and painfulness" his courage and resolution were strengthened, and like Paul, he too became a prisoner.

In those experiences he came to realize that the chief aim of man should be the thorough performance of duty; duty to his Creator and the

Saviour as taught at his mother's knee; duty to himself in fulfilling all the obligations that rested on him; and duty to his fellow-man in the various relations of life.

And it would seem he constantly had in remembrance the appealing words of the twelfth chapter of Romans, and sought to conform to their injunctions; among them, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, continuing instant in prayer, distributing to the necessities of the saints, given to hospitality." For conduct, such is the law and the gospel; and the daily life of James Sprunt was in accord with the precepts. Diligent in business, endowed with inherited gifts, enriched by experience, and earnest in his appreciation of what is fine and admirable in literature, he developed into manhood and became an active factor in the life of the community.

The great commerce that engaged him was the wonderful creation of his father and himself. It was the result of vision, of judgment, of resolution and of such excellence of administration as to establish the firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son high in the confidence and good will of all who came in touch with it at home or in the countries of Europe. Perhaps no other firm in the Southern States ranked so high.

And it is to be remarked with pride and satis-

faction that from the start the management of its branch offices at Houston, New York, Liverpool, Havre, Bremen and elsewhere was committed to Wilmington men, selected with wisdom from among the early associates of James Sprunt in his daily life. He did not seek aid elsewhere but found talent, capacity, and efficiency for his world-wide dealings here at home.

In considering his great commerce, it has appeared to me worthy to be ranked with that of the famous merchants of Venice that made the importance of that City by the Sea.

As successful as his enterprise was in material results, it worked no change in the kindly, modest, unobtrusive nature and bearing of the great merchant; he became only more deeply interested in matters pertaining to the community, the navigation of the river, the welfare of the pilots, the deepening of the channel, and the general improvement.

Then came a period when through the admirable efficiency of his associates he was released from the chief management of details, and after the fashion of Old Mortality imagined by his beloved Scotch author, he explored the traditions of Orton and the Old Cape Fear, and then, turning to the deep wells of his memories of the sea, with a loving hand he drew forth the waters that rendered fruitful the fields of literature where

sea tales and Blockade Running bloom and blossom as never before.

Then later came from the abundant storehouse of material he had accumulated *The Chronicles*, the most interesting local history that any community can boast. And the wonder has been how this great merchant and man of affairs could turn his sentences with such precision, express his thoughts with such elegance and quote so appositely from poets and prose writers as if he had lived exclusively among his books. Indeed his achievements in literature were so notable that the University in recognition conferred on him the highest degree awarded to literary merit.

In harmony with such culture is the agreeable picture of his fireside, where gentleness and affection pervaded the atmosphere and refinement lent its charm. There gathered congenial spirits, men of letters seeking relaxation and enjoying the intellectual fragrance that gave tone to the home; for he was "given to hospitality," and whether at Wilmington or amid the varied attractions of Orton he was happy with his guests of high thought and large purposes in life.

Not merely constant in his friendships but responsive in his affections, he took his friends to his heart, where those of closer and dearer ties were ever enshrined.

But above all things except his own duty to his

Maker was his filial piety—his manifestations of loving remembrance, illustrated in those benefactions that would have been dear to his parents in their lifetime.

Such was this citizen—the influence of whose life among his fellow townsmen and, indeed throughout the Commonwealth, was most happy and beneficent.

The provision of nature is that in this world nothing is lost. The influence of James Sprunt's life is not lost by his removal from amongst us. Many a heart has been silently touched, and influences emanating from his example continue without ceasing to sweeten life, irradiate sunshine, nourish courage and foster resolution, while bringing comfort to those in distress and promoting the pious work of extending the field of Christian endeavor both at home and abroad. The value of such a life is inestimable not only in its own generation but in those yet to come.

S. A. ASHE.

JAMES SPRUNT

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY THE REV. W. W. MOORE, D.D., LL.D.,
President of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

In 1812 Laurence Sprunt, a farmer in Perthshire, Scotland, married Christiana McDonald, daughter of a Highland family. They had three children, Alexander, James Menzies, and Isabella, who were born and brought up on a small farm known as "Viewfield," near Perth. Assisted by their maternal uncle, John McDonald, a prosperous planter in Jamaica, the children were highly educated in Edinburgh. After his graduation, Alexander Sprunt went to the West Indies and became junior partner in the firm of Reed, Irving & Company, of London and Trinidad, off the coast of Venezuela. He had charge of the business of advancing supplies to the planters of the Spanish Main and far up the Orinoco River, his office employing more than twenty clerks. His sterling qualities were promptly recognized, and as early as 1841 he is spoken of as a merchant of high standing, a Queen's Commissioner or Magistrate, and a ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church in Trinidad.

When the British Parliament freed the slaves

in the West Indies the planters were ruined and the occupation of the merchants was gone. Having lost in this way all the property he had accumulated in his fourteen years there, he returned to Scotland, and after some ineffectual efforts to reestablish himself in the old country he moved in 1852 to North Carolina, whither his brother, the Reverend James M. Sprunt, D.D., afterwards well known as pastor at Kenansville, as Principal of Grove Academy, and as Chaplain in the Confederate Army, had preceded him.

On a second visit to Scotland while still at Trinidad he had married Miss Jane Dalziel of Paisley, but then living in Glasgow, a lady of rare intelligence and charm and exceptionally beautiful Christian character. They were blessed with a large family of sons and daughters, whose influence in the business world, the religious world and the home circle has few parallels. Two of the children were born in Trinidad—Laurence, who died in infancy, and Margaret Tannahill. The third, James, the subject of this sketch, was born in Glasgow, June 9, 1846, and was only six years old when his parents brought him to North Carolina. They then had five children—Margaret, James, Mary, John and Alexander. They went first to Duplin County, where the brother above mentioned was already settled, and there they remained two years. After moving to Wilmington

in 1854 Alexander Sprunt found employment as an accountant with the Commercial Bank and later with T. C. and B. G. Worth. While he had much difficulty in providing for the support and education of his growing family with his modest salary, and while they and their older children experienced considerable hardships for some years, he evinced an extraordinary capacity for business and had begun to mend his broken fortunes when the outbreak of the War between the States again brought him up short.

He and his wife were of Covenanter stock and therefore not easily disheartened. On her family shield was an uplifted arm with the motto, "I Dare!" The faith and courage which they had inherited from heroic forebears and which had sustained them under these buffetings of fortune they passed on to their children, making of them leaders in business ventures and missionaries to distant lands. "The sons and grandsons of the Scotch father have followed him as elders in the kirk, and the sweet mother in her neat bonnet, who led her little flock on Sabbath into the family pew, leads a long procession of daughters and granddaughters, who, with lifted eyes, hold that procession in line and follow her steps." Many of them have been adventurers in the best sense of the word, but the greatest leader of high enterprise among them all was the eldest son—

and it is the story of his life that we would here set down.

As a boy James Sprunt studied at various preparatory schools: one year at Glasgow, Scotland, one year under his uncle at Kenansville, four years at Jewett's Academy, Wilmington, one year at Col. Radcliffe's Military Academy, and one year at Mr. Mengert's School—eight years in all. Being very apt he made excellent progress. His parents, observing his remarkable precocity, made every sacrifice to give him a good education. But in his fourteenth year, under the pressure of imperative circumstances, he was put to work with Worth & Daniel, his weekly wages being turned over to his father and the money applied to the family use. This arrangement, however, was not allowed to arrest his education entirely. He attended night school under Professor Tallichet in French and English Literature, and also, as he had a desire to serve the State at sea, he studied navigation under Captain Levy, a former United States naval officer.

From the time he was able to go with his father to his office, he responded to the appeal of the sea. He was fascinated by the busy scene that he watched from the windows overlooking the harbor at Wilmington, where vessels of all flags and nations discharged and loaded cargoes all day long. He says himself: "From early youth I

have loved the Cape Fear, the ships and the sailors which it bears upon its bosom. As a boy I delighted to wander along the wharves where the sailing ships were moored with their graceful spars and rigging in relief against the sky line, with men aloft, whose uncouth cries and unknown tongues inspired me with a longing for the sea, which I afterwards followed, and for the far away countries whence they had come." His mother, from whom he inherited his extreme sensitiveness, understood perfectly not only his delicate constitution, but also his delicate thought and fancy, and she was the gentle intermediary between the somewhat austere but sterling character of the intensely practical Scotch father and the imaginative boy whom the whole world of romance beckoned from the harbor. It is not meant that there was any lack of practical qualities in his make-up. The fact is he had in an intensive form that strangely blended Scotch temperament of vision and judgment, of poetry and hardheaded business sense. James Sprunt became one of the truly great business men of the age, but he was far from being a mere business man.

In his father's house every Scot who made the port was welcome. Their talk was all of foreign things and as broad as Her Majesty's wide dominion. The home conversation took all the family

back to Trinidad, to Glasgow, to Edinburgh, to Arran off the coast of Scotland, to the Highlands of song and story. The call of the world that lay beyond the sea made a mighty appeal to the imagination of James Sprunt and quickened his application to the study of the French language and to the mastery of naval science. He was being led imperceptibly but surely to that life which never lost its attraction for him.

He came to manhood in a troubled time. The War between the States had begun. The Federal Government proclaimed a blockade of Southern ports. The natural advantages of Wilmington made it an ideal port for blockade runners, as there were two entrances to the river and as the slope of the beach for miles is very gradual to deep water. Therefore, a light draft steamer, hard pressed by the enemy, could run along the outer edge of the breakers without great risk of grounding, whereas the pursuer, being usually of deeper draft, was obliged to keep farther off shore. Mr. Alexander Sprunt, seeking to run the blockade under the protection of his own Government, had been captured and was held a prisoner in Baltimore, and it required six months effort by Lord Lyons, the British Minister, to effect his release and his return home. The yellow fever had broken out in Wilmington, and on the advice of their physician, the Sprunt family took refuge

in Duplin County. Under these circumstances, with the men of the community all at the War, James Sprunt, as the eldest of the sons, had to be entrusted, young as he was, with missions of importance in connection with domestic affairs. We read, for instance, of his taking the horse and buggy of their host and kinsman, Mr. J. E. Hall, and driving fifty miles to get salt needed in curing Mr. Hall's bacon. There were many similar tasks. Accustomed thus from boyhood to bearing responsibilities beyond his years, he was more mature and capable while yet in his teens than most men are at twenty-one.

In the meantime, heeding his country's call in the hour of her need, he sought an appointment where he could utilize in her service his knowledge of navigation. In the third year of the War at the age of seventeen, he took passage on a blockade runner to Bermuda with the promise of a position on the *North Heath*, a vessel then building on the Clyde. When she arrived at Bermuda, Captain Burroughs, her commander, who had successfully run the blockade twelve times in charge of the Confederate steamer *Cornubia*, appointed him purser of the *North Heath*. But shortly after sailing from St. George, Bermuda, bound for Wilmington, they ran into a hurricane and for two days and nights were in imminent danger of their lives. Tossed upon a

raging sea, every man of the crew of forty-eight except those at the wheel was lashed to the vessel, while they bailed with buckets and used hand pumps on the flooded fireroom. For an entire night she wallowed like a log in a trough of mountainous waves which broke over her in ever increasing fury. The water had risen in her hold until every one of the fourteen furnaces was extinguished. There was no steam to run the donkey boilers and steam-power pumps. Lashed to one another in the blackness of darkness, which was relieved only by the intermittent flashes of lightning, they held on in despair until morning, when they began to gain on the leaks. Thus encouraged they continued their toil until the steam pumps could be used in relieving the boiler room. Eventually the captain, an admirably cool and able seaman, got the ship under control and she was put about and headed back to Bermuda for repairs. The strain of this experience resulted in young Sprunt's case in a spell of fever, which confined him to bed for a long time on shore, and when the ship was ready for sea, as he was still disabled, Captain Burroughs reluctantly left him behind. A little later, however, he was appointed purser of the steamer *Lilian*, and on this vessel he passed through all the dangers and exciting experiences of a daring blockade runner.

The value of the service rendered to the South

by these swift and beautiful steamers that ran the blockade of the Carolina Coast can hardly be overstated. It was the Northern Navy more than anything else that brought about the final defeat of the Confederacy. At the beginning of hostilities the South did not possess a single ship of war and her inability to buy or build an efficient navy proved irremediable and fatal. It was the blockade runners that enabled the South to continue the unequal conflict as long as she did. One of them, for instance, after a hair breadth escape, delivered nine hundred barrels of gunpowder to the Confederates at Wilmington, and this ammunition was used afterwards by General Albert Sidney Johnston at the battle of Shiloh. It was "this remarkable traffic (through the beleaguered city of Wilmington) which almost wholly sustained the Confederate States Commissariat during the last two years of the War."

Among the official records of the War at Washington are the reports of the United States Steamship *Shenandoah*. Her log of Saturday, July 30, 1864, off Cape Lookout, says, "At 3:45 p.m. sighted a steamer burning black smoke to the eastward; made all sail in chase. At 4:30 p.m. made stranger out to be double smokestack side-wheel steamer, apparently a blockade runner, standing to the northward and westward. At 5:45 p.m. he showed rebel colors. Called the

first division and powder division to quarters and began to fire at him with the 30 and 150 pounder rifle Parrott. At 6 p.m. beat to quarters and fired all the divisions. At 7 p.m. took in foretopgallant sail and foresail. At 7:30 took in foretopsail. During the chase fired 70 rounds from 30-pounder Parrott, 18 rounds from 11-inch guns, and one round from 24-pounder howitzer. At 8 p.m. stopped firing, gave up the chase, stopped engines." Of this record Dr. Sprunt wrote half a century afterwards: "This matter-of-fact entry, read at random from the official records of the war, stirs my blood, because I, then seventeen years of age, was purser of that blockade runner, and it was I who hoisted those 'rebel' colors on that eventful day fifty-five years ago: and thereby hangs a tale." Then follows the blood-stirring story of the *Lilian*, loaded to the hatch combings with gunpowder for Lee's army; of her hundred-mile chase and bombardment by the *Shenandoah*, of the "fearful accuracy" of the cruiser's gunnery notwithstanding the deflection of her aim by the heavy sea that was running, of the young purser's sensations as the hurtling shells passed only a few feet from his head, of his taking the Confederate mail bag and government dispatches to the furnace by the captain's orders and seeing them go up in smoke at a critical moment in the chase when capture seemed inevitable, of the crippling of the

Lilian by the bursting of one of her boilers, reducing her to a desperate condition, of her wonderful escape after nightfall, when by a clever ruse, the *Lilian*, guided by the flash of her pursuer's guns, stopped for a few minutes, then, putting her helm hard over, ran across the wake of the *Shenandoah* straight out to sea, and on the following morning, though badly crippled, passed through the Federal fleet off Fort Fisher under furious fire from the whole squadron and steamed into Wilmington with her cargo of powder.

It requires some effort of the imagination to connect these perilous adventures in war with the personality of the quiet, courtly, silver-haired gentleman so vividly remembered by many of us as the leading citizen of Wilmington, but the qualities which made him a good soldier of his country sixty years ago were the same qualities which in the piping times of peace gave him the preeminent position which he held in the business world, in social life, and in religious activities—honored and beloved on every hand, North and South, as patriot, philanthropist, and man of God.

On the third outward voyage the *Lilian* was chased and bombarded for five hours by five Federal cruisers, disabled by shot below the water line and captured, and James Sprunt, sharing the fate of his associates, became a prisoner of war

(August 24, 1864) and was confined for some time in a casemate of Fort Macon. In company with Pilot "Jim Billy" Craig, afterwards well known as the Reverend J. W. Craig, an honored minister of the Methodist Church, he escaped from prison and they made their way to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Attempting to return to North Carolina he was shipwrecked on Green Turtle Cay in the Bahamas, and it was eight months before he got back to his anxious parents. His last service afloat in the War was as purser of the Confederate steamer *Susan Beirne*, of which Eugene Maffitt was chief officer, and he continued on this blockade runner until the fall of Fort Fisher.

Evidently the men who rendered that kind of service to the Confederacy were men of splendid courage. But not all of those who composed the crews of the blockade runners were equally brave, and Dr. Sprunt has recorded, with a touch of humor, his experience with a few of them who were slackers. He says, "It is remarkable that the blockade runners seldom included in their complement of officers and crew a professional doctor or surgeon, although there were occasions when they were greatly needed. . . . The runs from Wilmington to Nassau were made in forty-eight to fifty-two hours and to Bermuda in seventy-two to eighty hours, and the sick or wounded received scant attention until they

reached port. It therefore devolved upon the purser or the chief officer to attend such cases, and my very limited knowledge of medicine restricted the treatment of our alleged sick men to compound cathartic pills and quinine. The majority of the cases of 'Pains all over them' were malingerers, some of whom dodged their duty during the entire voyage." He adds an amusing anecdote in regard to such a case that was related to him by Captain Hobart of the Royal British Navy, son of the Earl of Buckinghamshire, who was commander of the blockade runner *Don*, and who later became Hobart Pasha, Admiral in Chief of the Turkish Navy.

In her book, *The Life and Services of John Newland Maffitt*, Mrs. Maffitt, the widow of that gallant officer, says that during the War her husband had formed a high opinion of the ability of Mr. James Sprunt and had requested for him the position of purser of the *Lilian*, which Captain Maffitt commanded and which he gave up in order to take command of the steam ram *Albatross*. When he decided to take command of the *Cuba* he sent a message to Mr. Sprunt through a friend, requesting him to become his chief executive. While feeling in his modesty that the position was beyond his ability, Mr. Sprunt might have been induced to take it, notwithstanding his youth and inexperience, had it not been for

other engagements which compelled him to decline; but he appreciated the compliment and he never wavered in his affectionate attentions to Captain Maffitt during his life and in his endeavors to keep his memory alive after his death.

Colonel James Morris Morgan of Washington, D. C., writing for the magazine *Adventure* in a recent issue, makes the following interesting statement concerning one of the exciting experiences of the *Lilian* above related: "Talking of adventures, the other day I accidentally got into communication with a grandson of Captain Maffitt, the man who ran the C. S. Cruiser *Florida* into Mobile Bay while he was ill with the yellow fever and had himself brought on deck to pilot his ship through the United States fleet in broad daylight. His ship was badly cut up, but she got through. Young Mr. Maffitt showed my letter to a Mr. James Sprunt of Wilmington, N. C., who at once wrote me that he had been the purser of the blockade runner *Lilian* when we made a wonderful escape from a big sloop-of-war which forced us among the breakers near the beach.

"It seemed a miracle that the little *Lilian* was not grounded and wrecked, but we kept on, being short of coal, and having to make a port, cost what it would. We reached the bar at Wilmington, N. C., just after daylight and had to take the broadsides of the whole blockading squadron as

we went in. The *Lilian* was badly cut up and the end of one of her boilers had been carried away by a shell. In his official report in the Naval War records, Captain Ridgeley, of the Sloop-of-war *Shenandoah* (U. S.) says: 'He was indeed a bold blockade runner. He kept the rebel flag flying until I lost him in the darkness. I fired one hundred and forty shot at him.' The officers at Fort Fisher said it was the boldest dash they had yet seen. I had thought I was the only survivor of that exciting episode, but here turns up a most prosperous cotton merchant in Wilmington who was attached to the little craft and who writes me that although an octogenarian like myself, he still thrills at the recollection of those shells tearing through our little ship, but above all remembers the qualms he experienced when we were rolling in the surf of those shark-infested waters."

When the *Lilian* was disabled and captured there were five Cape Fear pilots on board, all of whom of course were made prisoners of war along with James Sprunt, and he was for a long time thrown into daily contact with them. They were all mature men and he a stripling of seventeen, and he absorbed their stories as thirstily as a sponge drinks water. The lure of the sea was upon him. The heroism of the deep filled his soul with great dreams, and his imagination and

sympathy invested the calling of the pilot with a kind of holy mystery. The favorite figures of his religion were determined by this experience. To him God was the Captain of his soul, the Pilot to the safe haven, and his confidence in the Divine Grace was an Anchor both sure and steadfast. One of these pilots, his friend J. W. Craig, says: "There was a moral lesson, to those who heeded, in the devious path of our hunted fugitives of the sea in war time, for the Christian warfare is a running fight through many adversaries of the soul, and if we will but follow the lead of the Great Pilot, He will bring us safe at last to 'an anchor within the veil, whither our forerunner is already entered.'

"There is a beautiful figure in this Scripture, which few landsmen recognize. The approach by sailing vessels in the olden time to the inlets of the Mediterranean Sea was often baffled by adverse winds, or calms; a little boat was then lowered, which carried into the harbor a kedge anchor which was dropped overboard. To this small anchor was attached a line by which the vessel was warped by the windlass into the haven. The man who carried the anchor in was the forerunner, and, in a figure, he is Christ, the Captain of our Salvation; the line is the line of faith, and the man at the windlass is a human soul who trusts in God." Mr. Sprunt also adopted this interpretation of

Hebrews 6:19, and referred to it frequently. The imagery of the sea remained with him to the last. Once when writing of his old shipmate Craig himself, he said, "We often talk of those who took part with us in the stress of war, all of whom have gone out beyond the boundless tide, and we are thankful that we are in the convoy of him who walked upon the sea, and that we shall be guided to our desired haven by His good hand upon us."

His admiration for those men who held their lives so lightly and their service so highly became stronger with the years, and when in mature manhood he was elected a member of the Board of Navigation and Pilotage one of his reasons for accepting the position was his hope that he might have an opportunity to serve the Cape Fear pilot as well as the Cape Fear section in general. And that hope was richly realized.

After the war Mr. Alexander Sprunt and his son James, who was then nineteen years old, established a small commission business in South Water Street in Wilmington. The determining factor in this venture was five bales of cotton that belonged to James. On his third inward voyage on a blockade runner he had brought in ten barrels of sugar in which he had invested all his earnings and savings from his naval service. His father sold the sugar for him and invested the

proceeds in twenty-four bales of cotton, which he expected to carry out on the next trip. This proved to be impracticable, and, as the War neared its end, the cotton was sent up the country to Fayetteville for safety; but it was caught in the zone of the ravages of the great incendiary, Sherman, whose raiders burned twelve of the bales. Seven of the rest were stolen. With great difficulty five bales were saved and after the surrender they were sold for cash at forty-eight cents a pound. With the proceeds the firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son was founded in 1865-66. Such was the modest beginning of a house "whose ships now sail all seas and whose agencies are in all lands."

The export trade of Wilmington at that time was largely confined to naval stores—spirits turpentine, rosin and tar—and it was these products rather than cotton which the now famous cotton firm handled for the most part at first. Later on they bought and sold a little cotton on the side, but for some time their principal line was naval stores. Indeed it was only after the Carolina supply of naval stores began to fail that the firm turned its attention more largely to cotton. When the despoiled forests ceased their lavish yield of turpentine and the haulage of naval stores to Wilmington left but a narrow margin of profits, they saw that business would either have to move

with the forest of long-leaf pine or would have to handle more marketable merchandise. Fortunately for the later development of the firm the connections which the Sprunts secured for their supply of naval stores could be used also as contributing points for cotton, and there was no interruption in the export trade when the business in naval stores was abandoned.

Soon after the War, as soon indeed as the firm could afford the expense, Mr. Alexander Sprunt made a business trip abroad, during which he effected the arrangements by which the house began to deal direct with ports in Great Britain instead of through New York agencies—the first direct foreign connections used in the export of naval stores—and that visit of his paved the way for a trip made by his son James a few years later. On this trip James was absent five months and he spent in that time only \$450. In order to keep down expenses he went to Europe on a third class passage; but on the other hand he always put up at the best hotels for the sake of being thrown with the kind of people whom he wished to cultivate. Being more adventurous than his father, he went over to the Continent, to Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, seeking other business connections. During these five months he was enlarging his information, studying conditions, making acquaintances, and

incidentally meeting important people, "whose seemed always to take a fancy to the keen-faced, red-headed young Scot doing business in America." It was a peculiarly interesting time to visit Europe, as the Franco-Prussian War had just closed and he had opportunity to see with his own eyes some of its effects, especially its effects on France. In a letter written to Mr. Archibald Graham from Paris in June 1871, eighteen days after the French troops gained possession of the city and delivered it from the Communists' Reign of Terror, he gives a graphic account of the havoc wrought by the insurgents on the magnificent public buildings which were the glory of Paris and on hundreds of beautiful residences.

During the seventies and early eighties his business life was a monotonous grind of clerical duties on a small salary. His father said that if James had married before he was thirty-six the firm could never have been established, because at no time in those frugal years could they have afforded greater expenditures in living. He and his father did all the work.

But the monotony of his business life in these laborious years was relieved by the delightful social, intellectual and religious life of the town. He is said to have known every man, woman, and child in the place. He was especially drawn to those choice spirits of the community who rep-

resented the best of its character and culture. The men who taught the excellent private schools and academies were his intimates. With the MacRaes and other Scotch families of the town there was of course close association. The families of Captain John Newland Maffitt, the Honorable George Davis, the Reverend Joseph R. Wilson, D.D., and other men of outstanding gifts, were on his regular visiting list. He was one of the moving spirits in the Historical and Scientific Society, of which his father was also a member. Always interested in books, he was associated with his father in the Wilmington Library and helped materially with its support. In his twenty-fourth year, in 1870, he united with the First Presbyterian Church, and in 1873 he was made a deacon, and with this office came also the responsibility of serving as Church Treasurer.

Thus the seventies were full years, years of clerical drudgery in his office, of extensive business development, of informing foreign travel, of intimate association with the best minds of his own community, and of growth in religious life and work. This larger assumption of religious duties was tactfully fostered by his pastor, Doctor Joseph R. Wilson. Doctor Wilson was a brilliant and versatile man, of rare culture. As a young man he had been Professor of Chemistry in Hampden-Sidney College, Va. Later he was

pastor at Staunton, Va., then professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., and at the time of which we write he was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Wilmington. He saw deep into the possibilities of the gifted young men of his congregation, such as James Sprunt, Edwin A. Alderman, President of the University of Virginia, and his own son, of whom he used to say, "I expect Woodrow will be President some day." The son's full name was Thomas Woodrow Wilson, and in those days he was known in Wilmington as "Tommy Wilson." He was an intimate friend of the Sprunt boys. In 1896 when the writer was traveling in Europe with James Sprunt's brother, the Reverend Alexander Sprunt, D.D., we visited the regalia room in Edinburgh Castle, where the ancient Scottish crowns are displayed on velvet cushions in a circular glass case. There were a good many visitors that day, and a gentleman whom I had never seen before jostled Mr. Sprunt and looked up to beg his pardon,—then stepping forward eagerly, he said, "Isn't this Mr. Sprunt of Wilmington?" "Yes sir," answered my companion. "Well, Mr. Sprunt, I'm Tommy Wilson." It was a very simple incident, but it impressed me greatly as an indication of the unpretentiousness of the character of the future War President. He was already a man of international fame in letters,

but when he met an old friend the intervening years and their developments were lost sight of, and he straightway put their relations back on the boyhood basis. We strolled on together then for some time and found him an exceedingly agreeable and entertaining companion. His discerning father, who recognized so early his talents and promise, seemed to expect a great deal of James Sprunt also in the business and religious world. Dr. Wilson was a seer.

In 1882 occurred the accident which so greatly affected all his subsequent life. He was driving to the Sound with his youngest sister Jeanie (Mrs. J. A. Holmes) when the horse became frightened and ran away. Mrs. Holmes was thrown out but not seriously injured. James got his foot entangled in the buckling of the reins and in the accident which followed his foot was crushed. He was taken to a near-by house and doctors were sent for. There was a distance of ten miles to go through heavy sand. There were poor facilities—an uncertain kerosene lamp, a rude kitchen table, and by chance a bolt of new cloth that the lady of the house had bought to make into underclothes. The foot had to be amputated. There followed a long period of convalescence retarded by blood poison and profound depression. When the wound was healed and the limb was able to bear the strain he was taken North where he

bought an artificial foot. The skill of the manufacturer was shown in the success of the mechanism, for Mr. Sprunt was able to walk with only a slight limp all his life and could even climb stairs without much difficulty. After the operation the surgeon said to him, "Well, Jimmie, it is the arm-chair for you the rest of your life"—a prediction that proved to be wide of the mark, thanks to the courage, energy and enterprise of his patient. The Reverend Peyton H. Hoge, D.D. of Pee Wee Valley, Kentucky, one of Mr. Sprunt's cherished friends and for years his pastor, says that when he went abroad some fifteen years after the accident just described he was furnished with letters of introduction to Mr. Sprunt's representatives in a score or more of places all over Europe; and that as he looks back upon the boys who were growing up in his congregation when he left Wilmington he finds them in positions of trust and responsibility in the leading cities of Europe and America, having gotten their chance in life from the young man thus summarily disposed of by one who knew much of the human body but had not learned the invincible quality of the human soul.

After that accident the subject of physical pain naturally claimed a large part of Mr. Sprunt's thoughts and affected no little his outlook on life. Because of his infirmity every cripple called forth

his sympathy, and about fifteen years later, when his means could justify it, he and his wife undertook the treatment of the deformed and crippled children in the Delgado mill settlement at Wilmington, with a view to eliminating by operation the cases of curvature of the spine, club foot and other disabling infirmities. The children were sent to Baltimore for these operations. Many cures were effected, and there are boys and girls today who walk and run because James Sprunt remembered the days before he lost his foot and wished that every crippled child who came under his observation might walk and have a better chance in life.

On the twenty-seventh of November, 1883, he married Luola Murchison, second daughter of Colonel Kenneth McKenzie Murchison and Katherine Elliott Williams, then about twenty-five years old, twelve years his junior, but so mature through unusual cultivation of exceptional artistic and intellectual gifts that she was always his best critic, ablest adviser, and most congenial friend. There were three children born of this union: Kate, James Laurence, and Marion. Kate died in early childhood, and Marion at the age of twelve years.

The year 1884 was a momentous year in the history of the firm. That is equivalent to saying that it was a momentous year in the history of

business in the city of Wilmington and the State of North Carolina. Mr. Alexander Sprunt died and James was left to bear alone the whole responsibility. It had become apparent to him that the business was hampered by antiquated methods and that a radical reconstruction of it must be made. He saw that under the changing conditions it was no longer possible for the house to do what it had formerly done in naval stores. There was urgent need of a vast expansion of its business in cotton. He took into junior partnership his youngest brother, William, and adopted the policy for the firm which was to determine to such a large extent its later greatness. The two brothers made perfect partners. They were admirably adapted to the two definite sides of the cotton exporting business. William Sprunt, fitted so well by nature to deal with the man in the street and with the countryman on his farm, bought the cotton in the interior through agents, with whom he kept in the closest daily contact by mail and wire. James Sprunt, with his foreign knowledge, sought markets for the commodity and carried on the business of handling the export from embarkation to delivery. And these two definite lines of effort, carried on separately by each, but consulted over daily by both, worked out happily and successfully from first to last.

What James Sprunt thought of that brother of

the cheery disposition and unshakable faith, is indicated in the following lines written in pencil, found among James Sprunt's papers after his death and probably intended to be used as a toast at an annual firm dinner:

To my youngest brother and life partner
WILLIAM HUTCHINSON SPRUNT
Whose is the highest place in the respect
of his people, in the affection of his family
The just meed of his kindness and forbearance
His dignity and simplicity
His unwearied industry
Unawed by opinion
Unseduced by flattery
Undismayed by disaster
He confronts life with unique courage
And death with a Christian's hope

Little wonder that, as one who knew them well has said, "To the day of his death James Sprunt reached out after his brother 'Will' in the same way that he reached for his indispensable stick."

It is well known in business circles that cotton houses lead a precarious existence and are usually short lived. It is said that they seldom weather the vicissitudes of a single generation. The nervous nature of the business attracts many speculators, who are fascinated by the opportunities it affords to make fortunes overnight. But there are of course frightful risks, and fortunes

are as quickly lost as won. It was the more stable side of the business that appealed to such men as the Sprunts. They dealt in actual cotton. The principles of integrity which furnished the basis for the firm in the days of the father were maintained by the sons, and, resisting the allurements of wild speculation, they built upon the sure policy of buying on a close margin and selling whenever possible at a profit. In the end honesty, caution and perseverance established confidence and brought success. "It is a remarkable fact that from the beginning of the firm in 1865-66 up to the present time, although hundreds of millions of dollars have passed through the main office in Wilmington and their branches in Boston and Houston and Liverpool and Bremen and Havre, not on any occasion has their paper ever been dishonored." A London banker once described a visit he paid to the Governor of the Bank of England to ask for assistance at a time of financial panic. The Governor said he was quite ready to render assistance if the applicant could furnish satisfactory securities. The banker presented gilt edge securities, stocks and bonds, but the Governor insisted upon commercial paper. "Give me," he said, "some of that Sprunt paper, and I shall be entirely satisfied."

As already indicated, James Sprunt foresaw that the sources of cotton supply and demand

would eventually be brought into closer relations. As Dr. John M. Wells, his former pastor, has felicitously put it in a summary of his achievements in the business world, "he had the rare gift that men call vision. He saw the fleecy cotton fields of the South with a practical monopoly of a world necessity. He saw the cotton mills of the whole world looking to this section for raw material. And he realized that the firm that made the path from field to foreign loom the smoothest and least expensive would secure the volume of business. And so he placed his buyers in the local markets. He shipped the cotton that they had bought in carload and trainload lots to the port. He there compressed it and shipped it in chartered vessels to the foreign ports. At the great commercial centers of Great Britain and the Continent he established his sales offices, and from those offices he supplied the mills of Europe." At the juncture of which I am writing he saw that the time had come for a great enlargement of the foreign connections of his firm. He therefore made another tour of seventeen foreign countries in which American cotton was used, and established direct business relations with other foreign consumers. In all he established on this and succeeding trips about one hundred agencies through which Wilmington compressed cotton could be marketed in Europe.

Writing of the longest of these business trips abroad, he says; "About the year 1888 my firm had established business relations with Russia by the export of cotton direct from Wilmington to Reval, and in order to promote this trade which promised to be profitable, I resolved to visit this remote country and ascertain by personal contact how far we might go with our limited resources in the development of direct trade with the spinners in Lodz, Poland, and in the extensive cotton mills of St. Petersburg and Moscow. I have crossed the Atlantic Ocean some twenty-three times, often without a traveling companion and under depressing circumstances, but while I was in the heart of Russia ten thousand miles from home without even an acquaintance to cheer me, I had nostalgia written all over me. I was never more homesick in all my life. I had undertaken this long journey under pressure of duty which impelled me, and one night in my room in the huge Slavensky Bazar Hotel in Moscow I thought I would die of lonesomeness." This state of mind gave way later to a more cheerful mood when he formed personal friendships with some of their correspondents to whom he had brought letters of introduction.

It was after the assassination of the good Czar Alexander II, who had freed the serfs. He describes vividly the fiendish conduct of the

anarchists, who, in order to compass the death of the Emperor, had mined a street with explosives enough to kill ten thousand people, harmless people who gathered to see the Czar pass, a fate which they escaped only by a change of the route at the last moment, in consequence of which the crowd on this street had melted away.

“When we arrived at St. Petersburg,” he continues, “I was shocked to see the streets and parks nearly full of dead men—there were thousands of them. I said, ‘There was a revolution or a street fight here last night.’ ‘Nothing of the kind,’ answered my friend, ‘they are all dead drunk from vodka. Yesterday was a holiday (there are two hundred of them every year in Russia), and the Government finds it cheaper to let them sleep off their spree wherever they fall. After a while they will get up and go home.’ It is remarkable that this semi-barbarous empire by the ukase of the Czar became a prohibition country in advance of the so-called civilization of the West.”

He was much impressed by the religious devotion of the Russian people. There was a church or shrine on every street corner. There were eleven hundred licensed drosky drivers in St. Petersburg at that time and he says that not one of them ever passed a sacred place without bending low and crossing himself. “Within the

most pretentious church on the Nevsky Prospect and quite near to my hotel was a most beautiful icon of the Virgin, upon whose hands were almost priceless jewels. For several weeks the Greek priest observed that two devout pilgrims dressed in the garb of devotees worshiped before this image for an hour every day at noon. This daily devotion after a while ceased to attract his attention. One day after several weeks the strangers were missing, and a careful examination of the sacred image revealed the fact that they had gradually gnawed off the precious stones while pretending to kiss the Virgin's hands."

Mr. Sprunt was such a keen and intelligent observer, and he writes so interestingly of what he saw that one cannot help wishing that he had had leisure to write more than he did. But these brief excerpts, besides illustrating his skill in description, indicate the yearning of his heart for friends, the bodily and mental discomfort he endured, and the difficulties he encountered in trying to establish these numerous foreign connections.

There were many difficulties in the working details of the plan at the American base also. The depth of water in the Cape Fear and on the bar was not sufficient to float safely the most desirable class of vessels for the export trade, and ship owners were slow to trust their vessels upon

a tortuous stream in shallow water with only three feet rise of tide. These obstacles, however, were all surmounted in the course of time. The requisite plant also was installed at Wilmington. The Champion Cotton Compress was put in operation by the firm, and the Wilmington Compress and Warehouse was chiefly owned and operated by them. The plant is among the best and most complete in the South, representing a large outlay in capital, and it is so conveniently arranged as to afford the most improved facilities for the loading and unloading of five large steamships simultaneously."

The sound principles and business sagacity of James Sprunt meant a vast deal to his home town. During the half century covering his activities Wilmington has made remarkable progress as a business center. There have been many contributing causes of this expansion, such as the enlargement of the jobbing business, the development of the trucking industries, the great increase of bank deposits, and the multiplication of the facilities of commerce. But no other factor has been so effective as the business inaugurated by his firm. In his preface to Mr. Sprunt's *Chronicles of the Cape Fear River* Captain S. A. Ashe says: "The combined production of cotton in North Carolina and South Carolina in a good season is approximately two and a half

million bales, of which the local mills take by far the greater part. Of the residue the Sprunts buy from the producers through their local agents at 115 interior stations about half a million bales. These large exports of the value of \$30,000,000 pay tribute to Wilmington to the extent of over \$1,000,000 annually in railroad freight, in handling expenses, trucking, compressing and storing, and besides from \$50,000 to \$100,000 are left by the Trans-Atlantic steamers in the port of Wilmington for port charges and expenses. Moreover, the eight hundred employees of this company, white and black, contribute much of the money in circulation in Wilmington that supports the retail trade."

The good credit and exceptional prestige attained by the firm is well illustrated by an incident of the year 1907. There was something like a panic throughout the country, and widespread business depression. Banks began to be suspected, as a number of them in the North had failed. There was no Federal Reserve Bank to stabilize the country's finances, and the situation looked grave for the local banks in Wilmington. In order to establish confidence the firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son guaranteed to all their compress hands and local employees, numbering eight hundred or more, their savings on deposit, provided they would not withdraw their accounts

within a given period of time, and they made the same liberal offer to their cotton buyers throughout the states of North and South Carolina. This gave the banks time to recover from the strain and incidentally confirmed the reputation of the Sprunts for fair dealing and generous treatment. It did a great deal also to prove the strength of the firm both at home and abroad.

In 1884, on the death of his father, who had represented the British Government in North Carolina for about twenty years, James Sprunt was appointed British vice consul, and during his tenure of this honorable post he twice received the formal thanks of the British Government—once from the British Admiralty for his correction of its important aids to navigation, and again from Lord Salisbury, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, for his official report on the *Cuba* man-of-war incident. He always exceeded the exact limitations of his duty. If a ship grounded in the river under peculiar circumstances he was at pains to send an exact account of it to the British Government that the Consulate might be informed, to the Underwriters of the Royal Exchange that they might govern themselves accordingly, to the insurance companies in the United States that they might be advised, and to our Senators and Representatives in Congress that they might

form their opinion of the necessity for more work on the rivers and harbors program.

In 1907 the Kaiser appointed Mr. Sprunt Imperial German Consul for North Carolina and sent him his autographed commission, a very high compliment which was not solicited by him or his friends. He acted in that capacity for five years, during which he was twice complimented by the Imperial Chancellor Von Bulow for his official reports. When he resigned on account of impaired health Emperor William decorated him with the Order of the Royal Crown, which was given only for valor in battle and for distinguished services to the state.

By the year 1900 Wilmington began to feel keenly the inadequacy of her harbor facilities. The port was gradually regaining in steamship traffic what it had almost entirely lost in sailing craft, but it had and still has the serious handicap of all such tidewater sections, the choking of the river channels by erosion. The Harbor Master reported at that time that more than thirty vessels had grounded under way or at anchor in the lower harbor within a year on account of insufficient depth of water. He recommended an outside dredged channel in which to swing the vessels to their anchors. In order to meet this and other transportation needs Mr. Sprunt was appointed chairman of a committee from the

Merchants Association to advocate an anchorage basin at Wilmington and a channel of four, six or eight feet throughout the year from Wilmington to Fayetteville, the head of navigation for the Cape Fear River. These two objects were finally accomplished. But Mr. Sprunt continued to care for the river all the rest of his life. He was in the closest daily touch with the pilots and, as British vice consul, and as agent for Lloyd's, as well as in the interests of his own business, he was under the necessity of keeping the sharpest lookout for shoals and shifting channels and for deficient range lights, and of maintaining, if possible, depth buoys and adequate lighthouses and lightships. His tireless energy made the river comparatively safe, but all the approaches to the harbor, Cape Lookout and Frying Pan Shoals, continued to be so dangerous as to cause many mishaps to shipping.

In 1908 the lightship that had been protecting Frying Pan Shoals was moved from the Knuckle thirteen miles farther out to sea, thus causing greater hazard to ships bound for Wilmington. Mr. Sprunt, as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Navigation and Pilotage, accompanied by Senator Overman and Congressman Godwin, sought an interview with the Lighthouse Board and the Secretary of the Department of Commerce and Labor at Washington. The Sec-

retary recommended an appropriation for another lightship on Frying Pan Shoals, and Senator Overman introduced the amendment to the Sundry Civil Bill providing \$115,000 for this purpose.

Mr. Sprunt's zeal in seeking to protect the entrance to the Cape Fear River had been quickened by the experience of the British Steamer *Sheppy Allison*, which had been dangerously stranded the year before in a fog on Cape Lookout Shoals and had been rescued by the gallant seamanship of Captain J. H. Quinan, commanding the United States Coast Guard Cutter *Seminole*. Always eager to give generous recognition to any heroic action, Mr. Sprunt, in his capacity as Agent for the Lloyd's Underwriters of the Royal Exchange and as British vice consul, presented to Captain Quinan on behalf of the British insurance companies a very handsome and costly silver service inscribed "to commemorate the time, place and circumstances of the aid given so promptly and effectually." The gift was accompanied by a letter of profound appreciation to the commander, officers and crew of the ship for their services. This is said to be the first instance on record of the presentation of a silver service to one of the United States revenue cutter fleet.

Again in 1910 Mr. Sprunt went to Washington in the interest of the harbor and river improve-

ments and laid before the House Committee of Interstate and Foreign Commerce the lamentable condition of the lights by the Big Island and Old Brunswick. In every gale the lights were extinguished. He explained the inadequacy of the method and the inefficiency of the service with such telling force that eventually a modern and effectual system was adopted and maintained. During the World War the river improvements were necessarily neglected, but in 1919 he resumed his efforts, urging the need of a Cape Fear jetty to scour and deepen the ship channel and save the continual expense of dredging.

For thirty-five years he had been connected with the Board of Navigation and Pilotage, and for the last seventeen years of that period had been the Chairman, but now at the age of seventy-five and with impaired health he sought relief from the onerous duties which he had discharged so long and so successfully and addressed the following letter to the Board:

WILMINGTON, N. C., 25th April, 1921.

Gentlemen of the Board of Commissioners
of Navigation and Pilotage,
Wilmington, North Carolina.

Your active initiation and coöperation during a most trying period of commercial depression, and unhappy personal dissensions on the part of the pilots, having brought relief through legislative enactment with the mutual ap-

proval of all concerned, and I having served as a member of this honorable board for 35 years, and as Chairman for 17 years, and having passed the age allotted for human activities, do now ask the favor of your permission to resign the Governor's Commission which expires by limitation on 15 April, 1925, and to withdraw from the membership of this Board.

I have endeavored in my official and private life and in my public writings to magnify the office and the personnel of the pilots with whom I have been intimately associated for several generations, and to whom I am grateful for many expressions of friendly commendation, and it is a source of great satisfaction that I shall carry with me the assurance of the personal devotion of every pilot on the Cape Fear.

Thanking you again for your many courtesies during the course of our service together, I am

Yours faithfully,

JAMES SPRUNT,

*Chairman of the Board of Commissioners
of Navigation and Pilotage.*

The plans for incorporating the business were put into effect in 1919. Since 1911, when Mr. T. E. Sprunt, Mr. J. Laurence Sprunt, and Mr. Walter P. Sprunt had been added, it had been composed of five members. To these five were now added Mr. D. H. Lippitt, Mr. W. J. Bergen, Mr. John Hunter Wood, head of the New York office, Mr. H. Markley Crosswell, manager of the Houston office, Mr. L. Brown McKoy, manager of the Charlotte office, Mr. Thomas R. Orrell, Manager of the Havre office, and Mr.

W. L. Walker, manager of the Rotterdam office, Mr. Alexander Sprunt, (son of Mr. W. H. Sprunt) and Dalziel Hedderwick of the Liverpool office. In 1921 the corporation took possession of its new home in the office built for its occupancy. James Sprunt took this notable occasion to write a circular letter to every junior employee of the corporation, reminding him that the firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son had been founded in 1866 upon the principles of integrity and that it had been maintained ever since on the same high plane, never having had its paper dishonored and saying that, in entrusting them with positions of importance, he entreated them to live in the fear of God and to preserve the great traditions of the oldest cotton exporting firm in the United States.

James Sprunt appreciated youthful promise of every kind and was truly "a helper of many." He was generous with praise and lavish with encouragement. Many a useful man is in the ministry today in the home field and in the foreign field because of the help given directly by James Sprunt in securing an education. One of the young fellows whom he urged to stick it out at Annapolis when the boy was discouraged was Edwin Anderson; and he lived to see Anderson the commanding officer of the Asiatic Fleet the summer of Japan's awful earthquake. He would

take the greatest pains to get a promising boy enrolled at West Point or Annapolis and was always eager that they might have what he felt he had been denied.

His helpfulness knew no color line. He was the friend of the black man as well as the white. The Negroes never had a better friend. This was signally shown at a critical time in the political affairs of Wilmington. Urged on by certain politicians who were then in positions of importance in the State, a small group of unscrupulous white men sought to capitalize the negro vote. Their wild talk and indiscreet actions inflamed the Negroes, and it was hardly suprising that the public conduct of some of them became insupportable. A white person was apt to be treated with indignity wherever he appeared, and white women scarcely dared walk the streets in daytime unaccompanied. The crisis came almost like a clap of thunder; the white men of the community suddenly realized that it was a question of race supremacy, and they made their plans to make an appeal to arms if that should be necessary. Not even their immediate families knew of these plans until the day came to disclose them, and that day was the fateful morning when a citizens committee waited until ten o'clock to receive from the colored editor of the local Negro newspaper a complete retraction of statements

recently published reflecting upon white women and expressing certain evil aspirations. The retraction was made, but stupidly it was mailed instead of being sent as directed by hand. So when the clock struck ten and the letter did not come, the committee went to the printing plant and began to dismantle the press, as they had declared they would do. Unfortunately some one set fire to the building, and as it was an old ramshackle affair, it was soon in flames, and those flames like a signal fire shot up into the sky as a call to all the white men of Wilmington to come and defend the honor of their homes. Many things of importance to the wellbeing of Wilmington were done that day, but the facts with which we are concerned here are those connected with the cotton business of Alexander Sprunt & Son. The firm had in its employ hundreds of Negroes. Most of them had been long in the business and were respected for their integrity. A careful supervision was held over the crews of stevedores and ordinary laborers as well as over the cotton classers, as the work was important and had to be absolutely protected from fire on account of the inflammable nature of cotton. The men, on the whole, were far superior to the element that was fomenting the trouble. When they heard that the building in which the obnoxious printing press was located had been burned they became

panic-stricken and determined to "knock off" work and seek refuge in their own homes. It was the height of the "busy season," several ships were in port awaiting cargoes. James and William Sprunt went down to the wharves to try to pacify their "hands." They pledged protection if they would stay quietly at work. They did not know how difficult it would be to redeem this promise. In time of riot passion often over-rides reason. A company of hot-headed men under violent leadership, estimating all Negroes alike and declaring that no group of them should assemble in any place, trained a machine gun on the crowds of Negroes at the Compress and ordered them to run. At this very time the Sprunt brothers were among their men speaking to them and reassuring them. They were interpreting the real mind of the Committee of Safety, but unfortunately the passions of the multitude had been roused. The machine gun was meant for use and not for mere intimidation. When it became evident that his men would be fired on, James Sprunt had himself hoisted upon one of his big uncompressed cotton bales and said, "Shoot if you will, but make me the victim." That brought the white men to their senses. Thus was the pledge of safety to the Negroes redeemed. They were permitted to go unmolessted throughout the whole time of terror.

At the church on the day of his funeral the thing that struck one most was a body of about a hundred Negroes who had been given some of the best seats in the building close to the pulpit on the main floor, and this on a day when all the business houses in Wilmington were closed and when the people lined the streets, and when there was insufficient room in the church for the white people who wished to do honor to his memory. The *Africo-American Presbyterian* of Charlotte, N. C., in an editorial entitled "Wilmington's Foremost Citizen," paid a warm tribute to his character and work, commending especially his Company's interest in the welfare of the large number of colored men in its employment, and adding that "more than once its word has been a bulwark of defense for its Negro employees." It should be mentioned here that the hospital for the colored people at Wilmington was built by Mr. William H. Sprunt.

One of James Sprunt's most notable traits was his genius for friendship. He had in extraordinary measure the faculty of attracting to himself the best spirits, who, under the influence of his kindness, courtesy and comradeship, his broad culture and sparkling humor, and his delight in whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report, soon passed from the stage of pleasant

acquaintance to that of warm and abiding affection, and no man I have ever met has seemed to me to derive more pleasure from his friendships, and certainly none has *given* more pleasure to his friends. Any one who had ever been his guest in the historic house which was his home in Wilmington, the house once occupied by Governor Dudley—with its unrivaled river views, and its spacious rose garden, and its fascinating interior adornments, including by the way the only complete collection of portraits of the original Lords Proprietors of Carolina—any one who had ever been his guest there or in his lovely colonial mansion at Orton Plantation down the river, cherished the memory of it through life as ideal Christian hospitality. Many of those whom he favored with his friendship will recognize the picture given by one of his nieces of his walking at the front of the procession at the New Year's reunion of the Sprunt clan to the chapel on his great plantation with the gray banners of the moss-hung live oaks streaming above his snow-white head, and the blue river sparkling at the foot of his terraces, and of his limping down that sunny path with the help of his cane. There he loved to gather his friends. Many of them from other communities as well as from Wilmington have unfading memories of those house parties at Orton.

Dr. Sprunt held many public positions. Besides those already named—British vice consul, German consul, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Navigation and Pilotage, and others—he had been President of the Wilmington Produce Exchange, President of the Seamen's Friend Society, President of the State Literary and Historical Association of North Carolina, President of the North Carolina Folk Lore Society, Trustee of the University of North Carolina, and a member of the Wilmington Board of Education.

It is a striking proof of Mr. Sprunt's versatility that in addition to the discharge of the duties belonging to all these positions, and in addition to his large and varied activities as head of the greatest cotton export house in the world; as host in chief to distinguished visitors to Wilmington, to whom "the community always looked to do the right thing at the right time in the right way"; as leading citizen, munificent philanthropist and active Christian and church officer—it is a striking proof of his versatility that he should have achieved distinction in the realm of letters also. In 1914 he published a portly volume of more than six hundred pages entitled *Chronicles of the Cape Fear River*, which was pronounced at the time the most notable book that had been published in North Carolina in many years. A second edition, greatly enlarged, was brought out in 1916, and this

edition was not for sale—whoever wished it and had any good reason for possessing it was given a copy with the compliments of the author. All through life he loved the Cape Fear River. His hopes and fortunes have been singularly associated with it. Not only his business but the pleasures and the happy incidents of his daily life have been so blended with its waters, so to speak, that he cherished a warm affection for the historic stream itself. That book, therefore, was written out of his very heart, and it contains a wealth of historical information concerning this romantic region such as can be obtained nowhere else. Shortly after the publication of it the University of North Carolina conferred upon the author the degree of Doctor of Laws. About the same time he was elected a member *causa honoris* of the Alpha Chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society of William and Mary College. In 1920 he published another volume, also the only one of its kind, entitled *Derelicts*, an account of ships lost at sea in general commercial traffic, and a brief history of the blockade runners stranded along the North Carolina Coast 1861-1865. As an example of the kind of catastrophes described in this book it may be mentioned that about forty years ago the fine British Barque *David G. Worth*, staunch and strong in every respect, commanded by Captain Thomas Williams

and owned by Mr. Sprunt, sailed from Wilmington with a full cargo of naval stores. The captain's wife accompanied him, and the crew numbered sixteen. From the day of her departure from Wilmington bound to Bristol, England, up to the present time not one thing has ever been heard of her. She and her captain and his wife and her crew of sixteen and her cargo vanished absolutely from the face of the ocean.

He wrote copiously on other subjects. For example, he published in the *Union Seminary Review* in January 1920 an article of forty-five pages on "The Restoration of Jerusalem," matter sufficient for a small volume. In this article he described conditions in the Holy City at the time of the World War and after, and discussed Zionism and other theories of the probable future of the Jews in Palestine. He wrote memorials of a number of Wilmington's distinguished and useful citizens, such as the Honorable George Davis, David G. Worth, Esq., and Dr. A. J. de Rosset. He wrote numerous historical sketches and stories and some verse of genuine merit. His facility in writing was remarkable. It resulted partly from exceptional native ability and partly from constant reading of literary masterpieces—the Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, Montaigne, Macaulay, and others. He had a retentive memory, and he quoted freely at will from his wide reading.

It was not for nothing that he learned in childhood that man's chief end is to glorify God. When asked on one occasion what suggestion from his experience in life he would offer to the young, he replied, "Unswerving integrity, sobriety, perseverance, out of door exercise, and faith in the goodness of God." The main interest of his life was religion. As his fellow elders in the church have said, "he held his secular affairs subordinate to the interests of God's Kingdom, and his business success as a talent to be used in the service of that Kingdom." All his multifarious activities were suffused with the Christian spirit. Like Abou Ben Adhem, he was "one who loved his fellow-men," but he was no mere humanitarian. The mainspring of his abounding beneficence was his gratitude and love to our Lord. He once explained to his pastor, Dr. Hoge, that he had been prevented from doing what he wanted to do in the church and what perhaps others, seeing the extent of his business, might think was his due proportion, by the assumption of a debt, for which neither he nor his firm had any legal responsibility, but yet which he had thought it his duty to assume. It was a debt that would have staggered most men of his resources at that time. But he had undertaken it and was working through it. "When that is done," said he "I expect to

assume a larger proportion of responsibility in the church, and my hope is so to develop my business and to provide for my family that the time will come when I can devote not the tenth nor the half but the whole profits of my business to the service of the Lord." And this he admitted many years afterwards he had very nearly accomplished.

It would require more space than we have at command to describe even sketchily the constant and generous outflow of his Christian liberality in the relief of all manner of suffering and need, in the establishment and maintenance of Christian ordinances on his own estates and in his own community, in the erection and equipment of numerous churches, in the support of various missions at home and abroad, and in his gifts to the seminal work of Christian education. But we may mention specifically a few of his many good works. The buildings which he erected for churches, manses, schools, and hospitals were attractive in appearance as well as substantial and conveniently arranged. He built the beautiful Immanuel Church and manse in Wilmington. He built the lovely Winter Park Church in the suburbs of Wilmington in memory of his eldest sister, Margaret Tannahill, (Mrs. B. F. Hall). He built the exquisite church at Chapel Hill, the seat of the State University, in memory of his

wife, and also the chaste Colonial Chapel at Orton overlooking the river. In 1903, in memory of their little daughter, he and Mrs. Sprunt built in the Delgado settlement a schoolhouse to be used in conducting a day nursery and kindergarten for the children of the mill operatives, their hearts having been touched by hearing of several fatal accidents of burning in the homes of the employees who had been obliged to leave their children in the houses while they worked in the mill. He built the Marion Sprunt Annex to the James Walker Memorial Hospital at Wilmington in memory of the same little daughter, who died in her twelfth year. He erected the James Sprunt School for Boys and Luola Sprunt School for Girls (in memory of his wife) at the Kiangyin Mission in China, as well as homes for the missionaries at the same station. He greatly enlarged and improved the Sunday school building and Session room of the First Presbyterian Church at Wilmington. He and his brother William built jointly the infirmary of the Barium Springs Orphanage in North Carolina. They built jointly also the Church of the Covenant in Wilmington in memory of their father and mother, and installed there a set of chimes—which, by the way, played softly the hymns of the Christian's hope, "Abide with Me," "Lead, Kindly Light," "How Firm a Foundation," as his funeral procession

passed the church on its way to the cemetery. During the Laymen's Missionary Movement in the Southern Presbyterian Church he paid the salary of the Reverend J. Campbell White. For many years he furnished half the support of the large mission station at Kiangyin, China. He established at the University of North Carolina the James Sprunt Historical Monographs, which enabled the University to publish important articles and sketches for which no funds were available. At Davidson College he established a loan fund for young men who desired to study for the gospel ministry. When he heard that certain members of the faculty of Union Seminary were not able, at a time when the war and other conditions had increased greatly the cost of living, to provide comfortably for their families, he supplemented their salaries in order to relieve the difficulty. In 1911 he gave to the Trustees of the Seminary the sum of \$30,000, since increased to \$50,000, for the purpose of establishing a perpetual lectureship which would enable the institution to secure from time to time the services of outstanding ministers and authoritative scholars in addition to the regular faculty as lecturers on subjects connected with various departments of Christian thought and Christian work. One of the objects of the foundation, besides affording fuller training to the students for their

ministry, was the creation of a sound and permanent Christian literature, and in the thirteen years since its establishment it has placed thirteen valuable volumes in the hands of the Christian public—and will continue to produce a volume a year throughout the future.

In an editorial published at the time of his death the *Richmond News-Leader* said of him that he never lost the spirit of his forefathers in the rush of his great industrial career. He was a Covenanter among Adventurers. Where others spent of their millions in costly forms of amusement he sent out missionaries and endowed colleges and created lectureships. "Here in Richmond his love of his fellow-men will be remembered by the lectures that bear his name at the Union Theological Seminary. As these lectures are printed annually and are circulated, they will be read by thousands who will find in them stimulation and spiritual strength.

"Wise in many things, James Sprunt in nothing better disclosed his sound judgment than in the selection of trustees for his benefactions. The foundation he created for the lectureship has been made worth many times the \$50,000 he invested in it, if for no other reason than that it has been at Union. The president and committee in choosing the speakers have brought before the student body notable men who have presented

brilliantly themes on which millions have been thinking. The seminary was and is debtor to James Sprunt and mourns today his passing: James Sprunt could not have been otherwise than proud of the manner in which the seminary discharged his trust." To which it may be added that he has often stated emphatically that no investment he had ever made had given him more satisfaction. Further proof of this is seen in the fact that in his will he made a bequest to the seminary of \$10,000, for its library fund.

As soon as the United States declared war on Germany, Dr. Sprunt's son Laurence enlisted. He was stationed a long time with the British Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow. James Sprunt placed at the disposal of the Government his speed yacht the *Luola*, and also gave the use of his private wharf at the foot of his garden. He was Chairman of the New Hanover Committee of the Council of Defense and served untiringly on the Sailors and Soldiers Committee which sought to aid the local enlisted men and later all the drafted ones. He was also Chairman of the Memorial Committee and kept the names of the heroes from New Hanover County before the public through the newspapers, calling attention to their supreme sacrifice whenever the death of one of them was reported. Among the first victims of the influenza was Miss Kelley, the

trained nurse who had charge of Dr. Sprunt's little grandson and namesake. She died within three days after she was stricken. There were some ten thousand cases at one time in the community. The plague had subsided on the day that the Sprunt firm (always advised in advance by their foreign connections) received the joyful news that an armistice had been declared. That meant for James Sprunt that the war was over, that the slaughter of four years was ended, that God had spared his son, and that business could resume a more normal course. He turned to his secretary and said, "In recognition of God's great mercy, I will present to the First Presbyterian Church a new organ to sing His praise." Forthwith he dictated a letter to this effect, which brought his pastor around within an hour; the matter was formally presented to the Session for their approval and the organ was ordered. It cost \$17,000, and no expense was spared to install it to the best advantage.

In 1910 he had a fall and broke the hip that supported the mechanical contrivance which held in place his artificial foot. It was a long time before he could get about at all after this mishap, and he often said that his "harness," as he called it, pressed upon the delicate and tender spot involved in the break and made him uncomfortable and restless nearly all the time. It is

wonderful that any man of his sensitive temperament could endure the discomfort that this incessant irritation caused. Early in 1924 he had an attack of lumbago which settled in his lame side and caused continual suffering. He was no longer able to attend church regularly, but going one Sunday morning about this time, he heard the plea of the Committee from the Mission Station in Kiangyin entreating the congregation of the mother church to give them additional housing facilities. They reminded the First Church people that in the last year they had increased their working force (of the number the Reverend Charles W. Worth, Jr., one of the recent graduates of Union Seminary, and Mrs. Worth had gone to the station supported by Mr. Sprunt), and although some of the workers were always on furlough, there were not enough rooms for each missionary to be accommodated within the station. James Sprunt went home and, calling up his pastor, Dr. Gilmour, asked him to come to see him, and then and there offered to give personally the required amount, \$7,000, for the erection of a double residence to be named for his mother, Jane Dalziel Sprunt. This was his last undertaking. But in his will, in addition to the bequest to Union Seminary already mentioned, he left a generous legacy to Davidson College, and provided liberally for the First Presbyterian Church of Wil-

mington and for the Mission Station at Kiang-yin, besides making provision for all his nieces and nephews, other relations and a few friends.

An unfortunate fall on the steps and an automobile accident followed one after the other, and an organic condition, aggravated by both and dating from the time of his broken hip in 1910, made it necessary to seek relief through an operation. Shortly before his seventy-eighth birthday surgeons who had been brought down from Baltimore for the purpose performed the operation at his home. Two months later on the ninth of July he passed peacefully to the "inheritance of the saints in light."

James Sprunt was a great Christian. He had been brought up on the Bible and the Shorter Catechism. When he was called upon to lay away the wife he so tenderly loved, he asked his pastor to use as the committal service those two statements in the Catechism which have to do with the believer's future, and when his own tired body was laid to rest, his honored brother, Dr. Alexander Sprunt, in tones that faltered and then rang clear, recited the same great words of faith:

The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.

At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

A community is known by the manner of man that it honors. The significance of this Book of Remembrance lies in the fact that it is a revelation of civic character. James Sprunt was universally recognized as Wilmington's ideal citizen, the finest embodiment of the qualities that we admire and wish to conserve and perpetuate. "First in citizenship, in intellect, in material achievements, in literary accomplishments, in constructive benevolences, he was unique and without a peer in the life of this community"—so declared the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce in its memorial minute. "As a business man he was by common consent without an equal; as a citizen first in everything that concerned community life and interest; as a philanthropist generous and constructive; as a friend loyal, sympathetic and constant. He was an institution within himself, a bulwark of strength to business, an example to the aspiring, a consolation to the needy. His name was an asset, his character a resource, his humanity a refuge. 'His like we shall not look upon again.'"—so declared the Board of Directors of one of the city's strong corporations. Such was the appraisal of him in words carefully

weighed by his associates in the business world. He was a man of wealth, but the essential fact about that is that his wealth was honorably acquired and nobly used. He was a great captain of industry, but the essential thing is that his nature was not dwarfed but enlarged by his devotion to business. Some men become mere business machines; their nobler powers are atrophied—their natures are narrowed and shriveled by the very intensity of their devotion to business. It was not so with him. With all his sagacity and skill and success in practical affairs, with all his concentration of energy upon whatever enterprise he had in hand, he remained to the last an idealist, high-souled, broad-minded, sympathetic, benevolent, devout. We could not but recognize in him a fulfillment of the ancient promise of God that “A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” In the strength of his character and the kindness of his heart he was like a great rock affording shelter to many from the sweep of calamity. In the outflow of his benevolence he was like rivers of water in a dry place. We rejoice that the streams of it have not only flowed copiously through his own community, but that they have gone far and wide through this land and other lands and even to the ends of the earth,

pure, refreshing, lifegiving. We thank God for a man who was both a rock and a river, both a shelter and a source of fertility.

This city has been richly blessed in many ways but it is a thrice happy community in the fact that in an age accused of complete absorption in things material its leaders in business are not indifferent to the things of the mind and the heart; that they do not undervalue character and culture; that the man to whom the community points as its model citizen, the finest product of its life, was not only a capable and successful man of affairs, but a man of culture and charm, of purity and faith. It was this intellectual and moral refinement, this high strain of the mind and spirit, which gave him a distinction among the mass of men "like a braid of shining gold on a sleeve of hodden-gray."

And it is the priceless value to a community of qualities like these, so splendidly exemplified in him, that justifies this movement to perpetuate the memory of such a character and such a life. Let this memorial therefore say from this day forward to our children and our children's children, "This was our ideal citizen, an upright and able man of affairs, an unselfish leader of civic progress, an open-handed philanthropist, a golden-hearted gentleman, and a reverent and radiant man of God."

MEMORIAL TRIBUTES

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WILMINGTON

Full of years and honors James Sprunt passed through death unto life July 9, 1924.

A member of this church since 1870, serving in the offices of Treasurer and Deacon with his characteristic faithfulness and efficiency, this congregation did, in 1896, raise him to the position of Ruling Elder, "to take part in this office with us."

No tribute of mere words, from this Session, would reveal its deep sorrow and sense of loss at his passing from us, but we can only lift our sorrowing eyes to the great God, the comforter of troubled souls, and fill our hearts with prayers of thanksgiving to Him.

Thanks that there has been lived among us a life, so full and rich and rare, and that it has been given to us to have felt its touch and influence.

Thanks for the quiet, peaceful ending of a life, that had been filled with far more than the usual burden of trials, trouble and pain.

Badly broken in body in early manhood, he yet met these trials—bodily infirmities, blows to

love and hope in loss of dear ones, vicissitudes of fortune—with an energy, born of confidence and hope, that the world calls daring but the soul calls trust.

Called to early maturity by circumstances of war, James Sprunt made name and place in the history of the Lost Cause by faithful and patriotic service in the dangerous, but indispensable, service of breaking the blockade of the enemy and bringing help and succor to those in need—work symbolic of his whole life.

This early experience, without doubt, implanted in his heart the seeds of love for the Cape Fear River and its people that was ever manifest in his long career, and the nature of the service rendered developed those native instincts of succor and help, always so characteristic of the man.

Ambitious, sound of judgment, tenacious of purpose in spite of seeming failure, we give thanks that he was permitted to live to see these ambitions gratified, judgments vindicated and purposes attained.

The world will pay its tribute of respect and admiration to a life of success, of honor, integrity and philanthropy and thereby honor itself in recognizing greatness when seen. Society will miss the open door of hospitality—opened so often for the community's guests of honor. Char-

ity suffers the loss of one whose ear ever heard its appeals. What of his church?

Here at home and in far distant lands many a monument of wood and brick and stone rises up with silence that speaks, as witnesses of his love for the church, his desire to adorn the Bride of Christ, to make the work and worship of his Master more beautiful and dignified and inspiring to men's souls. Here in his own church on every side are proofs and testimonials of that love.

Here where he has been for so many years a chosen leader, where his word was of paramount influence, and his service was so humbly and modestly rendered that only God knows its measure and reward.

His generosity rendered possible many of the most effective agencies and efforts of the church; many a serious halt in work of supreme value has been prevented by the sacrificial giving of James Sprunt. This man gave not only of his abundance but his most liberal gifts often meant sternest sacrifice.

His greatest mature ambition was to be a living illustration of the power of God unto salvation, and his greatest happiness would have been to realize that his example was a tower of strength to any.

Let his life, character and example be an inspiration to this membership, be an inspiration to

reconsecration of mind and body and soul to our Master's service, and that will be our memorial most pleasing to James Sprunt.

KIANGYIN MISSION STATION

CHINA

The greatness of a life is measured by the degree in which it has illustrated the truth of the saying that "No man liveth to himself." And, many as are the good deeds that follow the well-beloved man who has gone from us for awhile, there is probably no place where he has made himself a vital factor in the lives of more persons than here in this Chinese district of half a million souls. Few of our missionary group have failed to experience his beautiful courtesy, and to learn a very real love for him; but it is in young Chinese lives that he has most widely scattered that which increaseth with the scattering, and it is for them that we speak at this time.

Eighteen years ago the foundations were laid for school work here, when fifteen boys were gathered into a tiny plant; and very little later a beginning was made for women, and, following that, for girls. These pioneer workers saw visions of larger things; and during a visit from Dr. H. F.

Williams, representing the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, plans were laid for an expansion that called for an initial outlay of ten thousand dollars. Prayer was lifted up for that sum; and the prayer rather provided a fit reception for the gift than led to the giving. For God was working on both sides of the sea; and we know now that just at that time Dr. Sprunt was having his heart opened for the first time to a deep interest in foreign missions. The Station had been making request for this money for about a week, and a letter had just gone to the home church, when the exact amount was received from Dr. Sprunt; and it was easy for those whose hearts were set on the expansion of this work to believe that the seal of God's approval was upon it, and to go on with a new courage.

It is not necessary to enter into detail as to the building that went up with Dr. Sprunt's name over the entrance; that building is now the center of a group of buildings housing nearly three hundred boys. In the guest room hangs the portrait of the founder, whose benefits to the school are known to these boys and to the many others that from the beginning have gone in and out. Directly across the fields from this school stands another very similar group, and the name over the door here is Luola Murchison Sprunt. Almost two hundred girls are being trained here. Dotted

about the country are little primary schools whose teachers are for the most part recruited from the graduates of these two central high schools; these two bear the names of the mother schools; and over seven hundred children are being educated under these names.

Not that the actual names of the founders go in Chinese to the ears of every child that attends these little schools. The high school students, seeing the portraits, reading the English names over the entrances, having the privilege of seeing sometimes rarely inspiring letters from Dr. Sprunt's own hand, or of hearing as they did, for example, a few months ago from Mr. William Cumming, sketches of his life; and sometimes writing to him letters that we think must have rejoiced him very much;—these students know well what the name James Sprunt stands for. But, as in nearly all Chinese schools, a symbolic name has been given to each of these high schools,—“Urge to the Truth,” “Help to the Truth”;—and it is these worthy standards that are held before them every hour, because this man loved not his life except to scatter it.

It is most fitting that the telling of what he has done for us should be in terms of the output of lives from these schools. There have been in all thirty graduates from Luola Murchison Sprunt Academy, from 1916 to 1924. Of these, seventeen

are teachers in our own or other Christian schools, nearly half of these being homemakers as well as teachers; one is a kindergartner, one a graduate nurse, and one a most earnest and successful evangelist; five are still studying, some in the Nanking Bible School. From James Sprunt Academy, sixty have graduated since 1911; thirteen of these are still in colleges or professional schools; twenty-one are teaching, and one of these in a non-Christian environment is doing quite as noble a work as any in the church schools; two are graduate physicians, and one a graduate nurse; and four are seminary graduates now in the work of the ministry. Three are dead, leaving honored memories; and only four are to be regarded as unlikely to make good at something.

Our own work could not carry on without these young people. Some who did not graduate from the high school departments have proved signally useful. The most spiritually minded of all the preachers in our country field, and a number of less notable ones; the hospital druggist; a number of nurses, both men and women;—all are examples of this class. And in hospital, schools, or direct evangelistic work, we could ill afford to run a single day without our graduate students.

And all the good influences are not to be sought in those who have actually entered on their life work. We saw last year a group of the younger

boys radiant over the winning of a soul in their prison evangelistic work, and girls coming back happy and tired every Sunday afternoon from rounds of the villages with their teachers. We love to think back to the time when a number of both boys and girls willingly offered themselves, with a glorious exaltation in their own spiritual lives, when skin was needed for grafts on a terribly burned woman in the hospital—a graceless wretch who never gave a sign of gratitude for the sacrifice;—and when one of the girls developed erysipelas as a result of the operation on her arm, she said to the loving watchers about her, “What are you crying for? I have done my duty, and I am willing to take whatever God sends.” (But the young life was strong, and she did not die.) We saw these girls, when a nation-wide student strike stopped their study, take up on their own initiative a course of nursing, and at the end of three weeks give a demonstration that was an inspiration. We have knelt with earnest groups in the quiet school prayer-rooms; we have directed and watched their health campaigns, their athletic contests, their school city activities, their religious societies; we have each year seen a light dawning on the faces of some that would never have come there but for their life in these schools—a light that never was on land or sea. And we have felt that, whatever the price might be

in money or life, it could not be too high for the privilege of giving a chance for pure living under the pure Gospel to these often fine and always priceless young people.

Therefore we thank God for the life that has passed on, his works following him. We are now within a few tens of miles of a devastating war, before which the people are trembling and fleeing; and thousands of students are turning sadly away from closed school doors, or pacing unquiet homes yet more sadly, or treading uncertain roads to refuge. Here our boys and girls, almost as usual, are going on with but little irregularity in their happy student lives. And even in the irregularity we rejoice. For we have just seen the entire Senior and Junior classes of James Sprunt Academy finish a five-day course of absorbing interest under Dr. Lee of Luola Murchison Sprunt Academy, and the staff of our hospital,—a course in first-aid field methods, looking toward the not impossible outbreak of fighting here at Kiangyin. A course of such inspirational value, to say nothing of the utilitarian uses, as may be judged by the letter sent in today by a group of young men from the city who took the course with our own boys. "It was with the deepest feeling," ran the letter, "that we heard Dr. Lee's explanation of the Red Cross of sacrifice,—the Cross of Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, and His shed blood of sac-

rifice for others. It is not only for the methods in first aid that you have taught us, that we are grateful, but for this lesson." And this is the lesson that James Sprunt has taught as his life message, and that it is our blessed charge to teach to these that come within the doors that he has opened in China.

A MEMORIAL TO DR. JAMES SPRUNT, PRESENTED
BY THE WHOLE BODY OF CHINESE CHRIS-
TIANs AT KIANGYIN, CHINA

Dr. Sprunt was a native of Wilmington, North Carolina, U. S. A. He was a man of humble and gentle disposition, sympathizing with others both in sorrow and in joy; equally kind to both men and women, not discriminating between old and young, upper and lower classes, rich and poor.

His literary ability was of a high order and his virtues commanded the admiration of all.

In business matters he was remarkably successful, both at home and abroad. As British consul he exhibited unusual ability, winning praise both in America and Europe.

Possessed of the highest ability, he still had an humble estimate of himself. He held steadfastly to his purpose not to live for glory or for wealth. With authority and honor and riches heaped upon him, he did not seek these as an end.

Having been abundantly blessed of Heaven, he determined to share his bounty with his sister country. Most dear to his heart was our city of Kiangyin, where he devoted his wealth to the erection of school buildings for boys and girls, which, standing to the east and west, lift their heads toward heaven, with windows and walls of surpassing beauty, complete in all their appointments. For more than ten years God's blessing has abounded here: large numbers of our boys and girls have been led out of ignorance to faith and baptism and the knowledge of God. Dr. Sprunt has made possible for us these great privileges.

Truly Dr. Sprunt was a faithful servant of God! His conduct was most beautiful, his heart was most kind. We shall never look upon his like on earth. Our hearts will hold him in everlasting remembrance.

This short memorial is respectfully presented by our whole body, with united, praiseful hearts.

CHURCH OF THE COVENANT WILMINGTON

Upon the death of our beloved friend and benefactor, Dr. James Sprunt, we, the Session of the Church of the Covenant, wish to record:

1. Our sincere gratitude to God for the life of this man, lived in our midst with such integrity

and uprightness as to be a challenge and inspiration to all of us. For his multiplied ministries and his Christlike service in our community to all sorts and conditions of men; and in particular for his beneficent generosity by which he had made the Church of the Covenant possible, having shared with his brother, Mr. W. H. Sprunt, in the erection of our beautiful church plant and having erected, a few years later, the manse for the use of its minister.

2. We wish to record our deep sorrow and bereavement at the loss of this, our friend, whose constant interest in the progress of the church and whose evident and sincere devotion to its welfare was always a constant inspiration.

3. We wish to express to the bereaved family our sincerest sympathy in this great loss and bereavement which have come to them, and to assure them that we shall ever treasure as one of the great heritages of this church, the memory which they hold so dear.

IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WILMINGTON

Whereas, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst His beloved servant, Dr. James Sprunt; we, the people of Immanuel

Presbyterian Church, recognize that we have sustained an irreparable loss:

Be it resolved, That the loving memory of Dr. Sprunt shall always be cherished in the hearts of this, his people, who have been graciously lifted up spiritually through the friendship and benevolence of this lovable character, and that mere words can only sound the touch of an indefinable aching void; that we commend the members of his family to an all-loving and provident God, whose grace is sufficient to sustain them in all of their griefs and trials; and may the love and spirit of Jesus bear them up in his everlasting tender arms, and reconcile them to the fact that our loss is God's gain in calling Dr. Sprunt home to make His heaven brighter.

Be it further resolved, That these resolutions be incorporated in the permanent Session records of our church and copies be sent to his family.

WINTER PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WILMINGTON

The officers and congregation of the Winter Park Presbyterian Church desire to have an expression of their gratitude to the memory of Dr. James Sprunt recorded in the memorial volume which is being prepared.

Our church was organized with a small membership on December 14, 1913, and, from the beginning, enjoyed the cordial interest of Dr. Sprunt. Our numbers grew rapidly, and soon he entertained the idea of providing for the congregation a larger house of worship than that afforded by the Chadbourn Building which was used at the time. Accordingly, early in the summer of 1915 he offered to donate a new building suitable for the uses of the promising church. His offer was readily accepted, and on July 27, 1915, ground was broken for the new structure; the Chadbourn Building having been removed farther back upon the church lot.

We recall his generous attitude toward the construction work, and his wish to have everything done to be of the finest material and best workmanship. Our church plant, with its many parts, therefore, reflects his taste and his good will toward the Lord's work in our midst; and in testimony of the motive which inspired his interest in the development of our church, he had inscribed on the memorial tablet over the front door of the church the fact that he gave the structure "To the glory of God." We recall, also, that the building was constructed as a testimonial to the life and usefulness of his honored, departed sister, Mrs. Margaret Tannahill Hall,

whose Christian character and service he regarded as an inspiration to himself.

On the occasion of the dedication of our church on March 5, 1916, we knew that our good friend and benefactor gloried humbly in the privilege that God had given him, thus to offer of what God had given him this memorial of his love for his Heavenly Father and of his affectionate memory of his sister.

During the following years, and until his passing away, there were many evidences of his continued interest in our church and his wish that God might prosper us in His work. We feel that God has done so; and we believe that the devoted spirit of Dr. Sprunt is still with us to wish us God-speed in the life and activities of our church. We would add that on March 21, 1917, our good friend acquired the house and lot adjoining the church for the manse of our minister, and generously added to the cost whatever was considered necessary for the comfort of the occupants. This made our property complete and placed us in lasting obligation to him.

We, therefore, in adopting this expression of our gratitude to his memory, add the hope that the Lord will lead us to carry out Dr. Sprunt's purpose that his benefactions in our behalf may redound to His glory and the enlargement of the Saviour's kingdom.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHAPEL HILL

The officers and congregation of the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church desire to record their sense of profound loss and deep regret in the death of Dr. James Sprunt, of Wilmington, N. C., and to express to the surviving members of his family their most heartfelt sympathy.

This church realizes the great loss to the State in the death of one of its citizens whose public spirit and business ability contributed so much to the development of the resources of the State, and whose interest in its traditions and history led him to seek to perpetuate that history both by his own writings and by providing the means for others to continue the work.

In the death of Dr. Sprunt the Presbyterian Church in the State has lost one of its most zealous and efficient members, one whose liberality has contributed most generously to the support and building up of the work of the church in his own home community and elsewhere in the State.

Dr. Sprunt will ever be held in grateful remembrance by this church as its friend and benefactor. His generosity made possible the beautiful church building, and provided it with comforts and equipment for service to the youth in attendance upon the University, and his

continued and undiminished interest in its welfare has been an inspiration in its work.

For the knowledge of his personal character and the abiding influence of that character, this church feels the deepest gratitude. His was a nature of genuine unselfishness, of deep piety, of true devotion to lofty ideals, of great charm of mind and manner—rare qualities, which were fitly expressed in life and deed.

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WILMINGTON

Whereas, in His infinite love and wisdom, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dearly beloved friend and benefactor, Dr. James Sprunt, from earthly existence to eternal life; and

Whereas, we the Board of Deacons of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, wish to express our love and esteem for him; and realizing the pain and irreparable loss the family has sustained in his passing:

Therefore be it resolved—

1. That we prayerfully express to God our thanks for the fullness of his life of service.
2. That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family, commending them to God,

who knoweth and doeth all things well; with the prayer that His richest blessings may rest upon them in their hour of sorrow.

3. That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, and also that a copy be spread upon the minutes of the Board of Deacons, as a tribute to the memory of Dr. Sprunt.

ST. JAMES PARISH
WILMINGTON

In view of the purpose of the City of Wilmington to make permanent record of the grateful recognition by its citizens of the unique worth and work of the late Dr. James Sprunt, it seems peculiarly fitting for St. James Episcopal Church, richly endowed as it is with a historic past and spiritual legacies, to pay tribute to the memory of this Christian gentleman, who in addition to his public and private virtues, which are recognized by all men, loved and cherished the traditions of the Cape Fear section, with which this Parish and Church are so inseparably associated.

We, therefore, the Rector, Wardens and Vestry of St. James Parish, in behalf of its whole congregation and in token of our high appreciation of the noble contribution which he made throughout the whole course of his life in every sphere of

service and example, ask the privilege of adding our tribute to the lasting value of his ennobling example and to the imperishable influence of his life upon this whole community.

Chiefly would we record our sense of the unwavering consistency in application, and remarkable faithfulness in performance, with which Dr. Sprunt translated the Christian principles and ethics into terms of service and character in every relation of his life. Such an example is a distinct Christian achievement, and the mightiest force that the Christian Church can use in making real and effective her mission in and to the world. His personal traits, which endeared him to all who knew him most intimately, and no less to those who in innumerable ways were beneficiaries of his unfailing generosity, were those of essential greatness. Simplicity of manner and address, sympathy with every good cause, corporate or individual, modesty in his appreciation of his own gifts and merits, refinement of thought and speech, purity of life, integrity of character, singleness of motive—these, it must seem to all those who with us may seek to appraise his individual worth, were the outstanding graces of his personality.

In his social and business relations, no less, he interpreted the Christian ethics in his daily walk among men. His munificent gifts to al-

most every cause for the propagation of the Christian Gospel, the advancement of education, and the betterment of society, are so universally known and spoken of that they need no fresh reminder in this connection. So also, his gracious hospitality and his ever ready sympathy for those in trouble or misfortune.

That which is most rare and commendable, in which he excelled, was his catholic minded recognition and appreciation of Christian truth and endeavor, wherever he found it, whether in his own communion of which he was a loyal and zealous member, or among adherents of religious fellowships, remote in doctrine and customs from his own. So that it might well be said of him, what was first spoken of another—

The catholic man, who hath mightily won
 God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain,
 And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

Be it resolved therefore, That this tribute be spread upon the minutes of the Vestry, and a copy thereof be sent to the family of Dr. Sprunt, and another copy offered to the committee for incorporation into the James Sprunt Memorial.

GRACE METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, SOUTH

WILMINGTON

At a meeting of the Board of Stewards of Grace M. E. Church, held July 9, 1924, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That this Board records with deep sorrow the death of Dr. James Sprunt, a man beloved by all people, and recognizes the great loss to this community in both its civic and religious life.

Resolved further, That a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of this Board, a copy be sent to the Session of the First Presbyterian Church, and a copy to the family of Dr. Sprunt.

MINISTERS CONFERENCE AND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
COLORED

WILMINGTON

The passing from earth to his final reward of Dr. James Sprunt must be regarded as an event that has created a void in the life of all the people of the city of Wilmington, the county of New Hanover and the adjacent counties.

As an efficient and prosperous business man his influence cannot be challenged; but today the humble and the poor of our community feel that his benefactions and his kindly interest in every worthy endeavor for uplift and human betterment will memorialize him in their hearts forever. The demands of a large and growing business did not keep him too busy or too far removed from all classes of the people, and he made it possible for the most humble to reach him at all times.

Dr. Sprunt was known to have a sincere interest in the development of the colored people of this community, particularly the religious aspect of this development, and a recent utterance of his made in the presence of one of our ministers was that he was distinctly gratified at the efficient and intelligent leadership that the local ministry of this group represented.

As an expression of sympathy on the part of the Colored Ministers Union and the colored Chamber of Commerce in session July 18, 1924, and on behalf of the colored people of this community thus represented, the following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, in the dispensation of an all-wise Providence there has been taken from among us Dr. James Sprunt; and,

Whereas, his death has struck a universal note of sorrow in the hearts of our people, we the

members of the Ministers Union and of the Chamber of Commerce, on our own and on the behalf of our people, hereby acknowledge submission to the will of the Almighty:

Be it therefore resolved—

1. That we hereby record our deep appreciation of the life of the deceased as a Christian gentleman and our keen regret at the loss of such an exemplary life.
2. That this expression of our united sympathy be tendered to the members of the bereaved family.
3. That a copy of these resolutions be published, one copy be placed in the archives of the groups here represented, and one be sent to the members of the bereaved family.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHAPEL HILL

Whereas, on July 9, 1924, the University of North Carolina suffered a profound loss in the death of Dr. James Sprunt, a most generous benefactor of the University and esteemed member of its governing body; therefore be it

Resolved, That a page in the minutes of the Board of Trustees be especially dedicated to his

memory, and that there be spread thereon the following record of his distinguished career, as an expression of the sense of this Board of the unusual worth to the University and the State of his inspiring life and character.

A friend of the University from boyhood, Mr. Sprunt's official connection with it dated from 1899, when he became a member of the Board of Trustees. His interest in its welfare was un-failing and he proved himself here, as elsewhere, gracious in personality, wise in counsel, and in-spiring in example. Through his generosity, the James Sprunt Historical Publications were es-tablished in 1900 and maintained for twenty-five years, the resources of the Library were enriched, the Graham Memorial Fund was materially as-sisted, and his gift of the Sprunt Memorial Presbyterian Church in Chapel Hill made not only the students, faculty, and community, but the whole State his debtor. In 1915, in recog-nition of the unusual distinction of his services and attainments, the University conferred upon him its highest degree, Doctor of Laws.

In all phases of his life he exemplified the things which, to quote from him, he recommended as a guide for youth—"unswerving integrity, sobriety, perseverance, and faith in the goodness of God."

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
WILMINGTON

At a special meeting of the Directors of the Young Men's Christian Association, of Wilmington, N. C., held on July 31, 1924, the following minute was ordered spread upon the records of the Association, in memory of Dr. James Sprunt, whose death occurred July 9, 1924. It was also ordered that a copy of this record be sent to Dr. Sprunt's family.

Dr. James Sprunt was a man of character almost unique, possessing a number of attributes, any one of which would have made its owner notable.

Of Scotch ancestry, he inherited from his father that which was of more value than much riches—a good name, and the example of unaffected adherence to the command, "Do good and fear not." The impress of the teaching of a mother, whom to know was indeed a benediction, was felt in his later years, perhaps unconsciously, in his kindly thought of others, his gentleness and sympathy with those in trouble and affliction, and in a courtesy not affected by rank or circumstance.

Deprived of the advantage of an extended education by the effects of the War between the States, he retrieved the loss by diligent study of

the great writers of all the ages, and himself became a master in directness of thought and clarity of diction, and was an author of books of permanent historical value, and of other writings in lighter vein, and this, despite the demands of an immense business.

Without capital, he laid in the days following the close of the Civil War, the foundation of a business, which, expanding under his guidance and far-visioned judgment, reached into almost every hamlet in the cotton growing section of the Southern States, and was represented in many of the great commercial centers of world activities.

And as prosperity rewarded his efforts, he altered not. His fortune was held as a trust. Wise judgment, goodly advice, practical aid, was at the command of others, and the humblest of those who knew him were made to feel that the consideration shown them was innate, not assumed.

Churches may point their spires toward the heavens in testimony of his desire to spread the knowledge of the Kingdom of God, Mission Boards may testify to the assistance given to those sent to preach the Gospel to them that are afar, colleges may acknowledge the aid rendered, that education might reach out uplifting influence, but after all, his finest and sweetest epitaph must be "He loved his fellow-man." And the hearts

whose sorrows have had sympathy, and the little children bereft of parental care, helped to a better manhood and womanhood, will sing his requiem in sweetest songs of unforgetting love. "To pity distress is but human, to relieve it is godlike." And so we may say and believe, "God be with you—Good-bye. With hands filled with good deeds, he has reached the door of eternity. A fragrant memory for us—everlasting peace for him.

WALKER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WILMINGTON

Resolved, That in the death of Dr. James Sprunt this hospital has lost one of its best and most valued friends. A man of large affairs, pressed with matters of importance, he was nevertheless always mindful of those in need or distress, and gave freely and generously, both of his time and his substance, to relieve suffering and to aid his fellow-man. Through his generosity this hospital has been adequately equipped by his gift of the Marion Sprunt Annex to serve suffering children and women. His thoughtful interest in our work has manifested itself in many other kindly and effective ways. In his passing we lose a friend who delighted to act the Good Samaritan, and who, by his example, showed us all how a

Christian gentleman should live. He has passed to his reward, but his memory will be cherished by those who knew and loved him for what he was.

Resolved, further, that these resolutions be spread upon a page of the records of this Board.

MEDICAL STAFF OF WALKER MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL
WILMINGTON

GENTLEMEN: Your committee, appointed at your last regular meeting, to draft resolutions relative to the late Dr. James Sprunt, beg leave to submit the following:

Dr. Sprunt left school at the tender age of fourteen; soon he entered the service of the Southern Confederacy as purser of a blockade runner and diligently followed the sea in the interest of the Confederate government until near the close of the war, when he and his friend, the Rev. Billy Craig, were captured and imprisoned by the enemy. In 1866, with his gifted father, Alexander Sprunt, he began in a small way the cotton export business, which, in time, through his energy, judgment and sagacity, developed into the largest single cotton exporting enterprise of the world. His capacity to labor was enormous,

and he was esteemed the greatest captain of industry of this city, and the foremost man in the business realm of the State. In his varied occupations from day to day, largely concerned with the serious and weighty affairs of the firm, which required infinite tact and extraordinary knowledge, he would cheerfully stop to say a kindly word or do a gracious act. Even a little child could approach him unafraid. Possibly, no man has ever blended so much charm of personality with such admirable administrative ability.

What we desire to stress is the astounding fact that, in a life so crowded to the brim with work, he could still find the time to dispense numerous and noble charities, participate in the general civic and community activities of our city, write accurate, entertaining and luminous histories of the Lower Cape Fear country, and with his facile and polished pen create other books of real literary merit, build churches, construct hospitals, do a thousand and one little, unnumbered things, become a master of *belles-lettres*, and then be crowned with the amaranthine wreath of Doctor of Laws by the University of North Carolina. Such magnificent performances are not alone the coinage of the brain—"They are the spilth of the human heart, that wonderful fountain, fed from the living veins of heaven and welling over."

In all his rare accomplishments, he was as

modest as the pretty daisies Bobby Burns turned up with his plow upon the bonny fields of merry Scotland.

His whole life "was sweet as sweetest song of bird on summer's eve"; and above and beyond the richness of his achievements shines the glory of his beautiful character.

Mr. Sprunt's magnificent gift, shared by his most excellent wife, to the James Walker Memorial Hospital, of the Marion Sprunt Memorial Hospital, a costly and handsome addition to the main building, thoroughly equipped in every department for the care and attention of women and little children, will forever stand as a living monument to the nobility of soul of the generous donors.

Resolved, That these sentiments of our love and appreciation be spread upon the minutes of the medical staff and a copy be furnished the newspapers of the city and the family of the deceased.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WILMINGTON

Today a prince has fallen. First in citizenship, in intellect, in material achievements, in literary accomplishments, in constructive benevolences, he was unique and without a peer in the life of this community. Beginning life with nothing

but his own moral and intellectual resources under conditions adverse and discouraging, amid surroundings wrecked by war and disrupted by political upheaval, without commercial traditions as a lamp for his feet, by the sheer force of intellect and dominance of spirit he founded and developed a pioneer business in the South, which he carried to unexampled success and extended to the markets of the world.

He cast his lot with his adopted country and gave his all of mind and spirit to its commercial development, civic good and spiritual advancement. His life is a record of the achievements of this community. There was no enterprise in which he was not identified, no good cause in which he was not enlisted, no charitable or benevolent undertaking in which he was not the chief supporter.

To a mind richly endowed by nature he added the charms of a cultivated manner, a wide knowledge of literature and purity of diction which made him one of the outstanding intellectual and literary figures of the State. His literary tastes invited and enabled him to explore the best literature, to commune with the choicest spirits, to gain rich knowledge and to acquire a style at once chaste and clear and peculiarly his own. With true historical instinct he did more than any man of the Cape Fear section to rediscover, rescue

and preserve our political and social records, habits and customs, and his effort in this field is a rich legacy to the people of this section of the State. His wide culture was reflected in every relation of life, and it was to him the community always looked to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way.

His life is a priceless heritage, his work a common pride, his character an inspiration, his spiritual fervor an exaltation. He lives in his deeds.

Resolved, That this appraisal be entered upon the minutes of the Chamber as a memorial to the distinguished and lamented dead.

MURCHISON NATIONAL BANK WILMINGTON

Though he was not a member of the official board of the Murchison National Bank, it is fitting that the directors make appropriate recognition of the irreparable loss that has come to this community in the death of Dr. Sprunt.

As a business man, he was by common consent without an equal; as a citizen, first in everything that concerned community life and interest; as a philanthropist, generous and constructive; as a friend, loyal, sympathetic and constant. He was an institution within himself, a bulwark of strength

to business, an example to the aspiring, a consolation to the needy.

His name was an asset, his character a resource, his humanity a refuge.

“His like we shall not look upon again.”

ROTARY CLUB

WILMINGTON

Whereas, our community has suffered a great loss in the passing away of a distinguished citizen, Dr. James Sprunt, therefore be it resolved by the Rotary Club of Wilmington that a special page in the permanent records of the Club be set apart for this tribute of respect and appreciation of the life and works of Dr. Sprunt.

In Dr. Sprunt were exemplified those qualities which are worthy of emulation by all Rotarians. He was a leader in his vocation. From a small beginning, under his leadership, the operations of his firm grew to enormous proportions. In the conduct of his business he conformed to those high standards of business ethics of which Rotary International is an exponent. His whole life exhibited the loftiness of his moral and Christian character.

In the conduct of his business there was evidence of the realization that one's vocation is a means of serving society. The development of the Sprunt

interests has always meant the enrichment of community life. A large share of the business profits has been devoted to social service: in provisions, at home and abroad, for schools, churches, hospitals, and various other needs.

To these admirable qualities as a business man Dr. Sprunt added the rare attainments of a man of letters. His writings have enriched the historical and literary resources of the entire Cape Fear section and of the State.

Withal, there has been a beautiful simplicity in the life and a rare charm in the personality of the man which have caused each of us and thousands of others to feel a loss in his passing.

ROTARY CLUB

ROCKY MOUNT

Whereas, death has claimed the most distinguished person of Wilmington and one of the most useful citizens in the entire State of North Carolina by the passing of Dr. James Sprunt; and

Whereas, his notable achievements in history, literature and industry are an inspiration to all of us who survive him; and

Whereas, his faithful, modest and unassuming life has characterized in the fullest degree the motto of Rotary, "Service Above Self":

Now, therefore, be it resolved, That the Rotary Club of Rocky Mount points with pride to his achievements in life and has ever been impressed with his deep sense of Christian duty and desires to express to the people of North Carolina and to his bereaved family its feelings of sincere sorrow over the death of one who always "bore without reproach, the grand old name of Gentleman."

KIWANIS CLUB

WILMINGTON

When a man dies whose claim to the respect and admiration of his fellow citizens has come through genuine service to his community, the community mourns and its sorrow is deep and sincere. But in the death of Dr. James Sprunt the Kiwanis Club of Wilmington recognizes that to hundreds of his fellow-men his death is even a greater and more personal grief.

A rare example of the courteous and courtly Southerner was Dr. Sprunt, a Christian gentleman, a business man of vision and courage; a philanthropist whose generous hand outstretched in all directions and to all quarters; a friend and foster of religious and educational growth.

And in his death the State of North Carolina has lost a citizen under whose banner its com-

merce has been carried throughout the world; his own city has lost, in his death, its outstanding figure, the example of whose life of service will, however, forever live.

Resolved, That a page in the minutes of the Kiwanis Club be dedicated to the memory of Doctor Sprunt.

UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY

NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION

On the morning of July 9 there passed on to wider fields of service and a higher life one whose memory we wish to honor at this hour—James Sprunt.

It is fitting that we, representing the North Carolina Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, should pause in the routine of our work to remember him who as a lad braved the perils of the sea in an effort to do his part for the cause of the Confederacy, and who ever held dear that Banner, which, though conquered, we adore!

By sympathetic word, constructive counsel, and generous gift, Dr. Sprunt proved himself a friend not only to the Cape Fear Chapter, but also to that larger organization of which we are a unit.

It is unnecessary to attempt a sketch of Dr. Sprunt's life, that is known far and wide; and in the

brief time allotted it would be impossible to dwell upon all the characteristics and qualities which made Dr. Sprunt so generally admired and respected.

Possessed of keen intellect, business acumen, unprejudiced judgment, he made his name a force in the business world. Through graceful phrase and discriminating taste, he fills his niche in the hall of Southern writers. With courtly manners, broad sympathy, and conversational ability enriched by observant travel and intelligent reading, he was in the social life of the day the considerate host and polished gentleman.

But to my mind, Mr. Sprunt stands out pre-eminently as a builder, not alone of temporal edifices, though churches, hospitals, community houses, playgrounds testify to his many gifts along these lines, but of that for which these stood, for they were the agencies by means of which Christian character was to be built, and the things of first value to be stressed. When we think of the men whom he has educated for the service of God; when we remember the little children whose bodies through his help have been made whole and fitted to do God's work; when we hear of the weary and disheartened who because of his call for courage were able to take up the burden of life with renewed strength and hopeful outlook; and the sick whom he visited, and the

sorrowing whom he comforted, surely we acknowledge that here was one "who loved his fellow-men,"—and in the book of those who loved their Lord, whose name "led all the rest." My friends, others could in more finished language have paid this tribute to Dr. Sprunt, but he was my friend and I have put a bridle upon my tongue, fearing that my heart might over-ride my judgment.

To some of us it may have seemed that Dr. Sprunt's lines had fallen unto him in pleasant places, that God had indeed "made a hedge about him and about his house and blessed the work of his hands," and with that other cynic we may have questioned, "Doth Job fear God for nought?"

Mr. Sprunt's life was not all sunshine; at the age of fourteen he began to labor with his hands, and his wages went into the family exchequer. Handicapped by physical disability, he endured great suffering; his house was left unto him almost desolate, heavy grief was his portion. He bore all with perfect confidence in Him who said "My grace is sufficient for thee," and always could he say, "blessed be the name of the Lord."

And so, as the sunset of life drew near, his ear was attuned to catch "the one clear call," and he who had done much to alleviate the perils ever lying in wait for the brave pilots of the Cape Fear, made ready to embark, in the hope that he would meet his Pilot face to face when he had crossed the bar.

THE MORNING STAR
WILMINGTON

The profound regret of this community, because of the death of Dr. James Sprunt, is inexpressible. The family of this inestimable citizen of Wilmington is sorely bereft, indeed, and the community of which he has been such a vital part in every particular has suffered a loss of which all Wilmingtonians are deeply sensible. There are no words in which to fully express the public grief which has been caused by the passing away of a citizen so universally beloved and whose death brings very deep sorrow to those who knew him best. Wilmington is bowed in sorrow with those who gather about his bier to mourn one whose life has been a benediction to them, and while Wilmington has been bereft of her most eminent and most beloved citizen, the State has lost a son whose demise will bring sad reflections to all North Carolina people who knew him and were aware of his great personal worth to his State.

The life of Dr. Sprunt is spoken of in detail elsewhere in the *Star* and even in that extended sketch the really important phases of his peculiarly useful earthly career could not possibly be depicted or emphasized in any manner that would give one a really comprehensive conception of

the innermost worth of a man so close to Wilmington in every possible angle of citizenship. While it can be said that he was Wilmington's greatest business man, we sincerely conceive that his greatest worth was in his open and secret work as a benefactor. His benefactions were numerous and large, and though many are known wherever Dr. Sprunt was known, those which really bespoke the inherent spirit of this beloved citizen are known to but few, many not even known to those most closely related to him or most intimately associated with him. His benefactions embraced religion, education, society and individuals, and the generosity with which he dispensed benevolence in hundreds of instances can never be summed up. He never permitted it while he lived, and death veils forever some of the purely personal and most touching acts of his life.

The chief characteristics of Dr. Sprunt were his deep consciousness, his profound religious convictions, his charity, his sterling integrity, and his great humaneness. Coupled with that was the wide scope of his business ability, his great executive capacity, his fine social qualities, his extensive learning, his ripe scholarship and his adaptability for literary work, even during the busiest years of his life. He had a most remarkable personality and his courtliness was as natural

as it was impressive. He was a charming gentleman and constant kindness and gentility marked his demeanor even to the humblest persons in his service. He was generous, charitable and liberal, and he reached out toward all humanity with his generous hand. He was deeply sympathetic and most so toward those who were unfortunate.

Dr. Sprunt's life was a blessing to this city in both a personal and business and commercial way. His business genius was responsible for the development of the great cotton exporting concern which his father and he founded, and which he developed on the broad scale which now makes it the largest single cotton exporting house in the United States. For a quarter of a century, 90 per cent of the commerce of the port of Wilmington was done by the house of Alexander Sprunt & Son, and latterly by the larger corporation into which it grew. He illustrated the highest type of citizen, and as a friend, host and townsman he was preeminent. He was a refined and scholarly gentleman and had peculiar gifts as a writer. He possessed great capacity for gathering and retaining facts and data, and he had a gift for compiling them into substantial shape. He wrote several books and treatises and Wilmington will ever be indebted to him for his published works, *Chronicles of the Cape Fear, Tales and Traditions*

of the Lower Cape Fear, Tales of the Blockade of the Cape Fear, Blockade Running of the Cape Fear, and A Colonial Apparition.

One of the most impressive relations in the life of Dr. Sprunt was his veneration for his parents and his great affection and loyalty to his loved ones. For fifty years he and his brother, Mr. W. H. Sprunt, were inseparable as business partners and companions and they builded together, and both were inspired by the same lofty spirit as citizens and business men. They achieved together, and one of the sad reflections at this moment is the thought that there has now come to an end the affectionate relation which marked the lives of the brothers in business.

It is hardly necessary to repeat here what Dr. Sprunt did for churches, schools and humanity in the establishment of lasting memorials and foundations for worthy purposes, but nothing in the way of a memorial is so typical of the Sprunt brothers as their covenant to build a church in memory of their parents. It stands at the corner of Fifteenth and Market streets in the "Church of the Covenant." The baby hospital built at Wrightsville Beach by Dr. Sprunt shows his tenderness towards children, and his large donations to orphanages express that sentiment even more deeply. His most recent benefaction in a religious way was to build and equip a home for

missionaries at Kiangyin, China. His contributions to education were notable, and his great benevolence and public spirit will make his memory endure.

Wilmington reveres the memory of her departed citizen, and as a mark of respect for his memory, all business houses will be closed during the obsequies this afternoon between the hours of 4:30 and 5:30 o'clock.

THE AFRICO-AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN CHARLOTTE

For many years the name Sprunt has been a household word among the white and colored people of Wilmington, and has been accounted typical of the highest and best in the civic, business and religious life of that city. It is not surprising, therefore, that the passing of Dr. James Sprunt, the oldest member of this noted family, should call forth expressions of the deepest regret from all classes, not only in Wilmington, where he was loved and honored, but throughout the State.

Dr. Sprunt was the senior member of the great cotton firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son. From the beginning this company has had a large number

of colored men among its employees and the relation between employers and employees has always been characterized by the utmost good feeling and mutual interest. The company's interest in the welfare of its men has been manifested in numerous ways. More than once its word has been a bulwark of defense for its Negro employees.

THE TIMES

LONDON

Mr. James Sprunt, who died at Wilmington, North Carolina, U. S. A., on July 9, at the age of 78, was a prominent figure in the American cotton industry. He was chairman of the firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son, Inc., of Wilmington, and prominently interested in numerous cotton firms in the United States, in England, and on the Continent. He was an author of considerable ability and wrote a number of works of an historical character dealing principally with the American Civil War, in which struggle he took an active part. The University of North Carolina honored him with the degree of Doctor of Laws. Mr. Sprunt was born in Glasgow, Scotland.

THE TIMES-DISPATCH

RICHMOND

Funeral services for James Sprunt, LL.D., author, cotton merchant and philanthropist, who died at his home in Wilmington, N. C., Wednesday, were held there yesterday afternoon. Mr. Sprunt was well known in Richmond and throughout Virginia. Among local people attending the funeral services was Rev. W. W. Moore, D.D., of Union Theological Seminary, an intimate friend of Mr. Sprunt.

Richmond's debt to Mr. Sprunt is for the founding of the James Sprunt lectureship at the Union Theological Seminary. Though this is not his largest benefaction in one sense, it is his most far-reaching one in the range of its powers and influence. The foundation amounts to \$50,000, the income from which enables "the institution to secure from time to time the services of distinguished ministers and scholars, in addition to the regular faculty, as lecturers in the various departments of Christian thought and Christian work" with the double purpose of affording still further training to the students for their future ministry and of creating a sound and permanent Christian literature.

Mr. Sprunt was the head and one of the founders

of the cotton exporting firm of Alexander Sprunt & Son, with home office in Wilmington and branch offices in Boston, Houston, Liverpool, Bremen and Havre. Mr. Sprunt first won prominence in his youth, when he became noted as a daring blockade runner in the War between the States.

But Mr. Sprunt was better known for the beneficent use of his money than for his wealth, and was more admired for his culture, his learning and his hospitality, than for his philanthropy.

Besides his large and varied activities as head of a great business house, as British vice-consul, as host to distinguished visitors to Wilmington, as leading citizen, philanthropist and church officer, he achieved distinction in the realm of letters. He published a number of volumes.

DROPPING THE PILOT

The reefs are past: the Pilot leaves the ship;
And we who loved him, ranged along the side,
With moisten'd eyes observe his vessel slip
Swiftly, bravely, down the Infinite Tide.
Great is our debt to that courageous heart;
Great our regret that here our ways must end:
We lose more than a pilot as we part—
We lose our inspiration and our friend.
The tears we shed are not for him: our grief
Is for ourselves: the loss is all our own,
For him—the realization of his belief:
For us—to cruise the stormy seas alone.
Oh, Pilot! gentlest breezes to thy sail!
God grant thee peace where'er thy anchors fall;
Well won thy rest from tempest and the gale;
Farewell, dear friend! true pilot of us all!

E. J. D.

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