

Education gained by hard work, and severe application.

An intimate acquaintance with cultivated friends.

And the result of these, consecrated to the service of God, and manifested in his usefulness to his fellow-men.

We find an appropriate summary of this life in the inscription which it is the pleasure of his grandchildren to perpetuate upon this tablet, an inscription written by his son, Rev. Samuel Ware Fisher, D.D., and placed upon the monument which the people of this Church erected here over his remains :

“An Orphan, whose father fell in the Revolution.

He rose to eminence as a Scholar by his own efforts.

A Minister of Christ for more than fifty years.

His Record is in the hearts of hundreds converted under his ministry.

His Memory is the precious inheritance of the churches to whom he ministered.”

Note.—The Church at Ramapo had been erected in 1810 by Jeremiah H. Pierson for the benefit of his employees in the iron works. Among others in the Presbytery Dr. Fisher devoted the most time to this church.

After the peace of 1815, following the war of 1812, the industries of Paterson were so depressed that for several years the people were unable to meet their obligations to Dr. Fisher, and the church in Ramapo assisted largely in his support, as appears in the following letters :

PATERSON, November 30th, 1833.

JEREMIAH H. PIERSON, ESQ.,
Ramapo Works,
New York.

My Dear Sir :

Yours of the 26th instant I this day received. I have for several years past felt a deep and lively interest in the destitute situation of your village and vicinity in regard to moral culture.

Whenever I have preached there, and witnessed the interesting group of young persons collected, I have been pained to think that they should remain without the stated means of grace. I have felt that something ought to be done in their behalf, and have at times inquired what my own duty was in relation to them, but the many cares devolving upon me, as pastor of a large congregation, I have perhaps too much kept the subject out of mind, but of late, I have questioned with myself whether I ought not to undertake personally to gather a regular congregation there. I am fully aware that a separation from my present beloved charge to whom I have ministered, next Spring, twenty years, would be extremely painful to me, and to them, but still it may be duty.

When this place experienced a reverse after the Peace, my trustees gave me notice that they were unable to fulfill their engagements, and though unwilling to have me leave them, still could not object. I doubtless should have left, as I had at that time a favorable call from another congregation, if you had not generously engaged to divide with them the burden of my support. This was continued until they had become strong enough wholly to sustain me. They have enjoyed whatever advantage may have resulted from my continuance amongst them, through your instrumentality, and now they have become a large and flourishing congregation, able to afford a competent support to any man they may choose to call, and I have ever felt that in some degree, at least, they are indebted to Ramapo for this, though I make no pretensions to shining talents or popular eloquence.

Yet from my intercourse with all sorts of people and the knowledge of human nature thus acquired, I have been led to think that were I to remove to Ramapo, and God should spare my life and health, I might through the Divine blessing be instrumental in establishing a respectable congregation there, while some other person might be more useful here where the congregation is large and firmly established. I have preached to this people about twenty years, and though, as far as I know, there is perfect harmony, without a dissenting voice, yet, I am inclined to think that a change may be beneficial to their spiritual interests.

There may be such a thing as being loll'd to sleep by hearing the sound of the same voice for a long course of years, but you must see that the subject is a very difficult one to decide upon and I shall not think of coming to a decision without seeking counsel from God and man.

I shall endeavor, if spared, to visit Ramapo in order to have a personal interview with you on the subject.

I have but a few years to labor in Christ's vineyard in this world and if I know my own heart, I choose to labor where I may be instrumental in doing the most good.

That your health may be confirmed and that you may enjoy the consolations of religion in your own soul, is the sincere prayer of,

Yours sincerely,
SAML. FISHER.

PATERSON, March 12th, 1834.

JEREMIAH H. PIERSON, ESQ.,
Ramapo Works,
New York.

Dear Sir:

Last evening my Trustees and Session met at my house agreeable to my request on the Sabbath and I made known to them the plan of my future labors. I had, a few days before, mentioned the subject to one of my session in confidence. With this exception, the matter was as unexpected as it was new. It created considerable sensation as I expected, but I think most of them felt the force of my reasons for a removal. Whether they will oppose me before the Presbytery who hold their stated meeting here the third Tuesday in April, or not, I cannot now tell, but I am inclined to think they will not.

As my own mind is fully made up as to the path of duty and the thing is now made public, you may consider the exigency of secrecy as fully removed and can communicate with the people on the subject, as you think expedient.

I am very busy now visiting the congregation, as I expect for the last time, but I hope before long to be able to come up and spend a night with you and converse respecting our ulterior arrangements.

My family are in comfortable health and desire an affectionate remembrance to your self and family.

Yours with much esteem,
SAML. FISHER.