



REV. ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH D.D.

*Pastor of the Independent or Congregational
Church in Charleston, S. Carolina.*

**SERMONS,
ADDRESSES, AND LETTERS.**

SELECTED FROM THE WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

REV. ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, D.D. *K*
ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE INDEPENDENT OR CONGREGA-
TIONAL CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED;

AN ENGRAVED PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR,

A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE,

AND THE

SERMON PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEATH.

BY REV. ANDREW FLINN, D.D.

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A

FUNERAL DISCOURSE,

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE

REV. ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, D.D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE INDEPENDENT OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

DELIVERED IN THE CIRCULAR CHURCH, JAN. 4, 1814.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF THE CHARLESTON BIBLE SOCIETY.



BY REV. ANDREW FLINN, D.D.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

MONDAY, JANUARY, 10, 1814.

At a stated meeting of the Managers of the Bible Society of Charleston, at the house of GEN. C. C. PINKNEY, President.

RESOLVED, that the thanks of this Board be presented to the Reverend Dr. Flinn, for his eloquent and appropriate Discourse, preached on the occasion of the death of the late Rev. Dr. Keith, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Bible Society; and also that the Rev Dr. Flinn, be requested to cause the same to be published.

(Extract from the Minutes)

T. FORD, Recording Secretary.



A FUNERAL DISCOURSE

COMMEMORATIVE OF

THE REV. ISAAC S. KEITH, D.D.

PSALM XII. 1.

HELP, LORD, FOR THE GODLY MAN CEASETH ; FOR THE FAITHFUL FAIL FROM AMONG THE CHILDREN OF MEN.

THE mysterious dispensation of heaven, which has summoned us, this day, to the house of God, is of the most afflicting nature. It has shed a gloom upon the whole community : it has hung our temples with the emblems of mourning ; has covered with sables, an extensive congregation, and filled with sorrow a thousand hearts. The stroke which has prostrated a stately pillar in the Lord's house, has awakened the sensibilities of our city. A great man has fallen in the Israel of God ! An ambassador of Jesus Christ has been called home from among us ! One of the Lord's ministers is dead ! Our friend and brother is no more ! No, " it is no illusion ; " " the urn which bore " his ashes before us ; the streams of anguish which followed ; the sombre aspect of this bereaved temple ; the " sad and sorrowful weeds " which cover this assembly ; the tear of affliction, which has not yet ceased to flow, with united voice, though in mournful accents, which melt the soul, declare the painful truth, that our KEITH has gone down to the land of silence ! Evidences of the mournful event, and of the universal feeling which

it has excited, every where present themselves. The tear which stole down the cheek of the venerable man of God, on that day when this bereaving stroke of heaven left him alone, to bear the pressure of this great people, spoke the sorrows of his heart. *Here* a very aged and venerable minister of grace, though belonging to another branch of the church, with a liberality that does him honor, exclaims, "I am near seventy years old, and I never knew a more excellent minister of Jesus Christ, of *any denomination*:" *there*, the statesman, and the Soldier, with a saddened countenance, testifies of him, "he was a *good man*, he deserved every mark of respect which can be showed to his memory." *Here*, I behold another venerable minister of Christ, stooping beneath the pressure of years; standing on the margin of the tomb, which has received the ashes of our departed brother, while the tear of affection rolls down his cheek, exclaiming, "long will the name of this great and good man be had in remembrance!" There weeps the humble African, who had been wont to sit at the feet of this excellent servant of Jesus Christ, to receive instruction, crying, "My shepherd is gone, my father is dead." *Here*, a whole congregation of the Lord's people, dumb with grief, and overwhelmed with sorrow, gathers round the altar where he used to minister, while their tears, and their sobs, speak the anguish of their souls. Yonder, disconsolate, and sorrowful, in the chamber of death, sits an afflicted widow, while she tells of the virtues of him, who "was a good husband; a true friend, and a faithful guide." What impressive evidences, *these*, of the universal affliction, which this bereavement has occasioned! How honorable to the living! How just to the dead!

Amidst this general mourning, of which all are partakers, the Bible Society of Charleston, formed for the purpose of giving a more extensive diffusion to the word of life, and of shedding upon the cheerless mansion of poverty, the light of salvation ; of which Society, the deceased was an active, zealous, and highly respected officer, cannot remain indifferent. Feeling its full proportion of sorrow, and "bearing its badges of wo," it presents itself before these altars to day, trembling under this awful stroke of the Almighty. In having commanded me to speak of departed worth, it has only made me the humble organ of giving expression to the anguish, which it feels, on this melancholy occasion. I approach the task assigned me with diffidence. Standing in the place where this minister of God has so often stood ; in presence of a bereaved and afflicted people, I feel able to do little more than lift up my voice, and weep. On such an occasion, and under such circumstances, the pathetic exclamation of the ancient church, which has been pronounced in your hearing, seems natural and proper. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth ; for the faithful fail from among the children of men !" In these words the Psalmist describes a character, and assumes a principle. The two leading features in the character described, are godliness and faithfulness. The principle assumed seems to be this : that the removal by death, of men eminent for their piety and usefulness, is to the living a sore calamity.

In preparing the subject for an application suited to the afflicting circumstances, under which we are now assembled, I will follow this natural order of the text,

I. I will endeavour to present you with a just view of the character described, by illustrating the two prominent features of it, which are specified in the text; godliness and faithfulness.

II. I will establish the principle which the text assumes, viz. that the removal, by death, of men eminent for piety and usefulness, is, to the living, a sore calamity. This is the plan of our discourse. And now, may that Jesus, who sits as King upon the holy hill of Zion; who covers, with a cloud, the face of his throne; who has sorely afflicted us, and has given us "the wine of astonishment to drink," be with us on this occasion! May the light of his countenance gild the glooms, which have settled upon this assembly.

I. I am then, in the first place, to present you with a just view of the character here described, by illustrating the two prominent features of it, which are specified in the text; godliness and faithfulness.

These expressive terms have reference to, and embrace the duties enjoined, both by the first and second tables of the law. Godliness is a relative term, and is most extensive in its signification. It refers to God, and consists in being like him; in having the true fear of God in the heart, leading to purity and fervor in his worship.

It is, perhaps, impossible, as a celebrated divine justly observes, to bring within the scope of what is called a definition, an adequate idea of the term *godliness*. It is evident, from a declaration of St. Paul to Timothy, that it embraces the whole of practical religion: "godliness," says he, "is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which

is to come." Saurin reduces it to these four ideas, "knowledge in the mind, by which it is distinguished from the visions of the superstitious; rectitude in the conscience, by which it is distinguished from hypocrisy; self-denial in the life, by which it is distinguished from the unmeaning obedience of him who goes as a happy constitution leads him; and lastly, zeal in the heart, by which it is distinguished from the languishing emotions of the lukewarm."

If godliness consists in a conformity with the image, and obedience to the laws of God, which will not be questioned, it necessarily implies a saving knowledge of the divine character; a correct knowledge of his laws, and a hearty approbation of his statutes. No man can rationally conform to rules, of which he knows nothing; nor can he yield an acceptable obedience to laws, with which he is not acquainted, or which he does not approve. His obedience, in this case, even could it be made to meet the *letter* of the law, would be essentially deficient in *principle*; for God acknowledges no obedience, which does not flow from a principle of love. Now, since the sacred oracles are the great repository of divine truth, and are stampt with divine authority; since the image of God is there delineated; his laws and statutes there recorded, it follows, that godliness supposes a knowledge of the Holy Volume, together with a conformity of heart and life, to the doctrines, and precepts therein contained. It is thus that the godly man, deducing the rules of his duty, and the maxims of his life, from the fountain of truth, and the stores of divine knowledge, differs from the child of superstition, whose rules are visionary, and whose maxims are the fictions of a bewildered mind.

Sincerity of soul is another essential property of true godliness. The godly man, is a man of simplicity. To purify his heart from guile, is the great business of his life. No hypocritical professions of affection, which he never felt, or obedience, which he never yielded, are permitted to enter into his character. In simplicity of heart, and sincerity of soul, as in every other virtue, he feels bound to resemble God, who is infinitely sincere in all the professions which he makes, of affection for his creatures. The constant endeavour of the pious man is to act in such a way, as will enable him to carry his appeal, with Peter, to the omniscience of Jesus. "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." Afraid lest hypocrisy should lurk in his bosom, he sends up his cries to *Him*, who trieth the reins, "Search me, O God! and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

A third property of true godliness, is self-denial in the life; a steady opposition of soul to every evil propensity. The question with the pious man is not, what will be most agreeable to the current of the carnal heart? What will be most conducive to my worldly interest, or temporal honor? But what will be most pleasing to God, most agreeable to the revelation of his will, or most conducive to the honor of his name? Living "the life which he lives in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God;" pressing "towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus:" urging his passage on, in pursuit of "a better country," with "holiness to the Lord" as his motto, written upon the palm of his right hand, he willingly "denies all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and lives so-

berly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world." Finally, supreme love to God, and zeal for the honor of Emmanuel, burning in his heart, imparting light, life, and vigor to all his other virtues, crown the character of the godly man.

Born from above, created anew in Christ Jesus; having the principles of holiness implanted in his heart, and the features of the divine image retraced upon his soul; his mind stored with heavenly knowledge; warmed, and animated with sincere love to God, the pious man is found faithful in the discharge of his duty to men. This faithfulness displays itself in a proper attention to the *rights*, and to the *wants* of men. The *rights* of men, for I here use the word in its *proper* sense, are such as are founded upon the relations in which they are placed, as creatures of God, or as members of domestic, social, civil, or religious society. The *wants* of men, which the faithful servant of Jesus Christ regards, equally with their perfect rights, are such as are occasioned by the scanty possession, or painful bereavement, of the blessings of Providence, by the pains, and sicknesses, the agonies, sorrows and ills, "that flesh is heir to." To all the various classes, of which the great human family is composed, the servant of God feels that he sustains a particular, and important relation. The nature of this relation points him to his duty, in the conscientious discharge of which, his fidelity consists. The cardinal virtues of justice, charity and truth, shed their lustre round his character. Upon his heart is engraved the rule of life, which his Saviour has given; "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even the same to them." Influenced by this, he is just to the *property*, and to the *feelings* of others. He is the faithful guardian of his neigh-

bour's good name. He takes not up an ill report, nor does he give countenance to the base assassin of character. He is the faithful husband, the tender parent, the humane master, if God have placed him in those relations ; the benevolent and obliging neighbour ; the honest and useful citizen. United to the great original of goodness and love, by the holy dispositions he has received from on high ; his heart warmed and expanded by the benign principles of love to God, he embraces, as his brethren, the whole human race. In him the stranger finds a friend ; the widow, a husband ; and the orphan, a father. He wipes the tear from the cheek of misery ; sheds light, and joy through the mansion of poverty, and lights up a smile on the bed of pain. Having known, by experience, the truth and importance of the things of God, he is faithful to the eternal interests of men. While he relieves the temporal wants of the sinner, he administers also to the maladies of his soul. *Now* he remonstrates with the wicked man, while he tells him of the terrors of the Lord ; and *now* he holds up the trembling penitent, while he tells him of the love of Jesus, and by pointing him to the blood of the covenant, assuages the sorrows of his bleeding heart. Having himself beheld, in the lively oracles, the light of salvation, and experienced the virtue of the streams which flowed from the cross, he anxiously endeavours to send this revelation from God, to those who are perishing "for lack of vision." This is the character described in the text ; devoted to God, and faithful to man ; bearing the glory of Jesus, and reflecting, in some degree, the lustre of the moral attributes of God. This is the man who sheds light, and diffuses blessings, upon all around him. While ad-

mitted to nearness and communion with God, he is an honor and a blessing to the land in which he lives. That the removal of such characters, by the stroke of death, is, both to the church, and to the world, a sore calamity, is a proposition evidently founded on the text. This brings us to the second general division of our subject, which requires us,

II. To establish the principle, assumed by the Psalmist, that the removal, by death, of men eminent for their piety and usefulness, is, to the living, a sore calamity. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

That the removal from our world, of such excellent characters is a sore calamity, will appear evident if we reflect, for a moment, upon the vast chasm which their death has occasioned in society. Men of such distinguished virtues fill up a large space. They are stars of superior magnitude. The lustre which they shed around them enlightens, cheers, and animates extensive regions. Under their benign influence, in a restricted sense, the deserts rejoice, and the solitary places are glad. But when stricken from their orbs, in an evil hour, by the resistless hand of death, what darkness ensues! How cheerless appear those regions, which before were flourishing as the garden of God! But a little while ago, benignant beams were seen to glitter on the glooms, which had settled in the chamber of affliction and death; but these beams are seen no more! A light was discovered in the mansion of sorrow, where "Poverty kept the door;" but this light has gone out! "The wintry blast, howls through the habitation," while deeper glooms, unpierced by a single ray, have thickened upon the deserted sufferer! Of what im-

mense importance to the comfort and well being of society, is the life of godly and faithful men! They are blessings to the world; but the extent of the blessing is seldom known till they are dead. How many are looking up to them for counsel, in the hour of perplexity; for consolation, in the day of adversity; for succour, in time of distress; for their prayers, in the tempestuous night of divine visitation!! But now, that they are gone, how many faces must gather paleness! how many hearts burst with anguish! how many chords are snapped asunder! what breaches are made in the happiness of all!

2. The removal, by death, of men eminent for piety and usefulness, is, to the living, a sore calamity, because the sum of virtue, with all the blessings which flow from that fruitful source, is thereby diminished. The real happiness of society will always bear a just proportion to the solid virtue which is found in it; and on the other hand, in the same proportion that vice triumphs, will the happiness, and glory of a people languish. Vice will always be kept down in proportion to the weight of virtue opposed to it. Whatever, therefore, diminishes the sum of virtue, gives a proportional spring to vice, with all the miseries which flow from it. In this sense it may be said that the death of every good man, however obscure, is a calamity to the living, because the sum of virtue, and consequently the sum of happiness, is thereby diminished. But when men of pre-eminent virtue and piety are taken away, how great is the deduction! how extensive the calamity!

3. The removal of men eminent for their piety and usefulness, is a sore affliction, because of the *too prob-*

able evidence, which it furnishes, of the divine displeasure; of the Lord's controversy with a sinful land; of the kindlings of his wrath, and of impending judgment. In this light does the prophet Isaiah seem to have viewed the removal of the righteous, in *his* day. "The righteous perisheth, says he, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." It was well said, in allusion to this declaration of the prophet, by a holy man, now with God; "Doves fly home to their windows at the coming storm." "When ambassadors are called home, it becomes the nation where they were, to reflect whether a rupture is not likely to ensue." Not for the purposes of their own salvation *merely*, are the godly and the faithful continued on earth. By their instrumentality does God call a guilty nation to repentance. By them does he warn, admonish, and intreat. By them does he negotiate the treaty of peace, with these revolted colonies of his vast dominions. This is more especially applicable to those who have been commissioned as heralds of salvation, to a guilty world. To them has been committed the ministry of reconciliation. They have been constituted ambassadors of the King of kings. They have been authorized to state the conditions of pardon, and to offer eternal life to the penitent. Clothed with divine authority; "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" "having taken for an helmet the hope of salvation;" fired with zeal for the honor of their Prince, they seize the standard of the cross; they wave the banners of their king, streaming with the blood of the covenant; they ascend the watch tower, they leap upon the walls of Zion; they cry in the streets of Jeru-

salem, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near." Panting for the consolation of Israel, fearing lest the blood of souls be found upon them, they "lift up their voice like a trumpet;" they "cry aloud, and spare not;" "they shout, they thunder, they shoot the arrows of the Almighty;" while "with strong crying and tears," they beseech the Lord to crown their labours with success. Constrained by the love of Jesus, they melt into tenderness; they point the impenitent to the agonies of the garden, and the streams of the cross. By all the arguments which the mysteries of redemption furnish, they urge sinners to "be reconciled to God." Ah, these are halcyon days! precious seasons! The mountains are dropping fatness, and the little hills are rejoicing! Now the Lord may be found, and salvation secured. Now he waits, with much long suffering, while these, his servants, are going forward with their work. But if these days of grace be neglected; if these ministers of mercy be disregarded; if the articles of the treaty, which they are sent to negotiate, be rejected, and the insulted sovereign recall his ambassadors, does it not seem as if the breaking forth of judgment was near at hand? Thus it was in the days of Noah. One hundred and twenty years did God wait upon the antediluvian sinners, while his ambassador was continued with them; but they refused to repent; they spurned his messenger, and despised his grace. He recalled his ambassador, and "lifted the flood-gates of vengeance!" Thus was it also in the days of Lot. The iniquities of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, had come to the full. They had despised the Lord's messenger, and misused

his prophet. He is about to destroy them by the most tremendous of his judgments; but not a cloud is permitted to gather over Sodom; no thunder is permitted to mutter, nor baleful lightning to gleam, till godly and faithful Lot is removed. *Then* the clouds gather, the tempest thickens, the thunders roll, the lightnings blaze, sulphureous torrents descend, and the smoke of Sodom goes up as the smoke of a furnace! Ah, my country! if the gathering home of the Lord's people, and the recalling of his ambassadors, in thick succession, are evidences of his controversy with thee, and the kindlings of his wrath against thee, it is now I tremble for thy destinies! How rapidly are these doves of Jesus gathering home to their windows! How are the ways of Zion mourning, and the paths which lead to Jerusalem becoming solitary! This leads me to remark in the

4th and last place, That the removal, by death, of men, eminent for their piety and usefulness, is a sore calamity, because the barriers, which prevent the torrents of vengeance from sweeping a guilty land, have thereby been weakened. Ah! what a barrier do the prayers of the righteous present to avert the floods of impending wrath! "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." Upon the prayers of his faithful ones, the Lord has placed the highest estimate. It was in a desperate case, that admitted of no remedy, that God pronounced the tremendous declaration, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; cast them out of my sight, and let them go." The declaration itself, implies the *almost* omnipotence of prayer.

“Let me alone,” says God to an exalted favourite, wrestling with him for an idolatrous people, “let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.” How strong is this language! Even the arm of incensed Omnipotence, which wields the vengeful thunder, seems to be held in arrest!! The man of prayer prevails, and Israel is saved! “Therefore, says the Psalmist, he said he would destroy them, had not Moses, his chosen, stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath.” What a shield do the prayers of the upright spread before a people, trembling at the approach of divine vengeance! “Let the earth be removed; let the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; let the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, and the mountains shake with the swellings thereof;” let nation rise against nation, and kingdom dash against kingdom; let the storm gather, and the tempest thicken; so long as I see Moses on his knees, wrestling in prayer, with Aaron and Hur supporting his arms; while I hear him cry, “Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach;” so long as I see Abraham on his face, urging his suit, that the righteous perish not with the wicked; so long as I hear Daniel, clothed with sackcloth, and covered with ashes, crying, “Let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, and thy holy Mountain,” I will not be afraid. But, ah! when I see Moses ascending the heights of Nebo; when I see Abraham gathered to his fathers, and Daniel removed to the land of silence, “my flesh shivers,” and my heart faints with me. When, from the watch tower, I behold the Almighty, “rising, to shake terribly the earth;” when I hear him “uttering his voice in

the Heavens," and commanding "scourge to follow scourge, and vengeance to press on vengeance," my soul meditates terror; I am ready to exclaim, in an agony of grief, *who* shall now stand up for us, and plead for the arrest of the destroying angel!

My brethren, the age in which we live, is an age darkened with the judgments of God. "A noise has come up to the ends of the earth: the Lord has a controversy with the nations, and is pleading with all flesh." He is deepening our afflictions, and increasing our alarms, by gathering home his people, and recalling his ambassadors. Of this melancholy truth, the funeral solemnities of this day furnish us with painful evidence. They tell us that a lamp has gone out in the sanctuary of God; that "a burning and shining light" has been extinguished in Israel; that a watchman has descended from the walls of Zion, to return no more for ever. Embosomed, as we are, in the darkness which has succeeded, and saddened by the long desolations which are spread around us, let us now approach the solitary mansion where, silent, and cold, lies the man of God, whose sudden departure from us has awakened our sympathies, and filled our hearts with sorrow. Let us cheer the glooms, as we pass to his tomb, by singing this song, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Ah, me! it is *now* I feel my entire inadequacy to the task, which you have devolved upon me. You have commanded me to lead you to that tomb; to lift the mantle of death; to pluck from the grave its covering, and to hold up before you this venerable servant of Jesus Christ, in the intrinsic excellence of his charac-

ter ; but this would require powers equal to his own. In attempting to discharge this interesting duty, "too imposing to be declined," I shall endeavour cautiously to avoid, on the one hand, that fulsome adulation into which funeral eulogies are too apt to degenerate ; and, on the other, that blind partiality, to which strong affection naturally leans. Standing, as I do, before "the remains of departed greatness," and in view of the judgment seat of Christ, I shall hold myself bound to speak the truth, so far as I know, or believe. And, indeed, why should I do otherwise ? The character of my departed brother, needs no laboured effort of mine to preserve it ; it is embalmed in the affections of a thousand hearts ! His immortal part is not susceptible of flattery ; it is before the throne, joining in praises of another order.

With the parentage, and early character of the Rev. Dr. Isaac Stockton Keith, I have not been able to make myself sufficiently acquainted, to do justice to this part of the subject before me ; nor is it very important that I should. It matters but little from whom he was descended, or what favoured spot of country gave him birth. In general, I have learned, that he sprung from reputable parents, in the county of Bucks, in the State of Pennsylvania ; and, that while in the pursuits of science, in the College of New Jersey, he was assailed by the terrors of the Lord, and brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. But it was not until after his Lord, having counted him faithful, had put him into the ministry, that he was introduced to our personal knowledge. With his "manner of coming in, and going out" among us, we have been long acquainted. As a man, as a christian, and as a minister of the

Lord Jesus, he has been known to us all ; and we also know, that in each of these characters, he was deservedly *revered, respected, and beloved* ; that he reflected honor upon his generation, adorned the doctrines of christianity, and was an ornament to the gospel ministry. As a *man*, formed for society, Dr. Keith was calculated both to receive and impart happiness in the social circle. In him shone that bright assemblage of dispositions and virtues, which never fail to constitute the agreeable and useful companion. Venerable and grave in his aspect, his presence forbade the rude approach of impertinence. To a stranger, his first appearance seemed rather distant and austere : but, upon a nearer approach, that stranger soon discovered his mistake ; he soon found, that, though in the presence of dignity, it was dignity, softened and embellished with every benign and generous affection. Affable, but not assuming ; cheerful, but not trifling ; never descending from the dignity of the *man*, while his innocent anecdote lighted up a smile on every countenance around him ; his company was sought and loved by his friends. Naturally warm and generous in his feelings, he loved his friend with an ardent affection. Had he a weakness ? Perhaps it sometimes appeared *here*. Loving his friend with uncommon ardor, and placing upon the affection of that friend, in return, the highest estimate, he was sensibly alive to every suspicion of change in that affection. Perhaps this ardor of feeling might, sometimes, have led him to mistake *appearance* for reality. If you call this a weakness, it is one of those weaknesses which it is difficult to censure. On all the relations of life, in which he was placed, as a *MAN* and a citizen, he reflected honor. An affectionate

husband, a humane master, an obliging neighbour, and a distinguished philanthropist. His heart and his house were open to the stranger, and his *purse* to the *indigent*. He was a sincere lover of his country, and took a deep interest in her civil and political welfare; an interest, however, the expression of which was always chastened by a scrupulous regard to the sanctity of his office. Such, *you know*, was Dr. Keith, as a man. On all these excellent properties, the mildest beams of christianity shed their bright lustre.

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, this amiable man was *humble, watchful* and *devout*. On his private conversation, and retiring walk, was found the unction of the Holy One. The spirit of the gospel marked his intercourse with men. To the fervor of his devotions, his family and his closet, bore daily testimony. How affecting and impressive was the scene which sometimes unfolded to my view, when I have accidentally come upon him, at the time of the morning sacrifice! How have I seen this holy man of God on his knees, in the midst of his family, surrounded with his domestics, and the servants of his neighbours, who attended to receive the benefit of his prayers, with his eyes and his hands lifted before the mercy seat, his voice faltering, his whole system agitated, while he wrestled in prayer for himself, for his family, for his congregation, and for the land in which he lived! Ah! my country! bleeding and shaken by the judgments of the Almighty, these prayers for thy welfare have ceased for ever! "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

The personal piety of our departed brother, was not the sudden or transient flash, which appears for a mo-

ment, and then dies away. It was the steady fire, which burns with increasing fervor, and shines with increasing brightness. It influenced the whole of his deportment, and imparted character to all his transactions in life. Taught by this to sympathize in the concerns of others, he "rejoiced with those that did rejoice, and wept with those who wept." Himself a lover of Jesus Christ, he loved, and rejoiced in the prosperity of all who were so.

But it was from the walls of Zion that he shed the brightest glory of the gospel. Endowed with a mind which was strong, and discriminating; a judgment, solid and judicious; "apprehensions not remarkably quick, but unusually just;" the whole illuminated, and sanctified by divine grace, he was eminently qualified for being useful in the church. Thus fitted by his Lord, for the task assigned him, he was early commissioned as a herald of the cross. He commenced his ministerial career in the city of Alexandria, in the State of Virginia. There he laboured, with reputation and success, till he received a call to this congregation, to be a co-pastor with him who yet lives, and whose praise is in the churches. Here he laboured in word and doctrine for twenty-five years, when he was called to enter into the joys of his Lord. For one quarter of a century have this congregation and this city been blessed with his example, his prayers, and his labours in the ministry. During that period, through all the changes which it knew, he kept on, with a steady pace, in "works of faith, and labours of love." With tenderness he cherished the lambs, and with faithfulness fed the flock committed to his care. In the work of the ministry he was diligent, and laborious. Bearing

upon his mind a deep sense of the dread responsibility of his office, feeling that souls were committed to his charge ; and that for these he was bound to watch, as one who must give an account, he made it his earnest study, and constant endeavour, so to divide the word of life, as to give to each one " a portion in due season." Rightly discriminating between the saint and the sinner ; between the nominal christian, and the real believer, he shaped his instructions, admonitions, and warnings accordingly. Of his sermons, Jesus was the *center* and the *sum*. They were distinguished for their manly sense, simplicity of style, evangelical piety, and searching truth. Knowing that the great design of the gospel ministry is to bring sinners home to God, he was more solicitous to reach the conscience and to mend the heart, than to please the fancy, or to tickle the ear. He deemed that sermon worth nothing, which had not in it something of Christ. His theological opinions were, in the strictest sense of the word, orthodox. He stated, and defended the doctrines of grace, the doctrines of the reformation. He taught the entire depravity of the human heart ; the absolute necessity of being born from above ; the necessity of divine influences to change the heart, and to sanctify the soul ; the nature, and necessity of repentance and faith, holiness and love, influencing the heart to the production of good works, in the life.

The divinity of the Lord Jesus, and atonement through his blood, were, in his system, doctrines of *primary* importance. On these he rested his eternal hopes. In his public ministry, Dr. Keith was particularly distinguished, not only for the purity of his doctrines, but for the fervor of his prayers, and his marked

attention to the dispensations of Providence. In these he has, perhaps, been seldom surpassed in any age of the church. How often has he wrestled, like Jacob, on this *very spot* ! The pestilence, the fire, the earthquake, or the storm, were never suffered to escape his public notice. But why dwell upon the subject of his pastoral office, in presence of his bereaved and afflicted congregation, whose hearts are still bleeding, whose tears are still flowing, and who are sorrowing, most of all, because of the decree that is gone forth that "they shall see his face no more ?" How he fed you, with the bread of life ; how he comforted you in the hour of affliction ; how he wiped your tears, in the day of your anguish ; how "he prayed by your beds of pain ;" how affectionately he loved you, and how honestly he warned you, is known to *you* now, and shall be known to the *universe*, in that day, which shall disclose the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven ! *Then* shall you again meet your pastor ! Those who shall have savingly profited by his ministry, shall hail, with loud acclamations, the man who was "over them in the Lord ;" who fed them in this house, and pointed them to the Saviour. But those who shall then be found to have rejected his ministry ; but I forbear ! The subject is too awful ! Your loss, my brethren, is great, and sensibly you feel it ; but you have yet much for which to be thankful. Behold the venerable man who is still with you ! He will comfort you in this time of your trouble ; and you in return will comfort him. See him trembling beneath the pressure of this great people ! He is left alone, solitary and disconsolate ! You will hold up his arms, as Aaron and Hur did those of Moses.

But in this assembly I see a group of mourners, whose tears tell me that *they* too are filled with sorrow.

Ask them why they weep, and they point me to the seat which the man of God filled among them, now left vacant. To these my disconsolate brethren, I must be permitted to turn for a moment.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND

GENTLEMEN OF THE CHARLESTON BIBLE SOCIETY,

Ah, why have you already disarmed me! I see you weep! I know full well the cause of those tears! Your ranks are thinned! Your number is diminished! One of your much loved leaders has fallen; and therefore it is that you lift up your voice, in this temple, and cry, "help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth." But let us not be filled with over-much sorrow. Let us wipe away our tears, and gather round the ashes of our departed brother, and prove how much we loved him, by "gathering up his maxims," and following his bright example. His greatest eulogy, as a member of this body, is found in the excellence of the Institution itself. Perhaps it is not going too far to say, that no institution ever originated in human invention, that has been so extensively useful to the eternal interests of men, as the institution of Bible Societies. Never have the streams of salvation rolled on with such rapidity, and with such growing swell, as since the institution of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This was the fountain whence first issued those streams which, as the river of God, are now refreshing and fertilizing the wilderness, and the dark places of the earth, stretching almost to the remotest boundaries of the globe, where, for ages, have been "the habitations of cruelty." Never have the missionary armies gone out with such triumphant banners, as since the commencement of that society, and those which have grown out of it. All

Christendom seems to have been put in motion. Many are running "to and fro," and the knowledge of the Lord is rapidly increasing. The light of Zion is streaming in its glory, and the darkness of Paganism is flying before it. The Indian, the Persian, and the Arabian, with the inhabitant "of Burmah and China," are now enabled to read, each in his own language, the words of eternal life. Mount Caucasus, in the bosom of Asia, has become luminous with the light of truth, and is pouring the lustre of the gospel upon "numerous nations of the Tartar race." "The Malyan Isles," and those of the Pacific Ocean, have become vocal with songs of redemption through the blood of the Cross. "The great Continent of Africa is now the scene of translations and of missions." The Continent of North America, and that of the South, are sending to the nations the knowledge of the Saviour. "Greenland, Labrador, and Austral Asia, have received the precious gift." Jesus has taken to him his great power, and is building up Jerusalem in these troublous times. These amazing operations, which are fixing the attention of Europe and the world; and, in their results, are pouring blessings immortal upon the dark regions of the earth, soon caught the inquisitive and attentive ear of our departed brother. Having himself tasted that "the Lord is gracious," he hailed, with rapture, the introduction of the time, when "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." He longed to be engaged in so good a cause; and before the time had arrived which gave birth to this Institution among us, he was engaged, with others, in counsel, and pecuniary support to aid in furthering the interests of missions, and translations in the East.

When the time drew on which presented a favourable aspect towards the good work in this city, he was among the foremost to embrace it. His arms, and his house were opened. He gathered round him the ministers of the altar, who, in union with himself, drew up the Constitution and Rules, which bind us together. Of this Society, thus organized, he was chosen one of the Vice-Presidents. This office he filled with dignity, activity and zeal, until the evening of Tuesday, the 14th ult. when he fell asleep in Jesus! On Monday the 13th, at the last monthly meeting of the Board of Managers, he zealously advocated, and successfully supported the measure proposed, the object of which was to send the Scriptures, in their native language, to the destitute French, in the state of Louisiana; and in thirty hours he was called to sit down with Abraham on the Mount of God! In the silent mansion of the tomb, his "flesh rests in hope," after having served his generation fifty-eight years and eleven months. And now farewell, thou man of God! We will dry up our tears, and return to our work, waiting with patience till our Lord shall come!

"Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy: to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. AMEN."