



IN MEMORY

OF THE

LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF

THE REV. WILLIAM PRATT BREED, D.D.,

LATE PASTOR OF THE WEST SPRUCE STREET PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

ADDRESS BY REV. J. ADDISON HENRY, D. D.

Dear friends, what a different scene this is from that which many of us witnessed here some seven or eight years ago, at the time of Dr. Breed's twenty-fifth anniversary as the pastor of this church. That was a scene of joy and gladness. This house was then filled to the overflowing with those who had come to offer their congratulations, and to speak words of kindness to this dear pastor. He was surrounded by the ministry, he was also surrounded by his elders; an eldership which any minister in this city, or anywhere, might be proud to have around him. He was here, also, taken by the hand by his congregation, and by a great many friends who belonged to other churches. But this is an hour of quietness, of silence; it is an occasion of great solemnity and even of sadness, and yet it is the hour of our triumph, because another of the brethren has "overcome" through Jesus Christ our Lord. He has "fought the good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith, and henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day."

But why should I be called upon to say anything here, or why should any of these brethren be called upon to say anything that would tend to add to the estimation in which the beloved character that has passed from us is already held in your minds and hearts. I am certain we can say nothing that will add to the admiration which you already have for this noble man, and I do not know why we should say anything, other than it is well for us to speak of the virtues and of the piety of the ministers of Christ and the servants of the Cross, when they pass away from our sight forever.

I was last Saturday afternoon in the study of my dear friend, the Rev. Dr. Sands, the pastor of the Arch Street Church, and he had upon the mantel-piece of his study a picture of Dr. Breed, and under this

photograph he had written a verse from some favorite poem. I admired the selection very much, and I have it here in my hand, for my brother said to me "Henry, you can take it with you;" but I had no idea at that time of using it upon this occasion—for I had not then been asked to make this address; but I will read these lines which Dr. Sands had placed under the picture of our mutual friend—

" They never quite leave us, our friends who have passed
Through the shadows of death to the sunlight above;
A thousand sweet memories are holding them fast
To the places they blessed with their presence and love."

Ah, friends, I am quite sure that Dr. Breed's name will be a household word in every family in this congregation, and also in every Presbyterian Church, at least in this city; and in many of the families of those belonging to sister denominations.

I first saw Dr. Breed a good while ago. If you will forgive a personal allusion, I will say when I was in the first year of my Theological Seminary course in Princeton, it may have been in the last year of my college course, it was, however, just after this congregation had entered this beautiful house of worship, and soon after they had called Dr. Breed to be their pastor, that I happened to be one Sabbath day in Philadelphia; I was told, by a venerable elder, at whose house I was staying, "You must go, my young friend, and hear Dr. Breed preach this afternoon," and so I came to this church and sat somewhere near where that third column is yonder upon my left, and I heard Dr. Breed preach. He was then in his full vigor, and he delivered a most impressive sermon from the text, "The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." Those of you who have listened to the voice of Dr. Breed again and again, will know how he dwelt on those last words; "I am not saved." They are ringing in my ears yet. I was so impressed by that discourse that I went to my home and made a short synopsis of it, and in looking over my treasures a short time

ago, I came across that little sheet on which I had written the synopsis of that sermon. All this must have been about thirty-two years ago.

Yes, my friends, he was an impressive man; and he was a man who was complete in almost every respect. He was a remarkable man; for he was a theologian, he was a historian, I think we can honestly say he was a scientist, he was a poet, he was a humorist; and he was a faithful pastor.

Those of you who recall the little speeches that he made in the Ministerial Association will testify that what I have said is true of this beloved man. He was an excellent man, he was a good man, but he was also, as we believed in the ministry, a man of distinguished learning and acquirements.

You recollect, brethren of the ministry, that last paper which he read, just two weeks ago this very day, at No. 1334 Chestnut street, upon "Ancient Oratory," and more especially upon "Demosthenes '*For the Crown.*'" What a paper that was! and I am sure the brethren who are before me now will say they entered into the feeling of the remark of one of the gentlemen who followed Dr. Breed when he said: "Who but our own Breed could have written such a paper as that?"

What pathos there was in every word that he spoke. There was a peculiar tenderness in his voice, and it seems to me that that tenderness grew upon certain occasions, especially during seasons of remarkable religious awakening. Did you ever hear Dr. Breed speak at a meeting where there was unmistakable evidence of the presence of the Spirit of God? If so, you were touched with the peculiar tenderness of his tones. Those of us who were members of the old Synod of Philadelphia will recollect his earnest appeals at the meetings which were held in connection with this Synod; as for instance, at Lewistown, Lewisburg, Jersey Shore, Easton, Pittston and Lock Haven. We well know how every word that that good man uttered went to the hearts of the ministry as well as to the hearts of the people.

What a sympathizing man he was! How generous, how noble in every respect; how he wanted to aid his brethren in the ministry whenever he could, not only in this city, but elsewhere. Who ever came with a strong appeal to Dr. Breed but met with a ready response? His congregation knew that very well. He opened their hearts when making an appeal, and their purses also. He would listen to the men as they came from the East and the West, from the North and from the South, and from the ends of the earth. It seemed to be impossible for Dr. William P. Breed to turn anybody away.

How many missionaries will miss this man? how they will miss the sympathy, tenderness and the gifts that have been sent from this congregation through the influence of this dear brother.

Last week I had a letter from a minister who is at present in this city. I refer to the Rev. Prof. Bertrand, of Paris, who is representing the cause of French Evangelization in this country, and he seemed to be somewhat low-spirited, because he had not been able to gain admission to many of the churches to present this worthy object, and as he had heard of the death of Dr. Breed he writes: "Dr. Breed was to help me in my confusion and my troubles." Ah! that was always true of Dr. Breed; wherever there was one in confusion or in trouble he had a friend in that man.

I could speak for hours in regard to him, but I must close these remarks. How we loved him! And must we give him up? Ah, it is too true; these elders will not have him in their meetings again. His face will not be seen in this room where the Sabbath School gathers, or in that lecture room where he met his people for the last time.

Dear Christian brethren, shall we never hear that voice in our Ministerial Association again? Must I go to my work in West Philadelphia, and to my study and prepare my sermons, and plod on in my ministerial work, and endeavor to comfort poor, sick and sorrowing humanity, and know and feel that I am never to go into that study or into the home of

my dear friend and take that beloved hand into mine and look into that faithful face? It is so! Be still! my soul, be still! "Be still and know that it is God!" "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou didst it."

ADDRESS OF REV. CHARLES A. DICKEY, D.D.

My dear brethren, whether we take this occasion as our opportunity for reminiscences, or whether we take it as our opportunity for presenting the character and work of Dr. Breed, it is far too short. There cannot be time enough allotted for us all to tell the stories of our friendship. There is not time to tell what we know of his fidelity. The limits of the services are properly marked, and our regard for those whose hearts are so heavily burdened, if nothing else, would deter us from much longer prolonging these services. And yet, what need is there for speech? What is there to tell that he has not told himself? Is not his character written on our hearts? Have we not his works and words and character and life sparkling like gems in our memories? Has not his faithfulness recorded itself these thirty years and more in the memory of every one to whom I speak? His life was an anthem of praise to Christ; his life is the benediction that he has left us; and his character—we know that he was gentle and good; we know that he was true and strong; we know that we could always trust him with perfect confidence; we know that he was firm when firmness was needed, and tender when tenderness was required. We know that he was like a rock in the sea when truth was in peril, and yet we know how easily entreated he was, even, I would almost say, from his convictions, but I dare not—but always easily entreated when he could make peace to abide.