

THE BIBLE—WOMAN'S RECORD.

A DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

MRS. MARY GIDEON;

DELIVERED IN THE

FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C.,

On the Fourteenth day of August, 1853.

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. JOHN C. SMITH.

WASHINGTON:
PRINTED BY REQUEST.
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—“UNTIL THAT I DEBORAH AROSE, THAT I AROSE A MOTHER IN ISRAEL.”—*Judges*, v, 7.

THE Bible is woman's most truthful, most beautiful record. The brightest pages of her history are written here by holy men of old, and made luminous by the Holy Ghost. We have this book in our hands to-day, and read therein the wonderful things of God.

Poetry and song have united to extol the virtues, and celebrate the praise, of woman; and the effort often is to clothe her with angelic nature, free from sin and the passions of the earth-born, thus misrepresenting the original, and detracting from the beauty of that living portrait which God suspends in the gallery of his grace.

We have here the truth, the whole truth, and in it understand whence woman is; her relations, position, influence, power, and her mighty acts. Indeed, we can never appreciate female character until we have studied it in this light from heaven.

A very common and familiar remark is, "Circumstances make *men*." Another, I think, quite as true is, "Men make circumstances." We receive both as true with our interpretation. We mean in using such language, that "circumstances" call forth and develop powers of mind and heart which had latent been until these "circumstances" occurred. They did not make the man, in any sense, of imparting to him new faculties, or creating in him that which he did not before possess; but, in the circumstances, he developed powers and adaptations which had not been before roused into action.

What is here said of man may be as truly said of woman. In certain periods of time, she has appeared upon the theatre of life exerting an influence and exercising control over masculine minds, thus proving that strength of mind, perception clear and discriminating, and deeds heroic are not confined to sex, but that in both God may show forth his power and glory. We make no comparisons. They are often invidious. We take this word of God as the rule, and render "honor to whom honor." Hence, for a just estimate of woman, we need not travel out of this record. While here, the fancy is held in check, gilded scenes and unearthly characters are not admitted, imagination is not allowed to play; we have woman as she is, as God made her, placed her, endowed her, and as He directs her. She needs none of

the gewgaws of earth, the tinsel of life, the plaiting of the hair, putting on of apparel, the simpering and mincing of the weak and foolish, the blandishments which money procures, or the sickly sentiments so current, which but flatter and depreciate. God has put honor upon woman in her relations, position, and sphere of operations, and beauty is most adorned when unadorned.

With this divine light in our hands, we may know the value of this gift of God, and learn our indebtedness to him, the giver of every good and perfect gift.

The context is one of those strong passages in which woman shines. I say one, for the Bible furnishes many. Names are found here with which are associated acts the purest, the noblest ever performed; evincing not only the strongest affections of the heart, but the loftiest patriotism in the meekness and gentleness of woman's love. It was Miriam who sang, Hannah who prayed, Deborah who led the army of God to successful battle, Deborah who judged Israel; Esther who approached the king in the face of an unchangeable Persian edict with her life in her hand: "If I perish, I perish;" Mary, who sat at the Saviour's feet, who stood near the cross when all nature was convulsed in the throes of expiring Divinity, who came first to the sepulchre, and to whom first the risen Jesus manifested himself.

From the many, we select Deborah, "a mother in

Israel." She lived in times full of interest and sorrow too, when her countrymen were harassed and oppressed by Jabin, a king of Hazor, in the north parts of Canaan, who reigned about the year of the world 2700. He was a very powerful monarch, had 900 chariots armed with iron scythes, and an army under Sisera, his general, of 997,000 men.

"The Spirit of the Lord came upon Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth, and she judged Israel at that time. She dwelt under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. And she sent and called Barak, the son of Abinoam, out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him: Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward Mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? and I will draw unto thee, to the river Kishon, Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding, the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor, for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman."

Our text is a part of the song of triumph sung on

the occasion of that splendid victory by Deborah and Barak. At the first blush, it may seem as the spirit of vanity and boasting, but when properly considered, it is the language of gratitude and praise that God had called her to such a time, and put such honor upon her—"a mother in Israel."

This remarkable woman possessed piety, true piety, enterprise, dependence on God, zeal, and patient, persevering energy. The times and exigencies did not furnish them, but were the occasion of development. These were the gift of God, and she used them to their full extent in the efforts required of her in her peculiar circumstances.

Thus, the ancient Hebrews had their mothers in Israel, and the people of God in our day have had such raised up to and for them. Of one we speak to-day with chastened spirit, for she who was a mother in our Israel is no 'more. "She is not dead, but sleepeth."

We assemble to make a record, to which we are brought by the providence of God, and over which these many wounded hearts pour forth the deepest sorrow. Alas! alas! Mrs. Mary Gideon, wife of our Elder, Jacob Gideon, departed this life on Friday, 5th instant, at noon, aged 62 years, less a few days.

Could attentions from her immediate family, husband, sisters, children, grandchildren, the people of the church, neighborhood, and different parts of the

city have availed, she had not died! Had the most eminent skill medical, and the most unremitting devotion to a case been sufficient, then would we not be here to mourn the absence of our much beloved mother in Israel. If sympathy, fervent prayer and constant, could have prevailed, we now would have been rejoicing.

We repine not. We ask that grace divine may be sufficient for us, and that that grace may be perfect in our weakness.

In the case of Deborah, the people sung the victor's song over their fallen enemies. In our case, we sing the triumph over death, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In many points, these two noble women were very much alike. Nor were their circumstances very dissimilar. They both were women of piety, true-hearted piety, consecrated to God, possessing a large spirit of enterprise, zeal, energy, perseverance.

The theatre of their operations was different; but their circumstances, their objects, and aims were very much alike. They lived in ages very distant, but were closely allied in spirit and life. We speak of our mother in Israel as she stood related to this church, and say, without hesitation, that she was in this connection, from the beginning until the close of her life, all that Deborah was among the ancient Hebrews.

Deborah exerted strong influence, and, under God, accomplished vast results; but not more so than her sister in spirit, and ours by the grace of God. Neither of them was made by their circumstances, but the times and the occasions developed those traits of character for which each of them was so remarkable.

The record of the one is imperishable, because written in this Bible; the other, because engraven upon our memory and heart. Long as life shall last, her name, "Mary Gideon," will be as ointment poured forth.

Our tribute to exalted Christian worth is feeble, but we present the offering, though poor it be.

She was born in Washington County, Maryland; removed with her parents to this city, where she was married to her surviving and heart-stricken husband; made a profession of faith in Christ Jesus in 1811 or 1812, and united with the First Presbyterian Church in this city, then under the pastoral care of Rev. John Brackinridge, and when the congregation worshipped in the house under Capitol Hill. Subsequently, she transferred her relations to the Second Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. Daniel Baker was pastor, and continued an active, efficient member of *that* church until he resigned his charge and removed to Georgia.

At this period in the history of the Presbyterian Church, protracted meetings were becoming common

in some parts, and introduced in many others. A more active form of piety was developed. Revivals of religion were prayed for and enjoyed. A portion of the Second Church had this spirit, and they were stirred up to do some things in the way of prayer-meetings not agreeable to those who had "rule."

The vacancy caused by the resignation of Rev. Daniel Baker, a pastor much beloved, and whose labors had been greatly blessed, had to be supplied. Two candidates were before the people. An election was held. The minority, after consultation and prayer, determined upon a new organization, which was effected 24th November, 1828, when David M. Wilson was chosen ruling elder, and Rev. Joshua N. Danforth pastor of "the little flock," numbering twenty-three communicants, five men and eighteen women; of these our beloved sister, who now sleeps in Jesus, was one.

Including the original twenty-three, there have been added to the communion of this church, so organized, in all nine hundred and fifty-seven names. See what God hath wrought! Surely "He hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." The church has had for its pastors brothers Danforth, Noble, and myself, brethren loving one another, and beloved by all the church, and by none with more sincere affection than her over whose remains mortal we in sadness ministered on the 6th instant.

The Fourth Presbyterian Church has been abundantly blessed and remarkably prospered of God. A glance at a few points may enable us to understand some things which otherwise might seem unaccountable, or be attributed to causes not in existence.

We notice the fact that those who took their position as a church of Jesus Christ in this city, and in his name set up their banners, were without money, worldly influence, reputation, save that which belongs to pure-minded, honest men and women. Some sneered at them; others in spirit said, "What mean these feeble Jews;" but there was a hidden power in them and with them which those out of the circle did not perceive, because it could be only spiritually discerned.

At this point, so full of interest, anxiety, and responsibility, the piety, enterprise, zeal, and effort of our beloved mother in Israel, developed in forms to command the respect, affection, and confidence of the little band. She had, without seeking, or even knowing, the place among them that Deborah had in ancient times and among the people of God.

No church in modern times has been formed under much less of human expectation and encouragement, and yet none has been more successful. We attribute this, under God, to the direct, simple-hearted piety, zeal, and effort of the little band, generally, and to this "mother in Israel," specially.

We call your attention to—

1. HER PIETY.—It was not the formalism of religion, nor that which expends itself in utterance of words, or the cultivation of refined sentiment running into mere transcendentalism. Her piety was a correct view of Bible truth, obtained from reading the Word of God as given by the Holy Ghost. This truth impressed by the same Holy Spirit upon her heart, warming her affections into life, until her whole spirit was moved for God and for the salvation of the unconverted around her. She was educated in the school of Christ, and loved to sit, as Mary, at the feet of the Teacher come from God.

She knew but little about philosophy, falsely so called, but everything about prayer and communion with God, and ever spoke and ever lived as if her own happiness and usefulness depended upon this fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Hence, even a stranger, casually with her, and under unfavorable circumstances, could not but take knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus.

From the organization of the church in her house, until the time of her departure, a female prayer-meeting has been held every week, of which she was the leader, and into which she poured the feelings of her large heart, and where the promise of the Head of the Church was so often, so fully made good.

In seasons, too, of special interest in the church,

and for many of which we bless our covenant God, her power in prayer was always felt. Days of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, were conscientiously observed by her. After the public exercises, under the direction of her pastor, whose heart suggests this imperfect sketch, were closed, the sisters of the church often remained, and "our" Deborah was with the spiritual host and led them.

Her family shared in the grace which made her what she was. Her husband was converted, her children, grandchildren, and the name of "Gideon" is a tower of strength now, as it was in other days of the church of God.

Her piety was expressive and impressive! It was strong common sense in a pure heart sanctified. No wonder, then, that those within her circle received of her spirit and exhibited like precious fruits to the praise and glory of God. She cultivated faith in Christ Jesus, reposed unbounded confidence in the promises and providences of God. This feature of her piety may be summed up thus: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Hence, she was always cheerful, had a word of comfort and encouragement to speak to those who were, at times, cast down.

This cheerfulness is the more remarkable in the fact that her state of health for many years was such

that, with most persons, there would have been depression and gloom. If, for a moment, a cloud came over her, it was but momentary, for her heart was fixed, trusting in God. Living so much in the atmosphere of prayer, clouds were soon dispersed, while on the deepest and darkest she always saw the bow of promise.

2. HER ENTERPRISE was one of the fruits of her piety—*faith, works*.

To some ears unattuned, it may sound strange to speak of enterprise in woman. But not so to those who have studied character in the light of this sacred truth. We have to do with facts, and speak what we know.

The organization of this church was a splendid, a glorious enterprise. I have never known from whom the first suggestion came, but this I know, that the enterprise had, in its incipiency, her most cordial approval. Into it she entered with all her heart, and the same spirit of enterprise continued with her all the way through. She gave the church to which she belonged her entire affection, and always “enterprised” in connection therewith.

Among her enterprises I may name “the free school” which she originated in 1836 in connection with this church, and which was sustained principally by her own exertions, until the establishment of “public schools” by our city authorities rendered its

continuance unnecessary. I knew her faith and enterprise in this matter. How punctually she provided for the teacher's salary and incidental expenses when, many times, her resources were only in God and in prayer. How often have I not heard her tell of her difficulties in raising the necessary funds. Every source, at times, seemed to be dried up, but the money always came in the right way and at the right time. Many of the wives and mothers, now in respectable position in our city, will ever thank God for this pure spirit of faith and enterprise. That spirit was not confined by our city limits, or to points near her home. It was felt in other cities and in the far off West, for she had correct views of the influence that must soon spread itself from west to east. The several societies in this church shared largely in her affections. Her interest in home missions, and the education of young men for the ministry, was most lively, and always well directed. Within the last fourteen months, she proposed and obtained the pledge of one thousand dollars, in sums of twenty dollars per annum for five years, for the education in Iowa of young men for the ministry to preach the gospel of Christ in that region. A large box of valuable clothing and other necessaries for missionaries in the West had been received by them, and the acknowledgment made only a few days before her last and fatal attack.

We are thus particular to show how many different forms her enterprise assumed. Her heart sympathized with the effort to build the Fifth Presbyterian church edifice in this city, and, in the last conversation she had with Rev. Mason Noble, in speaking of his effort to build a house of worship on "the Island," she said, in her own expressive way and manner, "that house *must* be built."

3. HER BENEVOLENCE.—Her spirit was "glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good-will toward men." We have said that her "enterprises" were in connection with the church of her love. We speak this to her praise; but, in the exercise of her benevolence, she directed that to cases the most needy. It was enough for her to know that her help was asked; indeed, the necessity and her knowledge moved her heart and her hand. Well it is, my brethren, that we have the record, "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love," for many of her deeds of benevolence were so done that her left hand did not know what her right hand was doing.

All classes, conditions, denominations, and colors shared her sympathies, and were helped from her purse. This has always been true of her. Her means were ample in her last days, but her spirit was always the same, and she ever gave according to her ability. Not only so; she had the faculty to interest others in the objects that moved her own

heart, and draw forth from them their generous aid. If we had the power to summon to-day, and if it were right to anticipate the plaudit of the Redeemer, we might see a large multitude crowding these aisles from among the living and the dead.

She had no sympathy with the "be ye warmed and clothed" spirit, the caricature of true religion, and the scorn of every real child of God; but was in sympathy with Christ, who "took our infirmities, bare our sicknesses, and went about doing good."

This same spirit of benevolence led her to prefer the hovels of poverty, the abodes of the destitute, to the society of the rich and worldly-minded. She had no taste for display, or moving in circles however distinguished, where God was not honored. She loved to go where Christians met, and esteemed "richer by far the heart's adoration, as dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

4. HER PATIENT PERSEVERANCE, springing from the pure principle of love to God. I have known her as her pastor for fourteen years, less one month; and for more than twenty years of my ministerial life in Georgetown and in this city. I am, therefore, a competent witness, and have a right to testify. In every case I take pleasure in saying that her "continuance in well doing" was remarkable, and worthy of all imitation. Like many others, she would sometimes be weary *in* her work, but never *of* it, for her spirit

seemed to strengthen as she matured in years. Many around her halted, some went back and walked no more with her; but she persevered, and, blessed be God, she endured unto the end!

This spirit of perseverance is among the higher attainments of a Christian. Many run well for a season, but give up when difficulties come. Not so with her. We seem to see her at this moment as we used to look upon her sweet face, so full of benevolence and hope, and hear her say, "Hold on, brother;" "hold on, sister;" "the blessing will come;" "God is faithful."

Often, when discouragements could not be concealed in failures that occurred, she was most anxious to get a firmer hold on the throne; and then she knew she would be kept by the power of God through faith. Nor was she disappointed. While she had no confidence in herself, she had all confidence in Him, and was persuaded that he was able to keep that which she committed unto him against that day.

The qualities herein named are some of those which she possessed, and in possessing and exercising which she was among us what Deborah was among her people, "a mother in Israel," and so she deserved to be.

The place she occupied was not from any factitious circumstances, nor because at first there were but few around her. As it was in the beginning, so was it all the way through; so was it in the end. She was

where she was, because she was *what* she was. Now she is with Christ, which is far better. God gave her, God took her; blessed be the God of Deborah and of Mary, mothers in Israel; and blessed be our God!

In the large growth and expansion of this church of Jesus Christ, she could not have retained her hold upon the respect, confidence, and affection of us all, if she had not been an uncommon woman. In this family of the Son of God all mourn the loss of our "mother in Israel." This is as genuine with all who knew her in her last days as in her first, in the twenty-fifth year of the church as in the first year.

Blessed was she among women; the hearts of all, as the heart of "the one man," loved her and honored her for what she was, and what she said and did through the grace of God dwelling in her.

Having said so much of her in the relation she sustained to this church, it is but right to look at some features in her character in the domestic relations. Here we might be more at a loss than in those more open and public relations to which we have alluded. We may not enter into the inner life at all times and be welcome; but, in the case on which we are meditating, it was "at home" and in this inner circle where we saw the wife, the mother, the sister, the neighbor, the friend, and felt all the kindly influences of an affectionate, confiding spirit,

reposing confidence in God, and performing the duties pertaining to her household.

We use the language of Solomon for the general purpose in view: "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.—She stretcheth out her hands to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet.—Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.—She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

Those who hear me, and knew this our beloved departed one, will with me acknowledge the justice and propriety of the application of Solomon's language to her whose loss we have so much reason to mourn.

The strong, unvarying, separate, united testimony of husband, sisters, children, children's children, is all to the same point; while the cloud of witnesses in this church, in this city, confirm every word they say. And so we are prepared to speak, because the family lived with open hearts and open doors.

In very few families, anywhere, was there less of reserve; you found no affectation, no concealment

there; none of the spirit and practice "not at home;" nor, when "at home," could there be seen manner without heart, pretence without kindness, form without sincerity. We expect from Christians something better than the mere outside show; in many families, the best of life is sometimes lost in the etiquette of social intercourse. Here, while all proper attention was paid to these minor points, every one felt "at home," because there was *heart* there.

There was in that circle this very pleasant feature. Religion was always welcome; and no guest, no visitor was as cordially received as "the man of God," or those whose hearts were full of love to the Saviour, and had the grace, the spirit of prayer. This household of Jacob and Mary was the household of faith. Here was the altar of God, and around it gathered the members of that household, led to the throne of grace by him who now journeys alone on the path of life.

The influence of this beloved wife and mother was shed over all that household in the cheerfulness of her spirit. We have already alluded to this. Her religion was the religion of the Bible; deeply imbued with this truth, she looked upon life as furnishing much to afford happiness; and receiving what she had as from God, she enjoyed it, using all to his glory.

This happiness was in every heart. No man in his domestic relations could have been more blessed

than the surviving husband, or those relatives gathered around him now in sorrow. Well may it be said that "the light" of the household has gone out. A greater loss could not have occurred in any family, nor one felt more pungently, or mourned with more unaffected sorrow. The secret of all this happiness is, that she feared God, cultivated communion with him, walked by faith, and communicated that spirit to all within.

A heart thus sanctified breathed the spirit of kindness and love upon all. Her friendships were abiding as her piety was genuine. She leaves behind her many witnesses competent to testify in all these particulars. Nor can they, nor do they, hesitate to speak her praise.

She was truly a mother in Israel, and had a controlling influence that was felt by us all. Her counsel and advice were sought in hours of anxiety. She knew how to speak, and when to speak, and how to apply the calming, soothing influence. She was a practical believer in the doctrine, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," and always shared in the anxieties and sorrows of others. With her tender heart of sympathy, she wept with those that wept.

Our weeping time, alas! has come; for she whom we loved is no more. She has passed to the rewards of the righteous, and is this day enjoying all that God

has provided for them that believed on him in the world. Our doctrine on this subject is stated in the language of our catechism: "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do, *immediately*, pass into glory; their bodies being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection." On a doctrine so vital, so divine, we wish to be understood, and intend to leave no room for doubt. We plant our feet upon the foundation which standeth sure, and rejoice in the truth as defined in the words just recited.

This we hold as the truth, and preach as the truth, and nothing but the truth—that when Christians die *they are* with the Lord, and that the moment in which is dissolved the connection between spirit and body *is* the moment when the glories of the eternal world burst upon their vision, and when they enter into and rejoice over the possession of their inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. We abjure, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, all the fancies and speculations of men to the contrary. In this faith I live, and in this faith will I die! And, in my own view, I should be unworthy your confidence and regard if I could hold any other doctrine.

To my own heart this doctrine of the Bible sheds a halo of glory around the scene we contemplate! My joy is complete in seeing her with Him who is invisible, and in the firm, the full, the divine persuasion

that she is this Sabbath-day on Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, with an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and with God, the Judge of all, and with the spirits of just men made perfect.

“O! what hath Jesus bought for me!
 Before my ravished eyes,
 Rivers of life divine I see,
 And trees of paradise.
 I see a world of spirits bright,
 Who taste the pleasures there:
 They all are robed in spotless white,
 And conquering palms they bear.”

—— “To die is gain.” ——

With such views of truth we may well comfort one another. She has gone before us. We a little longer wait, but how little none can know.

We contemplate this subject with pleasing grief and mournful joy. The loss we have sustained by this bereavement may be estimated by the statements made in this discourse. These are the words of truth and soberness, uttered in your hearing and in the presence of the Omniscient One!

Can we ever forget! Must not these memories be fragrant with us all! her virtues embalmed in these hearts, in that circle of love of which she was the centre-light! that light has been removed nearer

“the Light of the world,” but has lost none of its softness—brilliancy. We speak of the grace of God, and write “grace, grace, grace.”

To the members of this bereaved family of Christ Jesus I need not speak particularly. There are occasions when we are best employed to sit in silence before God, and commune with our own hearts over His dealings with us.

It has been asked, “On whom shall her mantle rest?” Her place in the church cannot be filled by any other, however worthy and precious. We have here a band of men whose hearts God has touched, and women blessed of God, laboring with me in the gospel. We may have “mothers in Israel,” but not as she was; she stood on the threshold, and was with those who laid the foundations of this spiritual house in prayers, toil, and holy zeal. She was *foremost* in that little company of praying women, now enlarged into these many families.

“And Jacob said: ‘O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, ‘Return unto thy country and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.’”

The influence which she possessed because of her *peculiar* relation to the church cannot be had by any

one other, but her loss sanctified to these mothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, it may be diffused, and some may have, as in the parable, one talent, others five, others ten. In every case, the Master solemnly charges, "Occupy till I come." O! that we all may watch and pray, and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

In the close of a life so spent, there was nothing peculiar or worthy of special remark. We asked for no new testimony; we needed none. We have our own views of treating the dying saint, and do not believe in any necessity for questions and answers except such as may incidentally arise. These may be sought in doubtful cases, but not where *a lifetime* has been given, testifying to the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

I was sent for to Warrenton Springs, Va., and came home by the first conveyance, and found her suffering dreadfully from her malady, and these sufferings continued until the last moment. She expressed herself as entirely dependent upon *the grace* that bringeth salvation, and asked us, on several occasions, to pray that her faith might not fail, and assured us that the merits of her Divine Saviour were her only trust. We rather avoided conversations with her. Her peculiar and painful disease made quiet and repose absolutely necessary. She had said so much, and done so much, in health and during her lifetime,

that her testimony was finished before she came to lie down on the bed of death. We must, however, be allowed to say, that in all the pain and suffering she endured, not a murmur escaped her lips. At intervals, when there was a remission of pain, she spoke to her family, who were constantly around her, with great calmness respecting her death. She, from the beginning, said she could not recover; gave counsel and admonitions to the several members of her family, and particular directions that her body should not be taken to the church, as she was opposed to any display. On the afternoon before she died, she took an affectionate and final leave of each one of her family; had even the old family servant called, and spoke in terms of grateful kindness to her.

In her lifetime and health, she often expressed horror at being put into the grave, but grace came in time of need, for this dread was entirely removed; and she took occasion to speak plainly of the change that had been wrought in her feelings; for, said she to her sister, standing at her bedside, "The darkness of the grave is now all gone, and it is all light, light down to the bottom." Thus, in spirit she was able to say, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!"

One word personal. No heart out of her family is more stricken than mine. In all the sorrow with which my own spirit was pressed, I sought to meet

my responsibilities, and minister to the sick and dying, and to those whose hearts were ready to burst with grief. I myself have needed some one to comfort me, for I have sustained a loss not soon to be repaired.

My relations were more, much more, than official. I *knew* her and *loved* her with a pure heart fervently. My first impressions were received many years ago, called as I was to perform the funeral services of her second daughter, Mrs. Dr. Rose. At that time I was pastor in Georgetown, and came over by request, the pastor of the family being sick. There I knew her and her husband, and there I witnessed a scene which I would not, if I could, ever forget. The impressions of that occasion are still upon me, and I often live all that scene over. From that hour my heart was given to the father, now here; and the mother, now there—clothed in light.

She returned all that I ever gave her of my confidence and love. On the afternoon preceding her death, as I stood at her side, her son, leaning over in great tenderness, said, "Mother, here is Mr. Smith!" She opened her eyes, looked upon me with great affection, and, extending her hand, spoke her last words to me in a voice clearer and firmer than I heard during her sickness, "MY PRECIOUS PASTOR."

APPENDIX.

FROM THE PHILADELPHIA "CHRISTIAN OBSERVER."

DEATH OF MRS. GIDEON.

WASHINGTON, *Monday, Aug. 8, 1853.*

WHEN I saw the announcement a few days since that our beloved brother Gilbert was no more, my heart was deeply stricken, and in spirit I cried out, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Truly, a standard-bearer has fallen, and we, his brethren, are most solemnly admonished.

I then had no thought that I should be called so soon to mourn the loss of another even more tenderly beloved, though at that time Mrs. Mary Gideon, wife of our elder, Jacob Gideon, Esq., was lying seriously, and, as many thought, dangerously ill. I could not think so; nor was my confidence shaken until last Thursday evening, when a change occurred that roused my most painful apprehensions. She died at noon on Friday.

She was identified with the Fourth Church, was one of the little band that organized it in 1828, and always had a large place in the confidence and affections of all up to the hour of her departure. We have sustained a loss indeed! The mourners go about the streets.

Our deceased sister was no common woman. She possessed those qualities of mind and heart that pre-eminently fitted her for the *first* place among "the women that labored with me in the Gospel." Her loss will be deeply felt in our church, *widely* in our city, and in the

regions beyond. Those young men, candidates for the ministry, in Illinois and Iowa, will read this notice with tearful eye; and that *pastor* in Illinois, and that *pastor* in Wisconsin, and that *pastor* in Missouri, will be in sorrow that she who loved them and labored for them is no more. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The funeral services were conducted by Rev. Messrs. J. N. Danforth, Mason Noble, Byron Sunderland, and myself. Brothers Danforth and Noble were my predecessors in this pastorate. The cases are rare in which all the pastors of a church are together sympathizing in a common bereavement; as each in her lifetime enjoyed her respect, confidence, and affection. Her last words spoken to me were, "My precious pastor." Blessed, thrice blessed woman! thy name will be ever as ointment poured forth!

A large concourse of mourning friends gathered around her coffin. Of these, I must make particular mention of one—the President of the United States. His pew is immediately in front of Mr. Gideon's. When a Senator, he always sat with Mr. and Mrs. Gideon. Thus he came to know, and to know was to love her.

The President was in the Navy Yard on Saturday, and when the booming of the cannon had ceased, was about to embark on a short excursion in a United States steamer. At this moment he was incidentally informed of the death. He expressed regret that he had not heard of it before, and said he would have postponed the excursion, but now it was too late. He, however, communicated his wishes for an early return. He was gratified, and came at the appointed hour as *one of the congregation*, without invitation, other than that which all received. His heart, in common with us all, was penetrated by the afflictive dispensation. He wept with those who wept. Comment is out of place. "Brethren! pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."

24 JUL 68

JOHN C. SMITH.

FROM THE PHILADELPHIA "CHRISTIAN OBSERVER," OF THE 20TH OF AUGUST.

A WORTHY EXAMPLE.

IOWA CITY, *July 29, 1853.*

The Ladies of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, Washington city, under the Pastoral care of Rev. J. C. Smith, prepared, unsolicited, a box of clothing worth one hundred and twenty or thirty dollars, to be equally divided among ten young men in Iowa, who are preparing to enter the Gospel ministry, and whose tuition fees in the Academy are paid by a few benevolent individuals in the same church. How many wealthy churches are there in the East, that might exert their influence over Iowa in a similar manner, whose influence would be felt through all generations in rescuing this land from the man of sin? This Fourth Church of Washington city has its missionary in Illinois, ten students in Iowa, educated and clothed at their expense, and a private contribution to sustain the preached word, besides valuable presents to myself and family.

Yours, as ever,
W. W. WOODS.

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