

# THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

---

NO. 3.—JAN.—FEB., 1898.

---

## I.—LITERARY.

---

### THE REV. ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY, D. D., LL. D.

Robert Lewis Dabney was born in Louisa county in Virginia, on the 5th of March, 1820, of good old Hanover lineage. In June, 1836, he entered the Sophomore class, half advanced, of Hampden-Sidney College. He completed the remaining part of the Sophomore, and the Junior course, and left the college in 1837. He then taught a country school for two years. In December, 1839, he entered the University of Virginia, from which he retired in July of 1842 with the degree of Master of Arts. He again taught a select private school for more than two years. In October, 1844, he entered Union Seminary in Virginia, took the full three years course in two years and was licensed to preach in May, 1846. He spent one year as a missionary in his native county, at the end of which time he was called to be the pastor of Tinkling Spring church in Augusta county. Here he performed for a considerable time the functions of the pastorate to a large church and those of the head teacher of a classical school. After a pastorate of over six years he was elected to the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Polity in his *alma mater*, Union Theological Seminary, which he filled until 1870. Meanwhile, in 1869, he had been appointed Adjunct Professor of Theology, and he was made full Professor in this department in 1870. He continued to dignify this important chair until 1883, when owing to bronchial troubles he was warned by his physicians to seek a milder climate. Accordingly he accepted an invitation to the chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy in the University of Texas, at Austin,

it has been retarded. Men are needed to take up the work. Where are they to come from? Such men are the results of brain and application.

To the bereaved wife and family the Magazine extends its deepest sympathy. The church claimed Dr. Dabney. As such it would weep on its own account as well as mingle its sympathetic tears with those bound to him by closer ties.

[The next issue of the Magazine will contain a cut of Dr. Dabney.]

---

### RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

WHEREAS, on January 3rd, 1898, the Father of our spirits, whose workings, however mysterious, are all for good to them that love Him, did call from his pilgrimage into the eternal rest Rev. Robert Lewis Dabney, D. D., LL. D., we, the students of Union Theological Seminary, with which he was for so long connected, do hereby

*Resolve 1.* That while we lament the departure of one whose sound and sacred influences have directed our thoughts into the channels of truth, and whom we have learned to admire and to cherish therefor, we submit in reverence to the holy will of God, and do return to Him sincere thanks that the much which was for His glory in the life of His servant is imperishable.

*Resolved 2,* That we extend to the family of the one asleep our sympathy in this their bereavement, and do commend them to the One who is present amid all the trials which wrench the souls of His creatures.

*Resolve 3,* That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the afflicted family, and that they be inserted in *The Union Seminary Magazine*.

H. G. RICHARDSON, }  
 E. E. LANE, } Committee.  
 LEWIS WATSON. }

U. T. Seminary, Jan. 18, 1898.

---

### MEMORIZING THE SCRIPTURES.

True education as shown in the very derivation of the word (*e* and *duco* to lead forth) is development. Western civilization has caught the idea and acted upon it and the result is

the awakening of the mind's powers to observe, to remember, to reflect, to combine, etc. Eastern stagnation has maintained the old principle of cramming the mind with facts, and non-progressive nations have been the outcome. The methods of the West are undoubtedly correct and yet it may be possible to push them too far. For the minister seeking a Biblical education a *memoriter* study of the Scriptures has, or ought to have, a very large place. It develops an accurate and retentive memory.

Possibly no people in the world have such capacity for acquiring facts as the Chinese. The secret of it is found in their education. Every Chinese scholar who lays claim to any respectable standing or hopes for any advancement must be able to repeat from cover to cover the "Four Books and Five Classics." An error in one syllable may deprive a scholar of his degree or an expectant official of his button. These books form as much as the whole of the Old and New Testaments. Possibly we may ridicule their methods, yet two facts stand out, viz.: that they have developed at least one faculty to an enormous extent, and that they can handle their Book in a way that we can't handle ours.

But further such acquaintance with Scripture is of great spiritual benefit. Amid little worries and vexations nothing so quickly restores peace and banishes the heavy heart as one of the precious promises from God's word. Amid scenes of the greatest gloom nothing so quickly scatters the darkness as the words from the blessed Son of Righteousness. His message to men was "peace and good will." And yet unless these words are in the mind all their reviving power will be missed just at the moment when most needed. Like a song of the morning ringing in our ears all the day these Scriptures stored in the mind lend their magic power continually.

Besides this, in the hour of temptation, such a knowledge of scripture forms the surest bulwark. Satan may insinuate his most artful temptation but it is powerless in the face of a "thus saith the Lord." This was Christ's method of dealing with him. "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees," he flies when he sees the flash of the sword of the Spirit. The quaint Welshman, Christmas Evans, pictures Satan travelling through a country attracted by a noble, sturdy young man. He hastens to drop a seedlet of sin within his heart, but is stunned and routed by a sound of praise and wor-

ship from his lips. Again, he sees a pure, innocent, young woman and speeds his way to whisper an evil thought to her, but is stopped, turned, put to flight by the first notes of "Jesus lover of my soul" as they come from her lips. Still again his eye falls upon an aged, decrepit woman sitting at her loom and draws near thinking that here surely he will find an easy victim, but the same rebuff is met with as he hears her quietly repeating to herself the glorious promises of God's word held out to such as herself. 'Tis but an allegory, but an allegory that may daily come true to such as have their minds stored with the Scriptures.

Still further, such a knowledge of Scripture brings increased efficiency for work. The minister needs to know mathematics, science, law, and literature but he *must* know the Bible. Men are attracted to church by pleasing and eloquent words, they are won for Christ by an earnest presentation of the word. Personal interviews, opportunities for which may be made almost every day, are rendered effective by the free use of God's word. Such a reference removes a doubt, silences a caviller, grounds hope for a penitent, and recovers a backslider.

If the minister would supply these great needs of his people he must know the Bible. Well has one said, "those who take up this memoriter study lovingly, patiently, prayerfully, persistently, will find their public prayers enriched, their style chastened, their utterances more fervid and their whole discourse more permeated with the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

The thought is practical, not visionary. One verse a day with continual reviews will enable us to commit to memory the whole New Testament in 25 years. Four verses per day (leaving out the narrative portions) will enable us to store up for instant use the whole of the doctrinal and more devotional parts of the New Testament during our seminary course. The value of such work is simply beyond estimation. It is a mine of inexhaustible wealth, precious to our own hearts, lifting us into closer union with God, banishing temptation and rendering us more sympathetic and effective in our work.