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JOHN I. BLAIR.

The Honorable John Insley Blair died at his home in Blairstown on Saturday, December 2d, 1899. He had reached the advanced age of ninety-seven years, and though retaining the use of his faculties to the last, had in recent months been exceedingly feeble so that his death was not unexpected. Mr. Blair was elected as Trustee of Princeton University in 1866, and was always deeply interested in its affairs, though owing to his advanced age and increasing infirmities he has not in recent years been present at any of the meetings of the Board. The last time, if we are not mistaken, that he attended was at the Commencement meeting of the Trustees in 1889.

Mr. Blair founded the Chair of Geology in the University, and at various times subscribed liberally to the funds of the institution, his last gift being the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars—a contribution to the Sesquicentennial fund—for the erection of the handsome dormitory that bears his name.

John Insley Blair was born at Foul Rift, New Jersey, a small point on the Delaware River, August 22, 1802. In 1821, he moved to Blairstown, New Jersey, and there he spent the remainder of his days. Though he amassed a large fortune, he retained through life the

modest tastes of his earlier days, and lived in unostentatious simplicity among the people with whom in the early part of the century he had cast in his lot. He took a deep interest in the affairs of the community in which he lived, and was liberal in using his means to promote public improvements. He was also the friend of the poor and the helper of the needy. Mr. Blair began his business career as a merchant, in Blairstown. He then went into the business of banking, and founded the National Bank of Belvidere, New Jersey. When the era of railroad building set in, Mr. Blair became largely interested in railroad enterprises. His large fortune was the result of the rare sagacity and indomitable energy with which he prosecuted his work in this field of business activity. At one time he was said to own more miles of railroad than any other individual in the United States, and he was president or stockholder in twenty railroads.

Mr. Blair was always deeply interested in politics, and was an ardent advocate of the Republican party. In religion, he was a Presbyterian, and his benefactions to Presbyterian institutions attest his devotion to the faith of his fathers. Many churches in the far West were either founded or liberally helped by him. He also founded the

preparatory education was received at the Morristown Academy, N. J., where he entered at the age of thirteen. In the summer term of 1833 he joined the class of '35 at Princeton. On graduation he studied law with Henry A. Ford of Morristown for three years, and then yielding to the spirit of western migration, went out to Illinois and settled at Springfield, being admitted to the bar of Sangamon County in the winter of 1839. For the next few years he rode the circuit with men like Stephen A. Douglas, Stephen T. Logan, J. J. Hardin and Abraham Lincoln, commencing his intimate friendship with the latter at that time. As a Whig and an ardent admirer of Webster and Clay, and in 1840 a strong supporter of General Harrison, Mr. Conkling soon became interested in politics. He was elected mayor of Springfield in 1845. When in 1856 the Republican party was formed, as a delegate from Springfield and a member of the committee on resolutions he helped to frame the platform of the new party. He was a Lincoln elector in 1860 and 1864, and a delegate to several national conventions at Philadelphia, Cincinnati and Chicago, being by this time celebrated as one of the most successful stump speakers in that part of the country.

During the civil war Mr. Conkling served as State agent under Governor Yates, going to Washington to secure repayment of the State funds used in supplying troops in whose organization he had already assisted. His oratorical gifts were displayed to frequent advantage in those stirring days. It was to him that Mr. Lincoln addressed the well-known "Conkling letter" of September, 1863.

His active interest in the cause of higher education led to his appointment as a trustee of Blackburn University at Carlinville, and of Illinois State University at Urbana, and he was instrumental in locating Con-

cordia College at Springfield and did much to sustain it. In 1890 President Harrison appointed him to the postmastership of Springfield, a position which he held until the new administration came in. For many years he was a trustee of the Second Presbyterian Church of Springfield, and for the last forty years one of its elders. In 1841 Mr. Conkling married Miss Mercie A. Levering, daughter of Captain A. R. Levering of Baltimore.

**GEORGE DODD ARMSTRONG, D.D.,
LL.D.**

Class of 1832.

Dr. Armstrong, whose death occurred at Norfolk, Va., on May 11, 1899, was one of the oldest and best-known of Princeton's alumni in the South. Although a Jerseyman by birth, his entire life after graduation from Princeton was spent in Virginia, where his long pastoral and professorial labors gave him a reputation not confined to the limits of his immediate field of work. He was the third son of the Rev. Dr. Amzi Armstrong, to whom Princeton twice gave honorary degrees, and was born at Mendham, Morris County, N. J., in 1813. Graduating in 1832, he went to Richmond to live with his older brother, William Jessup Armstrong (Princeton '16), who was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at that place. There the young graduate took up teaching; but hereditary influences were too strong, and in 1836 he entered Union Theological Seminary, Va. Two years later he became professor of Chemistry and Mechanics at Washington and Lee University, or as it was then called, Washington College. Being licensed in 1838 by the Presbytery of Lexington, the next year he supplied the pulpit of Timber Ridge Church, some seven miles from Lexington, continuing his work there until 1851, in connection with his professorship. In 1843 he was

obtained, and eight years later, receiving a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Norfolk, he resigned his chair in Washington and Lee and entered the new field. The Norfolk church dates back over 200 years, and is thus one of the historic churches in American Presbyterianism. Among its pastors have been the Rev. John Holt Rice, to whom the presidency of Princeton was offered in 1822, and the Rev. Dr. Shepard K. Kollock, a Princeton graduate of the class of 1812. Dr. Armstrong was pastor of this church for forty years—years of active service in and out of the pulpit. During the yellow fever epidemic of 1855 he showed his courage and endeared himself to his community by sticking to his post of duty until he himself was stricken down, after losing four members of his family of seven. During the civil war also he remained with his people until General Butler imprisoned him in Fort Monroe.

The dedication in 1891 of the Armstrong Memorial Church of Berkeley, Va., named in his honor, fittingly crowned his long career of devotion and labor, and in 1892 he resigned his charge to become pastor emeritus.

Dr. Armstrong was twice married: in 1840 to Miss Porter, daughter of Edwin Porter, Esq., of Lexington, Va., and in 1857 to Miss Lucretia Reid, daughter of Charles Reid, Esq., of Norfolk. His influence and reputation as a presbyter and ecclesiastic were equalled only by his industry as an author. His name appears frequently in the files of *The Southern Presbyterian Review*, *The Presbyterian Quarterly* and *The Princeton Review*. Of his pamphlets we have no record at hand from which to quote, but the following is a list of his more pretentious works: The summer of the pestilence: a history of the ravages of the yellow fever in Norfolk, Va., 1855 (Philadelphia, 1856); The doc-

trine of baptism (N. Y., 1857); The Christian doctrine of slavery (N. Y., 1857); The theology of Christian experience (N. Y., 1858); The sacraments of the New Testament (1880), and The books of nature and revelation collated (N. Y., 1886).

CHARLES FREDERICK IMBRIE, A.M.,

Class of 1870.

Mr. Imbrie died at his home in New York City on November 3, 1899, in the fifty-second year of his age. His father, the Rev. Charles K. Imbrie, was a graduate of Princeton in the Class of '35, and his two sons, Andrew Clerk and Harold, are also Princeton men, the former being secretary of the Class of '95 and the latter a member of the present Senior Class. Mr. Imbrie's death removes an exceedingly active man from several fields of usefulness. Among sportsmen he was most widely known as a fly-fishing expert; business circles admired him as a progressive man who had carried his thorough university training into commercial lines instead of into the learned professions; and the poorer classes of New York thought of him gratefully as a philanthropist who, in the words of the *Tribune*, "gave as much or more of his time and personal attention, as he did of his money, to the management of a dispensary which furnishes medicines and baths and free medical, surgical and dental advice to the poor." Detailed account of Mr. Imbrie's career up to 1890 was supplied by him for '70's *Vigintennial Record*. He was born at Rahway, N. J.—his father's pastorate—on March 5, 1848, and when ten years of age was sent to the Quackenbos Collegiate School, New York City. In 1863 he was ready to enter Princeton, but having commercial tastes decided to postpone his college course until he had acquired some experience in business life. Accordingly for