

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE FUNERAL OF

REV. JOHN McDOWELL, D. D.,

SENIOR PASTOR OF SPRING GARDEN CHURCH, IN PHILADELPHIA,

By REV. MORRIS C. SUTPHEN,

SURVIVING PASTOR OF SAID CHURCH,

TOGETHER WITH ADDRESSES

BY

REV. DR. CHARLES HODGE, REV. DR. JOHN MACLEAN,

AND REV. DR. H. A. BOARDMAN,

FEBRUARY 18, 1863.

PHILADELPHIA:

WILLIAM S. & ALFRED MARTIEN,

606 CHESTNUT STREET.

1863.

ADDRESS OF DR. BOARDMAN.

THERE is just one topic, my friends, which it is due to this occasion, and to this beloved congregation, to be adverted to before these solemnities close. Your respected pastor, who is left alone in charge of this congregation, has indeed, very delicately adverted to the subject, but it is meet that it should be said here by some one, that this relation, which has subsisted for the last two years or so, is to be regarded as one of those abounding mercies, with which his and our covenant God was pleased to crown his venerable servant.

The relation, as has been intimated, of a collegiate pastorship is an extremely delicate one, is one which, in multitudes of instances, has caused more or less unhappiness and discontent, has awakened unpleasant emotions in the breasts of those immediately concerned, and of the people to whom they have ministered. And it is proper, therefore, that it should be said here, over the remains of this beloved man of God, that the relation to which I refer, was of his seeking, both as to the associate

pastorship, and as to the man who should be invited to fill the position. He had a right to know his colleague. Through successive generations, as you have heard, he had known his ancestors; and it must be mentioned as a token of God's great goodness, that nothing has occurred, in connection with this relation, to mar in the slightest degree the tranquillity and peacefulness of his declining years. So far from it, the relation could hardly, as I suppose, have been cemented by higher mutual respect and confidence,—on the one hand by sentiments of paternal kindness and affection, and coöperation, and on the other hand, by the sentiments of unfeigned veneration, and love, and reverence; so that I may be allowed to say here, without indelicacy, that the mantle of Elijah has indeed fallen upon Elisha, and that these two men of God, united in this confidential and sacred relation, have found therein their mutual comfort, their mutual usefulness, their mutual cause of gratitude to God. And the beneficent fruits of it, this congregation, in their unbroken harmony, and in their common affection, and in their joyful attendance upon the ministrations of this pulpit, have reaped from day to day since the co-pastorship was instituted. God be thanked that he was pleased, by ordering events so as to bring about this connection, to add to all the consolations and the joys by which the declining years of this venerated man were solaced and sustained.

I know that this beloved people understand and appreciate this subject; but it seemed due to this occasion, that some distinct reference should be made to it.

And now, while as a pastor in this city, there are very many things I should like to say, and that these pastors around me would like to say,—for there is not one of them who would not like to give utterance to the emotions with which his breast is filled as he looks upon this coffin,—yet time forbids that these services should be prolonged.

But how wonderful is the scene here presented to us, as we gather up the issues of a life like this! It is not surprising that the people of God should honour the memory of Dr. McDowell. God has honoured him; and honoured him as he honours very few men in any generation. It is meet that one whom God has crowned with such distinguishing favour, and whom he has made the instrument of accomplishing so much good, should be cherished in the affectionate regard and veneration of all the people of God. How meet it would be that the inscription upon the lid of the coffin should be, "ONE THING I DO,"—"FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST." There lies a man that "lived for one thing."

We hear of his labours in connection with our public institutions, and we are told that the actual records of his life present to us a list of thirteen hundred names of persons hopefully brought to

Christ through his instrumentality; but, after all, we know only in part. For who shall trace the influences that have gone out from this good man's life, and will be going out so long as time shall last—the fruit that shall be gathered from the seed that he was permitted to sow?

His was not a brilliant life—in the sense, I mean, in which that word is usually understood. It was not a life to arrest and awe the public attention and gaze. We are not arrested and awed by yonder sun in the heavens; but every moment, as he moves on in his beneficent orbit, he is dispensing light, and heat, and life, and joy, in every direction. Such has been the career of this man of God.

How true it is, we never know such a man until he is gone! We do know, I think, all of us, more of Dr. McDowell now, than we have ever known before. God grant that we may experience more and more of the blessed influence of his sacred teachings, and his holy life!