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IN MEMORIAM.

JOHN S. HART, LL.D.

IN MEMORIAM.

A DISCOURSE

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE

CHARACTER AND LIFE

OF

JOHN SEELY HART, LL.D.

BY

HENRY A. BOARDMAN, D.D.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THIS Sermon was preached in the Tenth Presbyterian Church, on the 3d day of February last; and again, by request of the "TEACHERS' INSTITUTE OF PHILADELPHIA," in Calvary Presbyterian Church, on the 19th of May ensuing.

H. A. B.

1311 SPRUCE STREET, PHILADELPHIA,
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THIS SERMON
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
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"TEACHERS' INSTITUTE OF PHILADELPHIA,"
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PUBLISHED.

DISCOURSE.

HE STILL TAUGHT THE PEOPLE KNOWLEDGE.—*Ecclesiastes* xii : 9.

IN the course of a brief address at the obsequies of the late Dr. JOHN SEELY HART, on the 28th of March last (1877), I took occasion to say that I hoped at some future time to pay a more formal tribute to my friend's memory. Imperative literary engagements precluded the performance of this duty during the spring; and a six months' absence from the city, has, greatly to my regret, further postponed the service until this period of mid-winter. The long delay might seem to warrant the expectation of an elaborate discourse. But Professor HART's life was a large life—large in its acquisitions, its relations, its labors, and its fruits; and a volume would be required to do it even moderate justice. An intimation that such a volume is to be prepared by a competent hand, supersedes the necessity for anything further on my part than a cursory notice of a few of the familiar aspects of his character and life.

All who knew, or knew of, Professor HART, will recognize the appropriateness of the text just recited, as an introduction to this service: "*He still taught the people knowledge.*" His vocation was that of a "teacher"—a teacher of the "people." What he taught them was "knowledge." And he "still" taught them: he kept on teaching them without intermission to the end of his days. To this occupation he dedicated his life. His chosen profession, as a young man, was the Christian ministry. To this end he sought and obtained licensure of his Presbytery. That he would have adorned the sacred office, had he adhered to his original purpose, there can be no question. There is as little room to doubt, that he would have become a great jurist, a great physician, a great scientist, or a great engineer, had he adopted any one of those professions. But the strong bent of his mind, after he left the Theological Seminary at Princeton,

confirmed by Providential indications, pointed in another direction. So he relinquished his licensure, and decided to become an educator—as interpreted by the event, a great educator.

It is of comparatively recent date that the business of teaching has begun to assert its claims successfully, at least in our country, as one of the liberal arts. Twenty years ago, an able writer, discussing this topic, observed: "Until recently the public seems to have depended for schoolmasters upon the probability that there would always be some persons fit for nothing else; some lame men that could not work, or lazy ones that would not; some disabled clergyman, physician failed in physic, or lawyer waiting for a practice; some youth willing to work hard for a little help on the way to his profession, or some poor man unable from lack of means to reach that end until too late in life to profit from it, and thereby compelled to make a life's labor of what had been designed merely as a step thereto. To deliberately choose school-teaching from pure preference thereof and after due preparation therefor, was certainly rare, and pertained only to the benevolent and unselfish, of whom the world has always possessed a few and never more than a few. And the position in which the work was put by the public was well calculated to make its share of that few as slender as possible. Unprovided with proper instruction, exposed to public obloquy, crushed into penury even by the systematic action of State governments, going to keep down the rate of salaries to the point of starvation, it was an employment which no person of talent and learning could be expected to enter upon, unless actuated by the enterprise of a pioneer and the self-denial of a missionary."

It is pleasant to know that the country has been gradually waking up to the anomalies (one might almost say the enormities) of this state of things. The word 'waking' is used advisedly; for we are not yet fully awake. Referring especially, as I shall do throughout, to Public School systems, it is satisfactory to be able to state that they have attained a better organization, with improved school-houses, and a more liberal endowment; that there is a higher range of scholarship

among teachers, and a growing conviction in the popular mind, that the education of the masses is one of those vital interests which cannot be neglected nor slighted without imperilling the stability of our government. But there have been commonwealths and cities where appropriations to this object were doled out with a parsimonious hand; where the administration thereof was not only made subservient to party politics, but, worse still, defiled with the slime of jobbery and money-making. As the natural fruit of this grovelling policy, teaching, as a vocation, has still to encounter somewhat of the blind prejudice and disparagement of a former era. There is a lingering feeling among people whose own social position is not fully assured, that a teacher, however intelligent and refined, unless connected with an institution of the highest grade, moves upon a plane below that which they themselves are treading. It is rather diverting than otherwise, to see an aristocracy of money fancying itself in a position to *look down* upon an aristocracy of brains.

If this were the only antic that money performs in connection with popular education, it might be dismissed as we dismiss other amusing delusions. But, as was just now hinted, the mercenary element enters as a most efficient factor into questions which touch with vital force the well-being, if not the very being, of the whole existing system. It will be on all hands conceded that the last sphere into which a man should allow himself to carry the regimen of an abject parsimony, is that of the education of his children. Let him economize in his table, his dress, his house-rent (it were superfluous to add, in his drives, his segars, and his amusements), but let nothing short of stern necessity tempt him to deny his children the best practicable means and opportunities of acquiring a good education. No inheritance he could possibly bequeath to them, would be of one-tenth the value. This being self-evident as to the individual, it cannot be contested as to the kindred duty of the State, which is herein *in loco parentis*. As the parent and guardian of the children not otherwise cared for, the State is bound, not simply on the ground of humanity, but, in a republic certainly, from the dictates of self-preservation, to make liberal provision

for their education. An embarrassed exchequer may demand a policy of curtailment. Let it be instituted. But in the name of justice and equity, of public virtue and public safety, do not homologate all departments, and apply your remorseless scythe to them indiscriminately. We may not depreciate the importance, in municipal affairs, of any of these departments. But how preposterous to put such titles as city and county officials, highways, police, public buildings, guardians of the poor, gas and water trusts, in the same category, financially, with public education. By what rule of logic, by what principle of enlightened policy, does it follow that an enforced retrenchment in matters like these must be extended to that department which underlies all the others, and is, next to true religion, rather, let me say, as blended with true religion, the main buttress of our peace and prosperity; which requires, for the due exercise of its functions, years of patient study, and the undivided time of its incumbents, many of whom may not improbably already be living (or starving) on stipends less than the wages a mechanic pays his journeymen, if not, peradventure, less than a contractor pays his hands for sweeping the streets. Economy of this type, which beggars faithful servants so long as they are able to work, and when disabled by sickness or old age, casts them off without a farthing's annuity, might not discredit Ispahan or Constantinople. But it would be a blot upon the fair name of any State or city, could so extreme a case be found, within the broad realm of Christendom.

You will not regard these observations as foreign from the design of the present discourse. For no man could have been more keenly alive to the evils just adverted to, than was Professor HART. In his view, the office of teacher was one of great dignity and responsibility. He recognized its vital connection with the formation of individual character, and thereby with the prosperity of churches and commonwealths. There have been teachers (so-called) who could see nothing within the four walls of their school-room but a group of boys or girls, with whom they were to spend five or six hours daily in keeping them in order, and putting them through a perfunctory routine of recita-

tions. To his eye, here was a company of rational, sensitive, and immortal beings, comprehending unknown possibilities of good and evil, each one of them of higher worth in God's esteem than the globe itself, and all placed in his hands to learn what they were, and to bestow upon them the training which might best fit them for honor and usefulness on earth, and for a happy eternity. To this high task he brought qualifications of no ordinary type. His mind was eminently judicial in its structure, clear and acute, comprehensive and discriminating. If his imagination was weak, this was simply in keeping with the usual law which governs intellectual forces of that mould. Under the quiet exterior, which was the most noticeable thing in his outward aspect, was garnered up a wealth of warm affections and generous sympathies. Amiable in disposition, and singularly gentle in demeanor, he had that indomitable strength of will which, with such an environment, not only extorts homage, but is so much more worthy of homage than the will which habitually asserts itself in boast and bluster. The really great forces of humanity are, like those of nature, noiseless in their working. Millions of gigantic forests record in secret the lapse of centuries; and millions of majestic orbs complete their mighty cycles in silence; "there is no speech nor language; their voice is not heard." And true intellectual power among men rather shuns than courts unnecessary parade.

He who would teach the people knowledge, must have knowledge to communicate, and know how to impart it. It were puerile to maintain that no one should attempt teaching unless he were a walking Cyclopædia. But, on the other hand, no teacher, of whatever grade, can do justice to himself unless he is constantly augmenting his own stock of information. The trite aphorism, "knowledge is power," finds one of its applications here. For there is no kind of knowledge which may not be used by the teacher to good purpose. Beginning with the A B C infants, and going up to the graduating class of the High School or the University, at every stage the freedom and efficiency would be in sharp contrast as between two instructors, one of whom was a mere text-book specialist, and the other a scholar whose

technical proficiency had been liberalized by scientific inquiries, or a course of general literature. Here, again, Dr. HART might be held up as a model to his professional brethren. The foundation for his rich and diversified acquisitions was laid in a thorough classical training. It was deep and strong, as it required to be, to support so compact and lofty a superstructure. Believing with Sir William Hamilton, that "on earth there is nothing great but man, and in man there is nothing great but mind," he justly regarded as indispensable some knowledge of that which it was to be the business of his life to develop and guide. His skill as a metaphysician had much to do with his rare insight into character, his facility in classifying the discordant materials jumbled together in a school-room, and his proverbial tact in securing and keeping the attention even of very dull pupils.

One of the most industrious of men, he never intermitted his own studies, nor suffered his pen to clog in the inkstand. He might have said as Petrarch did a little before his death at threescore and ten: "I read, I write, I think—such is my life, and my pleasures, as they were in my youth."

A glance at the titles of his numerous books and pamphlets, and his still more numerous essays, contributed to newspapers, magazines, and reviews, would give some idea of the extent and variety of his intellectual treasures. Not to recite the long catalogue, let it suffice to name such review-articles as the "English Bible," "Jenkyn on the Atonement," the "Revised Webster," "Normal Schools," the "English Language;" and of his books and pamphlets, the "Class-books of Prose and Poetry," the "Constitution of the United States," "Spenser and the Fairy Queen," "Greek and Roman Mythology," "Manual of Composition and Rhetoric," the "Bible as an Educational Power," "Mistakes of Educated Men," "Pennsylvania Coal and its Carriers," "A Manual of English Literature," "A Manual of American Literature," "In the School-room," "Removing Mountains," "Thoughts on Sabbath-Schools," "The Sunday-School Idea," "The Golden Censer," "Life Lessons from the Gospels."

This incomplete list may afford some hint of the stores of knowl-

edge he had accumulated, and which he faithfully appropriated to the great ends of his profession. It reveals another fact of the highest significance.

His theory of education, as alien as possible from certain schemes now much in vogue, which wholly ignore man's religious nature, contemplated the symmetrical development of the entire man—no less the moral than the physical and intellectual powers. Of all textbooks the Bible was in his esteem the most important; and any scheme which excluded it was, unavoidably, partial, distorted, and inefficient. His admirable monograph, entitled, "The Bible as an Educational Power among the Nations," is alike profound and practical. In that pellucid style of which he was a master, he takes various classes of the truths contained in the inspired volume, and shows how perfectly they are adapted not only to inform the conscience and regulate the affections, but to expand and discipline the mind and lift the whole man up into a purer atmosphere, with the surroundings and incentives of a nobler life.

The validity of his reasonings is tested by familiar facts. "In those regions in which the Bible prevails, the human mind is moulded and takes form and color from its prevailing influence, as plants are influenced in their growth by the atmosphere in which they are immersed. Go through the entire round of ideas concerning God and the unseen world, and the relations of man to his Maker and to the world to come, and compare the thoughts of a race or nation dwelling away from such an influence, and you ever come to the same result. In the one case there is light, in the other darkness. In the one case the mind works freely and logically, in the other it is cramped, dwarfed, degraded, abortive" (p. 30).

If there are those who would eliminate from a system of education all religious elements, even to the extent of proscribing the ethical principles of the New Testament, all that need be said is, that they are discarding the agency which is, under God, the source and spring of personal integrity, and the fostering nurse of those virtues which best conserve the thrift and happiness of communities and the stability of empires.

It is a trite observation that the possession of knowledge and the ability to impart it are by no means inseparable. Able and accomplished scholars have sometimes proved indifferent teachers, and a set of pupils has often drawn more water from a leaky cistern than from a living spring. Many of the great authors were poor talkers, *e. g.*, Dante, Alfieri, Descartes, Moliere, Dryden, Addison even (except among his intimate friends), and others. And every one could name professors whose reputation has shed a lustre upon their colleges, while their pupils starved.

This is only saying in different phrase, that teaching is an art which is to be acquired by hard study, like painting, music, or any other art. The fact has come to be recognized in the most pregnant of all forms, the establishment of "Normal Schools," a palpable misnomer, which detracts nothing, however, from the sterling value of the thing itself. The system of public education which lacks its Normal school, has its proper symbol in a headless statue—perhaps more appositely still, in a grove of semi-rootless trees. The double metaphor is more than permissible; it is essential. For the Normal School is alike the foundation and the dome of the public school system. The most elementary conception of it fills the mind with solemn thought. The teacher of teachers! What position more elevated! What function more honorable! What occupation clothed with a graver responsibility, or, rightly prosecuted, with a truer beneficence! All honor to those men and women of high culture who, in the face ever and anon of partisan prejudice and political greed, have upheld the reputation of our own Normal and High Schools, until they have now come to be cherished by all parties and nearly all sects, not simply as adding to the embellishments of our metropolis, but as among the prime constituents of our moral, social and commercial progress.

Those who are interested, whether in the way of speculative inquiry or of personal duty, in studying the art of teaching, would do well to read Dr. HART'S "*In the School Room.*" His opening chapter on the question, "What is teaching?" might, peradventure, give a further ray

or two of light even to some who have for years been "sitting in Moses' seat," with their classes before them. Let me quote a sentence or two that you may get the flavor of the book.

"Teaching is not simply telling. A class may be told a thing twenty times over, and yet not know it. Talking to a class is not necessarily teaching. . . . The teacher is doing his work only so far as he gets work from the scholar. The very essence and root of the work are in the scholar, not in the teacher. No one, in fact, in an important sense, is taught at all, except so far as he is self-taught. . . . Teaching, then, is *causing one to know*. Now no one can be made to know a thing but by the act of his own powers. His own senses, his own memory, his own powers of reason, perception, and judgment must be exercised. The function of the teacher is to bring about this exercise of the pupil's faculties. The means to do this are infinite in variety." After illustrating this radical idea, that teaching is a co-operative process, the learned author goes on to discuss in successive chapters such topics as these, to wit.: "The Art of Questioning;" "The difference between Teaching and Training;" "Modes of Hearing Recitations;" "The proper order in the Development of the Mental Faculties;" "Cultivating the Memory;" "A Talent for Teaching;" "Gaining the Affections of the Scholars;" "Practice Teaching;" and many other topics. In this small volume of 250 pages, Professor HART has treated, with consummate wisdom, of nearly all the matters which ordinarily enter into the administration of a school. He has laid bare the charlatanry of pretentious innovators; analyzed and exposed notions of teaching founded upon a false philosophy of the mind; and set forth the principles and methods which are sanctioned by sound reason and confirmed by the general experience of the best educators.

He had no tolerance for the sciolists who claim to have discovered a royal road to learning. "I have no faith in any theory of education which does not include, as one of its leading elements, *hard work*. Any knowledge, the acquisition of which costs nothing, is apt to be worth nothing. The mind, equally with the body, grows by labor.

If some stuffing process could be invented, by which knowledge could be forced into a mind perfectly passive, the knowledge so acquired would be worthless to its possessor and would soon pass away, leaving the mind as blank as it was before."* This doctrine runs through the book now under consideration.

If he has not devoted a separate chapter to the characteristic infirmities and failings of the profession—for we have all *read* of teachers who were more or less afflicted with shallowness, with pedantry, with impatience, with imperiousness, with *statuesque-ness*, with irascibility, with vindictiveness, with an awful dignity, with a childish levity, with boorishness, with an inborn antipathy to brushes and lavatories, and the like,—if he has not discussed these weaknesses in form, it must have been either because in his own entire exemption from them it did not occur to him, or because he deemed it wiser to leave them to the correctives interwoven with the entire warp and woof of his book. Let it suffice to add, that I know of no book which would be so invaluable an aid especially to young teachers; and the city or State which should put a copy of it in the hands of every teacher within its bounds, would have the investment returned to its treasury with a hundred-fold interest.

But it is time to follow Professor HART into another field—the one which was most congenial to his tastes, the only one which afforded full scope for the exercise of his powers, and for the unfettered prosecution of his plans. Any estimate of his character and life must be radically defective which fails to recognize him in his paramount relations with the *Sunday-School* system. It would be difficult to cite a parallel example of a man so gifted and erudite, who was pre-eminently distinguished in the two spheres of Public and Sunday-School education. In both spheres he was a thoroughly conscientious worker; but the atmosphere of the Sunday-School was specially suited to his constitution, and they only saw him at his best who saw him there. To this fact the church, in whose house of worship we are assembled,†

* Inaugural Discourse at Trenton, August 26th, 1862.

† The Tenth Presbyterian Church.

will bear grateful testimony. He was at the head of our school for a series of years prior to 1857, and then left us to accept a ruling eldership in our Colony, the West Spruce Street Church, and to organize and conduct its Sunday-School. That church cannot forget, as it could never repay, the priceless advantages it derived from his wise, patient, and energetic labors in both those capacities. After nine years spent in charge of the State Normal School at Trenton, and two years as Professor of English Literature in the College of New Jersey, he returned to this city in '74, and in the autumn of '75 again accepted, for one year, the superintendency of our school. No ordinary language could do justice to the efficiency of his administration. His very presence was an inspiration to his fellow-teachers. On taking the reins, he became their teacher both by precept and example. Teachers and scholars gave him their love and confidence. The whole school brightened up under his benign influence, and enjoyed, by God's blessing, a signal prosperity.

It would be inapposite to the present occasion to dwell on Dr. HART's relations to a particular school; but I may be allowed to quote a few sentences from his Report, presented at our Anniversary in May, 1876, the last Report he ever wrote. He begins by saying: "After an interval of twenty years I find myself, through the kindness of the pastor and teachers, once more at the head of this beloved Sabbath-School, where, in a generation now almost past, so many hours were spent in happy labor." Then, after giving some statistics, he proceeds thus: "Gratifying as has been this increase in numbers, it is the least of our sources of thankfulness to-day. Being impressed with the importance of making the Sabbath-School a place for instruction and study, for well-ordered and systematic growth in Christian knowledge, and not a mere place for religious excitement or entertainment; in other words, a school, not a *religious sociable*, I early called the attention of both teachers and scholars to this point, and I am happy to say that both responded to the appeal with a readiness that amounted to enthusiasm. I think I have never had the charge of a Sabbath-School in which there was so large an average amount of good, solid, bona fide study of God's word and of

Christian doctrine, as there has been in this school during the last four or five months. The scholar who does not regularly come with a lesson well prepared, as he would to his week-day school, who does not show that during the week he has made substantial addition to his knowledge of divine truth, is the exception, not the rule." This generous tribute has an aspect which his modesty forbade him to present. The interesting result he records, was largely to be traced back to his own influence as superintendent. He makes it the occasion for some remarks on a topic of great importance, often adverted to in his books and pamphlets.

"Among the pernicious notions now prevalent on the subject of education, both secular and religious, is that all teaching should consist in reasoning, explanation, and illustration; that there should be a plentiful amount of talk on the part of the teacher, but no solid, hard study on the part of the scholar, and especially that there should be no 'cramming of the memory.' Possibly in days gone by there may have been an error in this direction; there may have been an excess in the matter of mere committing to memory. But that certainly is not the error of our day. The tendency now is all in the other direction. There is among the young altogether too little of the work of committing to memory. Let us not undertake to be wiser than God in this matter. He has so ordered the growth of the human intellect, that memory is the earliest of all the faculties to bud and blossom. A child learns by heart with ease; to the man it is a labor of Hercules. What the child learns by heart, it retains; what the man learns by heart, he forgets. Childhood, unquestionably, is the season when the memory should be both strengthened and stored. It is the time when our noble Catechisms and choice portions of the Scripture, selected Psalms, the Parables, the Sermon on the Mount, and other memorable words and sayings of the Lord Jesus, should be stored in the memory."

These judicious sentiments, which the author has elsewhere elaborated and emphasized, are commended to the consideration of those modern sages who have laid it down as an axiom, that a child should be taught nothing which he cannot fully understand.

His report, as our superintendent, for 1854 (being then at the head of the High School), contains an argument in behalf of thorough religious teaching in the Sunday-School, which is briefly this: "The establishment of Public Schools on their present basis, makes Sunday-Schools an imperative necessity. For we must accept it as a fact that in those schools nothing of the nature of direct religious instruction is, or can be, given. There may be, and there is, religious influence. Our Public Schools have many directors and many teachers, men and women, of decided piety; and true piety cannot exist without making itself felt, especially in such relations as those which subsist between teacher and scholar. It is a gross mistake to suppose that our Public Schools are without religious influences. But we must not confound religious influences with religious knowledge. Good influences, even moral and religious influences, are evanescent, if not based upon sound religious knowledge." Hence (he goes on to argue), the indispensable need, not only of Sunday-Schools, but of fidelity on the part of parents and Sunday-School teachers in carefully storing the minds of the young with Scripture truth.

These extracts from papers, chronologically separated by more than twenty years, illustrate Dr. HART's abiding sympathy with the Sunday-School as an institution, and afford a hint of his views on some of its features. But his profound interest in the subject can be measured by no such standard. It had by degrees taken plenary possession of his whole being, and nothing could satisfy him short of the establishment of a weekly journal, devoted exclusively to this one object. In 1859, therefore, while editor of the publications of the American Sunday-School Union (that great institution which is an ornament, not only to our city and our country, but to our age), he took a leading part in founding the "SUNDAY-SCHOOL TIMES," of which, on its passing into private hands, he continued to be the chief editor for ten years. It is impossible to speak here of the far-reaching agency he exercised in this capacity, as well on behalf of the common Christianity, as in the diffusion of enlightened sentiments respecting the Sunday-School work. The general results of his study, observation, and ample experience,

happily for the cause, are embodied in his two portable volumes already mentioned, "THOUGHTS ON SABBATH-SCHOOLS," and "THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL IDEA." These incomparable books do for the Sabbath-School what his "IN THE SCHOOL ROOM" does for the secular school. Many other admirable works, designed as helps to teachers, had been previously published, and are, as they deserve to be, still in use. But it is safe to say of the latter of these books, that there is probably no other within our reach at once so comprehensive and so minute—none which covers so nearly the whole ground occupied by the Sunday-School, in its design, its organization, its relations with the church, the qualifications and duties of its officers and teachers, together with a due consideration of Sunday-School literature, music, anniversaries, the establishment and conduct of new schools, and numerous other topics. On all these questions his views are marked with the clearness, the sobriety, and the discrimination, so characteristic of the man in his whole mental structure. He was no blind idolater of the past, or of the present, in the department of Sunday-Schools or any other. It was the aim of his life to improve the existing system, to rid it of incumbrances, introduce better methods, augment the means and appliances of healthful teaching, and elevate the Sunday-School into a higher and broader sphere of usefulness. But it was conservative progress which he advocated. He noted with apprehension the growing tendency to lose sight of the true ends of the Sunday-School, to depreciate faithful doctrinal instruction, to subordinate the spiritual to the social element, and to give hurtful prominence to recreation and amusement as a means of attracting and retaining scholars. Not that he was averse to recreation in its place and measure. If you refer to his chapter on "Anniversaries," you will see that he holds the balance with a steady hand between solemnity and levity; that an anniversary, in his view, is neither a funeral nor a comedy; that "the exercises should be of a glad and joyous character," but of such a tone as befits a *Sunday-School*. "Let the children have music that will gladden and please them; let them be cheered and entertained with proper ceremonials; let them shout their hosannas, as of old, from hearts alive with love

and joy. But nothing so really kills this true and holy gladness of heart as rudeness or levity. The most objectionable feature connected with a Sunday-School celebration is turning it into a dramatic entertainment"—an observation which he illustrates by quoting the programme of a performance which might better have graced the boards of some minor theatre.

No less weighty are the author's views on the connection between parental responsibility and the Sunday-School. He saw, as every one who thinks of the matter must have seen, the practical, though unavowed prevalence of the delusive idea on the part of parents, that their responsibility for the religious instruction of their children can be delegated. In carefully chosen words he lays down the proposition, that "no duty of one human being to another is more direct, positive, and intransferable, than that of a parent to educate his child religiously as well as intellectually." This general obligation he goes on to enforce with a specific application to the duty of parents in co-operating with the work of the Sunday-School teacher. One step further he might have gone in this direction—the more so, as he so distinctly recognized the maxim, that innovation is not always improvement. The Sunday-School has brought millions of children and, indirectly, of adults also, within the reach of the Gospel. Its work, in the main, has been good, and good of the highest kind. But in one respect it has been the occasion, not the cause, of evil. It is one of several confederate agencies which have gone to depreciate and annul the beautiful, ancient custom among Christian families of a stated *Sunday evening gathering* for cheerful, religious and social communion. *There is nothing so weak in American society as the family-life.* And for the nourishment of that fragile but vital bond, there are no three hours of the hundred and sixty-eight, which make up the week, worth a tithe so much as the Sunday evening. Of the three Divine institutions established directly by the breath of the Almighty, the family, the church, and the State, the family is the oldest; and neither the State nor the church can trespass upon its domain, or usurp its time and its functions without, in the end, suffering for it. The family and the Sun-

day-School are neither adversaries nor rivals. In their true relation they are coefficient factors, animated by a kindred spirit and working to the same end. But the family bears, in a sense that cannot be claimed for the other, the King's image and superscription, and it is clothed with a higher responsibility; and therefore any unwarranted interference with its legitimate working, or any habitual infidelity to its chartered duties and privileges, may be expected to lead to evil consequences of correspondent gravity. A general revival of the true family-life among Christian households, would be a blessing of transcendent value to our country. Not only would it react with power upon the Sunday-School and the ordinances of the Sanctuary, but it would fall like the breath of Spring upon every great interest, whether of the church or the nation.

But let me return from this digression, if it be one, to say that Dr. HART's *Sunday-School Idea* has the same claim upon Sunday-School teachers that his *In the School Room* has upon secular teachers. It is quite safe to assume that there is no one, however familiar with this service, who would not find himself helped by it; and its general introduction into the Sunday-Schools of the land could not fail to mark an auspicious epoch in the history of the institution.

Professor HART, I have said, was a "great educator." You will doubtless concede that the materials now so summarily laid before you entitle him to this distinction. But there were two elements incorporated with his work, barely glanced at in this discourse, without which his rare success as a teacher could never have reached its exalted standard. One of these is indicated by the titles of chapters xviii. and xix., in his "In the School Room," to wit: "Loving the Children," and "Gaining the Affections of the Scholars;" in shorter phrase, *loving*, and *being loved*. These chapters are worth the price of the book ten times over. They are made up of golden sentences. Equally sound in their philosophy and graceful in sentiment, I should be glad to quote every word of them; but you will read them for yourselves. Of their flavor you may judge by a sentence or two. "No child, however humble or obscure, but feels indignant at being considered as a

mere pawn upon a chessboard, or a mere wheel or pulley in some complicated piece of machinery. . . . Little real influence is ever produced upon any human being, without creating between you and him a bond of sympathy. If we would work strongly and efficiently upon the minds of children, we must really love them, not in the abstract, not in a general way, but concretely and individually. . . . No one is fitted to be a teacher who has not learned to sympathize with the real wants and feelings of children. Pretence here is all wasted. Shams may do with grown persons sometimes, never with children. The only way to win the affection of a child is to love him, not to make professions of love." "If Jesus loves him you may love him." . . . "Children will learn so much more readily under a teacher whom they love. Love helps us to understand, as dislike disturbs and beclouds the understanding. When a child has a dislike, or prejudice, or ill-feeling of any kind against a teacher, or a subject of study, the effect upon the mind of the child is like that produced upon a spring of pure and sparkling water by stirring up the mud and sediment from the bottom. In the human agent the heart is at the bottom, and disturbing influences there cause us to see things through an impure medium."

Assuredly it is no very easy task which Dr. HART would here lay upon the teacher. There are children (and we all know there are adults) whom it is very hard to love, and whose love it is hard to gain; but in every case it is worth an effort; and the teacher who tries his methods will be apt to share his success. It has been said of him, that he always knew every one of his scholars, whether in the day or Sunday-School. It was his custom to individualize his pupils, to make himself acquainted with their personal traits, mental and moral, and to pay special attention to the dull and the timid. Moving about the room in his noiseless way, he would drop an encouraging word into the ear of a backward or disheartened scholar; or, inviting him to his private room, would learn just wherein he was falling short, and cheer him with wise and kindly counsel. He seems to have exemplified in his sphere that fine picture which St. Paul set before the mind of his son Timothy; "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle

unto all men, apt to teach, patient." These qualities all met in our friend; he was "gentle, apt to teach, and patient." Positive, peremptory, autocratic, he could be, if the occasion called for it; for obedience and order he would have, at whatever cost. But the "hiding of his power" was largely in those milder traits which, in turn, derived much of their potency from the massive character that formed their background. We cannot endure an effeminate man, but we can much more than endure the gentle wild flowers that garnish the face of a granite rock. And have we not *his* emblem here?

"Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
 Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-eyed;
 A man that would have foiled at their own play
 A dozen would-be's of the modern day;
 Who, when occasion justified its use,
 Had wit as bright, as ready to produce;
 Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
 Or from philosophy's enlightened page,
 His rich materials, and regale your ear
 With strains it was a privilege to hear;
 Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
 And his chief glory, was the GOSPEL theme."

This closing couplet reveals the other, and yet more efficient, element of his power, adverted to a moment ago. For who does not know that no character so symmetrical, so well-rounded, so complete as his, was ever formed without the pervading presence of a genuine Christian faith? It is of the nature of such a faith, in its loftier types, to be controlling, to sway the understanding, to subjugate to itself the strongest passions and affections, and to inspire and permeate the whole life. Of this there is a tacit but significant recognition in the fact, that even in the apostolical days, and from that time to the present, the word "believer" has been the accepted synonym of Christian. The bracing influence of such a faith upon the intellectual faculties, was one of Dr. HART'S favorite topics. "It brings our feeble and finite mind into a sort of living contact with the infinite mind of the Creator. Is it possible, in the very nature of the human soul, that such an intercourse can be

without a quickening power upon us? Is there on record an instance of a man who had become mighty in the Scriptures, who was not thenceforward a man of power among his fellows? The study of the Bible does not confer genius. It does not change a dullard into a man of talents, but it has a prodigious educating influence upon whatever talents or faculties God has originally endowed him with. The man whose soul is fairly steeped and saturated with sacred Scriptures, and who in reading it has the childlike faith of Bunyan or of Luther, to feel that he is in direct communion with the thoughts of the great God, cannot but have his faculties quickened and roused thereby.”*

With equal energy does a genuine faith sanctify, elevate, and harmonize the moral powers, and dominate the life. We see, accordingly, that Professor HART'S scheme of life was one which stretched far beyond our narrow terrestrial horizon; that his aims, while embracing the interests of time and sense, were as much above them as the heavens are above the earth; that his prime motives were drawn from the infinite and the eternal; and that, without any ostentatious parade of his cherished purpose, it was his great solicitude, as an educator, so to train his pupils that, by God's blessing, they might make the most of *both* worlds. It were easy to prove this by copious citations from his writings, literary and religious. But it has, perhaps, its best illustration in a work still in manuscript, which, I may be allowed to say, has impressed my own mind even more deeply than any of his printed books. His ten years' administration of the State Normal School at Trenton seems, happily, to have been hampered neither by political mistrust nor sectarian jealousies. Free to follow the dictates of his own Christian conscience, he daily opened the school with the reading of the Scriptures and prayer. Duly estimating the importance of these exercises, he composed a series of prayers for the occasion, which he designed for publication under the title of "*Prayers for the School-room.*" The portion of Scripture read each day, usually from ten to twenty verses, and running consecutively, though not continuously,

* "The Bible as an Educating Power."

from the beginning of Matthew to the middle of Hebrews, is indicated at the top of the (folio) page. Then follows the prayer, uniformly covering the page. Of these there are two hundred and seventy, the first bearing date September 1st, 1862; the last, April 23d, 1866. Then follows a series of twenty prayers for special occasions, as the opening and end of a session, the graduation of a class, the illness or death of a scholar, the resignation of a teacher, the quarterly examination, and the varied incidents that enter into the usual experience of school life. Of the quality of these prayers—the most difficult, let it be noted, of all the forms of composition—I can give you an opinion worth much more than my own, and which I heartily endorse. The author submitted his manuscript to the Rev. Dr. John S. Stone, one of the oldest, ablest, and most revered ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church, who returned it with a note, saying:

“These prayers are remarkable for comprehension, and wonderful for variety. They are good, tender, terse, luminous, cheering, admonitory, Christian, patriotic prayers, and I do not wonder that you have so often seasons of deep religious interest among your pupils. I love New Jersey for encouraging such religious culture in her Model and Normal schools. I hesitate not to say that they are the best collection of ‘School Prayers’ ever made. It has done my heart good even to read them, and I cannot doubt that God would bless their devout use at all times and in all places, whenever and wherever introduced.”

Are there not thousands of teachers who would rejoice to have this collection of prayers within their reach? And could not the teachers of the public and private schools in our city, without trouble and at a trifling expense, put their names to a subscription paper which would insure its publication?

Nor this volume alone. On resuming the charge of the Sabbath-School of this congregation, Professor HART instantly set about the preparation of a series of prayers for the Sunday-School. They run chronologically from October 17th, 1875, to June 18th, 1876, thus covering the term of his incumbency. Arranged on the same plan with the former series they are of kindred excellence, and would be

as great a boon to Sunday-School teachers as the other volume would be to the teachers of secular schools. Why should they not be published, and, when published, used?*

You will all perceive how utterly impracticable it must be to gather up and put in any tangible form the results of a life like Dr. HART'S. Its "results," did I say? Nay, these will not cease until time itself ceases. But I have spoken of him as a "power." This sentiment would have found ample vindication had his active life been restricted to his Presidency, from 1842 to 1859, of our High School. During his administration, as a courteous note from the present accomplished head of the institution informs me, "he had about three thousand students under his care, some six hundred of whom pursued the full course of study and were graduated." Every one of these young men felt, more or less directly, the impress of his hand. Not to disparage the agency of his corps of able associates, he, doubtless, had more to do with the moulding of their characters and the choice of their vocations, than any one else. Little cause had he to blush for his work. These young men (and the same tribute is due to the classes that succeeded them) have, as a body, reflected honor upon their *alma mater*, and added, not merely to the material growth, but to the intellectual and moral wealth of our city and even of our land. They are largely represented to-day among the best classes of our citizens, and in the ranks of our eminent clergymen, lawyers, physicians, teachers, editors, engineers, architects, artisans, in a word, in every sphere which calls for cultivated talent. Should the High School ever be challenged again for its right to be, it will be able to stop the mouths of gain-sayers, by simply saying, with Sir Christopher Wren's monument in St. Paul's Cathedral, *Look around!* And who can compute the power of the man whom God commissioned to stand for seventeen years at the fountain-head, and give impulse and direction, to all these healthful streams of influence?

* The MSS. of both these collections are temporarily in the custody of the publishers of this Discourse.

So, again, as to his ten years' Presidency of the State Normal School at Trenton—the consort of that kindred institution which every true Philadelphian regards as one of the chief ornaments of our city.

I learn by letters and papers kindly sent me by the present able Principal* of the New Jersey School, that Professor HART had yearly under his care in the Normal and Model Schools over six hundred students, besides two hundred and twenty-five in the “Farnum Preparatory School” at Beverly. His administration of this flourishing institution which, up to the present time, has required the fostering care of the State by supplying four hundred of its schools with skilled teachers, was eminently successful. On resigning the office, the Board of Trustees, composed of intelligent and influential men, two from each county in the State, adopted resolutions expressing in the most unqualified and grateful terms, their high appreciation of his very valuable services, not only to that Seminary but to the cause of Common School education in New Jersey. In the same spirit this Board prepared and sent to his family a beautiful tribute to his character and worth on the occasion of his death.

The personal attributes which have been mentioned, and his affable, persuasive bearing, were precisely suited to the more plastic material with which he had to do in that position. And when it is considered that the door was kept wide open for the entrance of pure religion with its white-robed train, it can excite no surprise that so many of the pupils were found, from year to year, sitting, with Mary, at the feet of the Great Teacher, and learning the same divine lessons. A large proportion of the young ladies thus trained, have become, as was just now hinted, or will yet become, teachers—which is true no less of many of the graduates of our own High and Normal Schools. Many of *their* scholars, again, will one day be teachers. And thus the benign influence exerted by their beloved and now lamented Principal, will propagate and diffuse itself in ever-widening concentric circles, so long as successive generations of men people the earth. Have we any standard by which to measure an influence like this?

* Washington Hasbrouck, Ph.D.

The truth, however, is still very imperfectly stated. In the introduction to his *In the School-room*, Dr. HART tells us that his experience "included the training of more than five thousand young men, and of nearly one thousand young women, a large portion of them for the office of teachers; and it has been gained (he adds) in college, in boarding school, in a city High school, and in a State Normal school." To this small army of pupils must be added other thousands brought as directly under his teaching in various Sunday-Schools. Then there are still to be taken into the account three other aspects of this many-sided life: his work as a lecturer, an editor, and an author; and to crown all, the conscious, and, not less, the unconscious influence that constantly went out from him, alike in the formal and the casual intercourse of society. Take any *one* of these elements, and you will soon discover, in tracing its course, that it has grown into proportions which mock your arithmetic. But the case is not that (to use the familiar symbol) of a single rivulet gradually swelling into a broad stream. Rather is it that of a deep, transparent mountain lake which sends off its sparkling waters through a half-score of outlets, a rill in this direction, a river in that, but all increasing as they go, and, though presently lost to sight, destined to meet at length, and form a majestic expanse too vast for any eye but One to compass it.

That a life in which were bound up so many precious interests should be brought to its term by a casual fall in the street—a fall, too, when he was returning from one of his characteristic errands of kindness to the young*—is one of those events which we can only refer to the mystery of Divine Providence. Concerning all such inscrutable dispensations, and they are many, it is well to remember, that we see but "*parts* of His ways."

"God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

* He had just been to return to a young lady at one of our best Female Seminaries, a manuscript he had kindly taken to look over and correct for her.

Our personal duty is apparent. We are here this morning to express our sympathy with that bereaved wife and son whose home this stroke has made desolate; to condole together over our common loss (to me the first and fatal interruption of a friendship of forty-five years), a loss, as well, which gathered Literature, Science, and Religion, as mute mourners around his bier; and to receive with reverent hearts the great lesson of this afflictive visitation. What is this lesson?

—“Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love;
For us they languish, and for us they die;
And shall they languish, shall they die in vain?”

I address myself especially to that honorable Guild of Teachers, of which Dr. HART was, in our city, for so many years the distinguished head, and come directly to the point by asking you, What is it concerning him that you dwell upon with chiefest satisfaction as your thoughts follow him to-day into the world of spirits? Is it his rare intellectual gifts, his high culture, his devotion to his and your noble profession, his manifold labors, his achievements, his triumphs? No, none of these, nor all combined, *except* as they were inspired and hallowed by a sincere, unostentatious piety. First of all, in all, and through all, we think of him now as a CHRISTIAN; and nothing short of this could reconcile us to his death.

We have seen that this was, more than any other quality, the main element of his power. On the lowest view of the subject, how can you fulfil your allotted tasks without a genuine trust in the Saviour, even as a matter of personal comfort? Teaching has a fascinating mastery over many persons; but like every other occupation, it has its snares and vexations. It is a weary round you tread, at least in its lower spheres, and although your sowing brings you many a generous harvest, your inevitable crosses and trials must overmatch your unaided wisdom and patience. What so needful to you as a FRIEND always at your side, who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, who has promised wisdom freely to all who ask, and who has said to every disciple, “As

thy days so shall thy strength be?" Such a friend you will find in JESUS OF NAZARETH.

Again, it is the equitable demand of your pupils, that you shall do your very best to give them a good education. And whatever your talents and experience, you cannot do your best unless you are daily taught, as you may be "without money and without price," by the omniscient and unerring Master.

Note the stress which our friend lays upon this point. "I have no professional conviction more fixed and abiding than this, that no persons more need the direct, special, continual guidance of the Holy Spirit than those who undertake to mould and discipline the youthful mind. No preparation for this office is complete which does not include devout prayer for that wisdom which cometh from above. There is a teacher infinitely wiser and more skilful than any human teacher. The instructor must be strangely blind to the resources of his profession, who fails to resort habitually to that great, plenary, unbounded source of light and knowledge."*

These views are of grave moment in their bearing upon our Public Schools. To repeat Professor HART'S observation, "it would be a gross mistake to suppose that those schools are without religious influences." The five or six hundred pupils of the High School, and the nine hundred of the Normal School, listen every morning to the reading of the Scriptures, and are taught to reverence the Bible as the word of God; and this is understood to be the general usage in the schools of every grade. But formal instruction in religious doctrine is not allowed; indeed, it is not easy to see how it could be, without a radical reconstruction of the entire system. All the more important is it, that the teachers generally should carry into their work—as very many of your body have long done—that love to God and love to the souls of men, which pertains to the essence of real religion. Here is a door open to you which no legislation can shut. If you have "the mind of Christ," the spirit which pervaded His every word and act, you cannot fail to

* Discourse at Trenton.

exert a religious influence upon your pupils. It will make you faithful, patient, cheerful, considerate of their feelings, lenient towards their infirmities, firm but kind in enforcing discipline, and wise in counseling them, as occasion offers, to make sure of the "pearl of great price," the only imperishable ornament, the only inalienable possession. Opportunities like yours for doing good—possibly to some whom no one else can reach—constitute a sacred trust, the obligations of which can be neither transferred nor evaded. And why should you wish to evade or transfer them, when, rightly discharged, you might, by God's grace, "save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins;" nay, when you might, peradventure, attain in the end a place among that exalted company who, having turned many to righteousness, will shine as the stars for ever and ever? Is there anything of earth so well worth living for as the service of Christ and its reward? "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

If neither of these arguments, a regard to your own personal comfort, nor the just claims of your pupils upon you, may avail to win you to this service, turn your thoughts for a moment to the inevitable change which awaits us all. Every one will assent to Pascal's remark: "Nothing is so important to any man as his own state; nothing so serious to him as eternity." It is the voice that spoke on Sinai which says: "Prepare to meet thy God." If you can afford to live without religion, can you afford to die without it? Is there any other equipment than that supplied by a devout reliance upon the blood and righteousness of Christ, with which you dare venture into the presence of the Uncreated One? There may be those here, scholarly and cultivated men and women, who have yielded to the current unbelief of the times, and repudiated their early faith in the divine origin of Christianity. Not to discuss at all the grounds of your unbelief, whether scientific or philosophical, let me ask you a single question. Suppose the hour had come for you to die, what could your skepticism do for you at that crisis? Unless stupefied by disease or medicine, you would be intensely anxious to know something of death, and what is to follow it. Could your philosophy tell you? Could your science? Nay,

suppose it were possible to summon to your presence in that supreme hour the entire body of unbelieving sages, illustrious astronomers, geologists, physiologists, naturalists, and metaphysicians, the vouchers of an atheistic philosophy, whose boasted discoveries are giving color to the literature of the day, and whose names are on every tongue; suppose you could gather the august brotherhood around you, and say to them, "I am about to die; tell me, I implore you, what is death? what is beyond the grave? *is* there a 'beyond?' and how am I to meet it?" what would be their response? One portion would boldly reply, "Blind force created you, and annihilation awaits you." The rest, less advanced and more merciful, would turn from you and go out one by one from your presence, silent and baffled, and ill at ease. Were not this most cruel mockery of a dying man?

I stood once by the bedside of an aged man, a prominent politician and jurist in a distant State, whose threescore years and ten found him literally a profane and scoffing infidel. A few hours before his appalling death, the saddest sight of my life, he said to the colored servant who was waiting on him, the only person present, "*What sort of a world is that I am going to?*" Poor old man! this was all his infidelity could do for him. It had brought him to the outermost verge of life, and then left him to plunge, helpless and alone, into the dark abyss. Not of this type, assuredly, can be the unbelief of any who hear me. Yours is, doubtless, a "rational" skepticism, courteous towards Christianity, and associated with honorable qualities. But what does it know of death? What solitary ray of light does it shed upon the darkness of the grave and the dread hereafter? And what a comment will it be upon your intellectual pride, your scientific researches, your trusted intuitions, if, as the chill of death is creeping over you, you have to turn to some poor African servant and ask, "*What sort of a world is that I am going to?*"

Were it not infinitely better to ask this question now, at the only Oracle that can answer it with certainty and with authority? It has already spoken, and you may hear its answer if you will. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "I am the Resurrection and the

Life." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

