



*James Woodruff*

# DR. JAMES WOODROW

AS SEEN BY HIS FRIENDS.

---

## CHARACTER SKETCHES

BY

HIS FORMER PUPILS, COLLEAGUES, AND ASSOCIATES.

---

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY HIS DAUGHTER,

MARION W. WOODROW.

PART I.

PRINTED BY THE R. L. BRYAN COMPANY.  
COLUMBIA, S. C.  
1909.

evangelist of Charleston Presbytery from 1867 to 1869; pastor of the church at Spartanburg, S. C., for several years; District Superintendent and Field Agent of the American Bible Society for twenty years, his residence still being at Spartanburg; has been Stated Clerk of the Synod of South Carolina since 1875, and Permanent Clerk of the General Assembly since 1904.

A Tribute, by the Rev. Dr. James L. Martin . . . . . 68

Recollections and Appreciation, by the Rev. Dr. George L. Petrie . . . . . 77

Dr. Petrie was born in Cheraw, S. C., Feb. 25, 1840; was prepared for college in Charleston, S. C., and Marietta, Ga.; graduated at Oglethorpe University in 1859, and at Columbia Theological Seminary in 1862; was chaplain of the 22nd Alabama Regiment of the Confederate Army; taught for a few years after the war; was pastor of the church at Greenville, Ala., from 1870 to 1872, of that at Petersburg, Va., from 1872 to 1878, and of that at Charlottesville, Va., from 1878 to the present time; received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from Hampden-Sidney College in 1887.

Recollections, by Rev. Dr. Wm. E. Boggs . . . . . 80

Dr. Boggs was born May 12, 1838, at Ahmedmeggarr, India, where his parents were serving as foreign missionaries; was prepared for college in South Carolina; graduated at South Carolina College in 1859; entered Columbia Theological Seminary in 1860; enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861, serving with the troops defending the coast of South Carolina soon after the fall of Fort Sumter; became chaplain of the Sixth South Carolina Regiment in 1862, and saw service with it until surrendered by Gen. Lee at Appomattox April 9, 1865. He became pastor of the First church in Columbia, S. C., in 1866; married Miss Marion Alexander, daughter of Mr. Adam Alexander, of Washington, Ga., in 1870; became pastor of the Second church in Memphis, Tenn., in 1871; of Central church in Atlanta, Ga., in 1879, when the health of Mrs. Boggs, which had been shattered by an attack of yellow fever in the great epidemic of 1878 at Memphis, required change of climate; was professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in Columbia Theological Seminary from 1882 to 1885; again became pastor of the Second church in Memphis in 1885; became Chancellor of the University of Georgia in 1889, and pastor of the First church in Jacksonville, Fla., in 1900; was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1909; and is now Secretary of Schools and Colleges.

## Recollections.

---

BY THE REV. DR. WM. E. BOGGS.

Memory runs back over an interval of just about fifty years to the time when the young Professor came from Oglethorpe University to take his seat in the newly established Perkins Chair, the first of its kind, I believe, in the whole world. I was soon to graduate at College and to become his pupil in the "Relations between Natural Science and Revealed Religion," but my call to the ministry had not been made clear to me. I recall his features as I met him in social circles—the face finely cut and nearly as white as marble; the fine eyes looking straight at one through glasses that did not conceal their penetration or their kindness. His manner was an invitation to friendly intercourse, and the voice was wonderfully soft and gentle. There was never the least suggestion of self-assertion; of his having been a favorite pupil of the great Agassiz; or of his feeling otherwise than "a man among men," to be rated at his worth when fairly and dispassionately judged. After talking with him one went away feeling a sort of pleasure in his interest about one. I was soon to discover that he had a strong hold upon the confidence and affection of a fine company of "Theologues," who had been his pupils at Oglethorpe University. And also that on downright, outspoken men like Drs. Thornwell and Adger he was making a favorable impression.

And when not long afterwards I entered his class-room in the Seminary, I found an instructor whose position was not above and apart from his pupils, but among them, as an elder brother ready to help and encourage them. The facts of Science were simply and clearly stated in their bearing upon his theme. And opinions, his own and other men's, were quietly given. Questions and difficulties real or imagined were invited. Invariably the teacher's replies were given without assumption of authority save such as belongs to truth when made apparent. And I do not recall a single instance in which one of us was made to feel "cheap," because of any slowness of apprehension or ludicrous error. The teachings of Holy Scripture were always reverently set forth as of final authority on any subject

treated of by the Divine Spirit. His words, though in some not unimportant respects they might admit of a new interpretation, yet were never to be twisted or forced to yield some meaning that might be the favorite of an hour. Each source of information, the volume of Nature and the volume of Scripture, must be allowed to speak for itself. And then his principle of "NON-CONTRADICTION," rather than *didactic agreement*, was calmly applied to evince their freedom from disagreement.

This calm, non-sensational way of showing the harmony of Science and the Bible very probably failed at first to make much impression on the impatient mind, but it grew upon one from day to day until by degrees one came to see in this soft-spoken young Professor one who loved and trusted both of God's revelations—Creation and the Word. And finally one realised that his principle was the key which unlocked puzzles and avoided the entangling alliances of Scientific Hypothesis and of Scriptural Exegesis which had so often created confusion, strife, and skepticism in the past under the caption of "The Conflict of Science and Religion." Thus it was that we came to deal with

"Thoughts that wander through Eternity"

—the Professor and his pupils together, his encouraging word, the touch of his kindly hand, as it were, ever ready to make steady their tottering feet when on slippery paths, and to release them from the clutch of unfriendly thorns by the wayside. And now after nearly fifty years of experience, I seem to realise more than ever the help thus given me as man and as minister so long ago in the class-room of the Seminary. Dr. Woodrow's principle of "Non-Contradiction," rather than concurrence, has never failed to help me in time of need. It has been continually whispering: "No scientific teachings are to be sought in the Bible. And no twisting of Scripture to force an agreement with Science."

Before my Seminary studies had been completed, however, there came a loud call for me to take part with the younger men of the South in the great War between the States. And in parting with Dr. Woodrow, I was to discover a new side of his character. Of pure Scottish blood, born in England, and

educated in Pennsylvania, he had deliberately made choice of the South as his future home. He had studied her people and her institutions, and had adopted them, because he had first approved them. And so in early manhood he had said in his heart after the manner of Ruth: "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I recall now the regret that revealed itself in his tones when he spoke of the privilege accorded to those who felt free to go to the front. So soon, therefore, as the obstacle was providentially removed by the closing of Columbia Seminary, and he was free to follow his martial impulse, he enlisted as a private soldier in the Confederate Army. And so the name "James Woodrow" was inscribed and forever will remain on the Muster Roll of that valiant host that fought under the banners of Lee and Jackson for the right of self-government. But he was not to be permitted to serve exactly as he wished. His attainments in Chemistry were not unknown to the authorities. And therefore he was detailed from the ranks to be placed in charge of the Laboratory of Medical Supplies. Only those of us who can recall the destitution in our hospitals and the consequent sufferings of our men, with the high death-rate, can properly estimate Dr. Woodrow's invaluable services in that Laboratory. Probably not many Generals in high commands, probably not one of our brave regiments, were able to render more effective service to the cause that he loved. Was he ever entirely satisfied with the exchange? I seriously doubt it. The best fighting blood of old Scotland flowed in his veins, and he was by birth and instinct a soldier. And when we came back with defeat written upon our furled banners, his comment was: "The Confederate government was the only human government that I ever loved." And after the noise of battle had been hushed, and the more cruel horrors of "Reconstruction" were thrust upon a prostrate people, none were more busy in supplying bread to the widow and orphan, clothing to the destitute, and hope to the discouraged. His busy pen was pouring consolation into the bleeding hearts of his brethren, and he was among the foremost in re-opening the schools of learning which were to supply trained thinkers in all professions, especially ministers for our vacant pulpits.

But I must pass over years in which I was permitted to labor with Dr. Woodrow, as pastor of his family and co-presbyter in Church courts and committees. Duty called me to a distant post in the valley of the Mississippi. The time came by and by when I was re-called to the Seminary, as a junior colleague in the Faculty. Time and experience had in a measure prepared me the better to appreciate the breadth of his powers and the accuracy of his judgment in widely diverse matters. Especially did I come to see in him far more clearly the man of affairs, the administrator, the embodiment of what Macaulay styles that most uncommon kind of sense, called *common sense*. My beloved colleague, Dr. Charles R. Hemphill, now of the Kentucky Seminary, often spoke with me in private of the curious fact that in nearly every case requiring the exercise of good judgment or common sense we found ourselves constrained, sometimes almost unwillingly, to agree with Dr. Woodrow. It might be at times inconvenient for certain reasons. But for this course there was, or seemed to us, no remedy save by doing what we believed to be wrong or unwise. And so, without withdrawing our confidence in or affection for other brethren, we were bound of course to do what we sincerely judged to be wise and right. And when, under circumstances that we regretted and disapproved, the Board of Directors were betrayed into calling on Dr. Woodrow to deliver the famous Address on Evolution, we inferred the operation of a scheme which would probably make the poor, little Seminary the focus and centre of a controversy which would possibly wreck it—as was the case. Of our colleague's loyalty to Holy Scripture as being the very word of God, we had no more doubt than we had of his affection for and fidelity to the wife of his youth and their dearly loved children. But storm signals had been displayed in our sight for some time. And many worthy brethren in the Church were illy prepared for sitting in judgment on questions involving Evolution, which in their minds was associated with the names of noted unbelievers. Into the mazes and labyrinths of the Evolution Controversy there is no need that I should enter at this time. The follies and shame of it are well known to many and accessible to all.

Dr. Woodrow had conceived it to be his duty, in preparing the Address, to review *de novo* the whole question of Evolution. And in so doing he reached the conclusion that the evidence for the truth of Evolution as defined by him was now such as to make it "probably true." And this decision, *though wholly devoid of any theological importance whatever*, became the weapon in the hands of his enemies to destroy the peace of the Church and the life of the Seminary. Dr. Woodrow lived to see a change in the opinions of the great majority of his brethren who had hitherto opposed him. Without recalling their various and sundry deliverances, *in thesi* and otherwise, they admitted him to be *rectus in ecclesia*. He was welcomed in their pulpits, called to the Moderator's chair in church courts, and most respectfully solicited for his wise counsel in many trying situations. And "here endeth the lesson," so far as rectifying the injustice done a great leader in the pacification of the age-long conflict of theological speculation and scientific speculation is concerned. What our brethren now think of "*in thesi* deliverances" and the "Non-Contradiction" of Evolution and the Holy Bible is a matter of doubtful inference.

As for the type of Christian character which showed itself in Dr. Woodrow's experience, who that heard him can ever forget the fervency with which he dwelt on the preciousness of the covenant with the believing parent touching the salvation of his children? And when death laid his hand on his only and beloved son, who can forget the Abraham-like faith with which he said to the weeping household: "He was the Lord's more than he was ours. Let the Lord have him according to his holy pleasure." And when one of his colleagues saw fit in the Seminary Conference to suggest very gently that some words of Dr. Woodrow about the place of "Religious Feeling" in the Christian's experience, not to oppose but to supplement what had been said, were misleading, who that was present can ever forget how eagerly the man of Science came forward to say that viewed as an exercise of the regenerated heart, love was "*indeed all—everything*. Supreme love to God, and love to our fellow-man as to ourselves, is the first and greatest of all commandments." I can close my eyes now, after the lapse of more than twenty-five years and recall that eager face as he bent over



the sacred desk to explain: "My dear colleague is entirely right in the sense intended by him and not in any wise denied by me: *love is all—everything.*" And let me add further that I have yet to find the Christian, learned or unlearned, minister or layman, who holds more tenaciously and consistently the supreme authority of the Bible, not only as *containing* the word of God, but as *being*, in every part of it, as it came from the pens of holy men who were moved by the Holy Ghost, *the very word of God.*