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HISTORY
OF THE
San Francisco Theological Seminary
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN THE U. S. A.
AND ITS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.

BY
JAMES CURRY, D. D.



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GEORGE BURROWES, D. D.

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A third name ever to be held in remembrance as that of one of the founders of the San Francisco Theological Seminary is the name of Rev. Dr. George Burrowes.

He began his services as Professor of the Hebrew Language and Literature with the first term of the Seminary, and for almost a quarter of a century he continued his remarkable expositions of Scripture and in the manifestation of a beautiful Christian life.

Dr. Burrowes was born April 3, 1811, at Millham, near Trenton, New Jersey. He began his classical education at a school in Trenton, April, 1824, and was for a time a teacher at Allentown, New Jersey. In November, 1830, he entered Princeton College and graduated therefrom in September, 1832. He took the first honors of his class and delivered the Latin salutatory at the Commencement, and had also assigned to him an honorary speech in English on "The Importance of Mathematics in a College Course."

In November following he began his studies at Princeton Theological Seminary and graduated in 1835. He united with the Presbyterian Church at Trenton, N. J., in April, 1827; was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, February, 1835, and was ordained and installed pastor at West Nottingham, Md., July, 1836. He preached here from 1835 till

1850, and then went to Easton, Pa., as Professor of Latin and Greek in Lafayette College, which position he held for five years. He was pastor at Newtown, Pa., from April, 1857, to June, 1859.

Having been selected by the Board of Education of the Old School branch of the Presbyterian Church to engage in educational work in California, he left New York, July 5, 1859, and came by way of Panama to San Francisco, where he arrived July 28th.

He found our Presbyterian Church well established here and doing good work.

Dr. Scott was then pastor of Calvary Presbyterian Church, and was in the prime of life and at the height of his renown and influence. Dr. Burrowes wrote that when he preached for him at night the large and beautiful audience room was literally packed with a congregation made up principally of "men in the vigor of life, all attentive and anxious to receive an instructive, orthodox gospel."

Dr. Scott welcomed Dr. Burrowes to the Coast most heartily, assisted him greatly in getting started in his educational work and ever stood by him in it.

The object of Dr. Burrowes was to begin a work that should develop into a Presbyterian college. The school was started in the basement of Calvary Church with four boys.

When the first examinations were held they showed that most thorough and excellent work had been done, and the school began to increase rapidly, and soon outgrew its limited quarters. Presbyterians realized that there was a good prospect of securing a school of high order. Money was raised, a lot was purchased on the corner of Stockton and Geary streets, and the City Col-

lege building was erected. The progress was remarkable, for within one year and a half after the arrival of Dr. Burrowes there was established a college with educational facilities superior to anything in California, and with an attendance of one hundred and twenty students. The work continued to prosper, and, looking toward the development of the college into a university, a site containing twenty-five acres of ground in South San Francisco was donated to the Trustees of the City College for the purpose of establishing a college thereon, and \$31,250 were also given with it with which to erect the buildings.

In 1865 Dr. Burrowes' health broke down, and he was obliged to give up his work and return East to rest. The City College at that time had all modern educational appliances, was attended by one hundred and seventy students, and had an income above all expenses of about \$3,000 per annum. This was the fruit of six years' labor on the part of Dr. Burrowes and those who joined in with him.

He left San Francisco June 3, 1865, for the East, and remained there four years. While there, in 1866, he was reappointed a Professor at Lafayette College, in the department of Religious Instruction. His health having improved, he again turned his face toward California, and he arrived in San Francisco August 24, 1869. In the meantime, while the work was continued at the City College, a new college had been chartered for University Mound, and a fine Gothic building had been erected.

Upon his return Dr. Burrowes was offered the Presidency of the new college, which he accepted. The institution was opened for students in January, 1870, and soon a large number of them were in attendance.

In addition to the thorough work during the week, there were classes for Bible study on the Sabbath and preaching by Dr. Burrowes.

He continued here for about three years with great success, but the work proved too laborious for him, and he resigned his position to devote his whole time to work in the San Francisco Theological Seminary. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, ex-Governor H. H. Haight, a Presbyterian Elder, and President of the Board of Trustees, addressed a letter to Dr. Burrowes, eulogizing the good work done by him, and conveying the grateful acknowledgment of the Board therefor and their good wishes for his future health and happiness.

Dr. Burrowes was elected to the chair of Hebrew Language and Literature in the San Francisco Theological Seminary December 4, 1871, and for about one year and a half filled the Professorship in connection with his work in the College.

This was the beginning of one of the most self-denying, most important, and most fruitful works of his whole life. The Seminary had no buildings, no grounds upon which to erect any, and no money to endow Professorships. But those who undertook the work were men of ability, perseverance and faith. The work of instruction was done by Rev. Drs. W. A. Scott, William Alexander, Daniel W. Poor and George Burrowes. The amount received by each one from the Seminary was only \$300 or \$400 a year, and Dr. Burrowes lived on this and on the little that he had saved up before.

Thus with hard work, sacrifice, love and faith, they laid foundations that made it possible to build up the grand institution we now have, and their example has stimulated others to labor and give for this most worthy

School of the Prophets. The infirmities of old age made it necessary for Dr. Burrowes to cease from labor, and in 1890 he was made Emeritus Professor and retired on a salary sufficient to provide for all his wants and keep him in comfort. He continued with a good degree of health and strength, and occasionally preached or spoke at public gatherings. On April 3, 1894, his eighty-third birthday, he tripped upon a rug in his room, and fell on the floor and fractured the head of his thigh bone. From the effects of this he died April 19th, and was buried April 21, 1895, in Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, Cal.

Dr. Burrowes was twice married—in early life to Miss Helena Parker, whose brother, Joel Parker, was twice Governor of New Jersey. She died November 29, 1848. He was married again in 1850 to Matilda M. Shadwell in Oxford, Pa.

Dr. Burrowes was remarkable both as a scholar and teacher. He took the first honors of his class at Princeton, and was a tutor in the College there while pursuing his theological studies in the Seminary. He was for five years a Professor in Lafayette College, and also its Vice-President. He founded and built up a noble collegiate institution in San Francisco, and aided in founding and firmly establishing the San Francisco Theological Seminary, which is now so well equipped for its work.

He was a fine linguist, read the classics like his mother tongue almost, and was an exceedingly apt teacher. His expositions of the Scriptures were remarkable. He always began his recitations with prayer, and ever strove to lead his pupils closer to the Savior and to have them filled with the Holy Spirit. His students loved

him dearly, and when they would go to visit him after being out in the work it was his custom always to pray with them at parting, and place his hand upon their heads and give them a fatherly blessing.

He was a fine preacher also. He stuck close to the Gospel and presented the truth so as to interest and instruct both old and young. The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Washington College, Penn., in 1853.

He was a master of good English, wrote many articles for magazines and papers, and was the author of "A Commentary on the Song of Solomon," "Octorara and Other Poems" and "Advanced Growth in Grace." His commentary on the Song has been pronounced the best ever written.

He was a Christian of deep and humble piety, and had at various times all through his mature life remarkable religious experiences. He attributed them to the presence and influence of the Holy Spirit. After one of these experiences he wrote:

"Had I stood with Moses on the top of Pisgah my soul could hardly have had such delightful emotions as those now felt." Again he wrote: "When I arise in the morning and come into my study, here I find Jesus already waiting for me, and I meet Him with delight of heart." "I can scarcely conceive of anything more desirable in Heaven than merely to have these feelings made perfect, and the union with Jesus completed by my being brought to be with Him where He is to behold His glory."

He had a strong "desire to depart and be with Christ," and often said that when the summons came he would go with unspeakable delight. That desire

was at last gratified, and he has gone to enjoy the Heavenly Home and loved ones there, as he wrote:

“All I love
Is gathered now in Heaven—my precious Lord,
And friends loved well as life. * * *

Soon our soul
Shall from this body burst, bright with the rays
Of Christ our righteousness, and rise to shine
A star amid the morning stars of Heaven.”