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A SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

OF

ALEXANDER HENRY.

Preached in the Central Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia,
at his Funeral, August 17, 1847.

BY THE

REV. JOHN McDOWELL, D. D.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

1847.

EDUCATION ROOMS,
Philadelphia, August 24th, 1847.

Rev. J. McDowell, D. D.

My Dear Sir—The Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church, at a meeting called yesterday to testify their respect for the memory of their late President, ALEXANDER HENRY, passed a minute, of which the following resolution is a part.

“*Resolved*, That the Rev. J. McDowell, D. D., one of the Vice-Presidents of the Board, who preached a sermon in commemoration of the exemplary Christian character and public services of the deceased, be requested to furnish a copy of the same for publication.”

If a meeting of the Board could have been held in season, I know that it was on the minds of some of the members to request you to preach a sermon on the occasion, in view of your relations to the Board, and to their late revered President. As you were nevertheless called upon in the providence of God to perform the service, the Board, though prevented from requesting you to preach, do respectfully request you to publish. In their judgment, this opportunity of bringing before the public the memorials of departed worth, ought not to be lost.

Earnestly hoping that you will accede to our wishes, as well as those of others,

I am, truly and fraternally,

Your fellow servant in Christ,

C. VAN RENNELAER,

Cor. Sec. Bd. of Ed.

TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Gentlemen—Through your Secretary, I have received a resolution of the Board, requesting for publication a copy of the sermon I preached at the funeral of ALEXANDER HENRY, President of the Board. In answer, I would remark, that having been requested by the family to make an address, or preach at the funeral, I prepared the following sermon, without a thought of its publication. Since I received your resolution, I have endeavoured to revise it, and have added a few additional facts, which have come to my knowledge since the funeral. With these remarks, the sermon is at your service.

Respectfully Yours,

JOHN McDOWELL.

PHILADELPHIA, *August 31st, 1847.*

FUNERAL SERMON.

MATTHEW XXV. 23.

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

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P. W. Packer

We have met on a peculiarly solemn and affecting occasion. A good man, who has filled a large place in this community, and in the church of Christ, has fallen. Many have reason to mourn, and many do mourn, his loss. But we have no reason to mourn, as without hope, concerning him who has fallen asleep. Our loss is doubtless his eternal gain. After having filled up a long life, with great respectability, and extensive usefulness, his Master has called him home; and he has received the gracious award of our text: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

In the parable of the talents, of which these words form a part, a master, signifying God, the Sovereign and Judge of mankind, is represented as "travelling into a far country;" expressing the time which God waits with men, before he calls them to account, for their conduct in this world. Before his departure, the master called his servants, and delivered unto them his goods. "Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another, one." By these talents, we are to understand the various gifts which God bestows on men; and the opportunities of glorifying him, and being useful in the world, he affords them. In bestowing these gifts, and affording these opportunities, he acts as a sovereign, giving to some more, and to others less, as he pleases. Two of the servants, in the para-

ble, doubled their talents; signifying the faithfulness of God's people, improving for his glory, the gifts bestowed, and opportunities afforded them. The return of the master to reckon with his servants, signifies the account we must all render to God, for the use made of the talents entrusted to us. This will take place at death. Our text contains the blessed decision of the Judge, with regard to all who shall then be found to have been faithful, in the use and improvement of the talents committed to them—"Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." These words are suitable to direct our meditations on the present solemn occasion.

Let us first attend to a brief illustration of the character here given; and then to a description of the blessedness of those who sustain this character.

I. The character is given in the words, "good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things." The good and faithful servant is devoted to God in his heart, and acts from right motives. He has given to God, not a divided, but his whole heart. He loves God supremely. His supreme desires are after conformity to his image, and the enjoyment of him. His supreme delight is in his service, and enjoyment. His greatest grief is occasioned by his imperfections in duty, and occasional wanderings from God, and the hidings of his face. And the motives which influence his conduct are, supreme love to God, and regard to his authority, and glory.

Hence, we may remark, that the good and faithful servant *has experienced a change of heart, by the renewing power of the Holy Spirit*. For, such a disposition of heart, no man naturally possesses. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh," or carnal; and "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." To have spiritual affections, desires, delights, and motives, we must be born of the Spirit. As we read, "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit," or spiritual, or holy. "And, "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Every good and faithful servant of God has therefore been renewed in heart, by the Holy Spirit; and in vain are all claims

to the character of the text, unless we have been thus renewed.

Again: The good and faithful servant *makes the law of God, as revealed in his word, the rule of his conduct*; and, in whatever station he is placed, and in whatever sphere he is called to act, he endeavours to know his Master's will; and knowing, to do it. He searches the Scriptures, and meditates on their truths. He loves the courts of the Lord, and unless necessarily prevented, is stately found in his house in the seasons of public worship. He loves the ordinances of God, and comes to the sacraments of his appointment. He daily prays in his closet, and if he is the head of a family, in his family. He is just in his dealings with his fellow men; and does to others, what he would they should do to him. He is tender of the good name of others. He is kind to the poor and distressed, and ready to afford them needed assistance. He contributes his proportion for the support of the gospel, in his own congregation; and also, according to his ability, cheerfully gives of his substance to extend the kingdom of Christ abroad. If he is vested with office, either in church or state, he endeavours so to act, as to have the approbation of his own conscience, and of his Divine Master. He is a good citizen, an affectionate husband, a dutiful child, a kind parent, and an equitable master. He carefully endeavours to lead his children, and household, to keep the way of the Lord. In short, in every station which the good and faithful servant occupies, and in every relation he sustains, the law of God, in his word, is the rule by which he endeavours to regulate his conduct; and the end he has supremely and habitually in view is, the glory of God; and to this end, he makes every other subordinate.

Again: The good and faithful servant *relies for the acceptance of his services on the merits of his Saviour*. After he has done all, he confesses himself an unprofitable servant; that he has merited nothing at the hands of God; and that if he receives a reward, it will be a reward, not of debt, but of grace, abounding through the Saviour. He is sensible, that what fidelity in the service of God he has been enabled to maintain, he owes to his grace; that he has lived a spiritual life, because Christ, by his Spirit, has lived in him; and that, therefore, he has nothing

but what he has received; and consequently nothing that can entitle him to a reward on the ground of merit. Besides, he is sensible, that in his best services, he comes so far short of his obligations, that if he was dealt with according to his personal deserts, everlasting misery, instead of eternal life, would be his due, and must be his portion. On Christ, therefore, he relies for grace to be faithful, and strength to do his duty, and for the acceptance of the services he is enabled to render. And it is cause of grief to him, that he does so little for the Master, to whom he is sensible he owes so much.

II. I proceed briefly to describe the blessedness, or gracious reward of the good and faithful servant. In the day of account, his Lord will say to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

When the good and faithful servant is called away from this life, and appears at the bar of God, to give account of the deeds done in the body, he will receive the *approbation* of his Judge. He will say to him, "Well done." This approbation will be a great blessing. The good opinions of men, and especially of the judicious and influential, are highly prized, and are esteemed a blessing. How blessed, then, must be the approbation of God! and to hear him, who is infinitely exalted above all other beings, and whose judgment is always according to truth, express his approbation! The blessedness of this approbation cannot be fully estimated until it is heard. And here, I would remark, that this approbation of the saints, by God their Judge, is not intended to intimate, that the soul who has received it has merited anything from him. For the faithfulness, which his Judge will approve and commend, has been owing to his grace, which enabled him to be thus faithful.

But not only will God, in the day of account, express his approbation of the good and faithful servant, but will also adjudge him to *high honour*. It will be a high honour to be thus approved by the righteous Judge of all the earth. But the honour which will be conferred on him in the world to come, is particularly intimated in the clause of the text, "I will make thee ruler over many things." To be a ruler on earth is

esteemed a station of high dignity. Hence this expression is figuratively used to set forth the high honour to which the saints in heaven will be elevated. The good and faithful servant shall there, as the Scriptures teach, be made a king and priest unto God; receive a kingdom which cannot be removed; wear a crown of righteousness, and life, and glory that fadeth not away; and sit with Christ in his throne, as he is set down with his Father in his throne.

And further, God will confer on the good and faithful servant, *perfect and unspeakably great felicity*. The complete and exalted happiness, which awaits the saint after death, is especially expressed, in the last clause of the text, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The good and faithful servant will be admitted into the presence of God, and "shall see him as he is," and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him. There he shall be entirely freed from all sin; for he shall be like God, perfectly conformed to his image, and satisfied in his likeness. "When he shall appear, (said John) we shall be like him;" and, "I shall be satisfied (said David) when I awake with thy likeness." No more will the good and faithful servant have to complain of the power of indwelling sin. His inward foes will all be slain. No body of sin, nor ensnaring world, nor distracting cares and anxieties, nor tempting adversary, will any more disturb his peace, by drawing him into sin, or hindering him in duty. He will be perfectly holy; and will be confirmed in holiness, beyond the danger of falling. He will also be freed from all misery of every kind. "He shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more. God shall wipe away all tears from his eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." And he shall be completely, unspeakably, and eternally happy. This happiness is set forth in Scripture, by a variety of expressions and figures, which show its exceeding greatness. The good and faithful servant shall possess an enduring kingdom, wear an unfading crown, and sit upon a stable throne. He shall have "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." He shall dwell in "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" in "a house not

made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" and in a mansion prepared by the Saviour, in his Father's house. He shall partake of "fulness of joy," in the "presence" of God; and of the "pleasures," which are at his "right hand for evermore." He shall be associated with "an innumerable company of angels; and the spirits of just men made perfect." And he shall be admitted to the vision and fruition of God. And all this happiness, and far more than can be expressed or conceived of, in our present state, will be uninterrupted, unalloyed, and unceasing.

In the application of this subject, I beg leave now, to say a few things of the aged and venerated friend whose bodily remains lie before us; whose disembodied spirit has gone to the God who gave it; and whose death has occasioned this discourse. Though, according to the testimony of God's word, we know "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not;" though the best of men are imperfect, (and none are more sensible of it, and deplore it more than themselves,) yet, many are to be found, who sustain the character drawn in the text. They are good and faithful servants; and will, at last, be so acknowledged, and commended by their Lord. This character, we believe, was borne, and was eminently maintained, by our departed friend. In the several stations and relations of life, and they were many, in which he was called to act, they who knew him, and he was extensively known, I believe, will testify that he was indeed a good and faithful servant.

ALEXANDER HENRY, whose mortal remains lie before us, was born in the North of Ireland, in June, 1766. He came to this country, and landed in this city, (Philadelphia) in the year 1783, when he was seventeen years old. After his arrival, he engaged in mercantile business, first, for a short time as a clerk; and then in his own name. In this honourable employment, he continued, until he retired from business, in the year 1807. By the blessing of God, on his industry, integrity, and practical wisdom, he prospered in the world, and acquired an ample property, with which, to the latest period of his life, he honoured God, and blessed the church, and community. The North American and United States Gazette, in announcing his

death, on Saturday last, paid the following just tribute of respect to his character as a *merchant*:—"Mr. Henry's long and useful life was passed in this city; and the mercantile profession, in which he amassed his large and well earned fortune, was dignified by his unfaltering integrity, his large and liberal views, and his practical illustration of the duties of a merchant. He grew old in the midst of a community which honoured him for his worth."

Mr. Henry was highly respected and useful, and shone as a man, in the various relations he sustained in life, and the various spheres in which he moved. But his greatest excellence was his pre-eminent Christian character. He made a public profession of religion, in the Second Presbyterian church, in this city, of which Doctors Green and Janeway were then the pastors, August 4th, 1803. He was ordained a ruling elder of said church, in January, 1818. In June, 1832, this church, (the Central) was organized. Mr. Henry's name stands at the head of the list of its members. He was one of its first two ruling elders; the first president of its trustees; and one of the most liberal contributors to the erection of this house of worship, and the support of the gospel here, since its erection. His death will be a great loss to this congregation.

As a Christian, Mr. Henry, when he avouched the Lord to be his God, as his whole after life proved, devoted all he was, and all he had, to the Lord, to be employed in his service, and for his glory. He was an experimental Christian, deeply acquainted with his own heart; and with the various exercises of a soul born of God, and engaged in the spiritual warfare. With no person in this city, with whom the speaker has conversed, has he enjoyed more instructing, refreshing, and satisfactory conversations on the subject of religion. He loved to talk on this subject. And his conversation was not merely about religion, but religion itself;—the religion of the heart, produced by the grace of God.

He was also a highly intelligent Christian. He read much, and profitably. He was a good theologian, well acquainted with the doctrines of the word of God. He was sound in the faith, and fixed in his religious belief; but, at the same time, he was charitable towards those who differed from him on

some non-essential points, while they held to the great Head Christ Jesus, and manifested the Christian character in their lives. He loved the doctrines of grace;—salvation through Christ alone, without any merit of his own. In my frequent conversations with him, through a series of years, his unworthiness as a sinner, and the rich and free grace of God towards him, were constantly acknowledged. And this acknowledgment was among the last expressions of his life. As he lived, relying for salvation, on the mercy of God, through a Saviour, so he died. And his glorified spirit, doubtless is now uniting, in strains of immortality, with the redeemed in heaven, in the anthem of praise, “unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever.”

As a Christian, and an officer in the church, he was active in his Master’s service. And when his feeble health, and the infirmities of age, forbade active services, he was still engaged, by his wise counsels, and liberal contributions, in promoting the cause of Christ, and the temporal and spiritual good of his fellow men. Few, if any men of his day, exceeded him in philanthropy. He has long given largely, systematically, and conscientiously, to benevolent objects, for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of his fellow men. In him, every good object in this city, for the promotion of its prosperity; the instruction of the rising generation; the reformation of the vicious; and the relief of the poor and distressed, found a liberal and efficient patron. And especially was his liberality exercised towards objects more immediately connected with the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of the souls of men.

Before the speaker had a personal acquaintance with Mr. Henry, and before the formation of the many benevolent religious institutions, which are the glory of the present age, when large contributions for religious objects were rare, he has read, and heard, of the donations of Mr. Henry, and one other benevolent man in this city, gone to his rest, with admiration. For many years, and to the time of his death, he was uniformly one of the largest contributors to the benevolent institutions of the

Presbyterian Church in this country, to which he belonged. But he did not confine his benefactions for the extension of the kingdom of Christ to the institutions of his own denomination; but others, for the promotion of the same great object, ever found in him an efficient friend; and the paralyzing influence of age did not, in him, as is frequently the case, lessen his benefactions.

Among the numerous benevolent institutions of this city, and elsewhere, with which he was connected, and to which he was a large contributor, I beg briefly to notice a few. He gave much to the poor and needy. Among other benefactions to this class, for many years, every summer he purchased a large stock of wood, which in the winter he had distributed among the needy, especially such as were virtuous and pious. The blessing of many a worthy family, whose necessities were supplied, and whose hearts were made glad by his benefactions, has come upon him.

To the Tract cause, he was an early and efficient friend. Before a Tract Society was organized in this country, he procured tracts in England, and had them distributed in this country; and some of them, together with some new ones, written at his request, were published in this city at his own expense.

Of the education of young men for the gospel ministry, he was early and long the efficient friend and patron. Long before the Board of Education of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was formed, he embarked in the cause of educating indigent young men of piety and promise for the gospel ministry.

When the General Assembly established the present Board of Education, in the year 1819, Mr. Henry was appointed a member of the executive committee, and the treasurer. At the frequent meetings of the committee, as the minutes show, he was constantly present, and for several years he conducted the correspondence. When the Board was re-organized by the General Assembly, and took its present form in 1831, Mr. Henry was unanimously chosen its president. In this office he continued until his death. For many years he has supported, through the Board, one student in his preparations for the ministry in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. And be-

sides, many a minister of our church is indebted for his education, in whole or in part, to his counsels, prayers, and liberality.

Another noble institution, in which Mr. Henry acted a conspicuous part, was the American Sunday School Union. He was among the first in this country who engaged in giving instruction in Sabbath Schools. He was long a devoted and efficient Sabbath School teacher. Many who afterwards became valuable members of the Church, belonged to his class, and probably received their first religious impressions under his faithful instructions. He was one of the principal founders of the American Sunday School Union; and also of the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union, which preceded it. Of the latter, he was president from the year 1817, until it was merged in the American Union, in the year 1824. Of the American Sunday School Union, he was elected the first president, which office he held until the time of his lamented death. And it is worthy of notice, that from 1817, the year of his first appointment, until 1846 inclusive, he was always present and presided at the anniversaries.

The estimation in which our deceased friend was held, as a philanthropist, and a man of influence in society, and of practical wisdom, was manifested by his election as a manager of most of the benevolent institutions of this city, and of the Presbyterian Church, and of several institutions located out of this city. Of a number of these institutions he was the presiding officer. In the latter part of his life, sensible of his declining years, and increasing infirmities, he tendered his resignation of most of the offices he held. In some cases, his resignation was with reluctance accepted, but in others not.

Mr. Henry had, for years, suffered much from ill health, and frequently was brought nigh unto death, and then partially recovered. His last illness was short, and his death, at least so soon, unexpected by his friends. The exercises of his last days were of the same character with those of his life for many years. They were comforting and instructing to survivors. His was "the path of the just," which "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." A daughter, who was constantly with him in his last days and nights, has furnished the following account of some of his expressions.

He frequently expressed the desire, "if it were the Lord's will, to leave the poor frail body." He earnestly requested her, "not to pray for his continuance on earth, but that her mind might be divested of the selfish wish to detain him here, and be enabled calmly to leave the issue of his increasing debility in the hands of God; and to behold how the religion of the gospel, and the precious promises of the Saviour, can sustain, comfort, cheer, and elevate the believer, in the midst of intense pain, and more depressing nervous weakness." After a night of much suffering and consequent wakefulness, he was asked if he enjoyed any refreshing sleep? He answered, "No, my dear child; but what then? He gave me songs in the night." Several favourite hymns were at times repeated to him. These were, "Jerusalem my happy home;" "Vital spark of heavenly flame;" and "Rock of Ages, shelter me." When the last was repeating, he said, "That is it; no price I bring; no tears, no efforts to fulfil the law, can avail for a poor sinner; Christ must save, and he alone; all grace, free, undeserved grace." When, on one occasion, he thought himself alone, he gave vent to his full heart, in audible, touching confessions of his unworthiness, utter helplessness in himself, but strong confidence in his Saviour's finished work. On turning, he observed his faithful wife at his bed-side, and remarked: "I thought there was no one here—but I was not alone, Jesus was with me." On the Sabbath previous to his death, his daughter, on returning from church, mentioned to him, she had heard a sermon from the text—"Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." He said, "Yes, true; clouds and darkness surround his throne, as it regards his decrees; we cannot understand them; it is our duty to believe. Clouds and darkness surround his providences often; and though his children cannot penetrate them, they must acquiesce in the assurance, that judgment and righteousness are the basis of *his* throne, who doeth all things well. Clouds and darkness, in a measure, obscure my prospect now, when physical sufferings are permitted to affect the mind, and deprive me of the joy I have experienced, in seasons gone by. But it is all well. Though I do not enjoy the smiles of a reconciled God, to the same blissful extent, I have sometimes;

yet, blessed be his holy name, ‘*I know in whom I have believed;*’ my hope, my confidence in my Saviour has never been taken from me.”

Many times, during the week, did he quote the above text, “Clouds and darkness,” &c. Thus lived, and thus died Alexander Henry. He departed this life on Friday morning last, August 13th, in his *eighty-second* year.

Let his useful and holy life, the high respect in which he lived, and the assured hope entertained, that he has entered on a blessed immortality, comfort his family—his widow, children, grand-children, and numerous friends, under their bereavement. And while they mourn their loss, let them be thankful that God gave them such a relative and friend; continued him so long to them; and enabled him to be useful to the end of a long life. Let them ever keep in mind his pious counsels, Christian example, and earnest prayers, and profit by them. Follow him, as he followed Christ. Like him, be good and faithful servants, and you will ere long be welcomed to the unspeakable joy on which he has entered; and there be re-united to him, never more to be separated.

And to this numerous and respectable audience, I would say, you highly respected our deceased friend; imitate him in the virtues and graces which commanded such respect. And while you are constrained to say, “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;” be induced to live his life. The God who has called him to his account, will soon come to reckon with us. Let each one of us faithfully occupy with the talents committed to us, and with them, glorify God, and be useful to our generation. And then, when we are called, by death, to give up our account, we too shall receive the plaudits of our Judge, saying to us, “Well done, good and faithful servants; enter into the joy of your Lord.” AMEN.

TESTIMONIALS OF RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE
ALEXANDER HENRY.

Extract from the Minutes of the Board of Education.

At a meeting of the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church, held at the Education Rooms, Philadelphia, August 23d, 1847, the following minute was unanimously adopted.

GOD having been pleased in His all-wise Providence to remove from this life ALEXANDER HENRY, our distinguished and beloved President, the Board, whilst mourning over their great loss, feel it a duty they owe to the Church, as well as to their own sympathies, to record their testimony to the eminent worth and public services of their departed associate.

ALEXANDER HENRY has been for more than forty years an active promoter of the interests of ministerial education in the Presbyterian Church. Long before the Board of Education was organized, the sagacious mind and benevolent heart of this elder in our Zion realized the importance of assisting pious and indigent young men in preparing for the gospel ministry. His sound and enlightened judgment, as well as his extensive experience, enabled him to render the most valuable aid at all times, particularly when the Board of Education was organized by the General Assembly in 1819, and re-organized on a larger basis in 1831. Especially during the first seven or eight years after the organization of the Board, he was a leading executive officer in conducting its affairs; often corresponding with the young men, cultivating their personal intercourse, keeping the accounts, and exerting a prominent influence in the general management of the cause. He had the head to devise salutary measures for the education of our candidates, the heart to sympathize with them in their poverty, the hand to carry into execution, and the purse to furnish supplies. Many a preacher of the gospel in the Presbyterian Church has received his education through the counsels, the prayers, and the liberality of ALEXANDER HENRY. At the re-organization of the Board in 1831, he was unanimously elected President, which office he held until his death. All the operations of the Board, until the recent period of the sickness of our revered President, have been so intimately connected with his personal influence and agency, that we feel sensibly indeed his departure. But whilst we mourn, far be it from us to murmur. 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' He 'rests from his labours, and his works do follow him.'

The Board adopt the following resolutions, as expressive in a more official manner of their sentiments on the occasion of their bereavement.

1. *Resolved*, That in the death of ALEXANDER HENRY, the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church has lost an early, steadfast, and efficient friend, a sympathizing and wise counsellor, an enterprising and judicious executive officer, a liberal patron, and an honoured President.

2. *Resolved*, That we adore the divine goodness which gave, and preserved for so long a time so faithful a public servant to the church, whilst we acknowledge with resignation the severity of the dispensation which has taken him away. Amidst the sorrows of his death, we find a solace in his past life, as well as in his hopeful translation to a better world, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

3. *Resolved*, That the Rev. John McDowell, D.D., one of the Vice-Presidents of the Board, who preached a sermon in commemoration of the exemplary Christian character and public services of the deceased, be requested to furnish a copy of the same for publication.

4. *Resolved*, That a copy of this minute be transmitted to Mrs. Henry, with respectful assurances of Christian condolence, and with the prayer that the affliction may be sanctified to the family according to the gracious promises of our Redeemer.

C. VAN RENSSELAER, *Cor. Secretary.*

Extract from the Minutes of the American Sunday School Union.

At a meeting of the Board of Officers and Managers of the AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION, held at their house August 16, 1847, the following minute in reference to the decease of Alexander Henry, late President of the Society, was unanimously adopted:

It having pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from the scene of his labours and usefulness, ALEXANDER HENRY, the revered and much loved President of our Society, the Board of Managers would record their sense of this afflicting dispensation.

When the project was adopted to organize a society to supervise and aid in the work of supplying our whole country with the blessings of Sabbath school instruction, it was an important object to place at the head of the Institution a man of high personal piety, of sound judgment, and commanding influence. Such a man was found in Alexander Henry. Enjoying, in an eminent degree, the respect of this community, with a wide spread reputation as a Christian and philanthropist, the friends of the cause sought his co-operation. It was an experiment involving no small pecuniary hazard, and one in which failure would bring upon its leaders mortification and reproaches. These, however, were considerations not to deter a man like Mr. Henry, from entering with all his heart on a scheme of benevolence which promised such vast benefits to our country, to the cause of humanity, and above all, tending to the advancement of our Redeemer's kingdom.

With a sagacity and prudence well suited to such a station, the result of a strong mind, acute observation, and great experience, he entered on the duties of the office twenty-three years since, and although of late desiring to be discharged, when the infirmities of age disabled him from taking an active part in the business of the Society, he has been re-elected by the unanimous voice of his associates, at each returning year. During this long period, with exception of the past few years, he has presided at our meetings, and taken an active part in all our operations. His whole course has manifested the enterprise, the judgment, and prudence of a wise and good man.

Combining expanded views with a judicious execution of well selected plans, he spared neither the ardour of his mind, nor his great personal influence, nor free and large supplies of pecuniary aid.

We have cause of gratitude to God, in behalf of our country, that he has given us such a man, and has continued his services to a period so far beyond the ordinary term of man's life. Now that he is removed, we feel sensibly how severe is our loss. We mourn a great and good man, taken from a post of eminent usefulness; for his very name, which was so intimately blended with our own, carried weight and influence wherever it went. Therefore,

Resolved, That while we thank God for the blessing bestowed in the gift of his servant, now departed from us, we cannot but deplore the severe loss to the Society, to our country, and to the cause of truth in the world. We reverently bow to the will of the all-wise Disposer of all things; praying, that He will raise up those who may manfully and successfully bear the banner of His people, in their conflict with the powers of darkness, causing truth and holiness to triumph over ignorance and sin.

Resolved, That the Officers and Managers, with all persons in the service of the Society, attend the funeral of our deceased President.

Resolved, That the sympathies of the Board be expressed to the family of Mr. Henry, on this, their great bereavement, with our prayers that they may enjoy the consolation which God so freely gives to his children; and of which, they may assuredly partake, who can confidently trust in the happiness of a faithful, humble follower of the Lord.

FREDERICK W. PORTER, *Cor. Sec.*

A SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

OF

ALEXANDER HENRY.
