



*James Woodruff*

# DR. JAMES WOODROW

AS SEEN BY HIS FRIENDS.

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## CHARACTER SKETCHES

BY

HIS FORMER PUPILS, COLLEAGUES, AND ASSOCIATES.

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COLLECTED AND EDITED BY HIS DAUGHTER,

MARION W. WOODROW.

PART I.

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## Some Reminiscences, by the Rev. Dr. Eugene Daniel. . . . . 86

Dr. Daniel was born near Livingston, Ala., in 1849, the family removing to Raymond, Miss., during his infancy. He graduated at Columbia Theological Seminary in 1871; married Miss Susannah T. Witherspoon, of Camden, S. C., the same year; was licensed by Harmony Presbytery, ordained by Ouachita Presbytery, and was installed pastor of the church at Camden, Ark., in 1871; became pastor of the First church in Memphis, Tenn., in 1875, remaining there nearly eighteen years, passing through the yellow fever epidemics of 1878 and 1879, having the fever himself; was pastor of the First church in Raleigh, N. C., for ten years, and has been pastor of the church at Lewisburg, W. Va., for nearly seven years; delivered an address, alternate for Dr. Palmer, before the General Assembly at Charlotte, N. C., on the 250th anniversary of the Westminster Assembly; delivered the address at the Memorial service of Dr. B. M. Palmer in the First church in New Orleans; received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the Southwestern Presbyterian University.

## Some Impressions, by the Rev. Dr. C. R. Hemphill. . . . . 112

Dr. Hemphill was born in Chester, S. C., April 18, 1852; attended the University of South Carolina and that of Virginia, 1868-1871; graduated at Columbia Theological Seminary in 1874; was tutor in Hebrew in Columbia Seminary 1874-1878; married Miss Emma Louise Muller, of Columbia, in 1875; was Fellow in Greek at Johns Hopkins University, 1878 and 1879; professor of Ancient Languages in the Southwestern Presbyterian University, 1879 to 1882; professor in Columbia Seminary, 1882 to 1885; pastor of the Second church in Louisville, Ky., 1885 to 1899; one of the founders of, and professor in, the Louisville Theological Seminary from 1893 to its consolidation in 1901 with the Danville Theological Seminary, the consolidated institution being the Kentucky Presbyterian Theological Seminary, in which Dr. Hemphill has been professor of New Testament Exegesis and Practical Theology from 1901 to the present time. He received the honorary degree of D. D. from Central University and Davidson College, and that of LL. D. from Hanover College and Westminster College. He was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1895, and of the Synod of Kentucky at its centennial meeting in 1902.

## A Reminiscence, by the Rev. Dr. S. L. Morris. . . . . 116

Dr. Morris was born in Abbeville, S. C.; graduated at Erskine College, and at Columbia Theological Seminary; was licensed and ordained by South Carolina Presbytery; was pastor of

the church at Walhalla, S. C., for six years, evangelist of South Carolina Presbytery in Edgefield for seven years, and pastor of Tattnell Square church, in Macon, Ga., for twelve years; visited the Orient in 1895; became Synodical Evangelist for the Synod of Georgia in 1900; became Secretary of the General Assembly's Committee of Home Missions in 1901, which position he still holds. He was offered, but declined, the Presidency of Columbia Theological Seminary in 1906. He was a member of the committee which prepared the Hymn Book for the Southern Presbyterian Church; is the author of the Home Mission text-book, "At Our Own Door"; and is the editor of "The Home Mission Herald."

An Appreciative Estimate, by the Rev. Dr. Neander M. Woods . . . . . 120

Dr. Woods was born at Harrodsburg, Ky., Sept. 4, 1844; attended the University of Kentucky in 1859 and 1860; entered the Confederate Army in 1861, and served with the Cavalry until 1865; married Miss Alice Birkhead in 1866; graduated at the University of Michigan in 1867; studied law at Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., and theology at Union Theological Seminary, Va.; was ordained in 1873; was pastor of the Second church at Norfolk, Va., from 1873 to 1880; of the church in Galveston, Texas, in 1881; of the Second church in Charlotte, N. C., from 1881 to 1886; married Miss Sallie H. Behré in 1885; was pastor of the First church in Columbia, S. C., from 1886 to 1889; of the Second church in Memphis, Tenn., from 1889 to 1902; of the Second church in Louisville, Ky., from 1902 to 1905; Chancellor of the Southwestern Presbyterian University from 1905 to 1908; pastor of the Central church in Montgomery, Ala., from 1908 to the present time.

A Retrospect, by the Rev. Dr. S. M. Neel . . . . . 123

Dr. Neel was born in Fayette County, Tenn., Nov. 13, 1841; attended the Synodical College at La Grange, Tenn.; entered the Confederate Army at the beginning of the War, and served until the end. He was in many battles, but was wounded only once. He was captured at the battle of Kennesaw Mountain, near Marietta, Ga., and was confined in "Camp Douglass", Chicago, Ill., for eight or nine months. While a prisoner, a copy of Blackstone's Commentaries was smuggled in to him, which he read clandestinely, a fellow-prisoner, who was a lawyer, aiding him in his studies. When released from prison at the end of the war he studied law and practised it for a few years. But the conviction that he should preach grew upon him, and the sudden death of his wife was the occasion of his yielding to that conviction. He entered Columbia Theological Seminary

## A Reminiscence.

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BY THE REV. DR. S. L. MORRIS.

It was my good fortune to receive my theological education and training at Columbia Seminary during the time when that institution was in the zenith of its prosperity. Never before nor since that time has it ever had as many as sixty students in attendance. Its faculty consisted of Drs. Howe, Plumer, Adger, Wilson, and Woodrow, every one of whom has since gone to his reward. It will be no disparagement of his illustrious colleagues, if I am allowed to say that Dr. James Woodrow's teachings left their impress upon my life and thought more deeply than any of this learned and beloved faculty.

His teaching was positive, pointed, impressive, and thoroughly orthodox. One could not sit in his class-room without being impressed day after day with his profound belief in the Bible as the very word of God, infallible and inspired in its every utterance. There was never any doubt—not the slightest suggestion that the human element in its composition ever modified its divine authority. He taught his students not only to respect its authority in matters of faith and practice, but to bow to its teaching as supreme and the end of all controversy.

In his own department of Natural Science in Connexion with Revelation, his chief contention was for the law of non-contradiction between Science and Revelation. He held firmly that God's works, when interpreted by true science, and God's word when correctly understood, could never contradict each other, since all truth must be consistent with itself. He advised his students not to attempt to harmonise Science and Revelation, because they occupied different spheres and dealt with different phases of truth. His contention was that the Bible was written, not to teach science, was not written in scientific language, and dealt not with scientific subjects. At the same time, he insisted as strenuously that the Bible contained nothing contradictory to any scientific truth. His whole effort was not to reconcile Science and Revelation, but to demonstrate beyond the



shadow of a doubt their non-contradiction. It required patient and persistent teaching to make many apprehend this distinction, and appreciate his position. It was misrepresented, and misunderstood, but it is more and more becoming the accepted platform of both scientists and theologians. He impressed his students with the thought that they were not to preach science, but to confine themselves to the Gospel strictly. He diligently sought to influence them to confine themselves to the theme of the Bible, the plan of salvation. Whatever of History, Science, Philosophy, etc., it touched upon, was incidental to its one great aim, which was to reveal Christ as the Saviour of sinners. His theory was that the word of God is self-evidencing and self-protective and needs no defence or apology at the hands of any man. Over and over he said :

“Young Brethren, ‘preach the word;’ don’t preach science, don’t preach politics, don’t preach philosophy, don’t even preach theology; ‘preach the word,’ ‘preach the word.’”

Doubtless many can say the same thing, but there is one of his students who can truthfully say this lesson was not lost sight of even once in his ministry of thirty years.

The resignation of several members of the faculty left the institution but partly equipped; and Dr. Woodrow became professor of Church Polity. The writer imbibed his ecclesiastical principles almost exclusively from this eminent source. Dr. Woodrow’s position as to Church Government was in substance, and as near as memory can recall, as follows :

“I do not believe in the Presbyterian form of government because I have made a comparative study of all systems and am persuaded that the Presbyterian is the wisest and best adapted to men, but I accept and adopt it because it is Scriptural. Having thoroughly satisfied myself that Presbyterianism is laid down and inculcated in the word of God, that is sufficient for me. I have no right to question its wisdom, or authority, and I do not.”

Once more allow me to say, the writer in this respect has followed implicitly his great teacher.

So easily and ably Dr. Woodrow filled the chair of any absent professor, that it became the current belief among the students that he was not only a specialist in his own department, but was

a specialist in every department. He was generally regarded by his students as a universal genius, as much at home in Church Polity as in Natural Science, and as familiar with Theology as with either.

In the Thursday evening Conferences, conducted by the faculty, each speaking in turn, the student body eagerly awaited the expression of Dr. Woodrow's views, and ordinarily his reasoning was so clear and irresistible, that he carried conviction and the entire student body with him in his conclusions.

Owing to serious throat trouble, he seldom preached, but when he did, the sermon was never forgotten. The impression of his sermon on Sanctification and his searching exposition of the Fifteenth Psalm, are as fresh in the mind of the writer as if made yesterday, instead of thirty years ago. The tremendous power of Dr. Woodrow over his hearers was all the more remarkable when one remembers his poor delivery, owing to throat trouble, his words often being spoken almost in a whisper; yet his words burned or moved men as the most eloquent oratory could not. The secret of his power over his students, after making allowance for his great ability, was the conviction of his fearlessness, his directness, and his evident sincerity. His words are still ringing in my ears:

"I fear God; I fear nothing else." It was self-evident.

In all the bitter and needless strife which raged around him and his professorship during the Evolution Controversy, the writer openly and avowedly sympathised with him, although having not a particle of sympathy with evolution itself. That which held so many of his students so loyally to his support in those trying times was a sense of indebtedness to him for his invaluable instruction, coupled with the belief that his position was misunderstood, as well as a strong desire to save such a matchless teacher in the service of the Church. The fear that he would raise up a generation of heretics was groundless. Not one of his students ever drifted from the truth. Not one ever listened to his lectures thoughtfully but was more thoroughly grounded in the faith, and thus saved from the vagaries of rationalism and the higher criticism. The Church will never know the loss it sustained in being deprived of his teaching.

Time has vindicated him. The vast body of the Christian Church of all denominations has gravitated to his position ; and when the Church gets far enough away from his times to form a calm estimate of his work and teaching, it will realise that our beloved Church gave to the world one of its greatest men in the person of Dr. James Woodrow.