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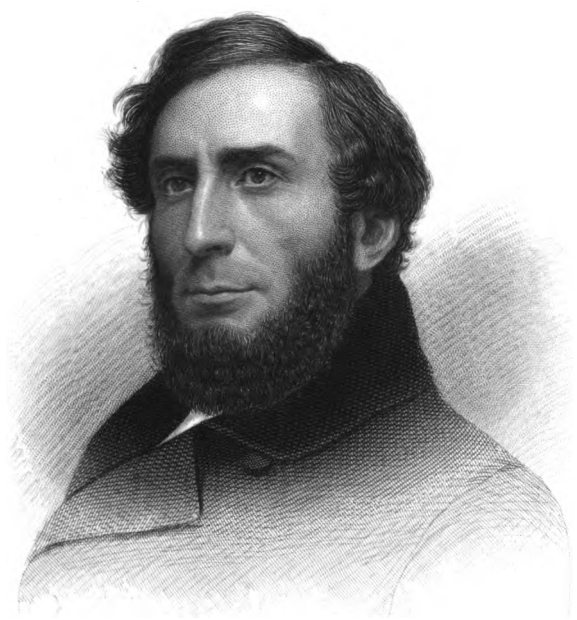
THE GIFT OF

SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN, M.D.,

OF BOSTON.

(Class of 1851.)

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Engr. by J. H. Parson

Anson G. Phelps

A MEMORIAL

OF

ANSON G. PHELPS, JR.

BY

HENRY B. SMITH.

WITH

A SERMON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DECEASE,

BY HIS PASTOR,

REV. GEORGE L. PRENTISS, D.D.

He lived in deeds, not words.

NEW YORK:

CHARLES SCRIBNER, 124 GRAND STREET.

1860.

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Dr. S. A. Green

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MEMORIAL  
OF  
ANSON G. PHELPS, JR.

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THE world is made better, not only by the lives, but also by the biographies of those who have lived for the glory of God and the good of man. The record of their beneficent deeds embalms and perpetuates their memory, and becomes a help and a stimulus to others. Such a tribute is fitly rendered, not only to the great men of the earth, but also to those whose lives have been fruitful in benevolence and charities. Their memory is held in honor and love by those whom they have aided; and even those who knew them not may be elevated by their bright example. Though their virtues be of a humbler kind than those the world most honors, yet they are just the virtues the world most needs, that it may become wiser and better. The pen of

inspiration has not only given us an account of David, and Solomon, of Paul, and Peter, but it has also handed down to all ages the narrative about the poor widow who, of her penury, cast her two mites into the treasury of the Lord. The Evangelists record a few incidents in the life of Mary, the mother of our Lord: they also tell of her who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. That poor widow has preached to thousands of hearts the lesson of charity; and that weeping penitent has led many others to sorrow at the feet of Jesus. The fame, too, that rests on merely outward success wanes as Christianity is more diffused; while the power of a good life is ever growing, for it has in it the element of eternity.

Those who best knew Anson G. Phelps, Jr., while living, desire some slight Memorial of his extraordinary beneficence. The recipients of his bounty will be glad to learn something about that training and religious experience, which made his life so eminently useful. He died young, not yet forty years of age; he filled no public station of trust or honor; he was not personally known to many beyond the sphere of his daily walks: he spurned all notoriety; he would not let his left hand know what his right hand did. Least and last of all would he



have thought or wished, that after his decease any written record should be made of what he was as a man and a Christian. And the incidents of his life are so few and simple, so little can be gathered from his own papers or letters, that nothing more can be attempted than a brief outline of his career, and estimate of his character. The account of many of his deeds is written only on high. This Memorial, then, does not appeal to the public at large ; it is intended chiefly for the eye of kindred and friends. It may perchance be a guide to some, who are asking, in what way they can best use the worldly substance the Lord has committed to their stewardship. To young men it may set forth, at the outset of their career, an example worthy of imitation. For the life of our departed friend was one of Christian wisdom in the use of this world's goods.

#### HIS CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

Anson Greene Phelps, Jr., was born at his father's house in Cliff street, in the City of New York, Oct. 18th, 1818. He was the fifth child, and only son, of Anson G. Phelps, and Olivia his wife. His paternal ancestors were among the first settlers in the State of Connecticut, near Simsbury, in

which place his father was born. The Rev. Dr. Prentiss, in the appendix to his Sermon upon the decease of the latter, says of the family: "There have been in the maternal line two or more of the early pastors of the colonists, one of these being the Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, pastor of the First Church in Hartford. Mr. Phelps' father was among the first who left Simsbury to join the war of the Revolution, and served throughout the whole war. He was, during much of the time, an officer under the command of General Greene, and named his son Anson Greene, in memory of his old commander." This son was converted under the preaching of Father Hallock, and trained under the ministry of Dr. Strong of Hartford, and Dr. Spring and Dr. Skinner of New York, in which city he resided from 1815 until his death in 1853. He was a man of marked character, sagacious and far-seeing as a merchant, and comprehensive in his plans both of business and of charity. Having rapidly accumulated an ample fortune, he disbursed large amounts with a liberal hand to religious and philanthropic objects. He was simple in his manners and habits, both at home and abroad. His wealth was never used for ostentation. At his death he bequeathed more liberal sums to a greater variety of benevolent associations than had ever before been done in this

country. The mother of the subject of our Memorial was the daughter of Elihu Eagleston of Hartford, Connecticut. She, too, was a devoted Christian, a member of the church from her early years, and never aspired after position in the ranks of gayety and fashion. Her quick intelligence and earnest affections were chiefly devoted to the training of her family, and to a career of private usefulness. She was constant in prayer to the God of the Covenant, in whom she trusted, for the conversion of her dear children ; they were never left to doubt for a moment, that she desired above all things else that they might be partakers of the Christian life.

One extraordinary circumstance, well authenticated, gave a decided character to the whole life of this Christian matron. It is related by her husband in his Diary, and has been published in an obituary, ascribed to the pen of Rev. N. Murray, D. D. When her only son, Anson, "was an infant, she was brought down to the gates of death by typhus fever. Her eyesight failed ; her pulse had ceased to beat ; and her physician pronounced her all but gone. And thus she continued for upwards of twenty-four hours. When all were momentarily expecting her breathing to cease, she opened her eyes, and turning to her mother sitting by her bed, she said, 'I shall not die, but live to close your

eyes ;—God has heard my prayer, and 'I shall live for the sake of my children.' From that moment she began to recover, and was spared for forty years longer to her family and to the Church.

“On her recovery she related to her husband, and to her pastor, the venerable Dr. Spring, what she experienced during those hours when her friends could scarcely say whether she was in the body, or out of the body. Her husband records the narrative in his ‘diary,’ and calls it ‘a trance.’ Like Paul, she felt herself carried to the third heavens, where she saw and heard things indescribable and unutterable. She there met with dear friends, and conversed with them ; and united with rejoicing angels on the accession of new spirits to glory. In the midst of this rejoicing, her guide informed her that she must return to earth, as her work there was not finished. ‘And without a murmur,’ says the narrative, ‘I winged my way back through infinite space, and found myself in the body, with all the composure of mind that the scene was calculated to make. My feeble body could hardly contain my joyful spirit.’ However we may account for all this, it had upon her a most happy effect. Through all her subsequent life, she lived in the enjoyment of the full assurance of hope ; and although feeling herself to be the least of all the

saints, she had not a doubt of her acceptance in the Beloved."

The house of Mr. Phelps was always the home of prayer. The children were trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. From early life their best associations were with the morning and evening worship of the family ; with songs and hymns of praise and of thanksgiving ; with the solemnity and decorum of a day of sacred rest, devoutly consecrated to religious observances ; and with the frequent petitions of their parents, enforced by their life, that their offspring might be the Lord's. At home they early came to know many of those devoted men and women, who went forth, in obedience to the call of their Master, to the destitute parts of our own land, or to the isles of the sea and the ends of the earth. Here they were taught to avoid the frivolities of fashion, and the fascinations of worldly pleasure, and to spend even their youthful years in ministering to the necessities of the destitute and wretched. And these Christian parents had the great joy of leading all their children, while yet in early life, to share with them in the bread and the wine of the sacramental Supper of our Lord.

Young Phelps, with six daughters, four older and two younger than himself, was guided in his

dawning life by this diligent Christian care. At the age of two years he was brought to the borders of the grave by a severe attack of dropsy in the head. Recovering from this he became a vigorous and active lad. Quickness of parts, strong affections, overflowing animal spirits and occasional impatience of restraint marked his boyhood. Always active and inclined to boyish mischief, he was also ever impulsive and generous in his affections. Religious susceptibilities were early aroused. When only four years of age he one day ran up to his mother and thrust into her hands a bit of paper, at the same time throwing his arms around her neck and bursting into a flood of tears. On that paper was written the verse, twice subscribed with his name in full :

“O that my load of sin were gone!  
O that I could at last submit!  
At Jesus' feet to lay me down,  
To lay my soul at Jesus' feet!”

With all the buoyancy, hilarity and waywardness of youth, he also ever manifested great tenderness of conscience. His conscience, too, was enlivened with a vivid sense of religious things, which were impressed upon his soul as living realities. He was instructed in religion, not as a matter of truth for

the intellect alone, but as something to be known by conscious and vital experience. And the truth thus early sown planted its roots deep, and at last brought forth abundant fruit. His grandmother, an inmate of his father's family, by her cheerful piety and fond love, impressed his mind with that reverence for venerable Christian matrons which never deserted him; he always, and in part for her sake, loved to look into the face of the aged, and support, with gentle courtesy, their decaying strength. The texts of Scripture and the hymns she used to repeat to him long lingered in his memory.

The impulsive temperament of Anson often led him astray, though he was always frank and confident. He could not deceive those whose commands he might heedlessly disobey. He had a determined will, which prompted him to resist mere force; yet a kind word or grieved look would melt his soul, and impel him to overwhelm those he loved with expressions of sorrow. Even his youthful carelessness was long remembered with regret. Once, in his eagerness to climb the mast of a ship lying in the dock, he forgot all about his younger sisters, who had been intrusted to his care, until attracted by the noise of a crowd, gathered around the spot where they had fallen into the water. Though they

were rescued without further harm, he always recollected the incident with keen regret. His ardent nature attracted to him the warm attachment of those of his own age, and made him a leader in youthful sports. Sometimes deserting school, he would spend the day in examining the curiosities of the Museum, making friends of the albinos, and persuading the keeper of the boa constrictor to let him wind the creature around his neck.

In 1827, at the age of eight years, he was sent to the school of the Rev. Mr. Stebbins in West Haven, where he remained about two years. Young as he was, his father, in vacation, made him his companion in his journeys. On one occasion they were at Washington, and young Anson sallied forth before breakfast, and, without further introduction, made a call upon the President, General Jackson, who received him with becoming gravity; and thinking, perhaps, of his own wayward youth, admonished him to behave well, as he might one day himself become President.

#### EARLY RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS.

The change from boyhood to youth was marked by more decided religious convictions and impressions. In 1830 Anson was sent to the school of



Mr. Ely, of South Hadley. Through life he was attached to this spot. Here first he deeply and consciously felt that love of nature, which continued so strong to the close of his days. The scenery of this lovely part of the famed valley of Connecticut, the varied outline of the Holyoke range of hills, the peaceful beauty of the ample plains, the glory of the forests, and the broad and sinuous flow of the noble river, lingered as pictures in his imagination: and he never felt fully at home until he could call his own a house built upon the banks of a river. His father hired for him, near the school-house, a small patch of ground, which he worked upon with zeal, never feeling more proud than when thanked for his frequent gifts of flowers and vegetables raised by his own hand. But South Hadley became also a sacred place, because he there also first felt a deep, conscious love to the God of nature and of grace. The years of parental solicitude and prayer were crowned with their fruition. The boy himself can best tell us about this great change, in a letter over which the warmest tears of human joy and thankfulness have been often shed. His father, in a journal, which he kept for many years, thus alludes to it: "I regretted very much sending Anson away from religious privileges, as there was evidently great opposition in his heart to the revi-

val [in New York], and an unwillingness to receive religious instruction. Indeed, I never saw more evidence of total depravity and enmity to God manifest in the heart of any child. But I have now received a letter, written with all his accustomed zeal, and speaking an entirely new language." Then follows the letter of the penitent son. "I trust I have given my heart to Jesus. I cannot express to you half of what I now feel ; but I will begin to tell you about the four days' meeting which we had here last week. It was announced from the pulpit. I felt very light about it, and made sport of it. The meeting commenced Wednesday. The next day, in the evening after supper, Mr. C. addressed the boys and prayed with them. Here I trust God first touched my heart. Mr. Austen took me up into his room, and conversed with me, and induced me to make a resolution, and write it on paper, that I would seek for an interest in Jesus, while he might be found. I bless God, I made this resolution. I knelt down and prayed that God would make me keep it a long time. The next day I went to meeting all day. Towards evening I felt very unhappy ; but I went to meeting determined, in the strength of God, to give my heart to him before I came out. Before the first prayer I tried to lift up my heart to God

in silent prayer. I prayed him to take me, and mould me as the potter does the clay. I prayed him to pardon my sins, not for any thing I had done, or that I ever could do, but only for the sake of the sacrifice of his Son ; and I trust he heard my prayer. The promise of God to them that sought him, struck with peculiar force on my mind ; and I felt that he would keep his promise. Next I thought how Christ had followed me from my youth up—had given me pious parents, pious friends, and the influences of the Holy Spirit ; and I had resisted all—had crucified him afresh. I trust I feel penitence and godly sorrow. The first question of my mind after this was,—Is this giving my heart to God ? How easy it is ! Next I felt as though I wanted to tell all around me,—I wanted the salvation of all. I felt for a great many of the boys who were evidently anxious. And now, my dear parents, you must not stop praying for me more earnestly than ever ; pray that I may be kept from temptation in the world.” At this time Anson was but just twelve years of age. The written covenant to which he refers, was found carefully preserved among his papers : it is copied in part from Doddridge’s *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. His teacher wrote at the same time : “He seemed to have a missionary spirit at once.

Just now he told me that he had been walking with a fellow-student, and that they knelt down under a tree and prayed together. He seems to be anxious to do all the good he can."

Under date, South Hadley, June, 1830, the son writes again : " O my dearest Parents, do give me your pardon for any thing I have ever done to distress you. I fear I have done many things to distress you, some of which you know, and some you do not. I trust I shall be hereafter your affectionate and dutiful boy. It does not appear to me, as though, if any really believed that Christ had come and died, they could help giving their hearts to him, who comes and begs them for it. I think I love prayer now, and hope God has answered some of my prayers ; and I think I love God's Holy Bible. O how different it appears to me from what it did ! I pray for you every day. O do pray for me.

" Your loving boy,  
" A. G. P."

It is in the genius of religion to lead the soul that knows Christ to plead with others, that they may partake of a like blessedness. This is expressed in a letter to his " dear little sisters." " How different I feel from what I was when I last

saw you. Then I was a very wicked, thoughtless boy ; now, although I am still very wicked, I trust that I am pardoned through the blood of Jesus ; and you don't know how I want you to feel the same happiness that I do. If you knew how sweet and simple it was to repent of your sins, and to love God who has done so much for you, I am sure you would do it." To another sister he wrote : "But there is one more question I want to ask, more important than any other : Have you given your heart to God ? O my dear sister, if you should be called out of this life, as dear little Ann was, how should I feel if I had not entreated you to make religion your chief concern. What now do you think I would give to have little Ann back to pray with, and to write to. Hear God say, "My son, or my daughter, give me thy heart." Hear the Saviour say, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." . . . You may say you cannot give your all to God ; I know that you cannot use all you have in his service, unless you are assisted by his Holy Spirit, for we are unable to have one right affection without him. But is not God willing to grant this to all who ask ? Does he not say that he is more willing to grant the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than earthly parents are to give good

gifts unto their children ? Now suppose you should come to papa, and confess to him that you had been a wicked girl, and that you had not done what he told you to do, and should beg him to give you a crust of bread ; don't you suppose he would give it to you, and not only give you a crust of bread, but the best there was in the house ? And God is just as willing, for he cannot lie. Come to Him, then ; tell Him that you are unworthy of the least of his favors ; confess and forsake your sins. This is genuine repentance,—believing in Christ's atonement and sacrifice, that you may be pardoned. Begin a life of holiness, trusting in his Spirit to enable you to continue in it."

The allusion in this letter is to a sister whom he fondly loved, and who was early taken away. His mother used to say that it was touching, during her sickness, to hear his childlike prayers for her, and his expressions of distress, lest he had not prayed the prayer of faith, which might save the sick.

Somewhat later he writes to his parents from the same place, speaking of his progress in the *Æneid*, Greek, French, &c., and of his health as not being good, "feeling pretty nervous," so that he "could not collect his mind, or use his pen, as he ought." He then adds : "I have not enjoyed

myself so well the last few weeks ; but yesterday, the Sabbath, God was pleased to give me very clear and humbling views of myself and of Jesus Christ's love. O what could we do without Him ; if he had not magnified his Father's law, and so opened the way that believing, repenting sinners might be saved ; if he did not condescend to send the Spirit into our hearts to sanctify and make us like him ! Of ourselves we can do no right thing. . . . O let us pray for faith and with faith. . . .

“ Your affectionate, loving boy,

“ ANSON.”

These letters we have given more at length, because they contain almost the only record of his religious feelings in any part of his life. In his later years he wrote but little, and that little was seldom about himself. He never kept any thing like a diary or journal. These letters, too, have an interest as the record of the religious experience of a boy of twelve. They express religious truth and feeling in a simple and natural way.

A few other letters of the same period are full of the warmest expressions of attachment to home : “ I hope I shall live yet to show my love and gratitude to you : . . . it does appear to me that I could not break your heart without breaking mine

with it . . . I hope yet, dearest mother, to live to see your grey hairs honored, and your passage down the vale of life smoothed, by the good behavior of your only son." All the household are remembered, down to the "goddess Diana, polishing her brass shrines at the front door," or "following the chase down the street." Then there is a famous archer company formed ; and a band of music "of twelve flutes, ten violins, and a bugle," making the night vocal, and arousing the slumbering teachers. Another epistle contains "the first oration," written "without the least help from teachers, or any one else," upon the "Early Life of Washington." "When we survey the deeds of great men, we are apt to forget the causes which produced them. In the blaze of glory which surrounds them, we forget that these heroes were once children, and shrink from examining the little circumstances which form the very basis of their exalted character. You may say in regard to Washington, why is it necessary to search into the history of his youth, when we have such a field of contemplation in his after life ? As well might you ask, why plant so small a seed as a mustard seed in hopes for so large a tree ? or, why place the tiny cup and ball of the acorn in the ground, in hopes of the noble oak ? Without these apparently worth-



less seeds, those lofty trees never would appear. So the little circumstances of youth are the germ of future noble actions. It behooves a farmer to find the seeds, and the manner of planting, from which others have raised excellent fruit. Would it not likewise be well for us to endeavor to discern those things in the early life of Washington, from which we may trace the great qualities and actions which so eminently distinguished his after life," etc. And then he goes on to particularize some of the virtues of Washington's character. With the imperfections of a child's composition, this youthful speech, as well as the letters written about the same time, indicate what the boy might have become, had he devoted himself to literary pursuits.

For a time his heart was full of his new-born zeal and love. In 1831 he became a member of the Union Church in New York city, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Norton. The whole community was then awakened under the influence of fervent preaching. It was one of the marked revival periods in the religious history of our country.

New churches, and free churches were established all over the city of New York. Church members engaged with unwonted earnestness, in practical religious work. Young Anson, when at home

in his vacations was foremost among the youth. He prayed, without reluctance, not only in the family, and in meetings for boys, but also in larger circles. He was eager to talk with all over whom he thought he could have any influence. A pocket Testament was his unfailing companion, and he would turn to it for any verse he wished to impress upon his young companions. His ardor was aided by native fluency of speech. The fervor of his addresses, his warm appeals, are still remembered by those who then heard him. To a sister in England, Mrs. James of Liverpool, he writes, in Oct. 1831 : " You have heard, I have no doubt, of the revival which commenced here at the five, or rather at the eleven days' meeting. . . . Some of the little boys, who have obtained hope, meet three or four times a week at each others' houses, and hold prayer meetings, which are generally very interesting. O that our happiness was so connected with His glory, that we could not be happy in doing or promoting any thing else ! . . . I have read through Paul's Epistle to the Romans, St. John's Epistles, and some in Christ's Sermon on the Mount, with Scott's notes and observations, lately or rather not very lately. . . . How very plain and clear he makes those parts of God's Word (O ! what a name that is for a book to carry about with it), which are obscure."

A narrow escape from death, when he was at home upon a vacation visit, deeply impressed him. His father had erected a new store at the corner of Cliff and Fulton streets, which he had just begun to occupy. His son was there passing the day ; in the afternoon Mr. Phelps went out to attend a meeting of a Free School in Chatham street, and told his boy, who had followed him, to return to the store and await his return. On his way back, he stopped to get a book in the Mercantile Library ; here he was startled by a loud crash, and running out, found that the store had just fallen down, burying seven men in its ruins. The son and father both reached the spot at the same time, and rejoiced in mutual thankfulness.

Meanwhile, in his studies at South Hadley and at the Washington Institute in New York, Anson made considerable proficiency. His quick perception and retentive memory made him a good scholar ; and he had then, and ever, a scholar's enthusiasm about books. Thus was laid the basis of the interest he always showed in liberal and Christian learning. In later life no object was nearer his heart. Books of general literature, of biography and history too, were his chosen companions : he was rarely without one of these mute, yet cherished teachers. While at South Hadley he wrote to his parents

about devoting himself to the ministry of the Gospel. But Providence had a different career of usefulness marked out for him ; he was to do, what few of his years ever did, for enabling many others to engage in this work, which he always magnified. Not even his desire for a collegiate course could be satisfied. His father loved him with more than ordinary parental fondness, and always desired to have his boy with him. In his frequent journeys he never failed, whenever practicable, to take South Hadley in his way, that he might see and counsel the son in whom so many hopes centred. He introduced him, while yet a lad, to the society of the mature. His cherished plan was, that he might follow his own honorable career, and carry out those large plans of business and benevolence, for which he was himself distinguished. This purpose controlled the son's career. At the age of fifteen he was taken from the school in South Hadley, to which he had become so deeply attached, and which was hallowed by such grateful associations, to accompany his parents upon his

#### FIRST VISIT TO EUROPE.

This was in May, 1833. About six months were spent in travelling, chiefly in England. A rough

diary of Anson's gives some slight notes of objects that interested him in various places. Rude as are these jottings, they show an observant eye, and facility in reporting what he had seen and heard.

“Manchester, July 2d. Visited a monastery now used as a charity school, endowed by Humphrey Chetham. Here are many curiosities: a shoe of Queen Elizabeth: Oliver Cromwell's original sword, long and twisted. The Monastery was founded by Thomas West, lord of Warren, in the reign of Henry VI. . . . Here was a good picture of John Bradford, burnt for heresy, educated in the adjoining grammar school. The chairs used there now are those that were fashionable in the reign of Charles II. . . . In the Cathedral are some splendid specimens of carving.” The journal also contains copies of inscription on sepulchral lamps, etc.

“July 3. Started from Manchester for Birmingham, passing by the most beautiful seats of noblemen and gentlemen. . . . First was that of the Duke of Sutherland, Marquis of Stafford, who has a fortune of £365,000 a year; we drove through his park and grounds. From one canal he has a revenue of £80,000. . . . Upon his estate, just as you turn the angle of a gentle eminence, buried between two hills, is a beautiful Gothic structure, built for a lunatic asylum. Before it are two or

three little ponds and fountains, in which swans are seen majestically moving ; while the whole breaks upon the beholder as if by magic, so suddenly is the scene presented to the eye. Next we passed the seat of the Earl of St. Vincent, son of the Admiral of the same name ; and then that of Lord Anson. At a distance flocks of deer are seen feeding upon the verdant slopes of the hillocks ; as far as the eye can reach, the black, thick smoke is curling up towards heaven ; on every side are the beautiful cottages of the common people, with their beds of flowers. Upon a field, a short distance from the road, Duke William of Normandy encamped, while pursuing the Scottish rebels, who passed within a mile to the left : this was before the celebrated battle of Culloden.

“ We came next to Wolverhampton, the great town of iron and coal. The first thing that strikes the eye is the blasted appearance of the country, smoked and baked by the furnaces. All the inhabitants you see appear to be miners or connected with mining. . . . Here you are pointed to the original establishment of Watt & Bolton, the inventors of the steam engine ; it is surrounded by a park. Just before coming into town you are shown the very first steam-engine ever erected, now falling into decay.

“Birmingham, July 4th. Visited the large gold, silver and bronze show-rooms and manufactory owned by Sir William Tomlinson, knighted for his ingenuity ; saw an elegant and exact bronze model of an ancient Roman glass vase, sixteen feet high,” etc. The journal contains long accounts of several of the processes of manufacture in tin, iron and bronze, witnessed at Dudley ; also a minute description, even to the architectural details, of the castle at Dudley, founded about A. D. 700, which had special attractions for the writer, as connected with the history of Cromwell, in whose career he always felt a peculiar interest.

“July 6th. Started from Birmingham in a post-coach, at 5 o'clock, and arrived at Warwick at 9. Immediately visited Warwick castle, the records of whose foundation are now lost. We entered the ancient gateway into the park, and walked through a road, mostly cut in the solid rock, to the grand gateway of the castle. This is flanked with towers, and calculated for the most desperate and successful defence. The old portcullis is still in its groove in the masonry : it is formed of bars of iron about ten inches square, pointed at the ends. . . . Passing this, you enter a square space, flanked at every angle with turrets, and enclosed with battlements. . . . You pass through another arched gateway into the

area of the castle. Here you are struck with the exceeding beauty of the towers, rising on every side, and the well-proportioned turrets at the angles. You walk through the area to the entrance of the grand hall, perhaps one of the most beautiful rooms in England. It is hung round with ancient armor. Here is Cromwell's helmet, and a buff coat of one of the old Earls of Warwick, in which he was killed in the civil wars ; Queen Anne's bed and furniture, and a splendid collection of pictures. The suite of apartments is very antique, and the furniture most costly ; for instance, a table composed of the largest specimens of gems ; a wardrobe of inlaid tortoise shell. . . . In the green-house is a most beautiful ancient vase, carved in the style of the Romans : the pedestal was found seven miles from the other part. It was used in the libations in the temple, probably, of Jupiter Stator ; given to George III., and by him presented to the Earl of Warwick."

The next full description is of Kenilworth Castle, " a most grand and imposing pile of buildings. Extending on each side of the gateway are the remains of the old wall, facing the lake, with the towers at regular intervals. Passing through the gateway, the first thing that strikes the eye is an immense building, in the area of the castle, now absurdly called Cesar's Tower ; its walls are about



eighteen feet thick. It has square towers at each of the angles ; three of its sides are entire ; the other was destroyed by some of Cromwell's captains. This is celebrated by Sir Walter Scott." The other sides of the immense quadrangle are also particularly described, as is also the grand hall of the castle, built by Lord Lancaster, with "its Gothic windows, and costly carved ornaments, now in ruins, attesting its former magnificence." Likewise "a vaulted apartment in a small tower, with little windows on every side, now vulgarly called Queen Elizabeth's dressing-room. On the other side a door, corresponding with this, leads to a spiral staircase in the tower, affording a secret and safe descent into the area of the castle." Notices of Lord Leicester's buildings, of Mortimer's tower, and the place where Edward was confined, complete this sketch.

The Journal contains further accounts of a visit to London and Brighton, to Dieppe, Rouen, and Paris, which, however, can hardly be of much interest to the reader ; and the extracts we have given can, at the best, only serve the purpose of illustrating the character and observations of a mere youth of fifteen, visiting for the first time the wonderful scenes of an old world. The notes were never meant for any other eye than his own ;

but they show that the writer, even at that period of life, travelled with an observing eye, and was able to give an intelligent account of what he had seen. This visit abroad had also a marked influence upon his subsequent life. It did not have the effect of imbuing him with an unpatriotic preference for foreign customs ; it did not lead him to be always prating about his travels, or to disparage his own country ; but it gave to him a tone of culture in the turning point of life, which had a happy effect upon his character. It did not make him less an American, but it kept him from a blind idolatry of what is only partial and provincial. It also led him to value more thoroughly the religious institutions of Protestantism, and even of Puritanism, in contrast especially with what he saw of the effects of Romanism upon the character of the French population. He thus came to feel the urgent need of those efforts to oppose the progress of Romanism, in which he was afterwards so zealously enlisted.

#### HIS ENTRANCE UPON A MERCANTILE CAREER.

After Anson's return from Europe, at the age of fifteen, he began his mercantile career, in his father's office. The elder Mr. Phelps was at the

head of the firm, afterwards so well known as Phelps, Dodge & Co., and which has uniformly held an eminent and steadfast position, in the midst of all the vicissitudes of commercial life. Through the most trying and disastrous times it has passed with honor. Its members have always been foremost in every good work of patriotism and of benevolence. Among the first solicited in all objects of charity, no worthy cause has appealed to them in vain. Their increased business has been made subservient to their Christian usefulness.

Mr. Phelps was a man of extraordinary energy. "He had," says Dr. Prentiss, "a very strong, original, and marked character. The slightest acquaintance with him indicated this; the history of his life demonstrates it. No ordinary man ever did, or could do, what he did. . . . Self-reliance, an iron will, solid and comprehensive judgment, a sagacious power of combination and forecast, indomitable perseverance, good common sense, a physical constitution capable of immense labor and endurance,—these are some of the qualities which give assurance of a marked man; and I think all who knew him will admit that Mr. Phelps possessed them." And this, through divine grace, was all tempered and directed by firm and broad Christian principles. From first to last, he was a

giver ; at last, in princely donations, but from the first, in equal proportion to his means. The first twenty dollars he could call his own were devoted to the support of an indigent student of theology ; the first sixty dollars he earned after he came into business for himself were given to the outfit of a foreign missionary. With the growth of his estate, his heart was also enlarged ; and there was hardly an object of modern philanthropy, to which he did not contribute freely. " He solemnly declared, a short time before his death, that, from the first, his controlling motive in accumulating property had been the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ." The influences thus brought to bear upon the son, in daily intercourse with a revered parent, were not lost, as his subsequent career testified ; but yet they did not at once produce their ripe fruits. Divine grace had been implanted in his soul ; but through struggles, vicissitudes, and temptations, it was to grow into the harvest. Emotion no longer had its constraining power, and habits of piety and beneficence were not yet fully formed. Though destined to the career of a merchant, the necessity of thorough and patient drilling, through which alone eminence here, as elsewhere, is usually obtained, was not forced upon him. The father was so definite and complete in his plans, kept even the

details so fully under his control, that the son could hardly be thrown upon his independent resources. Nor did he ever engage with enthusiasm in the profession to which his outward life was devoted. Other cares and interests lay nearer to his heart, and shaped his course of life. He had already begun to collect a library, and the selection of his books gave the pledge of a generous culture. He was passionately devoted to music, which he studied thoroughly at home and abroad. To his great delight he soon became the owner of an organ, and would spend hours playing upon it after the family had retired to rest. Though no longer pursuing regular studies, he made what amends he could, by reading with avidity. Thus he passed the hours which most sons of rich parents give to pleasure and gayety, when not to dissipation and vice. His reading, like his music, was often protracted to a late hour, to the injury of his health. In 1835 his parents removed to what was then a beautiful seat in the upper part of the city, with a garden extending to the river, there called Kipp's Bay. The grounds had been laid out with great care by the late Dr. Hosack; but the progress of city improvements has now almost wholly changed the entire neighborhood. Here were ample facilities for the young man to devote himself to the more

active pursuits, which his state of health made imperative. A boat-house was built for him on the banks of the East River ; and the gun and fishing-rod became his companions. Into all these sports he entered with zest ; he threw his whole soul into all his occupations.

In December of the same year, Mr. Phelps and all his family became connected with the Mercer Street Church, just gathered together in what at that period was considered the upper part of the rapidly growing city. Its first pastor was the Rev. Thomas H. Skinner, D. D., who left a professorship in the Andover Theological Seminary, to assume the charge of the new congregation. The church was formed in the height of the unhappy contest between what are called the Old and New Schools in the Presbyterian church. Becoming connected with the latter, in the rupture of 1837, it has ever maintained a firm, though a moderate position in the theological and ecclesiastical controversies of subsequent times. Its members were drawn together from various churches ; they here represented different shades of opinion and of practice ; yet, under able and wise pastors, it continued a strong and a united church, no minor diversities being allowed to disturb the general harmony. In the twenty-five years of its existence, few

churches in the land have done more good ; few have been able to do as much for the great objects of Christian benevolence. Its annual contributions for charitable and religious objects have sometimes risen to twenty-five, or even thirty thousand dollars. Its men of largest resources have been among its largest donors. To foreign missions it sometimes gave for several years seven or eight thousand dollars per annum ; and to domestic missions in like proportion. Without it, the Union Theological Seminary would, very possibly, not have been established upon a permanent basis ; and through all the year of its struggles, this church was ever prompt and liberal in its aid. Its mission schools, in various parts of the city, have grown, or are growing into other churches. Among its liberal and earnest members, Mr. Phelps, the father, was ever foremost, giving to foreign missions \$3000 a year, and to domestic missions, the Bible Society, the Tract Society, and Colonization, on an almost equal scale. Much of this unusual beneficence of the Mercer Street Church was doubtless owing to the previous training of its members, but very much is also to be ascribed to the instruction and example of their first pastor. By his preaching, at once logical and fervid ; by the power of his life as well as by his power in the pulpit ; by his rare union of Chris-

tian simplicity and Christian wisdom ; by the single-heartedness of his devotion to his church and their Lord ; and by his constant and urgent appeals, he trained his people to a large-hearted benevolence, and ceaseless personal activity in doing good. And all they did, he led them to see must be grounded in thorough Christian principle and doctrine. Standing where strife was most active, he and his church illustrated the great fact, that the best Christian growth is without excess either in doctrine or in life. Few men have impressed their own spirit more fully upon a congregation, and few pastors have gathered around them a more noble band of active, self-denying, and liberal Christian men and women. The elders of the church, of whom Mr. Phelps was one, and [its other officers, acted in entire harmony, though in many respects of very diverse associations, both social and political. Judges of our courts, men eminent in law and high in political life, merchants whose plans reached to every continent, physicians of deserved repute, were here gathered together, and as a church, were of one heart and mind. It was a school of training in the best Christian thoughts and for the best Christian work.

Under such salutary influences was the younger Phelps brought, at the time when he was passing from youth to manhood. The fruits of such



thorough teaching, and the inspiring influence of such examples, were not at once seen ; but the good seed was planted in the soil. In his case, as in that of so many others, a course of training, stretching through years of life, was the preparation for the great and beneficent result. In his case, as in that of all others, divine grace had to struggle with a thousand obstacles ere it could complete its predestined work. There was yet to be a long time of spiritual declension ; the brightness of the spiritual eye was to become dimmed ; the temptations of the world were to reassert their fatal power ; the firmness of the Christian hope was to become flickering ; the ardor of Christian love was to become cold. But through all this change and sad relapse, a father's love was watching over an elect child. The Lord had for him a work to do, and prepared him for it by teaching him more fully and deeply—that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy.

The health of young Phelps, never firm, soon demanded a complete release from business, and a change of scene. With all the buoyancy of his temperament, he was never entirely well, even in his more mature years. But now, in passing from youth to manhood, he experienced such physical depression and exhaustion, that by the advice of his

physician, he sought a long period of recreation ; and, in 1840, he left home for a year's absence in his SECOND VISIT TO EUROPE.

Of this visit, too, the only record left is in the form of rough notes, written in pencil from day to day ; ranging from March to June, 1841, and not begun until he was sailing upon the Mediterranean. The larger part of the year had however been spent in Great Britain and France. Our extracts from this diary will, as before, rather serve to illustrate the spirit of the writer, than add new information upon scenes so often visited and described. .

March 16, 1841. "Malta, visited the cave, where St. Paul lived, when cast away here, as mentioned Acts 27 and 28. Saw a part of the English fleet, just returned from their conquest of the East. . . One of the young officers was a son of Sir Alexander Dickson, who commanded the artillery at the battle of New Orleans."

March 20. "First sight of Greece : made land at Cape Matepan, a high, rugged, desolate point."

March 24. "Landed, and rode up to Athens, passing the remains of the walls of Themistocles, connecting Athens with the Peireus. Came in sight of the Acropolis, crowned with the Parthenon—the noblest edifice on the noblest site in the world. Lovely plain of Athens ; beautiful wild flowers stud-

ding the grass. . . Walked to the hill of the Areopagus, where St. Paul first preached to the Athenians. Visited the temple of Theseus, of pure white marble ; the view from the portico all around is most enchanting. . . The Lantern of Demosthenes, much admired for its singular and beautiful architecture, is close to the small Greek monastery, where Lord Byron lived. Visited the remains of the temple of Jupiter Olympus—sixteen or seventeen immense columns of pure white marble of the Corinthian order : the temple was elevated upon a high platform of polished marble, and had one hundred and twenty columns.”

March 25. “ To-day ascended the Acropolis ; and visited the Parthenon, the Propylæa, the Erechtheum, and the temple of Victory. Although two thousand years have rolled over these magnificent edifices, though they have been twice bombarded by the Turks and the Venetians—many of the immense columns having been pulled down, and made into cannon balls by the Turks : yet the Parthenon, particularly, both fronts of which are nearly perfect, still exhibits such magnificence of design, such admirable execution, and such faultless proportion, as to convince the beholder that the glowing descriptions of the Greek writers were not exaggerated, who spoke of it as “ an edifice too perfect and beautiful

for earth, and fit to be a mansion of the gods. . . . Though an hundred times copied, there is in the original an indescribable beauty and grace, which cannot be imitated."

March 26. Visits to different edifices ; among them "the great Athenian theatre, where the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles were first performed, and where the great orators and statesmen were crowned."

March 28. A ride to Pentalicus ; and a visit to a monastery : "the monks are in every respect very different from the Italian, many of them noble-looking men, and far from leading an idle life."

March 29. "Visited Mr. Benjamin, the missionary, and met Mr. King, Mr. Pericardis, the consul, and others : "rode in company with them to the Grove of the Philosophers," etc.

March 30 to April 6. A horseback tour through Greece : to Eleusis and the temple of Ceres : from Megara to Corinth, "along the side of a mountain overlooking the Gulf of Salamis." "The Acropolis of Corinth is a high, rocky, solitary hill, the whole summit fortified. It is a place of immense strength, and has never been taken except by treachery or starvation." Mycene, "is the city of Agamemnon, Homer's hero. The ruins are among the most ancient in Greece, supposed to have been built

thirteen hundred years before Christ. . . The great gate of the citadel is still perfect, and is surmounted by two immense lions in basso-relievo." The diary also contains notices of Argos, Nauplia, Epidamus, Egina, Syra, etc.

April 17. The first sight of Constantinople. In this city and its environs, Mr. Phelps spent a month, and his journal has minute accounts of a visit to the Seraglio, to the mosques and other places of interest. He returned through Italy to France.

Besides the gratification of the love of travelling, and the desire of seeing men under all the aspects of civilized life, two objects of interest always attracted young Phelps in the cities which he visited. He sought out the libraries, and heard all the best music. As to both he was an enthusiast. He would examine with delight any rare or costly works; it was not the transient glance of mere curiosity, but the closer scrutiny of one who prized the monuments of literary achievement. To distinguished organists he had introductions, and cultivated his native taste by the study not merely of the lighter, but also of the severer styles of secular and sacred music. The majesty of the old church music entranced him. He became familiar with the characteristics of different schools. Had he devoted himself to this department of art, he would have be-

come more than an ordinary proficient. In the last months of his residence abroad he was receiving instructions from experienced teachers, and intended to spend the following winter in Paris, that he might perfect his training. A roving life, and the attractions of this city of pleasure, were producing their natural effects upon his character, always susceptible, and not yet fully confirmed in religion. At this juncture, his parents, with fond solicitude, came to England and requested him to meet them there. He at once abandoned all his other plans, and, complying with their earnest counsels, returned to his native land, which he never again left, and resumed his former occupation as a merchant and a member of the firm, of which his father still remained the head.

#### THE TIME OF SPIRITUAL DECLENSION.

The God of the covenant, now, as of old, often leads the people of Israel through the wilderness into the promised land. To the Christian, as yet imperfectly sanctified, the law must sometimes still be a schoolmaster to lead him unto Christ. The deepest conviction of the radical sinfulness of the human heart is often felt by those who have believed themselves renewed in early life, and yet have been permitted to wander far astray, seeking out

their own desires, as if they had never known the Lord. Emotional experience is transient ; when the emotion subsides, the flesh again lusteth against the spirit. All the depths, and all the power of sin must be known, ere we can be fully rooted and grounded in love. We trust in divine grace as we ought to trust, only when we have learned, through bitter experience, that we dare not trust in ourselves. Thus it is that the Lord Jesus becomes to his people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And the Christian life is completed only as we become complete in Him who is our head. For the roots of that life are found in union with Christ ; the instinct of that life is to commune with Christ ; the consummation of that life is in being like Christ. And though this life be one, yet it involves a twofold process ; the putting off the old man and the putting on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.

This fullest, ripest state of Christian knowledge had not yet been attained by young Phelps. In his early experience he had glimpses of such truths ; but his experience was as yet too subjective. He had lived in emotion rather than in the objects of emotion. He looked within, rather than above : he thought more of the joy of holiness than of holiness

itself. Personal experience, and outward duties, rather than Christ, had been uppermost in his thoughts.

When such a form of piety was assailed by the temptations of the world, it began to lose its hold. Absence from the restraints of home and of the church, living so much, as every traveller must, in the mere outside of life, weakened the power of his religious feelings, and took him away from the duties of the Christian life. Though not devoid of firmness of will, he also had a most ardent and susceptible temperament, quickly responsive to the solicitations of the world. Minds of his native cast, of quick and delicate organization, are exposed to temptations which the more phlegmatic do not feel. They are allured through all the avenues of sense and pleasure. And Anson, thrown upon himself in the vigor of youth, with ample means at his command, forgot for a time his solemn vows, and gave himself up to the world. He returned to his native land at a critical period in his moral and religious history. The old associations and affections of home resumed their power; and occupation checked the love of pleasure. But for a long time he manifested no decided interest in religious duties; for years he felt himself unworthy to come to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Retaining his intellectual belief in



the Christian faith, and not ever wholly abandoning the hope that he had become a child of God, it seemed at this time probable, that he would go through life, paying a merely external deference to religion, but not feeling or showing forth its full power. He was prompt in giving to objects of charity, that appealed to natural sympathy, but his benevolence was from impulse, and not from a thorough consecration of all he had to the service of his Master. He took no part in the great philanthropic and religious movements of the church. His warm affections and generous sympathies attached him to the heart of all that knew him ; but those affections were as yet restless, not fully fixed upon the objects which alone could draw them out. Very little remains to tell us what he was and did during these years. One letter is addressed to his sister in England, in respect to a great and trying affliction, in July, 1842.

“DEAREST SISTER :—I need not tell you how we are all overcome with affliction at the terrible accident, which has taken your dear boy to another and infinitely happier world. Everybody who knew him here, his Sabbath-school teacher, and all who were in the habit of associating with him, say with

one voice, that if there ever was a truly pious and exemplary Christian boy, it was he.

“ Dr. Spring said at his funeral : ‘ Who can tell from what sufferings and sorrows he may have been removed by this sudden call ; and how great a mercy this may be in the guise of affliction ? Light will surely one day break in upon this darkness, and all will be proved to be wisest and best for him and for all.’

“ Our hearts are pained when we think what a terrible blow his loss will be to you. We hope and pray that you may have strength given you to sustain it.”

This letter shows that the language of religious consolation was still familiar to him. Nor is there any evidence that he ever wholly abandoned his early religious hopes. His aberrations, though sad and serious, did not eat out the heart of his piety. Various influences conspired to awaken this slumbering life ; though years were to pass, and years of doubt and carelessness, before the result became apparent.

#### HIS MARRIAGE AND DOMESTIC LIFE.

Mr. Phelps was married Nov. 5, 1845, to Miss Jane Gibson, the second daughter of Mr. James B.

Gibson, who belonged to the same church with himself. The following February the newly married pair took possession of the house on Union Square, which he had been building for the past two years. His home became to him at once a sacred and cherished place, around which his best affections gathered. He had no children ; yet abundant and daily blessings were vouchsafed. He lived with the wife of his youth in such simplicity and singleness of affection, with such daily and hourly devotion and care, with such unvarying cheerfulness and openness of heart, that the two lives made one life. It was a simple, healthful, affectionate and devoted marriage union. They walked together hand in hand, sharing all each other's joys, and knowing all each other's sorrows.

The habits of the outward life of Mr. Phelps were at once and wholly changed. Even the most innocent pursuits and recreations, which might separate him from his wife,—his gun and fishing-rod, and implements of sport, were laid aside. With his passion for music he used to attend all the concerts and musical entertainments ; but these too were relinquished, except on the rarest occasions : an organ and singing at home were the only substitutes. Nothing but an urgent call of business, and in his later years some benevolent association,

could draw him away for a single evening. Sometimes he was absent not more than two or three evenings in the whole round of the year. With all his taste for society, so natural to one of his frank and genial disposition, he avoided social gatherings, parties, and the like. And this was not thought of as a matter of duty, it was simply and solely a preference of home above all other places.

Besides music, books were his constant companions. He kept himself familiar, beyond most young men, with the progress of events both at home and abroad. He followed the great national debates with a keen interest, entering into them, not with the prejudices of a partisan, but with the knowledge of one who has weighed the wider bearings of the subjects. The great forensic efforts of our statesmen he always read and pondered, and with no one of them did he so heartily sympathize as with the ablest of them all ;—for Daniel Webster he felt a reverent attachment. With the earlier, as well as later history of our country, he was familiar, reading not only the most solid works, but many biographies and memoirs. He was also diligent in adding to his store of general knowledge. His library, though not large, was well selected, and the books he most frequently perused are an evidence that he had an intelligent and cultivated mind. Few, indeed,

knew the extent of his attainments, until, perhaps, some sudden question would find him at home, where others hesitated. A retentive memory kept his knowledge at command. In earlier life he could repeat long passages from Byron and Shakspeare; though his fondness for the former gradually declined. In the best books of travel he refreshed his recollections of the countries he had already visited, and explored new places. Like John Foster, he bought expensively illustrated works upon other lands, and studied them so thoroughly, that even their localities were familiar to his imagination. As his mind became more mature, he habitually perused works of a more enduring fame. He read and read again Neander's Church History; Jeremy Taylor's Discourses; Chalmers' Works; Sir Archibald Alison and Macaulay; Robinson's Biblical Researches; Conybeare and Howson on Paul's Epistles; Merle d'Aubigne's Reformation; Weiss's History of the Protestant Refugees; Livingstone's and Barth's Travels, etc. Milton was his most frequent companion among the poets; he also delighted in Herbert, and knew much of Cowper's Task and Hymns by heart. In the current quarterly reviews of this country and of England he was a regular reader. In lighter literature, the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, Walton's Angler, and the novels of Scott and

Dickens, were among his favorites. With a quick susceptibility to humor, he entered with zest into all descriptions of life which brought out its ludicrous and comical aspects. Almost every daily walk gave him anecdotes, with which in the evening his home would be enlivened ; but in all his mirth there never were any traces of envy or jealousy. Unusually reserved in the society of those whom he thought to be wiser or better than himself, in the privacy of home his whole nature had full and free play. His books, his thoughts, his feelings were shared with those whom he most loved. But, for two or three years, there was one painful want ; his was not a home fully consecrated to Christ.

At the same time, he was prompt in relieving the wants of the needy, and helping the outcast. He was generous and sympathetic by nature. If he saw a poor, drunken creature in the streets, unable to support himself, and jeered at by the throng, he would go up to him and take him by the arm, and lead him to a hydrant, and wet his head, until he was sober enough to tell him where he lived ; and then employ some one to see him safely to his door. And he would go home himself, and never say a word of what he had been doing. He was also prompt, and thought first of others in the emergency of danger. Upon a railroad train, a

locomotive was seen by him rapidly approaching the last car of the train in which he was sitting. His father and mother were in the back part of that car, and while all the other passengers were rushing to the front to escape the danger, the prompt and watchful son ran back to help his parents. Providentially only the platform of the car was broken. His parents did not notice that he had thus come, with a fond impulse, to put himself between them and danger ; and he never again alluded to the incident.

#### THE RE-BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT.

The child of the covenant, and of many prayers, had wandered for a time from the Father's house ; but that Father, abounding in longsuffering and lovingkindness, had not forgotten him. The seed of divine grace, early implanted, and nurtured by so many influences, was to grow up and bear fruit, even an hundredfold. Mr. Phelps now had all that he could ask for this outward life ; all that he would have craved, had he not also had the ineradicable instinct of another and higher life, a life hid with Christ in God. Home, troops of friends, abundance of this world's goods, a high social and mercantile position—all this was his. But still, beneath this fair surface, there were deeper questions, and desires rest-

less and unsatisfied. The outward cheerfulness was often a mask for inward depression. The light word enveloped sorrows and regrets. The present religious indifference was contrasted with those days in which the service of God was a delight, and Christ was present to his soul as a familiar friend. In many a silent hour, would doubtless come back the vision of a divine love, which had once entranced his spirit. Parental prayers and the supplications of friends followed him day by day. His wife, devoted to Christ from early days, guarded her life at every point, that there might be nothing in her habits or demeanor to interfere with what she was ever imploring with faith, at the throne of grace. The Rev. Dr. Skinner had in 1848 been transferred from the pastorate of the Mercer Street Church to the professorship of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology in the Union Theological Seminary; and his successor in the church was the Rev. Dr. Stiles, whose ardent, often impetuous, and always practical preaching, produced an immediate and visible effect upon his congregation. This and kindred influences doubtless made a decided impression upon the mind of Mr. Phelps. But such was his subsequent reserve, that no one ever heard him narrate even the external circumstances of that great change by which his soul was quickened



anew, and brought, in penitence and faith, to the foot of the cross. As far as any thing is known, the circumstances were most simple, and the result decided in a short space of time. The only living person who can tell the facts, says : " He had been quite sick for a few days, and seemed to feel more serious than usual. One Sabbath morning, I asked him what he was reading ; he replied, that he had selected the most sober article in Blackwood. I was just finishing Nelson on Infidelity, and asked him to read it, but he said, as he always did, " By and by." I opened it at the first chapter, and, taking Blackwood out of his hands, told him, if he would only read that first chapter, he might put it away if he did not like it, and I would not ask him again. He took it very cheerfully and began to read, stopping, as was his custom, every few minutes to think. He became so absorbed, that I had to tell him two or three times that dinner was ready. When he came to the table, to my surprise, as a young man was with us, he said, with deep seriousness, " I will ask a blessing ;" and in the evening he had family prayers ; both for the first time. The following day his heart seemed completely broken ; and he was so much in secret prayer, that I did not dare to open the library door suddenly, for fear of surprising him upon his knees. He came home

early in the afternoon, and at once took his Bible, which he would read for hours with the greatest delight. His whole appearance seemed changed, and always made me think of the man who was clothed and in his right mind. He did not say a word to anybody about his feelings ; but went to the Lord's Supper the next communion Sabbath with such a contrite heart, that his low sobs could be distinctly heard during the service. For a long time he spent the whole Friday, preceding each communion, at home in reading, meditation, and prayer.

What passed within that wrestling and penitent soul, in these solitary hours of renewed consecration, he never disclosed. He arose from his knees, like a returning prodigal, and found himself in his Father's house again, and did his Father's work. He went on his way silent about that mighty change which had subdued his inmost spirit ; when he might perchance have spoken of it, the gushing tear and the beaming eye spoke for him. A new life had swept through his spirit ; the winter was gone ; the spring had come again ; and he grew right on like a tree planted in the garden of the Lord, and seemed to take no more thought of his growing than does a plant reanimated by the breath of spring. His defection had taught him lessons of

humility and of wisdom. Now he would not talk, but live. Love to God and love to man, and love to Him, who is both God and man, inspired and blessed him day by day. Himself and all he had were consecrated to the Lord, without any reserve. There was no longer in him any weakness, or indecision. This one thing he did : forgetting those things which were behind, he reached forth to those things which were before, and pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling (the calling from above) of God in Christ Jesus.

#### RELIGIOUS HABITS AND CHARACTER.

There were certain marked points of contrast between the earlier and the later religious experience of Mr. Phelps. As a youth he was noted for his freedom in expressing his personal feelings ; for his ardor of speech in religious gatherings. He would talk as freely about religion, and about his own religious feelings, as upon any other topic. But now he seemed, not distrustful, but humble, as to his own experience. Now he assigned less worth to transient feelings, and insisted more upon permanent principles and habits. Then he thought much of the states of his own mind ; now he thought most of those grand spiritual realities which pro-

duce the right state of mind. Once he rested in his feelings ; now he rested in Christ. Formerly he was, it may be, over-confident ; now he was distrustful of all excepting divine grace. Now he was, perhaps, too reluctant to obtrude his personal experience upon others ; then he was fluent in describing it with all the ardor of youthful emotion. And yet he never let a fitting opportunity pass without saying a word in season to his friends and companions, whenever he thought he might do them good ; though he could rarely be induced to speak and pray in the religious conferences of the church.

The most marked change as to his personal religious habits, was in the time he now and ever afterwards passed in his private devotions. His life was eminently a life of prayer ; of heartfelt, earnest, intimate communion with his Saviour. Every morning, after breakfast, an hour was devoted to reading the Bible, usually with some approved Commentary ; often the hour was exceeded. At times he would be so absorbed in the precious words of the divine oracles, that some hint from others was needed to break this silent meditation. Then he would retire to his closet, and usually spend another hour in private devotions. This was not to him an irksome duty ; it was the delight of his soul ; thus he refreshed his spirit, more than his

body was nurtured by the fruits of the earth. Communion with God was the life of his life, the joy of his heart ; he knew the secret of the Lord and fed upon the hidden, heavenly manna. Thus he was prepared for the duties, the trials, the conflicts of the day, and obtained a cheerful confidence in the divine guidance and strength. And often during the day, in the pause of other occupations, or in any sudden emergency, his heart would be lifted up in ejaculatory petitions to Him, in the light of whose presence he felt that he was ever walking. Upon his return to his home in the evening, he always repeated the duties of the morning. Again the Bible was studied more than any other book ; this well-worn volume had always in it four marks, two for his own reading and two for the family. Again, in the family and in his own retirement, he would pour out his soul in thankfulness, confession, and supplication, before laying his head upon his pillow.

Few, even of his more intimate friends, knew the constancy of this prayerful life, almost literally obeying the injunction to pray without ceasing. Only one living person knew about it altogether. Few knew that one reason why he went so little into general society was, that he might not lose those sacred and blessed hours of intimate converse with his God and Saviour. All saw a great change ;

all felt a new and higher influence going out from him, but the secret springs of that power were hidden. They knew not that that radiant glance of love was every morning rekindled at the altar of self-sacrifice ; that that warm Christian greeting came from a soul that had just renewed its conscious fellowship with Christ ; that that divine charity, seemingly so spontaneous, had been anew inspired by the memory of the love of Jesus. All his outspoken words were so frank, that they seemed to be of nature rather than of grace ; and there was indeed a kindly and generous nature, but it was grace that gave tone and constancy to all he did, that made his Christian life so rare and ripe.

These habits of devotion were continued to the close of his life. When their regularity was interrupted by external hindrances, he would in some way seek amends for the conscious loss. If called from home suddenly in the morning, though others were around in the public conveyances, he would lean his head upon his hand, in silent petition, unconscious that any were near and might notice him. So unvarying was his habit of prayer, that he would not allow it to be interrupted even upon his occasional journeys. Once, when he had been passing the night at an inn, his horse was brought to the door in the morning, before he and his companion

were quite ready. They hurried away. The horse, a strong and spirited animal, soon began to run, as if trying his speed ; but one thing after another gave way in the harness, until the animal, plunging down a descent, broke entirely loose from the carriage, and dragging Mr. Phelps over the dash-board, which was bent flat in the strain, threw him upon the ground. The reins were at once disentangled from him, and he rose unhurt. His first words were those of gratitude to the Heavenly Parent who had rescued them from peril, "though they had begun the day without invoking His protection." "When away from home he used to pray for our servants and neighbors and friends, and for the societies and institutions which he loved, until I used to think he would bless the whole world if he could."

Any special religious occasion would only increase the length and fervor of those communions with God. On Sundays, and the fast-days of the church, after returning from the public service he would invariably go to his room, both parts of the day, to enjoy this feast of the soul, and to humble himself before God. Sunday was to him a glad day, because a day hallowed to the Lord, a day of spiritual rest, and spiritual communion. He devoted, with thankful joy, all its hours to religious occupations, though never finding fault with others,

who were less strict in its observance. With him, in fact, it was not the strictness of a law, but it was the freedom of love. The law of the Sabbath was a living law, in which he delighted ; not alone because it was commanded, but chiefly because he loved to do the Lord's pleasure on his holy day, and to call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honorable, and to honor Him therein, not doing his own ways, nor finding his own pleasure, nor speaking his own words. His conversation was indeed in heaven. From any lips that preached the word in simplicity and sincerity he was glad to hear the truth of God. When others spoke lightly of the preacher, and were fastidious, he always had a word of commendation. He had the rare good fortune of never hearing a sermon from which he could not extract some nutriment, which did not contain some warning, some promise, some gracious message for him to lay to heart. And this was not because he had not a refined taste ; it was not because he did not love and appreciate the very best sermons ; for no one did this better than he. But it was because he waited upon the ministrations of the sanctuary, not to gratify his æsthetic emotions, but for moral and religious benefits. He might easily have become, with his position and influence, a troublesome member of a church, dictating his own



private convictions, and making his conscience a rule for others. But the idea of doing this never entered his mind. He never disturbed his pastors by criticizing their views and methods. He honored the ministers of the Gospel, and was always prompt in aiding them, whenever a fitting occasion was presented.

This deeply religious life, daily fed at the fountains of spiritual growth, brought forth its rich and abundant fruits. Its largest, most conspicuous result was in that extraordinary benevolence, which has made his name a praise in our churches. His beneficence never seemed to cost him any self-denial; for all he had was the Lord's, and the only question he seemed to know was, how he might best use all he had in his Master's service. But this trait of his character demands a record by itself in a subsequent part of this memorial. For an account of some other characteristics of his Christian life, we are indebted to a communication from the Rev. Dr. Stiles, who knew him well in the different aspects of his public and private career.

After speaking of his "grand characteristic" as that of benevolence, he says, the "second quality that describes Anson G. Phelps was his *simplicity*. Benevolence neither needs, nor tolerates, disguise, ambiguity, or indirectness. If any thing is true of our brother, he was certainly incapable of duplicity

or cunning. He had no by-ends, and therefore needed no circuitous means. He never aimed to appear what he was not, nor essayed to do what he did not obviously design. He had no use for words, looks, tones, or actions, save to bring out the thought of his heart. . . . He was a social, a genial man, yet I doubt whether he ever attempted an elaborate speech, or wrote a wordy letter. His simplicity led him ever to ask: 'Is the thing right or wrong, wise or imprudent: shall I do it or decline it?' He decided and acted. Nor did any extended or ambiguous discourse leave the applicant in the slightest doubt, as to what his thought was, or his conduct would be. The fact is, nothing could hide the transparency of the man; broad, diversified, and intense as were the sympathies of his heart. . . . In all his way through life, whether you regard his manner, language, principles, aims or actions, he was as pure and as simple as a little child.

"The third distinguishing feature of our departed brother was his *innocence*. He was eminently free from the multiplied modifications both of selfishness and of malignity. He never seemed to think of himself; I cannot recall a single word from his lips which indicated an approving thought of his own character or conduct. Doubtless, like every other sinner, he was chargeable with undue

self-love. But self conceit, love of praise, ostentation, ambition, arrogance ! he must know him better than I did, who learned, by visible or audible exhibition, that such feelings were the inmates of his breast. Who has never been shocked at his own egotism ?—but who ever associated egotism with Anson G. Phelps ? It is a remarkable fact that he was not accustomed to speak of his benefactions even to the wife of his bosom.

“ Benevolence, too, in its very nature, must exclude *malignity* from the heart, equally with selfishness. Who ever charged our brother with suspicion, envy, or jealousy—with censoriousness, bitterness, or revenge ? On the contrary, whenever he spoke about men, he apologized for their defects, applauded their virtues, shared their felicities, and delighted in their prosperity. Indeed, in some aspects, he seemed to possess an excessive benevolence. Whenever the existing customs, or institutions of society, obviously ministered to the happiness of the people, his active sympathy with his fellow creatures would sometimes tempt him to look with too lenient an eye upon those latent forms of vice and mischief which, in the judgment of most good men, were clearly involved in those pleasures. At times, too, he seemed absolutely incapable of exercising the feeling of *resentment*. Men might wrong him, or

his father, or his family ; and yet, though once the quickest of men to feel an insult, with these very persons he would sometimes confer so gently and kindly, that no one would imagine that the first emotion of displeasure had been roused in his heart. Nor was this all. There is a beautiful development of benevolence, rarely reached by earthly humanity, which shone out brightly in our departed brother. He could *overcome evil with good*. It has sometimes happened that a friend has stood by, and, through the contrasted feelings of his own breast, deeply admired him as he observed how naturally, how sincerely he could praise, and even enjoy the taste, the wisdom, the energy, of one, who under like circumstances, had unkindly imputed to him motives which were far more conspicuously displayed by himself, in that very work of his hands, which was now the subject of Mr. Phelps' warm congratulation.

“ But if benevolence was the basis of his character—MODESTY was its crown. Our sainted brother had no taste for the high seats of the synagogue. He courted no honors which man could bestow. He held no office in the church. His voice was never heard in the public assembly. Dignities he avoided, but was always found where he could serve unseen. If the cause needed a strong friend, his co-operation

might be more readily secured when the occasion required no public prominence in the agent. He was never troubled by neglect, but often embarrassed by flattering attentions.

“Our dear brother was a man of an eminently delicate and retiring nature, and rarely exposed the secrets of his bosom. But all who knew him well, well knew that he ever carried about him a strong sense of his own unworthiness. Rarely did man ever hear a more touching utterance of humility than he breathed into the ear of a bosom friend, in an hour of profound privacy, not long before his death, but at a moment when he was in perfect health—‘Oh to think of it! I am almost forty years of age, and have *done nothing*. And I am nothing but a poor sinner! I cannot live so. I must do better!’

“We do not affirm that there were no men in the church more gifted, or none more spiritual, or none more useful. But this we do say—embrace the entire character and life of the man, and a more amiable, admirable, benignant, or laborious servant of our Great Master is not readily to be found in our day. And when we call to mind all his *benevolence*, and *simplicity*, and *innocence*, and *modesty*—we thank God for his works on earth, and cherish hearty fellowship with his reward in Heaven.”

Such are some of the traits of Mr. Phelps' character, as they appeared to one who knew him well, and watched his course with the strong solicitude of a pastor. This estimate is confirmed by the almost unanimous testimony of those with whom he lived in the closer relationships of social life. And all this rare loveliness of character, traced back to its root, is found in his communion with God in Christ. Silent, reserved, sensitive about expressing his feelings to man, his whole heart, in all its recesses, was ever open to the Father of lights; no sin was hidden, no deformity palliated there. He walked before God with an unveiled face, with an humble and contrite heart. Yet of all this rich spiritual experience, there is hardly a word of record; he kept no journal or diary. And when, in some brief, sudden moment, he did say any thing about himself to others, it was usually to lament his imperfections in a few broken words. We doubt whether he ever thought about the question, whether he had already attained, or were already perfect; except, perhaps, to feel that there could be no question about it in his own case—he still had so much to mourn over and confess. In words equally few, he would also sometimes express an humble hope, that God for the sake of His dear Son had had mercy upon him, and snatched him as a

brand from the burning ; and then praise and magnify that transcendent love which abounded to the chief of sinners.

But all these devotional habits, and religious traits, had their basis in that faith, which was to him eminently the substance of what he hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. To understand him fully and truly, we must know the style and character of his religious belief.

#### THE BASIS OF HIS RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

The groundwork of his religious life was found in that general system of faith, which has been the vital strength of our evangelical churches. Of Puritan descent, and Presbyterian training, he imbibed from his earliest years, in the Bible and the Catechism, that doctrinal system, held in common by the Presbyterian and Congregational churches of our land. He was not dogmatical in doctrine ; still less was he technical in his religious phraseology : nobody ever suspected him of *cant*. And yet the fundamental articles of the so-called Calvinistic creed were vitally inwrought into his religious experience. Thus was his personal faith nurtured and matured. The great Christian verities of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement ; the

fact of original sin, including the total depavity of man in his native condition, and his moral inability to good excepting through the grace of the Holy Spirit ; the electing love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord ; justification through faith in Christ alone ; sanctification as a progressive work of the Spirit within the soul, began but not completed here ; these, and their kindred or related truths, were to him great spiritual realities.

These truths he held in common with the great mass of evangelical Christians, and hardly thought of the lines of separation and division. He rejoiced with all that truly love the Lord, by whatever name they might be called. The increasing rivalries and discussions between the Congregational and Presbyterian churches he deeply lamented ; as he also did the unhappy disruption of the Presbyterian church, for which he saw not a justifiable reason. Not professing to understand the order of the divine decrees, or the subtilities of different schemes of imputation, or the metaphysics of inability and ability, he could not find any sufficient warrant, in differences on these more abstruse points, for the rupture of ministerial and Christian fellowship. At the same time, he was cordially attached, though without bigotry, to those views of divine truth, which he believed to be more definitely insisted upon in that branch of



the Presbyterian church in which his lot was cast ; especially the necessity and urgency of the call to immediate repentance, on the ground, not of natural ability, but of an atonement for sin provided for and offered unto all, and enforced by the gracious aids of the Holy Spirit ; active efforts for revivals of religion and in every good word and work ; and co-operation with Christians of other names, so far as practicable, in the great missionary and philanthropic enterprises of the day. One of his latest reported conversations was upon his "increasing joy in the communion of saints," his heartfelt gratitude in view of the union of Christians in the daily prayer-meetings, in the course of the late great revival.

Tone was given to his whole spiritual experience, by his humble and heartfelt sense of his many infirmities, and his personal sinfulness. The very progress of his religious life was marked, in fact, by an increasing depth and tenderness in his view of sin, and particularly of his personal sinfulness. But this conviction was to him a spur, and not a hindrance or a snare ; it led him daily to fight the good fight of faith, that thus he might lay hold of eternal life ; it led him every day to deny himself and take up his cross and follow Christ.

In the more mature periods of his religious life

he had the deepest, even a living sense of the reality of spiritual and divine things. He lived and walked in their light. He judged the things of sense by the objects of faith ; the worth of the natural by its relation to the supernatural. He judged the world by the kingdom of God. And spiritual things were not to him mere abstract truths made clear to the intellect, but they were ever seen, by the eye of faith, in their intimate and vital relations to a personal God and a personal Redeemer. Here was, perhaps, the core of his religious experience. Few Christians have a more living sense of the divine presence. Thus only could prayer be to him what it ever was. Thus only could Christ be to him what He ever was.

For that which gave tone and character to his whole religion was his intimate sense of alliance with Christ, as his personal Saviour. His vital union with the Head of the Church expressed itself in conscious communion and fellowship. His soul was affianced to his Redeemer. The God-man, Incarnate Love itself, stood before his mental vision in all the fulness of divine grace, with all the attractions of the tenderest human love. It was as if the Saviour were to him a personal and present friend, full of grace and truth. The life was manifest, and he saw it ; that eternal life, which was with the Father,

and was manifested unto us. And thus was his fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. His theology was eminently a Christology. It was not a mere barren, intellectual belief in certain propositions about Christ ; it was an inwrought sense of the absolute need to him as a sinner of such a person and such a sacrifice. He loved to dwell upon Him in all His offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King. He leaned upon His arm and was strengthened. He trusted in His sacrifice, and knew the blessedness of those to whom the Lord doth not impute iniquity. And all other Christian truths were for him vitalized, and illuminated by these central facts of the Christian faith. His own sinfulness and inability, the divine sovereignty and the election of grace, were seen, and seen truly, in the light of the cross.

To the sacrament of the Lord's Supper he ever came as the sacred place where he was to meet his Lord, presenting anew the symbols and pledges of His dying love. And he prepared himself for this as for a high festival. Not with the stains of the world clinging to him could he come to that solemn repast. He must first search himself and try his ways ; he must expel from his soul every root of selfishness and of bitterness ; he must confess and forsake his sins ; every idol must be cast down, and

brought as a sacrifice to that altar. The whole of the previous Friday was not seldom spent in this self-examination ; in this descent of the soul into its own hidden depths, detecting sin in its roots ; in this ascent of the soul to communion with God, through a peaceful, total, and renewed surrender of itself to the embrace of divine compassion. And when he came to that communion, and received the bread and the wine, the body and the blood, it was with a soul quivering with such emotions, as only the redeemed can know. An affecting allusion to the cross would draw the unbidden tear from his eyes. Nor could he cease adoring, in wondering humility, that grace, which had planted his feet upon a rock, and established his goings. Here he celebrated by foretaste the marriage supper of the Lamb, looking forward with a trembling, yet ardent hope to the time when faith should be exchanged for sight, when he should see face to face Him, whom having not seen he loved, in whom, though now he saw Him not, yet believing, he rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Thus by gazing upon these definite realities, these central objects of the Christian faith ; by communing with them until they became his very life, as marrow to his bones, and the light of all his seeing, he was kept from that unfixed enthusiasm,

which, in mere frames of mind, and transient glow of feeling, finds the centre of its experience. In the same way, by the same method, he was kept from that other extreme, into which the dogmatist, in contrast with the enthusiast, is so apt to fall ; the finding and binding of his faith within mere formulas of doctrine, without specific regard to those spiritual facts and realities which such formulas are intended to express. He lived not upon abstractions, but upon the reality of truth ; all his moods of Christian experience were derived from the vital facts and central objects of the Christian revelation. And it was partly because his soul was so fully pervaded by a living sense of these things, that he thought and talked so little about his subjective experience. The emotion to him was a very little thing in comparison with the objects that called forth the emotion ; and it was of the latter that he thought and spoke. Feelings and formulas he subordinated to revealed facts. From the excesses of emotion, from the height of merely sensitive joy, from the depths of spiritual gloom, he was guarded by the tranquil and inspiring vision of the kingdom of God, as it is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. His life was hid with Christ in God. His mature experience was so specifically a Christian experience, that to feed upon Christ was his daily food, that to become

like Christ was his daily aim ; that to die in Christ was his trembling hope ; that to rise again from the dead and be forever with the Lord was the crown of his felicity.

His whole previous religious training and culture entered into, and helped to mould this life of faith. But it received a quickening impulse, and a wise direction, through the instructions of the third pastor of the Mercer Street Church, the Rev. George L. Prentiss, D.D., the successor of Dr. Stiles in 1851. From that time until the close of his life, Mr. Phelps remained under his ministrations, and often spoke with thankfulness and joy of the spiritual benefit he received from Sabbath to Sabbath. Dr. Prentiss came to this important and responsible charge with rare qualifications for his work. He possessed the highest order of ministerial culture matured by the best helps both at home and abroad. A soul, full of native ardor and eloquence, was tempered by the thorough study of the masters of wisdom in ancient and modern times. He preached philosophically, without ever preaching philosophy ; and his preaching too was eminently practical, without ever degenerating into undigested exhortations. The great central truths and facts of the Christian faith, inwrought into his inmost experience, were always presented in full re-

lief, and commended to the conscience and hearts of all his hearers. He said but little on minor points and fugitive controversies, that he might say more upon the abiding themes of Christian faith and edification. His elevated discourses had not only a quickening, but also a stable influence. Averse to all the arts and methods by which a cheap notoriety is dearly purchased, he imparted to his people for seven years, from Sunday to Sunday, as great a variety of solid and pertinent instruction—often rising to the height of an animated and stirring eloquence—as could be heard in almost any pulpit of the city. And all his teachings were enforced by a devoted and blameless pastoral life. A most intelligent congregation was attached to him by the strongest ties of love and confidence.

Mr. Phelps felt as fully as any one the power of this thoughtful and earnest presentation of the living elements of Christian truth. More perhaps than he was fully conscious, his own thoughts and life were shaped by the instructions of the pastor, for whom personally he had the strongest attachment. Under the full and faithful preaching of Christ and him crucified, applied as it was to all the relations of life and institutions of society, his own views about the kingdom of Christ were enlarged, and the image of the God-man stood before his soul in more distinct

outline, and clothed upon with a rarer grace. Christ was seen more and more in his life, as well as felt in his heart. Others took knowledge of him, that he had been with Jesus. He was a living epistle of that grace of God which bringeth salvation. He was ever ready to say: "By the grace of God I am what I am." The last vestige of self-righteousness, the last traces of spiritual pride—that last infirmity of Christian souls—were gradually consumed by the pure flame of divine love burning ever brighter within him. His faith too became increasingly a faith which worketh by love, which purifieth the heart, which overcometh the world. He seemed to obey as by instinct that divine injunction: Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

#### HIS HOME IN TARRYTOWN.

If we would know a good man in all that makes his real excellence, we must see him in his daily life, and especially in his home, where alone all human and Christian affections have their fullest and freest play. How many faces that shine in public life, become darkened as they pass the threshold of the family; to see them there is to dispel the illusion



about their real worth. But those who are most worthy of regard become brighter and dearer to us in the retirement of the household. Thus it was, in an eminent degree, with Mr. Phelps. His truest, tenderest and best affections and sympathies were known only by those knit to him by the closest of earthly ties. His whole nature found its fairest scope and play in the time spent in his beautiful country residence, on the banks of the Hudson, about two miles above the village of Tarrytown. His simple, natural taste led him to long for country life, in contrast with the din and glare of his native city. He loved the city because he could there do his work, and fully carry out his plans of beneficence, aid the needy and the wretched, and unite with other Christians in the benevolent societies he loved so well. But he always looked back with warm memories to the period of his youth, passed on the banks of the Connecticut. Interwoven with his cherished recollections was the love of his parental home, before the progress of a great city had rudely destroyed its walks and gardens. "They are beginning," he says in one of his letters, "to open streets through the old place, and to build docks in front on the East River; and it is sad to have such a beautiful spot marred." After his marriage he early formed the plan of building a house for his summer

retreat. In September, 1848, he purchased a tract of land, at one of the most charming points on the North River, and began to lay out the grounds and erect a mansion. In the selection of the site, and in all the arrangements, he showed at once a refined and simple taste. Among the many beautiful residences with which the Hudson river has been crowned during the few past years, by the wealth of New York merchants, few are more delightfully situated, or can better minister to a true love of nature ; though many are much more expensively adorned, both within and without. It is in the midst of those scenes of historic and romantic interest, which have been made familiar as household words by the graphic and finished delineations of Washington Irving, both in his works of fiction and of biography. The broad river, seen from this point for a long distance above and below, towards the palisades and the highlands, the graceful indentures of the opposite bank, and the wooded hills beyond, the gentle and broken declivity of the slope on which the house is erected, the deep grove which hides it from the thoroughfare, and the steeper height towards the east, thickly clothed with trees ; these in their combination present a scene that attracts the lingering gaze, and calls out and heightens the love of the beautiful. Without extravagance

or display, the grounds were so laid out as to give a sufficient variety of walks and drives, at every turn disclosing some unexpected feature in the varying landscape. For three years it was Mr. Phelps' delight, in his leisure hours, to superintend the building of the substantial, stone mansion, which is neither a villa nor a castle, but a house made for a home, and ample for all the uses of a hospitable family. He brought to this work a familiar acquaintance with some of the best seats of the old world ; and he studied and arranged the plans even to their architectural details. The edifice was erected on a sharp descent, and is supported by a high walled embankment ; a broad and gently descending lawn in front extends to the fringe of trees on the bank of the river, where a boat and bathing house complete the arrangements for health and pleasure.

In the spring of 1851 this beautiful place became his settled home for about half of the year. In summer he could rarely be induced to leave it, unless in obedience to some call of business or charity. He never had the slightest wish to join the gay throngs at watering places of fashionable resort ; and avoided those long, hot and dusty journeys, which are sometimes mistaken for recreation. From the middle of May until Christmas he and his wife lived inseparably in this genial spot.

There they welcomed their friends with a frank and cordial hospitality. All who visited them felt at once at home ; the freedom of the place was given to them ; and there they enjoyed to the full their love of nature, and felt its soothing repose. "Mr. Phelps," writes one, "delighted in the country ; he loved the quiet evenings, the birds and the flowers ; he always seemed perfectly happy when sitting with his book upon the piazza. He was as glad as a child when he went to the place for a day in the winter. He used to like to walk in the fields, and watch the plough turn over the fresh ground. Every simple thing seemed to give him pleasure ; he would often watch a little insect, or be lost in admiration of a flower. His thoughts seemed to turn naturally to heavenly things ; the opposite bank of the river reminded him of the distant fields beyond the flood. A clear star-light night he would often come out to look and wonder, and I can almost see his earnest upturned eyes, and hear his solemn tones, saying : "The heavens declare the glory of God." Here, too, he and his wife were more together ; and this heightened every other charm. Hardly for an hour of the day were they separated ; if he was about to stroll away for half an hour, he always sent a summons or a message.

Here he felt the full inspiration of nature, in

all its varied moods, watching with delight the changes of the year, from the early and tender verdure of the spring, through the luxuriant glow of summer, to the ripened fruits and vivid hues of the autumn; nor would he return to town until the last leaves had fallen from the trees. Every living thing, each tree and shrub, the domestic animals and the free birds of the sky, were to him like familiar friends. Each and all spake to him in tones he loved to hear, of the great Author of nature; for to him there was no chasm between God and His works. Day unto day uttered speech, and night unto night showed knowledge, of a divine wisdom and goodness. Every bird was singing the praises of the great and good Being who feedeth the young ravens when they cry. It was God that clothed the grass of the fields; and the bounty of heaven was most distinctly seen in the ripening harvest. The changes of the year led him to survey the changes of life, and to look forward to the new heavens and the new earth.

Here, too, he loved to throw off the restraints which the more artificial forms of life impose, and surrender himself to that play and freedom of the soul so kindred with the freedom of nature. The buoyancy and even hilarity of his natural temperament delighted in those careless moods and ways in

which he could here indulge. His merriment was contagious. Without a particle of ill-will or envy, he quickly detected the incongruities and contrasts which reveal the comic side of human life ; and his anecdotes and apt descriptions enlivened the circle of his friends. He loved a good hearty laugh over men and books. He loved, too, the careless ease with which he might stroll about, and enjoy at more will whatever struck his wandering fancy.

Yet it never disturbed him when interrupted by the not unfrequent calls for charity from the wayfaring man, that came to his door. No hungry man went empty away. The poor for miles around shared in his benefactions. One of his prominent reasons for a liberal expenditure upon his grounds, was that he might give work to those that needed it. In a winter of great severity and commercial distress he enlarged his plans, and employed more laborers than ever before, even at an inconvenience to himself, that he might thus best supply the wants of the needy. Many are the poor who looked up to him with daily blessings as he passed by, and who mourn in him the loss of a benefactor.

Into his country home he carried the practice of religious duties, being as diligent and careful for his soul as when in the midst of the temptations and business of the city. Here, too, he was a liberal

supporter of the Gospel, in the Dutch Reformed church with which he worshipped. And on this point, as well as in respect to his general character and influence, we are glad to present the testimony of the pastor of that church, the Rev. A. T. Stewart : "I would speak of Mr. Phelps simply as he appeared in a plain village church, of which I have the satisfaction to be the pastor.

"It is about six years since he came to me at the close of the service in the old North church at Tarrytown, introduced himself, welcomed me to my new charge, and invited me to call upon him when I could do so with convenience. On my first visit he manifested a deep interest in our church, and expressed his hope that my pastorate might be pleasant and successful.

"His conversation with those who enjoyed for any time his society, his manner of reading the Scriptures and praying in his family, his intercourse with persons in his employ, his daily life at home, and upon his grounds, and at the church, impressed all with a deep sense of his intelligence and goodness. He was so regular in his attendance upon the public means of grace, that when his seat was vacant, it was taken for granted by all that he was either sick or away from home. In the house of God he seemed wholly occupied with the ser-

vice. He was a noble example of a Christian worshipper.

“ His benevolence was remarkable. He assisted the deserving poor of our village. In an unassuming manner he would approach one who had been unfortunate, speak a few cheering words to him, and place something in his hand which he would afterwards find to go far in making up his loss.

“ He gave in our usual Sabbath collections one third of all that was given. To special objects he gave liberally. When absent for a season he would inquire, on his return, what collections had been made, and almost always insist on making his contribution. On one occasion, after a home missionary had earnestly asked aid of our congregation for building a church at the Thousand Islands, we called on Mr. Phelps. He readily gave us \$50, saying he had intended to forward it to us, and when we attempted to thank him, he prevented us, saying: “ It is a great privilege to hand you this, and it is my duty to thank my God who has enabled me to do it.” We could not have built our church edifice and parsonage at Tarrytown without his aid. He gave in all to these objects about \$2,200.

“ No man understood better the value of riches and how to appropriate them. Once, when con-



versing freely on this subject, he said that riches were talents that God gave to men to be used for his glory, and if they failed to use them for that end he would severely reckon with them in the great day ; that this was a most solemn truth, and not sufficiently presented from the pulpit. During the interview we remarked, that riches did not generally exert a happy influence over their possessors, and often seemed mere facilities for entering into temptation. In this he not only agreed with us, but expressed his conviction that riches were no blessing, but rather an injury, to any man whose heart was not changed by the Spirit of God ; that they would tend to fill him with self-esteem, and make him arrogant, and reckless, and wicked ; that their influence in these respects was stronger than I could suppose ; that there were no passages of Scripture more true than those which describe the difficulty with which rich men shall be saved ; and that it was nothing but the grace of God that kept any man, especially a rich man, from plunging into very great sins, and being ruined at any hour. When he uttered these last words he was deeply moved, and seemed like one who was taking refuge in the divine strength.

“ He also had right views of the duty of social prayer. On one occasion, after hearing a sermon

bearing on such services, he came forward and said :  
“It would give me great pleasure to be with you in your meeting this evening, and always when you gather for prayer ; but my health will not allow me the privilege.”

“In preaching, he loved the plain and faithful exposition of the Gospel. It was never too plain and pungent. If he saw that the preacher loved the Lord Jesus he became deeply interested in him, and would turn away from all others to hear him. We have never known, we think, a better man, and one who, while engaged in vast mercantile pursuits, took so intelligent a view of the cause of Christ, or entered more earnestly into it. We have known few from whose conversation, and deeds, and devotion, a minister of the Gospel might learn more ; and none, dying so early, who had so fully done his work.”

#### WISDOM IN THE USE OF WEALTH.

From the period of his renewed and entire consecration to God, “Holiness to the Lord” was written upon all that Mr. Phelps possessed. He at once began that long series of benefactions, almost unequalled in the records of Christian benevolence in our country, comparing him with those who had the same degree of worldly prosperity. Others, with

less means, have given in larger proportions. Hardly any with the same means have given as liberally. The full extent of his charities will never be known : many of them are recorded only on high. He was always giving. He confined his beneficence to no one charity, to no one class of charities. He gave to all that seemed to need his gifts. At home and abroad, in the counting-house and by the wayside, in town and country, his hand was prompt and his heart open. He never seemed to ask what others had done, or might do, but what he himself could and ought to do. Doubtless there were some recipients of his benefactions unworthy of what was so liberally dispensed ; doubtless there were those to whom he gave for their importunity ; but he always thought it was better to run the risk of being occasionally imposed upon, than that of sending a needy and worthy person empty away. Hardly a day passed, after he became noted for benevolence, in which he was not applied to for some object of public charity, to say nothing of more private donations. Sometimes several in the same day would appeal to him ; he found the applicants awaiting him in his office ; he found them waiting for him at home ; they accosted him as he was going or returning ; his chief interruptions in the evening were of this class. And

yet he always had a listening ear ; he did not seem weary in well doing. Pressed by these innumerable applications, which often wore upon his exhausted strength and appealed to sensibilities that were only too keen, he was never known to turn away coldly from a tale of sorrow ; every worthy person or object received even more than they had dared expect. If he knew any one to be poor and needy, Anson G. Phelps was at once that person's warm friend.

Hundreds of testimonials, such as the following, might easily be gathered. "In trying circumstances I had just come to New York. My former professional earnings were quite spent ; my prospect of supporting my dear wife and myself, in the slowly acquired practice of a strange city, was gloomy indeed. In my darkest hours, your husband was my firm friend. He never wearied. Sometimes he freely loaned me hundreds of dollars. After a restless night, perhaps, my proud heart would beat wildly as I opened his office door ; and his quick, kind words, and kinder deeds, would send me down stairs with my eyes brimming with tears." "Some two years since, just as I had painfully gathered my last dollar to pay a note I owed him, I received an affectionate letter from him, written in his sick room at Tarrytown, volunteering with-

out my ever asking for it to renew that note, and give me more time." "I was in no way related to him; was not even of his church; never told him my trials as I have now confessed them; but simply said, in effect, I was a little straitened. And yet his quick, kind instinct divined it all, and offered more than I had dared to ask." "In these acts, too, he had a singularly unpretending and winning manner. He was very gentle with the wounds he tried to heal. . . I think I see him still as his face fairly shone with kindness."

These were private benefactions, such as were known only to himself and the recipients. Many such have become known only since his decease. One of his pastors testifies, that "such a succession of valuable private donations was providentially revealed by the embarrassments to which the beneficiaries were exposed by his death, as to indicate, that the last great day alone can bring to light the number and extent of those similar charities of his hand, which, though never known on earth, are now rewarded in heaven." Many do now, many more will one day, rise up and call him blessed. Besides the thousands whose sorrows were seen and audible around his grave, a large company wept in secret and silence the loss of a benefactor. Thus did he so use the very mammon of unrighteousness, as to

make to himself friends, who will welcome him to everlasting habitations.

But it was not only, or chiefly, in response to such private calls, that his beneficence was seen in signal gifts. Charities which many good men comparatively neglect, were foremost in his regard. Not merely benevolent and philanthropic societies, but those Institutions which underlie the efficient working of those societies, training men to do their work, were the peculiar objects of his wise and far-seeing benevolence. The appeals which come to our churches for the support of Colleges, and Theological Seminaries, and Education Societies, are apt to be less regarded than the calls for immediate missionary or philanthropic work. Because these institutions work more out of sight, in a more noiseless way, they have less hold upon the sympathies of the larger part of our church members. It requires, as a general rule, more forethought and more thorough principle in giving, to be liberal where there is so little of merely popular effect. But these were among the most cherished and constant objects of the beneficence of Mr. Phelps. Especially was he enlisted, heart and soul, in all that pertains to the education of a thorough and evangelical ministry.

To many of his friends it will be of interest to

know, that the institution to which he made the largest bequest in his will, was the very first to enlist his Christian sympathy and liberality, after the quickening of his religious life. The first collection made in the church, subsequent to this, was in aid of the Union Theological Seminary. And it is characteristic of him, that not even his wife knew what he had given, until accidentally informed of the fact by a third person. "He was soon afterwards invited to attend a meeting in behalf of the Seminary at the Rev. Dr. Skinner's: before he left home he spent some time in prayer; and when he bade me good-bye, he asked me if I would not pray for the success of the meeting while he was gone. He has taken a deep interest in the Seminary ever since, rarely failing to mention it in his prayers." These constant prayers testify to, and in part explain, the deep interest he felt in this institution, which ever had a foremost place in his affections. Founded in 1836, in the city of New York, on a basis that "commended itself to men of moderate views and feelings, who desired to live free from party strife," this Seminary experienced the disastrous influence of the financial revulsion of the next year; but it was nobly upheld by its devoted friends through all the period of its struggles, educating meanwhile a larger number of

students, than any similar institution of our land, at the same period of its existence. In 1851 it became necessary to make decided efforts to relieve it from pecuniary embarrassments. Dr. Prentiss and his church were thoroughly enlisted in this work; that church from first to last has been as a staff to this institution, ever ready to help it in its emergencies, and contributing about one third of its permanent endowment. Mr. Phelps, not only by his money, but also by his active efforts, largely aided in securing this result. He gave, in all, during his life not less than \$18,000, besides occasional aid for temporary objects. He was a member of the Committee appointed in 1851, at a meeting called at the house of Charles Butler, Esq., to procure an endowment of \$100,000 for the institution, and obtained several large subscriptions to it. When it was found that \$7,000 were needed to complete the amount and make the subscriptions binding, he promptly added \$3,500 to his original subscription of \$5,000; the sum was made up, and the largest donor then added \$3,000 to his subscription. All of the students' rooms in the Seminary were furnished at his sole charge, at an expense of \$2,500. The second subscription, begun in 1856, to raise the endowment to \$200,000, was started in his house; to this he subscribed \$5,000; and \$14,000 were



raised on the spot. To the library and to the students he made occasional donations of books ; at one time giving to each of the latter, with the Messrs. Carters, a copy of Lee's work on Inspiration. At the period of the severe mercantile pressure in 1858, when the students were in great need, and when he himself was pressed by numerous engagements, he gave during the winter about \$900 for their relief ; besides \$600 more for the furnishing of their rooms. The annual bills for repairs sometimes passed through his hands ; and he would not allow them to go to the treasurer. A casual allusion, in a Report upon the Library, of the need of a fire-proof building for the security of this invaluable collection (the Van Ess), led him at once, as appears from the dates, with characteristic promptitude, to put into his will a noble bequest of \$30,000 for this object. When it was desired to secure the services of Dr. Riggs for this institution, Mr. Phelps subscribed \$500 annually towards his salary. To the annual collection in the Mercer Street Church for the current expenses of the institution, he also made liberal contributions. In him the Seminary deplors the loss of one of its best and wisest friends. The Rev. J. S. Gallagher, to whom the Seminary is under such invaluable obligations for his wisdom and energy in completing

its endowments, says: "My labor in connection with the Seminary is self-denying and trying to my sensibilities; and I owe more to his sympathy, counsel, encouragement and aid, for whatever success I have had, than it is possible to describe. I never had occasion to solicit his benefactions; for they were always volunteered with the greatest cheerfulness." "I admired him as a Christian philanthropist; as a man of great discrimination and solid judgment; and I loved him as a friend and a brother." "His example will doubtless do much to stimulate others to good works; a friend of mine who, though personally unacquainted with him, greatly admired him, soon after his death saw his name on a subscription book for \$500, and after writing beneath it 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,' subscribed a like amount." "At the close of the Seminary term in May, 1858, only a week or two before his lamented death, I called to thank him for his liberal benefactions, saying I did not know how we should have got through the year without him, when he replied with great seriousness and humility—'Oh my friend, if I should be taken away, God would raise up others, who would do far more for this object than I have ever been able to do.' On this occasion he advised me to take some recreation the ensuing summer, that I

might be prepared in the autumn to resume the efforts to complete the endowment (which had been suspended for a year on account of the monetary crisis of 1857), saying that he would make an additional subscription of \$5,000, and hoped that a friend he named would do the same."

"This was my last interview with him. God indeed took him away—took him to Himself; and God has indeed raised up others to complete the work which lay so near his heart."

His interest in the education of young men for the Christian ministry also led him to take an active part in the Central Education Society, at the time of its greatest depression. He seemed to love to come to the help of a good cause, struggling in adversity. The churches, once so enthusiastic in this matter, had so far neglected it, that it was with the utmost difficulty the necessary funds could be collected to give to the students, urgently needing aid, the sum of \$100 each per annum. Mr. Phelps deeply felt that this state of things was a reproach to the Christian wisdom of the churches, since they ought to strengthen the foundations, as well as rear the walls and the towers. The neglect of others stimulated his own zeal. With two or three like-minded men he promptly met the annual deficiency. And when the General Assembly of his

church appointed a Secretary, to present the subject to its churches, Mr. Phelps at once offered to give \$1,000 a year towards his support. And besides all this, no needy student or struggling minister applied to him in vain for aid. "A few days before he died," says the Rev. Mr. Stewart, "he was seeking to complete a charity for some faithful laborers in a foreign clime, and advised to defer the case for a time, that he might more fully consider it. He replied that he would, but that he could not bear to have any such man ask for any thing, and not be able to get it." A part of this interest in the training and welfare of the ministry is perhaps to be ascribed to the fact, that in his younger days he had thought, as we have seen, of devoting himself to the sacred office ; deprived of this, he helped to train up many others, who now, from all parts of the world, from our remote domestic missions, and from widely separated stations in the foreign field, remember him with love and thankfulness.

But his benevolence was not engrossed or limited by these objects, dear as they were to his heart. As the field is the world, so he devoted himself and all he had to the conversion of the world. He came into active life at the time when those great missionary and benevolent societies, which his

father had known and helped in their small beginnings, were in their full activity. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was prosecuting its wise and admirable work in all parts of the world. To this society Mr. Phelps gave annually \$1,000 before his father's death; and afterwards \$3,000, which was the amount the latter had for some years been in the habit of contributing; the son felt that he must at once take his father's place. To the American Home Missionary Society he gave \$1,000 a year, and one year \$1,500. To the Tract Society he contributed \$300 a year for the support of colporteurs. He was one of the Executive Committee of the American Temperance Union, and as such, testifies its Secretary, Rev. John Marsh, "invaluable by his counsels and gifts, ever attending our meetings and cheering us onward in our work," and giving \$250 a year to promote its objects; nor would he ever furnish intoxicating drinks at his social entertainments. He was a member of the Board of the American Seamen's Friend Society; and there, too, says the Rev. J. Spaulding, "uniformly courteous, prompt, generous in his donations, and sympathizing with every appeal and plan that might promote the welfare of our brethren of the sea." He was also one of the Vice Presidents of the Port Society of New York,

and about a year before his death wrote an appeal for funds, and subscribed \$500. Of the American Bible Society he was one of the managers, and a member of its Auditing Committee.

When the Southern Aid Society was formed in 1853, Mr. Phelps was placed upon its Executive Committee. In the Annual Report for 1858 its secretary says: "It is highly probable that no private Christian of his year and day achieved a larger work of Christian benevolence, or left behind him a higher reputation as an humble and noble man of God. The immense unconsecrated wealth of church members in our age and country, contrasted with the large and cheerful liberalities of our departed friend, the wide-spread blessings of his princely munificence, and the delightful public impression of his brief life—would seem to indicate that Providence had raised him up in this affluent city, expressly to exemplify to all rich men what those uses are to which God expects them to apply his silver and gold in their hands. . . . It is a sacred satisfaction to every friend of our enterprise, that by a legacy of \$5,000 he enrolled our Society on that catalogue of his beneficiaries, whom he was pleased to remember and to bless in his dying hour."

As President of the New York State Colonization Society, he was the successor of his father, and

like him deeply interested in all its projects for the welfare of the black race, and a liberal contributor to its funds. Just before his death, he had ordered, at his own expense, portraits of his father, and of Ex-President Roberts, to be painted for this Society; and its Committee have since taken measures to add his own likeness to the collection of their benefactors; the father and son now hang together on their walls. Through this Society, Mr. Phelps thought that he could best accomplish his earnest desire for the amelioration of the condition of the negro race. He devoted himself to it, not as a partisan, but as a Christian philanthropist. In one of his latest letters to Mrs. Sigourney he says: "I received your favor of the 3d inst., (March 1858,) with the package for Mr. Geo. L. Seymour. I was able to get this package on board the King-fisher, a vessel just sailing for Monrovia; and I trust that Mr. S., will receive it in good time. I read his letter in the Magazine with great interest; and I cannot but hope that God intends to do great things for the poor negroes in Africa by his instrumentality. I thank you for your poetical contributions to our cause, and can assure you that they are highly valued by all our friends."

•Most Christians would have thought, that these Societies were enough, and would have echoed the

advice of his physician : " If you wish to live, you must give up six of your Committees." But this enumeration does not yet include the Society to which he devoted more self-denying and constant labor than to any other one—the American and Foreign Christian Union—of which for many years he was the Treasurer, and to which in his will he bequeathed over \$12,000. He was chosen its Treasurer in 1851, soon after its present organization, and when much was to be done to carry on its work. Having determined to accept the appointment, he devoted himself to its duties with characteristic zeal and firmness, seldom failing to be present at the meetings of the Board, and visiting its office several times each week. An obituary in the magazine published by the society says :

"He took an active part in establishing the Society in a fixed and permanent home ; and, deputed by his brethren for that purpose, he purchased for the Board their premises in Chambers-street, which, through his munificence, by his last will, may be regarded as practically released from the remaining pecuniary liability which was resting upon it."

He deeply felt the necessity and importance of this Society in view of the progress of Romanism in our country, and in modern times. He wrote contributions for its Magazine, and addressed letters



in its behalf to young men studying for the ministry. From these communications we subjoin a few paragraphs :

“By the wonderful providence of God, some of the most populous Papal countries of Europe, such as Belgium, France, and Sardinia, are now open to every effort which the church will put forth, and God crowns almost every effort made in faith with glorious success: witness the numerous and truly spiritual churches so rapidly gathered in Belgium, in France, and in Sardinia, wherever a faithful minister plants the standard of the cross. The masses of the people seem to know that Popery cannot be the true Gospel of God, and they hear with earnest attention the proclamation of a free salvation.”

“Prepare to take your part in the terrible struggle *which is yet to come*, and which must be decided in favor of truth and holiness, and that freedom which the pure Gospel alone gives, before ‘the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ.’ Remember that the *great conflict* of the next thirty or fifty years, not only in all Europe and in our own beloved country, but at every missionary station on the globe, is to be with this enemy, and you cannot hope to fulfil worthily the work of the ministry unless you are fully prepared and determined to be valiant for Christ in it.”

“He also felt,” continues this Magazine, “a very deep interest in the establishment of the American Chapel in Paris. And we may say that without his efforts in that branch of the Society’s labor, that noble monument to American piety and philanthropy,—that home for Americans in a strange land,—at which to assemble and worship God in forms sacred and dear to them, because interwoven with their earliest associations, and dictated by a pure Gospel, probably would not now have

been in existence. The commercial embarrassment which last year affected almost all benevolent interests, by his generosity, in drawing on his own resources, was not allowed to avert the progress of that work. And had he lived to carry out the purpose which we had the happiness to know he had formed concerning it, the present liabilities of the Board, in connection with it, would have been unknown by them. They would not have had to provide for the payments that they now have to assume, in consequence of his sudden and unexpected removal."

The Rev. E. N. Kirk, D.D., of Boston, writes, in relation to the application made to him through Mr. Phelps to take charge of the American Chapel at Paris; "I for the first time discovered the simplicity of his character, the largeness of his views, and the fervor of his zeal for the kingdom of Christ. His appeal to me, so earnest, so sensible and so generous, probably turned the scale, which hung so evenly balanced. . . . He made no pledge, and I wanted none. But he revealed to me his heart, and I saw in that a guaranty that I might go abroad; not to see if the work should be begun, but to do it. I did not wish him to build the chapel. But I would never have undertaken it, had I not felt assured that he would not see it fail for want of money, if I was not wanting in diligence and discretion. It was a difficult and trying work; at every stage no human support was to me more effectual than his letters. The promptness, cordiality and appropriateness of his

replies to all my inquiries, proposals and appeals, were the source of much strength in my work.”\*

At the time that some forty or fifty Portuguese exiles from the island of Maderia came to New York, (1850,) and were bitterly assailed as “imposters” and “swindlers,” he volunteered a defence in the public journals

“Of these poor and excellent men against so mean, cowardly, and malicious an attack upon their character, which is all they have left to them, to begin the world with, in this new country to which they have been driven by a persecution which ought to excite the scorn and indignation of every honest man in Christendom.

“The subscriber has had several of these men in his employ, and has had good opportunities of knowing the character and lives of the rest, and has no hesitation in saying that more honest, trustworthy, faithful, and excellent people it would be difficult to find; and in regard to their intelligence, Dr. Cox, of Brooklyn, a good authority, has expressed himself astonished at the great knowledge of the Word of God exhibited by many of them. It would greatly oblige their friends if the Dr. would state publicly his opinions in regard to them.

“Truly yours,

“ANSON G. PHELPS, JR.”

\* Extracts from the Letters of Mr. Phelps, which throw light upon the origin and objects of the American Chapel in Paris, will be found in the Appendix. So deeply was Mr. Phelps interested in this work, that he abandoned several plans for improving his residence in Tarrytown, that he might have means at his command for ensuring the success of the Chapel.

He was a member of the committee for the "Madiai meeting," and in connection with it addressed, through the newspapers, the following letter to the Rev. Archbishop Hughes.

"SIR: As one of the Committee engaged in making arrangements for the 'Madiai meeting' in Metropolitan Hall, I beg leave to call attention to a statement in your letter, that the occasion was made use of 'to denounce our Catholic fellow-citizens in this country;' 'to inaugurate a Protestant crusade against our Catholic fellow-citizens.' Reports of all the speeches made on the occasion are easily accessible, and prove that any thing more false than this accusation was never stated by any authority, clerical or laical.

"In regard to your statement that 'the art of printing facilitates the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures and that the Church avails herself with eagerness of that art for the purpose of multiplying copies of them,' we beg leave to ask you which translation of the Holy Scriptures into the Italian language is acceptable to the Church, and sure to meet the 'patronage of Popes, Cardinals, and Bishops?' and we pledge ourselves to print a large edition of this translation, and send it to Italy, for gratuitous distribution. We wait anxiously a reply to this inquiry, as our offer is made in perfect good faith, and we shall be glad to get your guaranty against the pecuniary risks of our enterprise.

"ANSON G. PHELPS, JR."

In addition to these more public objects, he also warmly entered into any plans for the relief of the

poor and suffering, freely giving his personal efforts. "Widows and orphans," writes one who knew the details, "came daily to his office for aid, and seldom went empty away." In the severe winter preceding his death, when so many poor were seeking employment, in the midst of the commercial panic, he sent the following communication to the Journal of Commerce :

"WANT OF EMPLOYMENT—SURE REMEDY.—The writer, late in the fall, commenced the erection of a large building in the upper part of the city, and has continued the work during the winter to this time, giving employment all the mild days in the open air to from thirty to fifty masons and laborers ; and as the carpenter's work, iron work, &c., is progressing in the shops, it is probable that from 150 to 200 mechanics and laborers are kept from want by the work furnished from this single operation.

"Now fortunately a very large number of the best situated vacant lots in the upper part of the island, are owned by gentlemen who could with little difficulty, and with small chances of ultimate loss, commence improving them *at once*. I would earnestly entreat these gentlemen to look at the matter, and although it is an unusual time to break ground for new buildings, and some sacrifices may have to be submitted to in arranging for funds, yet it may easily be done, and the 'blessings of thousands' literally 'ready to perish,' will be their reward. All other expedients to give aid to the suffering masses are mere alleviations ; this is a *sure remedy*.

"A. G. P."

He also interested himself in the affairs of the foreign congregations and churches in the city of New York. To one of the German churches, under the pastoral care of Rev. Heinrich Tölke, he made annual contributions. The French churches shared in his benefactions. To M. Pilatte, now of Nice, he was strongly attached, aiding him generously in his work. The Rev. J. C. Astié, now a professor in the Academy of the Free Church of the Canton de Vaud, at Lausanne, writes :

“I, too, am of the number of those who in Europe as well as in America, mourn deeply for him, and regard his premature death as a real public calamity, particularly for all that concerns the advancement of the kingdom of God.”

In another letter he says :

“I need not say aught of the generosity and Christian philanthropy of Mr. Phelps, for they were known to all. He was to me a most considerate and zealous friend. In this regard, I have often been a witness of the excessive delicacy of his good deeds. Knowing me to be the pastor of a poor congregation, (in New York city,) he never failed to inquire with a lively interest about the state of our affairs, and, never waiting for me to impress upon him the wants of the poor and the sick, he always put his purse at my service, and I often had to restrain his zeal and his generosity. I never needed to ask him to give; he divined and foresaw the necessity, which he ever generously relieved. To know how to make

use of the goods of this world in doing good is, doubtless, a great virtue ; but it is rare to find those who can do it with tact and entire delicacy. I never knew a man who united in so high a degree, as did Mr. Phelps, generosity with the exquisite art of doing what he did with a gentle grace. In this respect too, his untimely death is a very great loss. May his precious memory arouse many persons to follow his noble example, so that America may never lack those Christian citizens, who have it for their exalted mission to propagate the Gospel at equal strides with those material developments of every kind, of which the United States are the theatre."

In the same communication M. Astié gives an extract from a letter of Mr. Phelps to him, in which the latter, speaking of the state of the country in 1856, says :

"Our country is in a state of great political excitement at present. The question between freedom and slavery in the territories of the United States is fairly before the people. Pray God to give the victory to the right, and to deliver us from civil war and disunion. I do not think that the mass of the people even at the South would consent to disunion *on any account*; although a good many of the politicians are ready for it. . . My health has been poor this summer, and it would probably be of great service to me if I could take a voyage to Europe."

The latter plan was much in his mind during the later years of his life, but he could never find a time in which he might be released from the ur-

gent calls, not merely of business, but especially of benevolence.

Many more facts and incidents might be adduced to illustrate the measure and the methods of his extraordinary beneficence. The record extends through a period of about ten years ; in so short a time he was to do his great work. His own fortune was not very large, compared with that of many of the merchant princes of this city ; and all he gave was from his own resources, for his father's bequests, by the terms of his will, never came to the son's disposal. Many blamed him for the liberal hand with which he distributed these blessed gifts, at times exceeding his income. But he felt that what he had to do must be done quickly ; while living, he laid up his treasures in heaven ; with a disinterested joy he saw the fruits of his charities while still walking in the flesh. He did not see the wisdom of postponing all this joy to another estate ; he did not see why his money might not be doing as much good while he was alive, as after his decease ; and the best, the only abiding use of large wealth, he thought, was to be found in doing good.

And all this was not a mere perfunctory, and still less a vicarious, discharge of his duty as an almoner of what God had committed to his care.



He did not give it to be used by others. He saw to its use himself. He gave his time, he gave himself to this work of divine charity. He went, whenever he could, to the meeting of the Societies and Institutions he was aiding. He went cheerfully to places where he knew that if he went he must give : in fact he could hardly be induced to go to any meeting, unless he knew there was an urgent call for aid, and then he was quite sure to be present. The Rev. Dr. Stiles, in commenting on this personal devotion of his parishioner to the objects which he loved, says :

“There are many who give their money freely to the cause of benevolence, but themselves more heartily still to all the indulgences of secular activity or retirement. Unlike such men, the benevolence of our sainted brother was not *one-sided*. He gave his money as freely as any man, but just as freely did he consecrate to the good cause *himself*, his counsel, his fellowship, and his labor.”

“Contemplate now, this man’s hearty practical patronage of every worthy public object, secular or religious; his unceasing private efforts to reclaim incorrigible profligates, supply indigent sufferers, and encourage struggling genius; his unfailing readiness to throw himself into sympathy with every sentiment or enterprise which looked to the glory of God or the good of man; and finally, call to mind his personal labor, so cheerful, prompt, and constant; and who does not feel that Anson G. Phelps was emphatically entitled to the appellation of a *Christian Philanthropist*.”

The Rev. Joseph Tracy, D.D., Secretary of the Massachusetts Colonization Society, bears the following testimony to some of the traits of Mr. Phelps, as a philanthropist :

“Two things in him, though seen in some degree in many others, yet showed themselves so prominently as to seem like peculiarities.

“When once convinced that any benevolent effort was such that it had claims on him for aid, he appeared to adopt it as his own; as a part of the business of his life; as a thing to be accomplished, as much as any other part of his business. The only questions with him were, how it was to be done; by what agency, by what effort, at what expense, and how much of effort and expense were needed from him. Exhortations, appeals to labor or to give, exhibitions of the importance of the object, and of reasons why we should feel a deep interest in it, and every thing of that kind, seemed to be perfectly needless and useless. He had passed beyond the stage where such addresses were appropriate, and henceforth only needed to be informed as to the details of execution.

“The other peculiarity was equally marked when it appeared, but opportunities for its exhibition were comparatively rare. From the natural soundness of his judgment, his experience in business, and especially from his honest, unselfish, impartial desire to know how any good work under consideration might best be accomplished, it resulted that he was very seldom on the wrong side in any question of means and modes of operation. Still, instances did sometimes occur, in which the majority of his fellow-laborers differed from him on matters of that kind, and after long and earnest discussion, his

views were voted down. But no such vote ever occasioned any irritation, or alienation, or diminution, or interruption of cordiality, on his part, towards any of his associates, or towards their common object. The question being once settled, that settlement was, for him, a new point of departure, and he was immediately ready to work on, upon the policy adopted, just as heartily and as pleasantly as if the vote had been in agreement with his previous opinion.

“The prominence of these two qualities made him, not only an uncommonly efficient helper in any good work, but also a man with whom it was very pleasant to be associated.”

The characteristics of his benevolence were largeness, promptness, simplicity, and wisdom. It was large in its extent, and also in the number and nature of its objects. It was prompt, needing only a hint, and never an importunity. It was simple, making you feel that the donor really thought that it was more blessed to give than to receive: he always thanked you for the opportunity of giving. It was also wise; for, in the midst of incessant demands, he investigated and discriminated. And his treasures will abide, when all earthly riches take to themselves wings and fly away; they are laid up, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through nor steal.

## THE DECEASE OF PARENTS.

The father and mother, who had watched over the infancy and youth of their beloved son with such yearning solicitude, were permitted in his manhood to see their fondest hopes realized ; and their hearts turned with daily thankfulness to the God of the covenant who heareth and answereth prayer. All their children, and many of their grandchildren, were members of the Christian church. A blessing was upon their offspring. In their declining years a hallowed joy and peace were given to them. Through a long life they had devoted themselves, in the midst of innumerable cares and temptations, to the service of their Master ; and they received rich blessings in exchange.

The health of the father had been gradually declining for some years. His last illness was painful ; but in all his bodily sufferings he was sustained by an immortal hope. It was a long time before his beloved son " could think that his father might die ; but when the conviction forced itself upon him, it was painful to see his sorrow, and hear his earnest pleadings that he might yet recover. He was the kindest of nurses, and would sit for hours by his bedside, rubbing his hands, or, lay-

ing his head along side his father's, hum tune after tune in a low tone to lull him to sleep. And when he left him, his father's feeble voice could be heard, saying, 'Anson, my son ! Where is my dear boy !' The day before he died we felt more encouraged about him ; but the next morning, as we were leaving the house to go to him, a message came to say that he must come quickly, if he would see him yet alive. He arrived, pale and trembling, just too late to receive his last greeting ; and when he saw his father's face, peaceful in death, fell upon the floor in utter prostration. His sorrow for this loss was always fresh."

In his dying hours the faith and hope of the elder Mr. Phelps were unshaken. He often said, 'Oh ! I have done nothing, nothing for my Saviour, who has done so much for me.' The hymns of the redeemed church, such as, 'There is a fountain filled with blood,' were sung around his bedside, and his trembling voice would join in them to the last. A short time before his death, one of his children said to him : 'Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us, a place *for you*, dear father.' He answered, with strong emphasis, 'I believe it, I believe it.' These were almost the last words he spoke. Soon after this the distress ceased ; he breathed quietly and gently for a few moments, and

thus died, as sweetly and peacefully as an infant falls to sleep."\* He died Nov. 20, 1853.

The provisions of the elder Mr. Phelps, in his last will, for benevolent objects, were of an almost unexampled liberality ; though the larger part of them were not to take effect for several years. He left to the American Bible Society, \$100,000 ; to the American Board, \$100,000 ; to the American Home Missionary Society, \$100,000 ; to the Union Theological Seminary, \$5,000 ; to the Auburn Theological Seminary, \$3,000 ; to the New York Institution for the blind, \$5,000 ; to the New York Half Orphan Asylum, \$1,000 ; \$50,000 to a College in Liberia, (in case \$100,000 were raised for the same purpose,) for a theological department under the supervision of the Union Theological Seminary of New York ; \$1,000 to the Congregational Church in Simsbury, his native place ; to the New York State Colonization Society, \$5,000. Besides this he devised to each of his grandchildren living at the time of his decease, (numbering twenty-four,) \$5,000, to be paid when they severally attained the age of twenty-one years, the interest of which was to be sacredly devoted to the spread of the Gospel.

\* From a sermon on his death, by Rev. G. L. Prentiss, D.D.

Not included in his will was a donation to his son of one hundred thousand dollars, made in a note, payable five years after Jan. 1, 1854 ; the interest of which sum was to be expended "for the spread of the everlasting Gospel," while the principal was to be securely invested, and at or before the son's decease to be divided equally between the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the American Bible Society. From the terms of this donation, the money could not in any case have been received by the son, as he died before the expiration of the five years ; and the legality of the note was also contested.

But the best bequest of this father to his children and grandchildren was in the example and memory of his self-denying, humble, consistent, and benevolent life. To them, by word and deed, he commended those sacred objects which he had so largely helped to build up during his life. And the exhortation was not unheeded. Christian activity and benevolence are perpetuated in those households. The son, according to his ability, as has been already seen, engaged in this noble work with larger zeal and generosity than ever before. He rapidly came to fill the positions left vacant by his honored and beloved parent.

The mother survived both her husband and her

son. She died April 24, 1859, in the 76th year of her age. Bowed down by many infirmities, struck by paralysis, when the body failed the spirit was peaceful, prayerful, and triumphant. By the death of her husband the silver cords that bound her to life were loosed. The decease of her son cast another shadow over her declining days, and added another attraction to the mansions of eternal rest. Through a long and painful sickness, she was always testifying to the power of divine grace. Her constant exhortation to her surviving children, and her flock of grandchildren, was, that they should live near to Jesus. "I have trusted," she said "in Jesus from my youth, and he does not forsake me now." Sight and hearing failed; her speech became broken and troubled, yet still her exhortation was "Trust in Jesus! Trust in Jesus!" And in Him she fell asleep.

#### THE CLOSING SCENES OF LIFE.

To all human view, the younger Mr. Phelps, at the beginning of the last year of his life, seemed to have attained a position in which he could do more good than ever before. The severe commercial depression and revulsions, which marked the close of 1857, were passing away. The mercantile



firm with which he was connected had passed the crisis, meeting their engagements honorably, though at a large sacrifice. His property was accumulating, and coming more under his command. He was laying wise plans for husbanding and increasing, as well as expending, his gains. His homes in town and country were beginning to realize more fully his ideal of what such homes should be ; and he was projecting improvements of his residence at Tarrytown which would have made it a still more attractive spot. Friends were gathering around him, and looking up to him with increased love and confidence ; his Christian character and liberality added many to their number with each passing year. Throughout the churches his name was honored, as was that of hardly any man of his years, for generosity, and readiness to enlist in every good word and work.

He was also framing large plans for future beneficence. One of these cherished projects was that of providing for the Union Theological Seminary, not only the completion of its endowment, but also ampler accommodations for its growing numbers. He had conferences with several of its friends about its removal to a more eligible site, where suitable halls and rooms might be provided, and had said, that if the ground was given by others,

he would take it upon himself, by personal efforts, to see to the erection of the edifices. During the same winter, when the resources of the Central Education Society were exhausted, he had sent, unsolicited, large sums for the aid of the students. And in other good works he was equally active, giving to the poor and needy in town and country. "To many a merchant of this city," says a credible witness, "how strange would seem the testimony, that during the severest months of the panic, when his own house and almost every strong establishment seemed to be rocking to its very base, in the dead of the night he would awake and appear to forget all this, but exclaim, 'How shall this Society be aided; How shall that one be freed from its embarrassments!'"

The health of his beloved pastor, Dr. Prentiss, had become impaired in the midst of his multiplied labors in ministering to his attached people who gathered around him, in closer bands, year after year. His church and congregation reluctantly came to the conviction that he must be released from the burden that weighed upon him. Mr. Phelps, who loved him with all his heart, was very urgent that the pastoral relation should continue; and, with characteristic liberality, said that he would provide for the supply of the pulpit during

one or two years of absence. This was not judged to be the wisest course for either the pastor or his church ; the pastoral relation was severed, and Dr. Prentiss, by a most generous contribution of his people, was provided with the means for going abroad to restore his health. But he did not go before paying the last offices of a Christian pastor to the generous friend who remembered him to the last, and remembered him in his dying will. And thus was fulfilled a wish which Mr. Phelps but a few weeks before had expressed to a young friend, when speaking of the probability of his pastor's absence : " I love Dr. Prentiss much ; he has been my pastor for seven years ; and if I were on a sick and dying bed, there is no one else that I should wish to stand by my pillow, and help me examine my trust in Christ and hope of heaven. It is a great trial to change a pastor, and one to which I hope never to be subjected."

To the same friend, who often accompanied him in his walks, he said, not long before his last days, with great earnestness and humility, " My entire trust for salvation is in the blood of Christ. What a wonder is it that a sinful creature, one utterly unworthy in the sight of God, can ever have the hope of salvation ! Wealth, honor, position are nothing, when we consider the shortness and un-

certainty of time and the nearness of eternity. All my hope is founded only on the free grace of the Saviour !”

During the winter he had been unusually well, and often expressed his gratitude to God for renewing his strength. Some things weighed upon his spirit ; his grief at parting with his pastor ; a troublesome lawsuit which a colored man had brought against him, for having warned the public, as President of the Colonization Society, against him—he mourned that any of the black race should look upon him as an enemy. In his business relations there were also some sources of disquiet ; and he began to long for the relief he hoped soon to find in his country home. Thither he would betake himself, as soon as the religious anniversaries of May were closed ; and there he would find rest ! One day in walking out, he met a venerable and revered clergyman, the pastor of his youth, and said to his companion, “ I almost envy that dear, good man ; he has done so much for his Saviour, and is so near his home !”

On Friday, May 11th, he attended the anniversary of the Foreign and Christian Union. He returned home in a heavy rain, complaining of severe pains in his limbs ; but, after changing his dress and eating dinner, became cheerful and animated,

so that in the evening he went out again, and presided at the meeting of the Colonization Society. At night, appearing to suffer only from a severe cold, some slight remedies were applied, and gave such relief, that on the next day he was at the exciting meeting of the Tract Society in the church in Lafayette place. On Thursday he was still able to go to his office, and stopped, as was his wont, at the rooms of the Christian Union, though feeling so weak and dizzy that he could scarcely walk. "His physician was called the next morning, but apprehended no danger. As late as Saturday, he was able to drive to the Central Park. Sunday the fatal disease disclosed itself in a few spots upon his face; though it had as yet only the appearance of a mild form of varioloid. It was a trial to him to have a contagious disease; and he spoke several times of his fear of giving it to his wife, who watched every moment at his side. He asked for his Bible and Scott's Commentary, reading in them as usual. The next day he became more restless, and, to an assurance that he would soon be well, replied, "You must not be too sanguine, for you know that when God sends sickness, He only knows how it will terminate. You must pray for me." But still his wife had no serious foreboding, and said to him, cheerfully, that he might 'have to be her nurse as

soon as he got well,' receiving in reply the assurance that 'he would take care of her as long as the Lord gave him any strength.' He was very child-like and gentle, expressing his thanks for every service of love. When his lips became parched, and he was asked why he had not asked for drink, he said that he was afraid it might be unpleasant to moisten the mouth of one having such a disease, adding, 'Is it not like sin in the world, polluting every thing it touches?' The anniversary of the Seminary was held the same day, and the Directors sent to request his attendance, and then first learned the nature of his disease, accompanied, however, with the assurance that there was no danger.

In the course of the afternoon he requested his wife to read a few chapters in the Bible. A psalm was read, and he said, 'Now read to me some of the words of Jesus,' and turning to the sixteenth chapter of John's Gospel, asked her to read from the sixteenth verse to the end of the following chapter. When she came to the twenty-fourth verse, he wanted it read again: 'Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' He thanked the reader, but said nothing more.

That night he was again feverish and restless, rising several times, and sitting in his chair. In the morning, Tuesday, May 18th, he seemed anxious for the coming of the physician, but was more quiet after his visit ; and still no fears were entertained for the result. In the afternoon, he said that he would sit up for a while, that he might sleep better, adding, "I can hardly bear the thought of passing such another night." He sat in his chair for a short time, and rose, leaning upon his wife, to return to his couch ; she felt the burden pressing upon her more heavily ; he sank slowly to the floor, his eyes closed, his lips slightly parted with a gentle smile, as if he were hearing some sweet music. They bore him to his bed, thinking that he had only fainted away ; but he did not sigh or breathe again. His countenance was placid ; the traces of earthly care were swept from his brow ; the face of the man was as the face of an innocent child, in its purity and peace. The angel of death was but the minister of the Angel of the Covenant.

The tidings of this great loss brought sudden tears to many eyes, all over the land. He was struck down in his very prime, in the fulness of his strength, in the midst of his usefulness. "Anson G. Phelps, Jr., is dead !" was the sad exclamation of merchants as they greeted each other, where he

was wont to meet them ; of the friends and patrons of almost all the great benevolent and religious institutions of our land ; of widows and orphans, of the poor and wretched, whom his willing hand had so often helped ; and of such a company of personal friends as few in a short life gather around them. In many a place of prayer his name was named. In the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, then in session at Chicago, he was mourned and honored as a public benefactor. All united in writing upon his monument the title of a Christian Philanthropist. And there were also those, who, in the secrecy of their grief uttered no audible words, but bowed in silent anguish and with a broken heart, before that wise and unsearchable Providence, before that gracious and holy Will, which maketh all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. He giveth, and he taketh away ; and he giveth not account of any of his matters. But in a holy, loving and trustful submission, he also opens the fountains of that peace, which is like a river, leading us to say,

“God of my life, look gently down,  
Behold the pains I feel;  
But I am dumb before thy throne,  
Nor dare dispute thy will.”



Anson G. Phelps, Jr. was taken away in the meridian of life, having just reached the age of thirty-nine years and a half. He had finished his course of benevolence at a time, when many just begin to think of doing the real work of life. In a few short years he accomplished more good, by his deeds and his example, than a multitude who reach their threescore years and ten. We shall never again gaze upon that earnest, thoughtful face, nor see that bright and cordial smile, nor press that quick and warm hand ; but he lives for us still in memory and in example ; he lives for us still in those mansions which our Lord has prepared for them that love him. And could we see and hear him yet again, it would be only to hear him say to us : "Work while the day lasts : Lay up your treasures in heaven : Live near to Christ : Follow that perfect example : Trust in that blood, which cleanseth from all sin : and, when He who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory."

The provisions of Mr. Phelps's last will and testament illustrate the same traits of character for which he was distinguished in life. He first records "his thankful acknowledgments of the goodness of God, who has given me every thing, and has not been provoked by my ingratitude and sins (as

I humbly hope), to take away his mercy from me, but gives me some gracious assurance, that, through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall be cleansed from all sin, and that the Holy Spirit may make me fit for his service, and the enjoyment of his presence and glory in Heaven."

"I desire that all my property should be used in his fear, and for his service and glory; and believing that my dearly loved wife, Jane G. Phelps, loves and serves the Lord Jesus Christ, and will use wisely in his fear a large income in promoting the objects of Christian benevolence, which we have been accustomed for some years to pray for and patronize;"—then follows the bequest to her of the bulk of his property. This being secured, besides donations to relations and friends, not forgetting his pastor, he bequeathed to the Union Theological Seminary, for the erection of a fire-proof building or hall, \$30,000; to the American Bible Society, \$10,000; to the A. B. C. F. M., \$15,000; to the American Home Missionary Society, \$10,000; to the N. Y. Colonization Society, \$10,000; to the Southern Aid Society, \$5,000; to the American Tract Society, \$5,000; to the Central American Education Society, \$5,000; to the N. Y. Institution for the Blind, \$1,000, etc. Of any surplus of the estate, seventy-five per cent. is to go towards certain designated charitable uses.

## THE FUNERAL SERVICES.

The last tribute was paid to the remains of Anson G. Phelps in the impressive services at the Mercer Street Church, on Thursday, May 20th, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon ; after which the body was taken to the family vault in the cemetery of Second Avenue, and subsequently transferred to the cemetery of Tarrytown.

The day and hour appointed for these services, were the same, to which, on his own motion, the Directors of the Foreign and Christian Union had adjourned. They met only to unite in these solemnities, where were also gathered together representatives of many of the religious and philanthropic Societies and Institutions, which deplored in him an almost irreparable loss. The rain was falling fast, but a large assemblage was present to do honor to his memory, in heartfelt and solemn sorrow.

The services commenced with the singing of the hymn, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," from the Messiah of Handel.

The Rev. Thomas De Witt, D. D., of the Dutch Reformed Church, and President of the Foreign and Christian Union, offered a fervent prayer. Then was sung the hymn,

“Why do we mourn, departing friends,  
Or shake at death’s alarms?  
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends  
To call them to his arms.”

The pastor of the church, the Rev. George L. Prentiss, D. D., said, in substance, that this was no ordinary bereavement. We are called to part with a rare example of personal worth and Christian philanthropy ; and at a time when his life is identified with great and sacred interests, and in the very bloom of his existence. But yet, this is no hour for unavailing regrets ; God’s work will still move onward. Only a few days before he died, our departed brother had said to a young friend, “that all the wealth and gifts of this world seemed to him but as the dust, in comparison with an interest in Christ,” and expressed his adoring wonder that this privilege should have been given to him. Reserving a more full account of the deceased for a future occasion, Dr. Prentiss concluded by repeating the last verses of the Bible read in the hearing of Mr. Phelps, commencing with the seventeenth chapter and twenty-fourth verse of St. John’s Gospel.

The Rev. A. T. Stewart of Tarrytown spoke of the Christian character of the deceased in strong terms, and with great affection. Not having a report of his remarks on that occasion, we subjoin

extracts, substantially the same, from a sermon which he subsequently preached at Tarrytown. After speaking of the benevolent societies with which he was connected, Mr. Stewart added :

“To these institutions, and similar agencies, he devoted the energies of his cultivated mind. His travels and extensive reading of the very best writings of the age, and above all, his study of the sacred oracles, gave him enlightened Christian views, and enabled him to unite cordially and efficiently in action with men, who labor for and think of nothing less than the conversion of the whole world to God. With his mental endowments, he gave his time, many of his mornings and evenings and several of the business hours of every day. To these gifts he added largely of his wealth. His benevolence was remarkable. He gave a great deal more than was asked or expected, and gave it wisely. There were no cases of deserving want brought to his notice that he did not stop to relieve. Whether they consisted of individuals, or families, or ministers, or churches, or Christian institutions, they found in him a gracious helper. The great day will only reveal what he did, and how cheerfully he did it, while ‘busy here and there,’ in the cause of Jesus.

“In the death of Mr. Phelps, we, as a Church, have sustained a heavy loss. But such a man could not be our loss alone. His death is a loss in this community, a loss to the benevolent institutions of the age, a loss to the Church of Christ on earth, a common loss; there is mourning for him here and in the city; there will be mourning for him in Africa; mourning among many of the missionary stations in India, and in the isles of the sea; mourning among the

Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont. But all will find comfort in believing that 'the Lord has become his everlasting light, and the days of *his mourning* are ended.' Yes, for we believe he is in heaven. His prayers for his salvation are all answered. His expectations of bliss and of holiness are vastly more than realized. He stands before his risen Lord, and beholds his unveiled glory. 'He is like him, for he sees him as he is.'

"And now, we who had hoped, and never more than this season, to have welcomed him again to his summer home and church, will see his face no more, until we see it before 'the great white throne,' and in our union of body and spirit pass with him into the joys of our Lord. Let us, in joyous faith, move onward to that meeting, and gather new spirit for our journey from his bright example."

Rev. Asa D. Smith, D. D., remarked, in substance :

"I came here to-day with no expectation of offering a single remark. I would rather myself take the place of a mourner. But I cannot refuse a request coming from hearts touched by so great a sorrow. I am the more willing to add a word, in concurrence with the testimony already borne, just because I can do so with such unhesitating confidence. When called to speak on occasions like this, ministers of the Gospel are obliged often to express themselves with the greatest caution. They have to weigh, and measure, and guard their utterances. They call to mind things they would gladly forget ; and they are haunted by the apprehension that other like things may be known to their auditors. They are fearful of lowering, by over-praise, the standard of Christian duty. In respect to the beloved servant of Christ whose remains are before us, there is

no such danger. With special emphasis may this be said in relation to his Christian liberality. In the remarks already made on this point, there has been no shadow of exaggeration. He was not only a friend of all the great charities of the day, but he was among the foremost of their patrons. To some of the most important of them he was as a pillar; nay, I can hardly name one to which he did not sustain that relation. They trusted in him; they leaned upon him; they will all be mourners at his grave. I know not that in this regard he has left his like among us. Especially prominent was he among the friends and helpers of the cause of ministerial education. One of his last acts was the making of a large subscription in connection with an effort to secure an additional professor in the Union Theological Seminary. And then, his bearing was ever so modest! He sat in our Boards of Direction, with all his princely generosity, as unostentatious and unassuming as if he had been one of the least useful of us all. No tinge of self-consequence or arrogance was ever seen upon his character.

“As I now look back upon his life-course, he seems to me to have been unconsciously making haste to finish his work. As to his charities, particularly, he did with his might whatsoever his hand found to do. He had no thought of postponing them till his secular schemes had been accomplished—of doing good chiefly through his executors. He chose rather to be largely his own executor; to do good as he went along. It was one design of Providence in cutting short his days, I cannot doubt, to hold up before us all; and especially before the younger merchants of our city; his example in this regard. Had he lived to be an old man, his early liberality would have been comparatively forgotten. For God’s ends he has not died prematurely. We are not apt, I know, to judge thus. When one who has signally honored Christ is taken away in the

morning of life, our first impression often is, that he has but partially accomplished his mission. What a loss, we say—what a sad abbreviation of usefulness! We rear over him in Greenwood, as a fitting emblem, the broken shaft. But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. At the touch of his finger that shaft towers upward, a complete, symmetrical, beautiful form. The divine idea is realized, the life-work is finished. Nay, he still lives; not only in the seed sown, the fountains opened, the foundations laid, but in all precious memories, in all the varied power of a posthumous influence. So shall it be with him whose mortal part we now bear to its last resting-place."

The Rev. G. W. Bethume, D. D., then said :

"After what you have heard from those reverend gentlemen, whose more official relations to Mr. Phelps gave them a right to speak with authority, permit me who was simply his friend, the melancholy satisfaction of testifying to his great worth, and our irreparable bereavement.

"Very dear he was, and very precious is his memory, to all those who had the privilege of knowing him in the confidences of private intercourse, and the hospitalities of his delightful Christian home. His ever active zeal in every department of philanthropic enterprise, and the prompt, unstinted liberality, with which he dispensed the large means intrusted to his stewardship, made him, notwithstanding his singularly retiring disposition, one of those whom both the Church and general society regarded as a pillar and an ornament. It could not, therefore, be otherwise than that the tidings of his death, so sudden and in the forenoon of his day, should have caused such deep and general grief. But if such be the public feeling, who can speak adequately of the bitterness of that anguish



which is now wringing the hearts of those whom this event of Providence has clothed in sackcloth? God help her whom he loved best, and with such exquisite tenderness! Only the Almighty hand which struck the blow can sustain her in the desolation of this hour. God help her, and be to her all that He has promised to be to the bereaved of his people who put their trust in Him!

“But while we humble ourselves before our heavenly Father, and, conscious of our weakness, beseech Him to remember that we are dust, we cannot so far underrate the richness of our religious faith as to consider this an occasion only for tears. No words can express, no numbers represent our loss. It were criminal insensibility to the kindness of Almighty God, who gave him to us, not to feel sorely the change, now that he has reassumed his own in taking our dear friend up to himself. But great as is our loss, his gain is incomparably greater; and the strength of our love, which makes our sorrow so great, constrains us to bless God, who has given him the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The words from which, as we have been told, our dear brother derived sweet courage in the prospect of death, are the very revelation which should comfort us as we follow his dust to the grave—(it is only his dust; his spirit he committed into the hands of the Lord Jesus, and he is now with Him where He is)—‘Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.’

“‘Father, *I will.*’ This is more than desire, more than prayer, it is *demand*—the rightful, authoritative demand of the Mediator as he finished the work which the Father had given him to do. It is the faithful Son of God, incarnate, claiming the reward of his ‘obedience until death’—the ful

filment of the 'covenant' for the joy' of which 'set before Him' 'He endured the cross, despising the shame.' It was not only that He should Himself "be highly exalted,' but that those whom He had redeemed with his most precious blood should be taken up to be with Him; not only that He himself should be glorified in his Father's love, but that those to whom He had given power to become the sons of God should behold that glory. To be with Christ,—to behold his glory, is the only adequate consummation of evangelical promise and God-given hope. Where would be the use of Christian faith and hope and charity, if we were not sure that our friend, whose faith overcame the world, whose hope led him to purify himself after the image of Christ, and whose charity never failed, passed at once through death to the right hand of his Lord? He has now all that he prayed for, all that the regenerate spirit can enjoy, until that illustrious day when the crumbling dust now before us will rise in immortal beauty, and his whole nature be made like to the glorified humanity of Christ. Now—his soul is free from sorrow and pain, and best of all, freed from sin in the presence of his Lord; then—will he be satisfied with the fulness of the adoption, even the redemption of the body. Mr. Phelps was in his personal characteristics, especially when we consider the circumstances of his life, a remarkable man. The combination of qualities which he manifested is rare. The large share he had of this world's wealth only brought him to humble himself the more under a sense of his greater responsibility. Self denying in his own life, he never was pragmatical or austere towards others; zealous for truth and godly morals, his loving heart was a stranger to harshness, or bigotry, or fanaticism. A thorough gentleman, he nicely appreciated the feelings of all with whom he had to do, and governed himself by the apostle's rule, 'each

esteeming other better than himself.' His perceptions were accurate, and his judgment sound, though, from his modesty, he gained less credit from the world than from those who knew him intimately. His steady comprehensive mind was little affected by passing excitement, and he had no sympathy with temporizing expedients. His courage in philanthropic enterprise was maintained by his reliance only on the blessing of God, through a spiritual Christianity. A true patriot, he loved his country, his whole country and his country as one, knowing no North, no South, no East, no West; and as a man he recognized his brother man of every condition, and blood, and color, and religion. He was well known among us, for his riches made him notable; yet in his best qualities he was known to few, because he assumed no station, shrank from notoriety, and consented to be prominent only when his example was necessary to the accomplishment of greater good. Such was Anson G. Phelps, when his spirit was with us; what he is now, that he is with his Lord, it cannot enter into our hearts to conceive.

"God gave him grace to live his life of Christian service; now he has given him the glory which follows. Happy saint! we give him joy, as from the valley of tears we look up and see him in his Master's bosom! But what a loss is ours! What a melancholy void has his translation made! How many places are vacant in our public charities!

"God alone knows how many hearts are bleeding in private sorrow for the absence of that friend, who never forgot them in their need or their sorrow! But in his once happy, holy-tempered home—May the peace of God which passeth all understanding be with the mourners there!"

These solemn and appropriate services were con-

cluded with prayer and the benediction by the Rev. William Adams, D.D.

To them we may not inappropriately append a communication from the graceful pen of Mrs. Sigourney of Hartford, dictated by her affection for the deceased, of whom she wrote: "This loss to the religious and philanthropic charities of the day will be long and earnestly mourned. Yet let us not forget the joy of his gain, who, ere the shadows of time were permitted to fall on his head, has reached a region where is no decay or pain, and awaits amid cloudless skies the coming of the beloved on earth."

Poor Africa remembereth him in love,  
 And young Liberia, on her hopeful seat  
 Among the nations, grateful points to him,  
 The wise in counsel, tho' the young in years,  
 Who 'mid the clouds of her colonial state,  
 With tireless bounty, and unblenching zeal  
 Sustained and cheer'd her.

So he held his way,  
 And, 'mid the many charities, that give  
 Our favored age the blessed privilege  
 To work for God,—still stood conspicuous forth  
 With ever ready hand. Circled by all  
 That earth need covet, wealth and troops of friends,  
 And stainless honor, and the higher crown

That Christian duty gives, he early heard  
The "Come up hither!" and obeyed the call.  
—Sudden, yet not surprised, his willing soul  
Shook off its strongest ties.

In his fair home,  
Now left so desolate, fond eyes there are  
That weep for him the never-drying tear;  
Although the heart, from whence it flows, doth ask  
Communing with itself, in pious trust,  
Is it not better that the faith he loved  
Should yield its perfect fruit, and turn to joy  
Unspeakable?

A SERMON  
IN COMMEMORATION OF  
ANSON G. PHELPS, JR.

BY HIS PASTOR,

REV. GEORGE L. PRENTISS, D. D.

PREACHED IN MERCER STREET CHURCH, SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 1858.

## S E R M O N .



Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.—MATTHEW xxiv. 46.

Two things are especially noteworthy in the pictures of human probation drawn by our blessed Lord and his apostles. One is, that every man's life is a sacred trust. The other is, that no man knows in what hour he may be summoned to resign his trust, and give account of his stewardship. Each of these truths is fitted to impress deeply every thoughtful mind. One can hardly sit down and reflect upon them, as related to himself, without being awestruck at their solemn import. No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. We all emerged into being at the moment fixed by Infinite Wisdom, and not only time, but place, the circumstances, the duration of our earthly existence are also matter of divine ordination. "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down ; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." We do not *see* the hand which thus holds the threads of our destiny ; and yet that mysterious hand is not very far from every one of us. It made us. It upholds us. It dispenses all our blessings. It gives, and takes away, with the quiet but resistless touch of Omnipotence. A devout sense of this truth is one of the surest marks of wisdom. How finely is this exemplified in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, when lifting up his eyes to heaven, his understanding returned to him, and he "blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation ; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing ; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou ?"

Join to this declaration, that of God's eternal love to man as revealed in the Gospel, and we have a doctrine concerning our relation to Almighty Providence, which ought to afford us unbounded



comfort. And it does afford such comfort to the Christian mind. Millions of stricken hearts have found in it a solace that no words can express. It has enabled them to lift up their heads in joy amidst the fiercest storms and billows of affliction. Nor is it a doctrine fitted to soothe our grief merely. The reason, as well as the heart, craves its sublime consolations. The more deeply we meditate upon the great problems of human destiny, so much the darker and more fearful do they become, except as this doctrine helps us to understand them. Whether we consider our individual existence, or that of the friend in whose life our own was bound up, our thoughts find no rest until they soar upward and rest in God.

When I can say to myself with unfaltering lips, "He who was so dear to me came into this world, trod the paths of time, and then passed on into eternity at the summons of Infinite Goodness: he came not, he went not by chance, but led by the hand of God: no event in his earthly course, naught that concerned his permanent being was untouched by that guiding and friendly hand:" when I can say this, what need is there of further argument? My heart is satisfied, for I have reached the issue of perfect benevolence; my reason is satisfied, for I have reached the issue of per-

fect wisdom. Such faith is the consecration of sorrow and bereavement. It discloses the bright side of affliction, and assures us that the brightness is no passing gleam, but a veritable reflection from the glory of God. When I have connected the life and the death, and all the earthly course of my friend, with that adorable and blessed Will, whose decrees are the harmony of the universe, there is nothing to be desired. It were as wise for one to repine that he had not been born in another land, or to a different fortune, or a hundred years earlier, as to repine that he died so soon. Would the Son of Man have come if the right hour had not struck? *Can* I think a child of God ever crosses the river of death, or arrives at the gate of heaven, *unawares*?

But while the divine will, according to the Scriptures, fixes our lot, and appoints our bounds which we cannot pass, it does so in such wise, as not to violate, but rather to establish, our moral freedom and responsibility. Whenever we contemplate a virtuous and holy character, we ought first of all to admire in it the rare workmanship of God. It is a specimen of divine skill, incomparably fairer, and more wonderful than any object in nature. But having first done fitting homage to *His* matchless wisdom and beneficence, it is right for us to admire also the man himself, who, in the way of prayer

and self-denial, and imitation of Christ, has fashioned his soul into such a form of grace and beauty. In so doing he was a good and faithful servant. He executed aright the solemn trust of life. He fulfilled the end of his probationary existence. He won the plaudit and the glittering rewards of heaven ; why should not he have our love and admiration ? His merits are none the less real, his character none the less excellent, because both would have been unattainable without the aid of Him who made the world. Such appears to me to be the Christian philosophy of life. It delights to recognize in its beginning and end, and along its whole course, the Supreme Hand. Without denying the influence of second causes, or the reality of human freedom, it can yet content itself with nothing short of perfect wisdom. Its first, and last, and most cheering word ever is, "It is the Lord. The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away ; and blessed be the name of the Lord." With this word it charms to silence a thousand anxious questions, which it is powerless to answer. With this word, it can minister to the most desolate soul a peace that passeth all understanding. With this word it can enter,

"Doors, where the heart was used to beat  
So quickly, waiting for a hand,  
A hand that can be clasped no more,"

and light up the darkened rooms with rays from the eternal Sun of Righteousness. With this word it enables us to catch the melody of those divine promises, which, prophetic of ultimate joy and reunion,

“Roll,  
Sounding onward through a thousand years.”

Thanks be to God for a faith so precious, so resplendent with hope and immortality ! Thanks be to God for a faith which celebrates its grandest triumphs in the very presence of death and the grave ; a faith full of tenderest sympathy with human sorrow, yet of power to crown that sorrow with perfect and everlasting joy ! Whence, if not from the bosom of infinite love, could such a faith have issued ?

Reflections of this sort are readily suggested by the departure of any child of God from earth to heaven. It is characteristic of our holy religion, and one token of its divinity, that it proffers the whole wealth of its grace and truth to all men alike. There is with it no respect of persons. Let the most degraded human being that walks the earth, sincerely implore the mercy of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and straightway he will receive as free, and full a forgiveness, as ever Saul

of Tarsus received. The Holy Ghost will illumine his soul as willingly as he illuminated that of Augustine or Martin Luther. And so when the humblest saint is delivered from the burden of the flesh, there is a fresh display of the whole majesty and glory of the Gospel. The risen Son of God "comes" for that poor saint in as much power, as if he were some renowned leader of the sacramental host. Our Saviour is like our Maker. He is a Rock and his work is perfect. If any special favor is shown to one disciple over others on summoning him from the militant to the triumphant church, it is because of his intrinsic worth; not for any mere outward distinctions, which marked his earthly state. That such special favor *is* shown to disciples of Jesus eminent for their devotion and resemblance to Him, I do not for an instant doubt. It is alike reasonable and scriptural to think so. The more adorned with the fruits of righteousness, the holier a child of God, so much the gladder welcome awaits him in the realms of bliss. Who can dream that when St. Paul rested from his vast labors and entered into glory, his coming excited no special interest, or was hailed with no unwonted shouts of triumph? Who can believe that the arrival in heaven of such war-worn veterans in Christ's service as Luther and Calvin, and Knox and Latimer, and

Wesley and Edwards is an every-day occurrence ? The sacred Scriptures plainly exhort us to aim at high degrees of honor, on entering the eternal world. "Wherefore, (says St. Peter, after having mentioned the several Christian graces, which those to whom he wrote were entreated to add to their faith,) wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure ; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall : For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

I have been led to this train of thought, as you hardly need be told, by the heavy affliction which has just befallen this church and congregation. It has pleased Almighty God suddenly to take from us one, who was equally an ornament, and a pillar of our strength. None knew him, but to honor and to love him ; while those who knew him best, loved and honored him with an uncommon affection. They were themselves scarcely aware of its great depth and fervor, until it pursued him across the immense chasm of death. He was one of those rare beings whose existence is a constant benediction, but who move on through life with such noiseless steps, who speak and act in a way so unpretending, that when they are gone the world is astonished to find out what a treasure it

possessed in them. He "put a strange face on his own perfection." Nobody thought so little of him as he did of himself. Nobody has been so surprised at the exalted eulogies pronounced upon him as he would have been, had they been foretold to him. He shrunk from mere publicity, as the sensitive plant shrinks from the rude touch. He avoided observation as eagerly as most men run after it. At the voice of friendly praise and affection, I have seen his countenance tinged with that delicate, pleased, half-blushing expression, which delights one in the face of a simple-hearted girl. I never knew a man whose conduct was a finer illustration of the sacred precepts, which bid us "not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think," "to esteem others better than ourselves," and in performance of our good deeds not to "sound a trumpet before us, nor to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth." Obedience to these and similar precepts was with him instinctive. It seemed to cost him no more effort than it costs the lark to sing, or the stars to shine.

Hardly another man of his age, in this city or in this whole land, was so identified with some of our most important Christian interests; and yet it would have been next to impossible to make *him* believe it. Hardly another man of his age among

us gave to religious and philanthropic objects with so princely a hand ; and yet I do not suppose he prided himself upon his charities one iota more than the poor widow, who, all unaware that the Son of God was looking on, cast into the treasury her two mites, which make a farthing. Nor was his piety towards God at all behind his benevolence to man, and his modest estimate of himself. He was a true saint. He loved the person, and the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ with an affection which overmastered every other. Surely, my friends, we cannot afford to have such a man leave us forever without stopping a moment to consider his good example, to admire the dealings of God with him, and to impress upon our hearts the weighty lessons taught us by his sudden removal. For my own part, I should feel unhappy not to have borne witness in this pulpit to his eminent worth, and especially to that grace of God, which made him what he was. I could not have slept quite easy in my berth, or enjoyed in peace my anticipated rest, had I not first gone with you to *his* grave, hung upon it the garland of my humble praises, and there exhorted you, especially you, young men, to follow his bright example. He was himself still a young man. Less than two-score years enclosed his mortal existence,



and little more than ten years sufficed him to run his brilliant course of Christian usefulness.

In describing him, it is not possible wholly to separate the varied elements which composed his character. Nature and grace conspired to form him. The religious life is apt to assume the type of the natural. Piety does not create new faculties, nor does it easily change altogether constitutional tendencies. To the last, and after faith has accomplished its perfect work, you will discover in the saint more or less to remind you of the man and the boy. It was so in the present instance. Some of the fairest virtues which adorned his character, doubtless, had their root and blossom far back in childhood. But I shall speak of him, chiefly as he was personally known to me during the last seven years ; as I have seen him in this sanctuary, and in his own house, in the streets, in his rural retreat, and in the service of the Christian church. In all these different relations he appeared essentially the same ; in not one of these is the memory of him disturbed by a solitary shadow. All is of a piece, and all is grateful to remember. Who that enjoyed his intimacy, will ever forget his open, frank disposition, his perfect sincerity, the genial warmth and brightness of his affections, or the generous delight with which he entered into the plans and

wishes of a friend? It was a good thing to pass him in the street. One felt better for having received his smile, and the grasp of his bountiful hand. My last interview with him, was of this casual description. I met him in the crowded thoroughfare on the way to his place of business. It was a fair spring morning; but the morning was not half so fair as the expression which shone upon me from his benignant countenance. No doubt he had just left communing with his God and Saviour, and the halo of that sacred hour still encircled his brow. Taking me by the hand, and holding me fast, he told me with all the kindness of a brother, what for his sake, and my own, he wished me to do. I would not exchange the sweet memory of that chance meeting for a jewel of fine gold.

But his home, especially his rural home, was the place where alone all the finer traits of his character were to be seen. There his cultivated taste, his gentle domestic virtues, his love of nature and the whole ideality of the man shone in all their lustre. His passion for the country was like that of an artist or a poet. He would sit by the hour on some favorite spot, overlooking the splendid scenery of the Hudson, and seem to absorb into his very soul the glories of creation. There alone, or hand in hand with his almost inseparable companion, he would

wander over his wide acres, sit down under the old trees, and muse in silent wonder upon the things which are unseen and eternal. Would that at some such moment, he had unawares been seized and perpetuated by the pencil of art ! What shall I say of his domestic and social qualities ? what shall I say of him as husband, son, brother and friend ? Time would fail me to utter all that might truly be said of him in those dearest relationships of life. Nor would I dare on this occasion to intrude into the sorrow, which enshrouds his own hearth-stone. But I may allude to his filial and fraternal piety, as of the highest quality. I had ample opportunity to witness this in connection with the last days of his honored father. I have frequently observed it since ; nor do I believe he would ever have been the man he was, had he not been the devoted son and brother. His friendship too was of the noblest kind, while the generous affection which inspired it seemed to diffuse itself over the whole family of man. He spoke ill of nobody. Amidst all the petty irritations, and provocations of business, he still preserved his sweet equanimity of temper ; finding fault with no one, and apologizing for every one.

His charity was of the sort that "believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." You might have spent days under his hospitable roof,

and talked with him on every subject, even the most exciting party questions of the day, without having had your ear disturbed by the slightest harsh word, by a single personality, or idle gossip ; and I think you will agree with me, that in these days this is no ordinary virtue. He overflowed, indeed, with that kindness and goodness of nature, without which as Lord Bacon declares “ man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing.”

Mr. Phelps had a superior and cultivated mind. On this point his extreme modesty rendered him liable to be much underrated. In his earliest days he was very fond of reading ; he pursued a partial course of classical study, and although he never passed through the halls of a college, his mental training was excellent in its kind. He felt that God had given him an understanding to be improved, and no intelligent person could glance over his well-selected library or converse with him on books and general literature, without perceiving at once, that he was imbued with the true spirit of the scholar. I mention this trait because in my opinion it was closely connected with his invaluable services to the cause of theological education. It also helped to keep him free from that mental conceit and presumption, which infect so many of our young men.

It is scarcely needful that I should speak of Mr. Phelps as a merchant and man of business. Except in a secondary and limited sense, this was not his calling. His case was peculiar. Although he had been trained for commercial life, the special work assigned him by his Master was of another sort. It was not to become a model of the energetic, laborious, far-sighted and successful Christian merchant. Had he felt that to be his task, I doubt not he would have fulfilled it with eminent zeal and vigor. But providential causes released him from this pressure ; and while he did not forsake the walks of business, and was prompt and exemplary in all he did, yet inclination and the voice of duty alike led him into another path. He who foresaw that he was to be cut off in the midst of his days, designed him no doubt to be a model of the young *Christian philanthropist* and man of wealth. It is in this character particularly that I would hold up his shining example for imitation.

Lord Bacon speaking of riches, "I cannot call them better than the baggage of virtue ; the Roman word *impedimenta*, is better ; for as baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue ; it cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march, yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth, or disturbeth the victory ; of great riches there is no real use except

it be in the distribution ; the rest is but conceit. So saith Solomon ; ‘ where much is, there are many to consume it ; and what hath the owner, but the sight of it with his eyes ? ’ ”

Our lamented friend acted in the spirit of these weighty sayings. He affected no idle contempt for riches ; he had too much good sense for that. He knew that money is power, and also that it is a trust ; and he aimed to use it for the good of man, and the glory of God. But apart from its wise, religious use, he regarded it with the noblest indifference. He prided himself upon his wealth, as little as upon the air of heaven. In these respects he seemed as unlike many rich men, as if he belonged to a race among whom the love of money, and the pride of life had never been heard of. Who that saw him, at home or abroad, was ever unpleasantly reminded by word or deed that he was a rich man, or a rich man’s son ?

Of his charities whether in life or death I shall not attempt to speak particularly. It is quite unnecessary. Some of them have themselves long been speaking for him ; some will continue to do so in the years to come ; still others without number were never known to the public, or to his own family even ; many of them never will be. I have already mentioned his unobtrusive way of giving ;

how he would not let his left hand know what his right hand did. This was not in mere obedience to a precept of Scripture. It grew out of the magnanimity of his character. Why should he talk about the little sums he was permitted to return to the Merciful Giver, in the way of helping His poor, suffering children, and furthering His sacred cause? I verily believe that he thought less of giving away a thousand dollars, than some men, far richer than he, think of giving away one; nor do I question that it would have afforded him a real pleasure *always* to have done his alms in secret. The manner, as well as the extent of his benefactions, was most princely. He often made the recipients of his bounty feel as if they were doing him a favor, rather than he them. I have known but few men, whose liberality was altogether like his; but to have known one such man is enough to make the world look fairer. What joy will be his when his Father, who seeth in secret, and has noted all his generous deeds, shall reward him openly! What felicity will be his when the Son of Man, sitting upon the throne of his glory, shall say to him in the presence of all nations; "Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" How many centuries of

such enjoyment, as the happiest mammon-worshipper on earth ever knew, do you think it would take to equal the bliss of that divine plaudit? Oh that every young man who hears me would impress this question on his very heart!

I have said that nobody knew the extent of Mr. Phelps' charities; I doubt much if he even knew it himself. During the last few years he was giving nearly all the time. The fountain of his beneficence seemed inexhaustible. Those of you, who have a reputation for generosity, know how it is in this city. Charity has really no holiday and no Sunday. Calls from the East and the West, from the North and the South, calls by letter and by personal appeal, for public and private objects, for sums great and small, are incessant; and he is a very patient, as well as a very liberal man, who does not often shut his ear close against them. The statements concerning Mr. Phelps' way of treating these endless appeals, although coming from those who sat by his side, and saw what he did, day after day, year in and year out, would have seemed to me almost incredible, had not my own observation attested their verity. Why, my friends, if all the special recipients of his pecuniary aid and kindness, missionaries from heathen lands and from the new states and territories of our country, ministers of



the Gospel all around us, poor widows and orphans, indigent students, the lame, the halt and the blind, and all others who remember him as their benefactor, could be assembled to-day in this sanctuary, the bare sight of them would be a eulogy upon him, more eloquent than any tongue of men, or of angels. And, if thus assembled, they were to tell, each one his or her particular story, what a treasure of human goodness would be revealed to us!

It is possible that while he lived some thought he was *too* generous. At times I half thought so myself. But now we can understand the matter. He was doing his work fast, because he had a short time to live. Is there one of us who *now* feels that he did too much good, that he gave too freely to his Master's cause; or that he might as well have left behind fewer poor men, and women and children, to bewail his loss, and to bless his memory? Who would venture, who would wish, to tear a single leaf from the chaplet woven for his brow by the hand of gratitude?

Mr. Phelps' connection with our institutions of Christian benevolence and learning, and the great service he rendered them, as well by his counsel and time, as by his money, would form the fitting theme for a whole discourse. It is impossible to do justice to his memory in this regard, within the brief

space that remains to me. To the most of you, however, this portion of his life is already well known. His philanthropy was of the largest and most Christian type. Domestic and foreign missions, African Colonization, (causes especially dear to his venerated father,) the work of evangelization in papal countries, particularly on the continent of Europe, the circulation of the Bible and of religious tracts, these and similar objects stood high in his esteem. He loved to talk about them, to pray for them, and to contribute to their support. Nor was his interest in the advancement of his Master's kingdom limited by any narrow sectarian or partisan prejudices. No man was freer from the excited passions of the hour, more catholic in his feelings, and a truer lover of good men of whatever name, or school, or party.

When the intelligence of his sudden death was read in the morning papers, and ran along the telegraphic wires, thousands of every name and class, all over the land, were heard exclaiming, "Anson G. Phelps is dead! what an irreparable loss!"

There is one object, his devotion to which deserves a separate notice; for it did peculiar honor to his intelligence, pious zeal, and largeness of view: I mean the cause of Theological Education. The

service rendered by him to this great and fundamental Christian interest, is beyond all praise. I can speak on this point with the confidence and emphasis of an eye-witness. In the board of the Central Education Society, in the new Educational Committee of the General Assembly, and above all as a director and friend of the Union Theological Seminary, he showed himself to be as wise and far-sighted, as he was munificent, in devotion to Christ and the church. The Union Seminary will always cherish his name, as that of one of their greatest benefactors. The Board of Directors, the Faculty and the students all loved, all leaned upon him.

But I must hasten to a conclusion. Not, however, until I furnish you the key to the noble character we have been admiring. The true secret of Mr. Phelps' life and virtues was his simple-hearted piety. The grace of God, and that alone, is able to form such a man. Nature, philosophy, mere culture could not do it in a thousand years. These can make a man gentle, wise and honest, but they have no power to adorn him with the beauty of holiness ; they have no strength to change him into a child of God, or to fashion him into the likeness of Jesus Christ. This is the unique, and peerless work of the Eternal Spirit. Our beloved

friend, who now rests in God, was a signal instance of the power of the Gospel. By the grace of God he was what he was ; and none felt it like himself. He eschewed utterly all other merit than that of being sanctified and saved by the infinite mercy of God in Jesus Christ. He was clothed with humility. "Some two months since (writes a young friend of his) as one evening we were walking home from the office together, our conversation turned upon the subject of Christian hope. With great earnestness, and in the most humble manner, he expressed his entire trust in the blood of Christ for salvation, and his wonder that a sinful creature like himself, utterly unworthy in the sight of God, was permitted ever to cherish the hope of being saved ; adding, that wealth, honor and position were nothing when we considered the shortness and uncertainty of time, and the nearness of eternity. He then again solemnly declared, that for himself all his hope was founded only on the free grace of the Saviour."

He was the child of many prayers, and, while yet a boy, confessed his Saviour before men. At that early period there was something noticeable about him. "After his death, (continues the young friend just quoted,) a gentleman rose in the noon prayer-meeting, and said, that twenty seven years

ago, he was with a company of boys on a pic-nic excursion, and that he could not recall the form of one of that company except Mr. Phelps ; and, though that was the only time he ever saw him, the energy and determination of his character left an impression he never could forget. Before the company broke up, they felt as if they must have a season of social prayer, and the prayer of Mr. Phelps, young as he then was, he still remembered as one of the most affecting to which he ever listened."

But it was only about ten years ago, that Mr. Phelps' religious character assumed that eminently decided, and devout type, by which it was distinguished. In early manhood he had travelled abroad, had been exposed to many worldly influences, and at one time almost lost his faith in the Gospel. But at the period referred to a kind of second conversion took place. Its chief visible occasion, as I have been told, was the perusal of Nelson's Cause and Cure of Infidelity. From that moment his path was straight onward and upward, until he entered the "city which hath foundations." The testimony on this point is unanimous from all who knew him. He became, forthwith, emphatically a man of prayer. He betook himself to the Bible, and the other appointed means of grace. Then too

commenced that career of benevolence, which I have just been depicting.

His devotional habits were extraordinary, and were formed after the model of ancient piety. Every morning he spent from one to two hours in his closet, and a long season again in the evening. He loved to steal away for communion with God at noon-day also, as he had opportunity. These habits attended him at home and abroad. They gave tone and coloring to his whole existence. He was, as I have said, an exceedingly humble man. He cherished a deep reverence for God and his word.

His voice would tremble with pious awe, as he read aloud the Holy Scriptures. Nothing so astonished him as the pity and condescension of God, in saving a poor lost sinner like himself. The sentiment of his will penned a year or two ago, actuated his whole being; "I desire humbly to record my thankful acknowledgment of the goodness of God, who has given me every thing, and has not been provoked by my ingratitude, and sins, (as I humbly hope,) to take away his mercy from me, but gives me some gracious assurance, that through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall be cleansed from all sin, and that his Holy Spirit will make me fit for his service, and the enjoyment of his presence and glory in Heaven."

Such is a faint picture of the man who has just left us for a higher sphere. Our loss is indeed irreparable ; but what gain is his ! The precious words which fell upon his dying ear, are now forever fulfilled in him. "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me ; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." We are well assured that our dear friend is now beholding His eternal glory. He has joined the august and blissful communion of just men made perfect. He died young, but full of good works, and ripe in Christian excellence. Who would recall him to earth, now that his Master has called him to the skies ? "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing." Farewell, farewell, sainted friend ; enjoy thy fairly earned repose, and may God give us all grace to follow thee in the same path to glory ! It will not be very long, at the longest, my dear brethren, before we all shall take our last look of earth, and pass into eternity. Are we prepared to do so ? Are we walking as children of the light, and of the day ? Are we abounding in the fruits of righteousness ? Is our life hid with Christ in God ? How trifling are all other questions in comparison with these ! Let us watch unto prayer. Let

us be ever on the alert, and busy at our great personal work. We may be called as suddenly as our friend.

On the evening of his departure, we chanced to be singing, at our weekly lecture, these inimitable lines of Charles Wesley :—

One army of the living God,  
To His command we bow,  
Part of the host have crossed the flood,  
And part are crossing now.

E'en now to their eternal home  
Some happy spirits fly ;  
And we are to the margin come,  
And in our turn shall die.

How little we deemed that, even while on our lips, these beautiful words were being verified in the case of our beloved brother ! So it will perhaps be when we depart. But this is not a painful, it is a delightful thought. For what Christian wishes to live always ? or to stay in the flesh longer than his Master appoints ? Who of us, my brethren, believes that earth is really better than heaven, or absence in the body better than being present with the Lord ?

Wherefore let us be up, and doing with our might, our part of the glorious and ever advancing



work of God. Alas ! for him who has no share in that eternal work ! who lives and dies, still toiling after, and clasping only, the shadows of time ! What will he answer when the Almighty Judge summons him to his last account ! what shame, what terror, what woe will then be his ! What exultation and joy unspeakable will, on the other hand, be his portion, who, at that awful reckoning, shall receive the plaudit of his Judge, as a “good and faithful servant !”

May it please God to fill us all with His Holy Spirit ; for He only can teach and enable us so to pass the rest of our days, be they few or many, that at their ending, “an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—Amen.



APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

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### RESOLUTIONS OF PUBLIC BODIES.

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#### UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors, held June 7th, 1858:

The decease of Mr. Anson G. Phelps, a member of the Board, having occurred since the last meeting, a Committee was appointed to draw up a Resolution relating to this event, to be recorded in the minutes, and communicated to his family.

The following Resolution was prepared and adopted:

*Resolved*, That this Board regard the sudden and early death of Mr. Phelps as a great public affliction. His connection with various institutions of public benevolence; his peculiarly large and liberal benefactions; his personal activity and self-sacrifice in promoting the cause of philanthropy and religion; and, above all, the general influence of his character and example, as an eminently devoted, unostentatious, and consistent Christian, have given him a place in the regards of the community, which has caused his removal to be deeply and extensively lamented.

This Seminary especially is indebted to his generous and

noble liberality. From the time of his connection with the Board, his devotion to its interests was shown, not only by liberal subscriptions, whenever he was called upon for his aid, but by his personal attentions and thoughtful care for the comfort of the students, by which he evinced not only his generosity, but the kindness and loveliness of his character.

While the Board bow with resignation to the holy and mysterious will of God, which has taken him away from us, we cannot but deeply feel our loss, or refrain from expressing the sympathy we have with his suffering wife and family.

In behalf of the Committee,

THOS. H. SKINNER.

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NEW YORK STATE COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

At a special meeting of the Board of Managers, May 19, the following Resolutions, offered by Dr. D. M. Reese, were adopted :

*Whereas*, intelligence has just reached us that our worthy friend and beloved President, has suddenly departed this life, therefore,

*Resolved*, That the Board of Managers of the New York State Colonization Society feel called upon to record the expression of their deep affliction for the loss of our endeared and invaluable presiding officer.

*Resolved*, That our late President inherited the humble piety, earnest philanthropy, and Christian virtues of his late venerated father and predecessor at the head of this Board, and we feel that the Colonization cause never had truer friends or more liberal patrons than the father and the son.

*Resolved*, That while, as in duty bound, we bow with submission to the Divine dispensation which has thus early

called from his career of benevolence and usefulness the chief officer of the Board and the President of our State Colonization Society, endeared to us all by our personal and official relations; yet we find consolation in the remembrance of his truly religious character, exemplified as it was by his love to God and man, and his fidelity to Christ and his Church, in which respects he was, though young, a bright and shining light.

*Resolved*, That with our sincere condolence with his family in this mysterious dispensation, a copy of these resolutions be signed by our presiding officer and secretary, and transmitted to the widow of the deceased.

*Resolved*, That this Board will attend the funeral services to be held in Mercer Street Presbyterian Church, to-morrow afternoon.

THOMAS DE WITT,

*Vice President.*

JOS. B. COLLINS, *Rec. Sec.*

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#### THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN CHRISTIAN UNION.

*Whereas*, God in his wise providence, though inscrutable to us, has been pleased to remove from the scene of his earthly labors our highly esteemed and valued Treasurer, Anson G. Phelps, a man greatly endeared by familiar intercourse and association with us, as an officer of this Society for the last seven years, who has given us so cheerfully of his time, his influence, and his wealth; therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That though cut down in the midst of his days, and apparently when his efforts in the cause of Christ were greatly needed, still we render devout thanksgiving to God that his life was spared so long to us, to his friends, and

to the cause of the Redeemer, and we rejoice in the assurance that our loss, great as it is, to him is unspeakable gain.

2. *Resolved*, That while we deeply lament his death, on our account, not on his, and scarcely know where to turn our eyes for a successor, blest alike with wealth, and a heart as prompt and ready to respond to every call of benevolence; yet we cherish the most profound respect for his many virtues as a Christian and philanthropist, and shall ever remember with devout gratitude his undeviating attachment to this Society, manifested both by his publications and the bestowal of his wealth.

3. *Resolved*, That we hereby tender to his afflicted family and friends our heartfelt sympathy in this hour of sadness and of sorrow; and our prayer is that this dispensation of Divine Providence, though grievous at the present, will work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The Prudential Committee of the Board in Paris, France, at their meeting in June, 1858, adopted the following:

*Resolved*, That the Committee has heard with profound regret of the death of Anson G. Phelps, Treasurer of the American and Foreign Christian Union; and while it bows with resignation to the will of our Heavenly Father, who has in infinite goodness and mercy recalled our brother to himself, it desires to record and to express by this resolution its heartfelt sympathy with the bereaved family, and with the community of which he was so beloved and useful a member.

#### THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

At a stated meeting of the Board of Managers, June 3, 1858, the following Minute and Resolution were adopted:

As it has pleased a wise though often inscrutable Providence, to remove by death Anson G. Phelps, Esq., one of this



Board, the surviving members feel it both a duty and privilege to record their appreciation of his worth, and the corresponding loss which this and other benevolent institutions have sustained. The deceased came into the Board, four years since, on the demise of his venerated father; and, though young in years, he had a maturity of character, and was favored by circumstances which gave him peculiar advantages for usefulness. His mind was clear; his judgment cool, yet decided; his temper and manners unusually mild; with habits of business, and an amount of wealth at command which few of his age possess. But with these mental and pecuniary resources, he was at the same time so favored with the rich and sweet influences of the Gospel, as to lead him to place little value on any earthly endowments, further than they helped him, in some way, to honor his Divine Master. His benefactions, therefore, though noiseless, were constant and varied, measured out with much discretion, where most good was likely to be effected. In all his intercourse with the Board, and as a member of one of its Committees, he manifested such uniform courtesy, such adhesion to important principles, and so little tenacity in regard to points unessential, as to render him a highly agreeable as well as useful co-laborer.

The Board, therefore, record his removal from them with emotions of unfeigned sorrow, and would desire to profit by his worthy example, as a man and a Christian.

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#### THE AMERICAN SEAMEN'S FRIENDS SOCIETY.

*Whereas* it has pleased the Almighty, in his inscrutable providence, to take to his rest our highly respected and beloved friend and associate, Anson G. Phelps:

*Resolved*, That this Board unite with our various benevo-

lent institutions in tendering to the family circle, and especially to the widow and venerable mother of the deceased, our sincere condolence in their deep affliction, with our sincere prayer that the Divine Comforter may be their stay and support.

*Resolved*, as the sense of this Board, that the community at large, the Church of Jesus Christ, and the friends of the sailor especially, have reason to bow themselves in profound humiliation under this sudden and afflictive dispensation, which, but for an overruling and gracious Providence, must prove an irreparable calamity.

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At a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce of New York, June 3, 1858, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

*Whereas*, it has pleased the Almighty, in his inscrutable Providence, to remove from this world, by sudden death, our late associate, Anson G. Phelps:

*Resolved*, That in recording this afflictive event, we will cherish the remembrance of the qualities which adorned the character of our deceased friend and associate; his intelligence, his enterprise, his public spirit, his munificent liberality, and his great moral and religious worth.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be presented to the widow and family of the deceased, with the expression of our heartfelt condolence in the event which has inflicted on this community an irreparable loss.

By order of the Chamber,

P. PERIT,  
*President.*

EDWARD C. BOGERT, *Secretary.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF MR.  
PHELPS, IN RELATION TO THE AMERICAN  
CHAPEL AT PARIS.

NEW YORK, *November 19, 1856.*

REV. E. N. KIRK, D. D. :

DEAR BROTHER,—I know you will pardon me if I write an urgent plea to you in behalf of our contemplated American Chapel in Paris. I feel that, under God, the success of the project depends on you. If you can for a few months devote your energies to the American population in Paris, land will be purchased, a fine building erected, and the foundations laid for untold good to generations both of French and Americans. We have a most promising subscription already in New York ; and if we can show that the work is begun in earnest in Paris, and by you, we can get all the funds necessary.

We are just so situated now by the death of Brother Dickinson, and other circumstances, that I really fear that the whole enterprise will fall through unless you will serve us for a few months. It is not twice in any man's life that he has an opportunity of doing so much good by his personal influence, as Providence now, I really think, puts in your power. I trust that you will embrace it, and that your Church will act generously and kindly by sparing you for a few months. I will myself be individually responsible for the necessary expenses of the mission, whatever may be the state of our treasury.

In haste, yours truly,

A. G. PHELPS.

*March 31, 1857.*

REV. E. N. KIRK, D. D. :

DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you by the Persia on the 18th March (which letter, I suppose, you will receive before the 1st April), stating that I had accepted and would pay (D. V.) your draft for \$5,000, due May 18th; and authorizing you to draw on me at once, at sixty days' sight, for \$5,000; and at four months' sight for \$5,000; and stating that if you found any difficulty in negotiating such drafts, on receipt of your letter I would endeavor to send you either bills or a letter of credit. I suppose that this will meet your wants exactly.

You are perfectly right in construing your instructions as you do. It makes no difference to the Society whether they pay interest on a mortgage or ground rent, only that it is much better for all that we should own the "fee-simple" of our church. I am very glad to hear that the Rev. Mr. Channer consents to let you off from your engagements to take the church; you will see by my previous letters that I anticipated trouble from this source. Make a formal application to the "New York Bible and Common Prayer Book Society" for one hundred copies of the Prayer Book, and send it to me in your next letter; I will endeavor to get them for you, but have nothing now to found the application on. In regard to the organ, cushions, etc., when we are able to report the church nearly finished, we can, perhaps, find some friends who will give us these articles. We are now doing all in our power to make collections for the general object. But I must close. Write soon and fully.

Affectionately yours,

A. G. PHELPS.

NEW YORK, *April 14, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK :

I hope to hear that you have obtained the necessary authorization from government, and that the contracts are made, and the house of God is building. There was an item in one of your letters to Dr. McClure, which gave some pain to the brethren in our Board, viz. : that the erection of the building would probably have to go on Sabbath days, as well as the other days of the week. We know that you are, at least, as scrupulous in regard to the holy day as we are, and that, unless overruled by the Committee, or by absolute necessity, you would not permit this to be done. The Board passed a resolution, that we pledge ourselves to pay any necessary expense which may be incurred, by making it a condition in the contract that no work shall be done on the building on the Lord's Day. It was thought very necessary and important that we should bear this testimony by your action ; but we know it can be safely left in your hands.

I shall pay your draft for \$5,000 (D. V.) on the 18th of May. Your bankers will hear of this payment, say on the 1st June. The other drafts proposed would be payable in New York, say about the 18th June \$5,000, and the 18th August \$5,000; and your bankers would hear of their payment about the 1st July and the 1st September, and might regulate their advances to you in Paris accordingly, if they think it necessary.

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*April 20, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK :

After speaking of the offer in his previous letter, Mr. Phelps adds :

If you have not drawn, I will (D. V.) put you in funds in

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good time, to the amount of \$10,000, either by a letter of credit or by remitting bills. I hope you have not been rash in beginning to build before having the actual authorization of the government, and that the last payment on the building (15,000 francs), and the last payment on the land (30,000 francs), will not embarrass you. The \$10,000 from us shall be forthcoming in good time (D. V.). Can you depend on the money promptly from your Paris friends, and that the contractor will make no difficulty about letting the 60,000 francs lie on the building? If you answer both these inquiries in the affirmative, I can see no great difficulty in the way of success.

I have a letter from Mr. J. J. Keller, enclosing the lithograph of the Evangelical Chapel of the Luxembourg, and requesting me to act in procuring subscriptions in this country for it. I am very much rejoiced that such a chapel has been erected, and would do much to aid it, if in my power; but at present it would be quite out of the question for me to come before our public to solicit subscriptions for another chapel in Paris. I am Chairman of the Committee for the American Chapel, and am constantly making collections for it, and my mouth is closed for all other enterprises in Paris, in the way of church building, until this is completed and paid for. Please say as much to Mr. Keller. I will write to him very soon, in reply to his favor.

I hope now to receive from you very soon a copy of the authorization for the chapel; a lithograph, and description of the same; particulars of the location, etc., and all the facts of interest to our friends here.

Under date, New York, May 4, 1857, to Dr. Kirk :

DEAR BROTHER,—I have only time to write a line by this steamer, to acknowledge the receipt of your very acceptable letter of the 14th April, and of the lithographic plate of our proposed chapel, for which please accept my thanks. I think the elevation is a very neat and tasteful one, and one that will be much admired. The only point that I have much fear upon is, that although you have the "ambassador's word to our ambassador," you are rather rash in beginning to build without the formal authorization of the government. I trust you will get this as soon as possible. There is no justice in paying the ten per cent. to government, unless the ownership of the property is really transferred from the Am. and For. Christ. Union to some other parties. The change of our agents, attorneys, or employés, is no change of ownership, and must not be so considered. You must not submit to such an arrangement for a moment. I am sure our ambassador will represent the enormity of the extortion proposed, and see that justice is done.

I note your intention to draw on me for 50,000 francs. D. V., I will accept and pay the drafts.

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NEW YORK, *May* 12, 1857.

TO DR. KIRK :

I have only time to write one line. I wrote you by last steamer, which I hope you have received. I expect to send forward by the American and European Joint Stock Express Co., either by the steamer "Africa" to-morrow, or by steamer next week, a box of Prayer Books, from the Society here; and one large-print handsomely bound book for the pulpit, which you may set down as a gift from Mrs. Phelps.

NEW YORK, *May* 19, 1857.

Yesterday I paid the bill for \$5,000, and I hope you will draw for the balance, say in three or four drafts, waiting until the money is wanted for your payments, as it will give us an opportunity here to make our collections. I enclose one of our new circulars, which we also print in some of the newspapers. I am anxious to hear that you have obtained the formal authorization of the government, and that without liability to pay ten per cent. at each change of minister.

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Under date June 15th, 1857 :

I have just now, had handed in yours of the 31st inst., per Mr. Richter, with the accompanying document. In reply to all, I would now say that we had a meeting of the Board immediately after the receipt of your favor of the 19th May, which letter was read to them, and carefully considered. Rev. Dr. Baird was present ; but our excellent friend, Rev. Dr. McClure, is, I fear, very ill, from long disease, and is entirely unable to do any thing, and was not present. It was voted by the Board, 1st, to confirm your action in regard to the payment of \$40 per Sabbath, to prevent work on the building on the Lord's Day. We supposed that there would be say sixteen Sabbaths, costing say \$640 ; you say it will cost us \$1,600—a mistake, I suppose ; but we agree to the best you can do. 2d. It was voted, that you be requested to consult with Count de la Borde, a lawyer of Paris, named by Dr. Baird, and also to ascertain how the American Chapel in Havre, the Seamen's Chapel, (Rev. Mr. Sawtell is pastor, I believe,) is held ; and that, if you consider it best, you should take the title in your own name, of a committee of Americans in Paris, of which *you* should be one. It is intended *to leave the matter to your best decision*, after you shall have obtained all the light



you can. If the title is taken in the name of a committee in Paris, they must, of course, give to the American and Foreign Church Union a "declaration of trust," that they hold the property for us, and agree that we shall have the appointment of pastor, etc.

After all, I most sincerely trust that our blessed Master will show you that you can serve his cause to the best advantage, by making your permanent residence and field of labor in Paris, and that you will take the title of the property in your own name.

This arrangement would be by far the most agreeable to the whole Board. Look at the matter most carefully. Your draft will (D. V.) meet due honor when it appears. I hope to write again very soon.

P. S.—Dr. Baird says that he thinks the prohibition of preaching in French can be modified or removed hereafter, by proper effort.

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NEW YORK, *June 22, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK:

DEAR BROTHER,—The manner of holding the property under the laws of France must be left to your best discretion, after getting all the light you can. Whoever holds the property will be, in all Christian honor, although not in a strictly legal sense, the agent and attorney for our Board, and bound to see that its interests and wishes are promoted, to the extent of his power; and that, in the event of his death, the best arrangements in his power are made for the security of the Board. I will write you in good time, viz., so that you will receive it before July 12, of any further action of the Board or Committee. If the Lord should show you plainly that you can spend the rest of your life to far greater advantage for the promotion of His cause in the world, by making your residence

in Paris, and being a witness for Him and His truth in that great centre of Europe, rather than to continue a settled pastor in a greatly-favored American city ; then, by all means, take the title of the property in your own name ; and I have no doubt that when you come over to your dear people in Boston, and show them the reasons for such a step, they will bow to the will of the Lord in the matter. It may be that five years of faithful labor in Paris would enable you to do more for the great cause in the world, than twenty years of the most successful labor in Boston or New York.

Who can tell what the Lord is about to do in France, and in all Europe, by His Spirit, word, and wonderful providence ?

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*June 29, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK:

I have submitted your letters to Dr. Fairchild, and, after consultation with others, we cannot add any thing to what we have before said and authorized by the action of the Board, viz. : That you should use your best discretion in taking the bill of property ; either in your own name or a Committee of which you should be a member, the Committee afterwards to execute a proper " declaration of trust," declaring that the property is held for and subject to the control of the American and Foreign Church Union. Dr. Fairchild suggests that, if you thought best to take the title in the name of a Committee of Americans, all members of this Board, the following names might be used :

Dr. KIRK,	Congregationalist.
A. G. PHELPS,	N. S. Presbyterian.
W. W. STONE,	O. S. " "
E. L. BEADLE, M. A.,	Reformed Dutch.

But there will probably be objections to taking the names of so many persons, all non-residents in Paris, and I cannot but hope that Providence will so order it that you will take the title in your own name, with the hope and expectation of making Paris your field of labor, after you shall have returned to this country, and arranged satisfactorily your affairs here.

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NEW YORK, *July 6, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK:

If your lawyer informs you that the persons you refer to have any just and legal claims, or if they have it in their power to annoy or inconvenience you, so that you are advised that it would be wise and best to pay them 1,000 francs, you will, of course, do so. But otherwise you will say to them that the money in our treasury is the contribution of Christians in this country, many of them poor men and women; and the Board of Directors have no power to bestow any gratuities, or to do any thing with our funds not absolutely necessary to the success of our benevolent objects; and, besides that, our treasury is now empty, and we have to depend on loans and advances from friends and officers of the Society to meet our regular expenditures.

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*July 21, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK:

I am glad that you decided to take the deed of the property in your sole name, and execute a contre-lettre, and insure your life. It is the best way, I feel assured. Your drafts for 15,000 francs appeared yesterday. I called on the bankers, and arranged the acceptance to their entire satisfaction.

I feel sorry for Mr. Keller. Say to him for me that Dr.

McClure is and has been very sick, almost unable to attend to any thing; and it is quite impossible for us to print circulars and introduce his enterprise to the public, while our own is barely able to sustain itself. As soon as we get our chapel built and paid for, I will gladly, as far as I am concerned, subscribe towards their debt, and use my influence to get them a liberal subscription in this country. Another year—say next year—they may be able to raise 25,000 francs from friends in this country, with proper exertions, and with the endorsement of our Society. Mr. Dale is here, and has called on Dr. Fairchild, but I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing him. I note your account. Please to keep all the receipts and disbursements on account of the building in a separate account, crediting what you receive from your bankers for drafts, donations for building fund, etc., and a separate account of your expenses in sustaining worship, charging your salary, etc., crediting what you receive from your circular notes, collections in chapel, etc. I am very glad to hear that Mr. Woolsey has been so liberal. I hope other rich American gentlemen now in Europe will follow the example.

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*July 27, 1857.*

TO DR. KIRK:

I have your favor of the 4th inst., No. 18, and am thankful to learn that you have obtained the title of the property, and have progressed so favorably with the payments.

The contre-lettre appears to be every thing that is necessary, but in this country I think it would require to be executed under seal, and with a witness; probably these formalities are not required in France. By all means, get the insurance on your life at once in Paris. We could not get it here in your absence, and the rate named does not appear to

be a very high one. Your drafts shall meet due honor. The amount insured should be payable to some one for account of the American and Foreign Church Union. You should, by all means, get insurance on the building also against fire, say one half the value; payable as the other.

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NEW YORK, *August 10, 1857.*

TO JAMES W. TUCKER, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR,—Our mutual friend, Rev. Dr. Kirk, informs me that he left the papers connected with the American Chapel in Paris, and the care of the same, with you until his return from the East. I write a line by this steamer merely to say that I shall be most happy to hear from you, at your convenience, in regard to the progress of the building, the collections of subscriptions, and payments on account of building, etc. Mr. Kirk proposed to insure his life in Paris, for the amount which would be payable to the French Government, in case of his death, unless we should prefer doing it in this country. We cannot insure here in his absence; and if the matter is left in such a shape that it can now be done in Paris, I should think it wise to do so at once, and I will pay a draft for the amount of premium. I think, too, that a reasonable amount of insurance against fire ought to be made on the building. I should be pleased to hear your views in regard to these matters. Please say also when in your opinion the church will be ready for dedication. I am very anxious that Mr. Kirk should remain in Paris to dedicate the church, if he possibly can.

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NEW YORK, *October 2, 1857.*

TO JAS. W. TUCKER, ESQ.:

The drafts advised have not yet been presented for acceptance, and I trust that you will have received from Mr.

Dale sufficient to enable you to get along without drawing for more than 7,000 to 10,000 francs. I have already paid in cash on account of the chapel, as follows :

Draft through

Messrs. E. and E. Poirier & Co., .....	\$5,000
“ “ “ .....	5,000
Messrs. Munroe & Co., .....	2,950
For letters of credit to Mr. Kirk, and other charges, .....	1,200
Yet to pay on account of letter of credit,....	600
And the drafts you now advise,.....	2,000
	<hr/>
	\$16,770

I have only received as yet in cash about \$8,000, and the balance I have advanced out of my own pocket, or borrowed on my own security, or pledge of my own stocks, for the Society.

We never had such times in financial matters as at present in New York, not even in 1837, and it is next to impossible to borrow any money on the best securities. I shall expect to accept and pay, D. V., the drafts advised in your favor of the 17th instant, which I hope will not exceed 10,000 francs, but you will please not to rely on me for any further amount without receiving advice from me to draw. If the receipts of the Society shall at all justify it, I shall be happy to authorize further drafts.

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NEW YORK, *December 8, 1857.*

TO JAS. W. TUCKER, ESQ.:

I have accepted your draft for 700 dollars, as requested, but I must request you not to draw on me for any further sum at present. I shall be in advance to the Society about

\$10,000 when the acceptances, &c., now maturing, are paid, and I cannot advance more at present. The society will actually have paid on account of this enterprise, including Dr. Kirk's salary, expenses, and Sunday abstinence, \$17,000; but we would of course most cheerfully pay \$1,000 or \$2,000 more to make things easy with you; but just now, as I mentioned before, our treasury is empty, and we have a large number of men in this country depending on us for daily bread, and I have advanced as much as I can at present. As soon as we can make collections, I will most cheerfully authorize you to draw.

Our Boards of Directors are most anxious to send out a first-rate man in every respect, as chaplain. We could get fifty very respectable men at once; but the difficulty is to find a man of such talent and character as ought to occupy this most important post, who can be detached from his church or professorship here.

We sincerely hope that the Lord will point out and secure for us the right man. It is a most difficult task. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain,

Yours very truly,

A. G. PHELPS.

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The original subscription of Mr. Phelps to the Chapel was one thousand dollars. But, as appears from this correspondence, he repeatedly advanced large sums to carry on the work, allowing the Board time for the payment of the same. After the Chapel was begun it was found that at least six thousand dollars more than the original appropriation of the Board would be required to carry it on; and this outlay, too, was encouraged by Mr. Phelps. But for him it is probable the Chapel never

would have been completed. The American and Foreign Christian Union accomplished this great work; they originally projected it, and expended upon it, writes Dr. E. R. Fairchild, no less than twenty-three thousand five hundred and twenty-nine dollars. These facts speak for themselves as to the character which this Chapel ought to retain, considered as a sacred religious trust.

THE END.



