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ART. I.—SOME ALARMING TENDENCIES IN OUR SOCIAL SYSTEM.

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Mortalia facta peribunt.—Horace.

WHEN our fathers had achieved our national independence, through the concessions of Great Britain after the Revolutionary War, a new era seemed to be dawning on our land. The day-star of national glory seemed to be rising in the West, and a period of political happiness seemed to be about to bless the world. The tree of Liberty was planted, and its *leaves were to be for the healing of the nations*. Few of this generation can remember the enthusiasm of those golden days. All was hope and animation. The sun shone brighter; the spring seemed to open earlier; the blossoms seemed to shed a sweeter fragrance on the air, and Columbia's glory was the joy of all her sons. But this was the flight of hope without experience. Such expectations must be disappointed. As when a mariner begins a long voyage under a vernal sunshine, in the last month of spring, with every wave gentle and the whole wind in his favor, the day that animates his hopes can not be a pattern of his whole voyage: so our early expectations could only teach us wisdom by a modifying experience and a partial disappointment.

ART. VI.—REV. THOMAS HARVEY SKINNER, D. D.

By Rev. GEORGE L. PRENTISS, D. D., New York.

[The following pages comprise the substance of the remarks of Dr. Prentiss at the funeral of Dr. Skinner. In a subsequent number of the REVIEW we intend to have a more full account of the life of one whose loss is so widely and deeply felt, and who rendered such eminent services to our Church and to the Cause of Christ in his day and generation.—ED.]

WE HAVE come together, fathers and bretheren in Christ, to the burial of a very eminent and venerated servant of God. In a good old age, with his eye hardly dimmed, or his natural force abated, standing at his post, in the vigor of his noble intellect, in the mature strength and beauty of his saintly graces, the Master has appeared and taken him to himself. It is a blessed consummation—one which he had long devoutly wished; and I feel, therefore, as we gather around his bier, that we are quite on the verge of the "Better Country," and may say to ourselves, as Jacob said on awakening out of sleep, on his way to Padan Aram, *Surely the Lord is in this place. This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* In the spirit of Christian awe, joy, and thanksgiving, then, let us enter upon the service and privileges of this hour.

A brief sketch of the life of our departed friend will be first in place:

THOMAS HARVEY SKINNER was born at Harvey's Neck, in Perquimons County, N. C., March 7th, 1791. He was the seventh in a family of thirteen children. His parents (to use his own language respecting them) were simple and plain in their mode of life, distinguished for their probity, hospitality, and kindness to the poor, pious and strict in the training and education of their children. His father was by birth a Quaker, his mother was an Episcopalian. After their marriage they became members of the Baptist Church, under the ministry of the Rev. M. Ross, well known in that region for his highly evangelical labors. They were both bright examples of spiritual religion, and died in faith and peace. Their house was much frequented by preachers. It had been furnished as a church; and as there was regular service only

once a month, and that twelve miles distant, his father, three Sabbaths out of four, conducted public worship in it himself. He did not preach; he prayed with the people, read the Scriptures to them, and read also a sermon, generally one of the Village Sermons, or one of President Davies, whom he preferred as a preacher to all others; he united exhortation with his reading; his children conducted the music. He had great simplicity and transparency of character, with something of Puritan earnestness and fidelity in the ordering of his household; yet was a man of tender sensibility, and of a peaceable, loving spirit, as became an old Friend. The mother was a woman of singular gentleness, modesty, and loveliness. To these traits in the parents I think we can trace back some of the most striking features in the natural and Christian character of their illustrious son. He cherished their memory as long as he lived, with most grateful and pious affection.

He was prepared for college at Edenton, N. C., entered Nassau Hall in 1807, two years in advance, and was graduated in 1809. He then returned to Edenton, and commenced the study of law in the office of his eldest brother, Joseph Blount Skinner, one of the first lawyers in the State, and a remarkable man every way. Here God met him—to borrow his own words—with his renewing and saving mercy, when amidst the pleasures and temptations of the world, he was estranged from him and exposed to destruction. The Rev. Benjamin H. Rice, who was itinerating through North Carolina as a youthful missionary of the General Assembly, came to Edenton in the spring of 1811, and preached two sermons; and these sermons, conspiring with the sudden death of a younger brother, who suffered shipwreck near the mouth of the Mersey, England, and with the faithful counsels of a pious negro, were the occasion of his awakening and conversion. He resolved at once, against the most determined opposition of his brother, to abandon the law and devote himself to the Christian ministry. Not long after he returned to Princeton, joined the Presbyterian church in that place, and began the study of divinity under the instruction of his old and revered President, Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith. In the autumn

of 1811 he went to Savannah, and put himself under the tuition of the celebrated Dr. Kollock. At the friendly invitation of Rev. (afterward Dr.) John McDowell, he came to Elizabethtown, N. J., in the spring of 1812, and became the theological pupil, as also a member of the family, of that admirable man. After the death of Dr. McDowell, his old pupil paid a touching and beautiful tribute to his memory.*

He was licensed at Morristown, Dec. 16, 1812. On the same day he came to Newark with Mr. (afterward Dr.) Richards; and in the evening preached his first sermon in the First Presbyterian church, from the text, Luke xii, 32: *Fear not little flock, etc., etc.* On the following Sabbath he preached at Elizabethtown, in the pulpit of his theological tutor, on the *Character of a Christian*. Text, Matt. xxvii, 57: *Who also himself was Jesus' disciple*. December, 26, 1812, he preached in the Tabernacle, Ranstead's Court, Philadelphia. And on several following Sundays in the church in Arch street, corner of Third. He next spent a Sabbath in Washington where he preached twice with great power; and then returned to his friends in North Carolina. June 10, 1813, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, as co-pastor with Dr. Janeway of the Second Church, in that city. In 1815 he accepted a call to the Fifth Church, in Philadelphia. Several years later a new edifice was erected for him, in Arch street. In 1828, he accepted a call to the Pine street church, Boston; but in a few months was induced to return to his old people in Philadelphia. In 1833, he was called to the chair of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology, in the Theological Seminary at Andover. On the 11th of November, 1835, he was installed Pastor of the new Mercer street Presbyterian Church, in this city. In March, 1848, he was inaugurated Professor of Sacred Rhetoric, Pastoral Theology, and Church Government, in the Union Theological Seminary, and continued to fulfil the duties of that chair until his decease—a period of nearly twenty-three years.

Such were some of the leading incidents and outward changes in the long life of Dr. Skinner. But how little they

* See Dr. Sprague's *Memoirs of the McDowell's*, p. 222.

tell of the man himself, or of the work for God which he did in his day and generation! Whether regarded as a preacher of the gospel, as a theologian, or as a disciple of Jesus, he was alike admirable and preëminent. For almost three-score years he has been identified with the religious interests of the country—especially with the history and piety of the Presbyterian Church. His name has long been a household word among Christian people all over the land; and henceforth it will be embalmed with those of Miller, and Richards, and Alexander, and Beecher, and Albert Barnes, and others like them. He came upon the stage at a moment when the theological and ecclesiastical atmosphere foreboded strife and trouble; and, when the storm burst, nobody took a manlier part, nobody was more faithful to his honest convictions, avowed them with greater boldness, or maintained them with more ability, than he. But I shall not dwell upon these things now. Dr. Skinner regarded it as a special favor of Providence, and one of his greatest felicities on earth, that he was permitted, during the closing hours of life, to breathe an atmosphere no longer embittered either by theological or ecclesiastical animosity and discord. One of the last things I saw him do was to grasp the hand of a friend, and exclaim: "Yes, brother, I believe with you, that the *odium theologicum* is dying out!" From the first, he earnestly desired and prayed for the Reunion of the Presbyterian Church, both for its own sake, and as the harbinger of a larger and still more blessed union of all Christ's disciples; and when the momentous act was at length consummated, his joy was unbounded. Some present will remember how he poured out that joy in this very place, as at the request of the Moderator, although himself not a member of the General Assembly, he offered up thanks to Almighty God immediately after the unanimous vote in favor of Reunion. His whole soul was filled with the spirit of our Lord's high-priestly prayer, that His followers might all be one; *as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* The 17th chapter of the Gospel of John seemed, indeed, to have become part of his spiritual life-blood. To hear him talk and pray about union with Christ,

and the union of Christ's people in Him, was almost like reading, on one's knees, that wonderful chapter.

Of Dr. Skinner's career and character as preacher and theologian, my brethren, who follow me, will speak. In the earlier and palmy days of his ministry, his power in the pulpit must have been extraordinary. He was little more than a stripling when he began to declare the way of salvation; but even then some of the greatest preachers and divines of the age listened to him with delight, and bore witness to his remarkable gifts. It is related, that on one occasion, he was to preach at Germantown; and, upon entering the pulpit, saw among his auditors that prince of sacred orators, the renowned Dr. John M. Mason, who happened to be sojourning in the place. At first, he was filled with dismay; but by a special effort of mind, threw himself upon the help of his Master, and was enabled to proceed in his discourse with entire freedom. When the service was over, Dr. Mason came forward, seized him by the hand, and with tears in his eyes, said: "God bless you! And he *will* bless you!" The latter half of his course in Philadelphia, in the Arch street church, Dr. Skinner called "the seed-time of his ministry;" but every part of his ministry, in Philadelphia, in New England, and in New York, was a seed-time, out of which most precious harvests of souls have been gathered.

Of his personal and Christian character it is difficult to speak in measured terms. He was a man of the rarest courtesy, grace, and sweetness of manners. He had a most winning smile, and when in his high and radiant moods, the charm of his presence and conversation was something indescribable. At such times his face was as it had been the face of an angel. Only two weeks ago to-night a large number of his brethren saw him in such a mood at his own house; and never will the hallowed scene, or the sweet hymn, "My Jesus, as Thou wilt," which he repeated to them at its close, be effaced from their memory!

I never knew a human being of whom it could be said with more truth: *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!* His artless simplicity was as uncommon as the vigor of his intellect, the beauty of his affections, and the sanctity of his life.

What he said of his venerated and faithful friend, Dr. James P. Wilson, applied, word for word, to himself: "What a charm is there in gifts, when simplicity exercises them; and how venerable is simplicity when it invests illustrious gifts! Never have we seen the person in whom simplicity dwelt in a higher degree. Whether in his public ministrations, or in private life, this eminent man was unassuming as a little child, claiming no distinctions above the plainest individual, and appearing to be conscious of no superiority to him in any kind of excellence." To this lovely trait was joined a humility equally remarkable. One of the church fathers, on being asked what is the first thing in religion? replied, humility—and what the second, replied, humility—and what the third, replied still, humility. It was so in an eminent degree with our departed friend. He loved to lie low—"infinitely low," as his favorite, President Edwards, expresses it, before God. He was very modest and humble in reference to his intellectual and theological gifts and attainments; while his sense of his own unworthiness, littleness, and imperfections as a minister and disciple of Jesus, was overpowering, and would have been intolerable, had it not been relieved and swallowed up by impassioned love to his Saviour, and an immense faith in him. The depth and intensity of both sentiments were strikingly illustrated by an incident, which occurred only a few days before his last illness. He called at my house for the purpose of spiritual conference with a Christian friend. Before leaving he said: "I have brought something which I want to read to you," intimating that it expressed exactly his own feeling. He then read, with infinite animation and emphasis, and with holy unction beaming in his eye and face, a letter of Rev. William Romaine, author of "*Life, Walk, and Triumph of Faith.*" The letter is so striking, and throws such light upon the state of his own soul, that I give a large portion of it:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed you with so many blessings already, and who, having begun, will not cease to bless you in life and death, and forever more! Your letter of May 2d puts me in mind of his goodness, as I wish all things may. It rejoices my very heart

to see him displaying the glories of his grace far and wide. From London through Europe, from Europe to America, yea, as far as the sun travels, his fame is spread. And does he not deserve it? Oh, my friend, what have we to tell of but the loving-kindness of Jesus; and what to praise but his wonders in saving such as we are, and in saving so many of us? Blessings for ever on the Lamb! May we glorify him by resting on him for righteousness and strength, and by living wholly upon him for grace and glory. Then all goes well, when

On all besides his precious blood,
On all besides the Son of God,
We trample boldly, and disclaim
All other saviours but the *Lamb*.

As to what you write about, I know not what to say. It is in the best hands. He knows what to do. Let him alone. Remember he is the head of the Church, and he will look after his own matters, and well too. At present, I see not my way clearly from London. Here my Master fixes me, and here I must stay till he calls me to some other place. When he would have me to move, he will let me know his will. Besides, what am I? What does it signify where I am? A poor, dumb dog, the vilest, the basest of all the servants of my Lord. If you could see what is passing for any one hour in my heart, you would not think anything of me: you would only admire and extol the riches of Jesus' love. Wonderful it is that he should send such an one to preach his gospel, and bless it, too, to many, many, souls (while every sermon covers me with shame and confusion)—Oh, this is wonderful, wonderful, eternally to be admired, grace! What can not he do? who can form a preacher out of such a dry, rotten stick, fit for nothing but the fire of hell? Glory, glory be to Him alone, and for ever and for ever more. All the tongues in heaven and in earth, men and angels, throughout eternity, can not praise him enough for what he has already done for my soul, and therefore I am content to be a poor, broken, bankrupt debtor forever. Hereby I shall be enabled forever to exalt him, and to put the crown upon his head, and that is all I want. It will be heaven enough to join that blessed company, who are crying, '*Worthy is the Lamb (but none else) to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*' "

Of many other things—of his devotional habits, and his marvellous gift in prayer—of his noble virtues as a Christian citizen and patriot—of his relations to his old church in Mercer street, to this bereaved Church of the Covenant, and to myself as his pastor in both, I would gladly speak; but time forbids that I should do so now. I hasten to the closing hours.

The death of his old and greatly beloved friend, Mr. Barnes, made a profound impression upon him; and after his return from Philadelphia, I felt that he might slip away from us at any moment. His heart and his thoughts were, plainly, all above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. In a

letter to an old friend in Boston, dated January 24th, only a week before his departure, he writes : " What a glorious death was that of Albert Barnes ! It holds me wondering and praising God for his singular grace to that very remarkable man. Is it possible that such a death is to be mine ? I wish to die, if God's will be so, in *mediis rebus* ; but to die in *good health*, and *without pain* ! Is such a mercy in reserve for me ? Pray for me, my dear friend, that die, when, where, or how I may, I may glorify God in dying."

But, although suffering from a cold, he continued his lectures, as usual, until Wednesday of last week. On Thursday, a physician was called in ; but it was not until Tuesday morning of this week, that his friends became seriously alarmed at his condition. His prostration was at that time very great. He lay dozing at intervals throughout the day, rarely speaking, save in reply to questions, and evidently disinclined to mental exertion of any sort. Toward evening he was much agitated and disturbed by an effort to take nourishment. An attempt was therefore made to divert his mind from painful thoughts by speaking of Christ. He instantly caught at the allusion, and though he had hitherto spoken little, and that with great difficulty, his whole soul roused itself, and he broke forth into the most wonderful expressions of love to his Saviour, closing with the following stanzas from a hymn of Watts, which he repeated with such unction and energy of feeling, that at the time, the language was not recognized as verse, but was supposed to be his own. That it was the language of his inmost heart at that very moment, no one who had heard the tones, and seen the worn, yet illumined face, could for an instant doubt :

Lord, when I quit this earthly stage,
Where shall I fly, but to Thy breast ?
For I have sought no other home :
For I have learned no other rest.

I can not live contented here
Without some glimpses of Thy face ;
And heaven, without Thy presence there,
Will be a dark and tiresome place.

When earthly cares engross the day,
 And hold my thoughts aside from Thee,
 The shining hours of cheerful light
 Are long and tedious years to me.

And if no evening visit's paid
 Between my Saviour and my soul,
 How dull the night ! how sad the shade !
 How mournfully the minutes roll !

This flesh of mine might learn as soon
 To live, yet part with all my blood ;
 To breathe, when vital air is gone,
 Or thrive and grow without my food.

The strings that twine about my heart,
 Tortures and racks may tear them off ;
 But they can never, never part
 With their dear hold of Christ, my Love.

My God ! and can an humble child,
 Who loves Thee with a flame so high,
 Be ever from Thy face exiled,
 Without the pity of Thine eye ?

Impossible ! For Thine own hands
 Have tied my heart so fast to Thee ;
 And in Thy book the promise stands,
 That where Thou art, Thy friends must be.

His physicians saw him early on Wednesday morning, and thought he might perhaps live through the day. But he sank rapidly, and his mind was more or less bewildered through his physical exhaustion. There was now and then a whispered word, "more faith," "blessed Saviour," "a poor sinner," but most of what he said was unintelligible. At about a quarter before eleven, he said, with almost a smile, "I feel a *great deal better*, and am going to get up." Yielding to the solicitation to remain in bed, he lay quietly for a moment, then rose and sat upright for a single instant. A sudden pallor spread over his face, and he was tenderly replaced upon his pillow, where he drew his breath gently at intervals, but so gently that those who watched about him hardly knew at what moment the ardent soul took flight from the exhausted body.

And so he left us and entered into the joy of his Lord! But what a legacy is the memory of his saintly life and character! "I thank God on every remembrance of him, as the holiest man I have ever known," writes an old friend; and many more of his old friends are ready to-day to bear the same witness. They, too, thank God on every remembrance of him, as the holiest man they have ever known.

ART. VII.—THOLUCK'S JUBILEE.

THE celebration of the semi-centennial jubilee of Dr. Tholuck, which took place at Halle, Dec. 2, 1870, was an event of rare interest. It is now more than fifty years since this eminent divine and scholar entered upon his academic career at the University of Berlin. Soon afterwards he was transferred to Halle, at a time when Gesenius and Wegscheider ruled that seat of learning. He commenced there a revolution in favor of evangelical theology, which after many struggles was completely triumphant. During this long period he has been prominent before the literary and religious world as a teacher and defender of revealed truth, as a fruitful author, as a learned expounder of Scriptures, as an eloquent preacher, and as a guide and friend of students, who flocked from all parts of the world to hear his lectures, and to enjoy his personal intercourse. His life was "a life with the young, fruitful in blessings." No public teacher of the age, not even the sainted Neander, surpasses him in self-denying devotion to students, and in magnetic power over their minds and hearts. He always loved, as he confesses, candidates more than ministers, and students more than candidates, because he was more interested in the process of growth than in the result of growth. He converses freely in ancient and modern languages; his learning is extensive and brilliant, his mind, though dwelling in a frail, sickly tabernacle, retains its youthful freshness and vivacity to his present age of more than three-score years and ten; but the crowning glory of his character and life, is his all-absorbing passion for Christ,