

# The Bible Student.

CONTINUING

## The Bible Student and Religious Outlook.

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Number 6.

**A Sore Loss.** In common with the cause of truth in general and the Presbyterian Church in particular, THE BIBLE STUDENT has sustained a sore loss in the death of Rev. GEORGE T. PURVES, D. D., LL. D. When THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK was merged into THE BIBLE STUDENT the interest of Dr. PURVES was enlisted, his cordial coöperation was secured, and from that time until his lamented death he was on its active staff. Not even his transfer from the professor's chair to the more numerous, various and exacting duties of the most prominent, metropolitan congregation in American Presbyterianism was suffered to withdraw him from his connection with this magazine or to interfere with his regular work on its editorial staff. Such practical devotion to its interests enhances the loss our magazine has sustained. A suitable memorial prepared by one peculiarly and preëminently fitted for the task appears elsewhere in our pages. We here simply note his death and express our sense of sore bereavement.

"God's ways seem dark but, soon or late,  
They touch the shining hills of day."

**Vocation.** There is no doctrine of more practical importance than that of

a divine vocation. There is none that is more uniformly assumed or more frequently referred to. Oftentimes the assumption lies in a mere allusion made by some speaker or writer without adequate appreciation of what is involved in it, using phraseology made current by a usage developed under the influence of Christian conceptions of God and of his providence, coin the image and super-scription of which have been worn off by long use but which are freely given and received for their face value. The fact has become fast embedded in our most familiar phraseology in daily, heedless use. Whenever one's vocation is spoken of, the doctrine is assumed. Even an avowed atheist would not hesitate to refer to another's profession in such terms, saying that his vocation was the law or his calling was medicine. Not that such a man would thus avow his belief in the doctrine of divine vocation, by no means; but at the same time his unwitting use of such words does bear unconscious testimony to the ineradicable hold this doctrine has obtained in the world's thought. Vocation presumes a voice, and calling involves a caller.

When one pursues his "calling" with such enthusiasm and persistence as to challenge note, it is not uncommon to mark the man or woman as one "with a mission," *i. e.*, one who

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GEORGE TYBOUT PURVES, D. D., LL. D.

SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1852—SEPTEMBER 24TH, 1901.

PROFESSOR B. B. WARFIELD, D. D., LL. D., PRINCETON, N. J.

THE BIBLE STUDENT is less than two years old, and yet it is already called upon to mourn the loss of one of its Board of Editors. It is not for me to whet the edge of the regret which every reader of THE BIBLE STUDENT will feel when he contemplates the seriousness of the loss he has sustained in the death of Dr. Purves. But it cannot be inappropriate to put on record here some account of the life-history of a man whom every one who knew him admired and loved, and in whom the readers of this journal have a special right to feel peculiar interest.

The Purveses, as every Scotchman will know, are a Berwickshire family. The name is extraordinarily common in that county; and Berwick men bearing it have won a place for it in the secular and particularly in the religious history of Scotland. Thence came, for example, in the eighteenth century, one of the most interesting figures in the annals of Scottish sectarianism, the eccentric James Purves, the predecessor of the late Thomas Southwood Smith in the pastorate of the Unitarian chapel at Edinburgh, and the author of numerous books which remain until to-day the monuments of his native vigor and self-acquired learning. Thence came, also, that man of God, John Purves of Jedburgh, a companion of the unique band of saints of whom Robert Murray McCheyne and the Bonars are, perhaps, the best known members, the aroma of whose devout lives filled all the spaces of the middle half of the nineteenth century. Thence also came, about the middle of the eighteenth century, the John Purves who, emigrating to America and establishing himself as a merchant first at Bridgeton and then at Philadelphia, became the ancestor of our Dr. Purves. In West Jersey, that refuge of persecuted saints, the young Scotchman found a wife for himself in a Huguenot maiden, bearing the great name of Anne Marot. Their son, Alexander Purves, married in Margaret Colesberry, a

descendant of Swen Colesberg, schoolmaster in the Swedish colony at Wilmington. Thus Dr. Purves' father, William Purves, the issue of this marriage, was typically American in the complicated mixture of good strains of blood in his descent. His wife, Anna Kennedy,—Dr. Purves' mother,—was on both sides of purely North Irish ancestry. But her Presbyterianism was no more deeply inbred than that of her husband. John Purves had from the beginning been identified with the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, which he served as a trustee; and in that church his son, Alexander, was first a trustee, and then an elder. In the latter high office William succeeded his father. It was from this godly stock that Dr. Purves sprang. The home of his childhood was an ideal Christian household, "abounding," as one who, as its pastor, knew it well, describes it, "with the sweetest Christian amenities and sanctities," "the goodly and godly fellowship of which was a perpetual charm."

Into this holy nesting-place, George Tybout Purves was born, September the twenty-seventh, 1852; and under its gracious influences he grew up. It was one of the felicities of his life that he was not compelled to leave his home to obtain his education. His primary schooling was received in the excellent Classical Institute of the Rev. Dr. John Wylie Faires, in stimulating companionship with a company of fine boys, some of whom have attained distinction in very various fields of activity. Among them may be especially named, perhaps—although they were both some years older than he—the present Professor of Greek in the University of Pennsylvania, and Gerald F. Dale (also the son of an elder in the First Presbyterian Church), whose short life was yet long enough to obtain a good report as a missionary of the Cross. He is described by one of his instructors at this period, as small and quiet, little aggressive in his work, and not yet revealing his full ability, fond withal of outdoor sports, especially of cricket, in which he was proficient. "I remember well," he adds, "his smiling face, his modest demeanor, his correct recitations, his eagerness to learn." At the age of sixteen he entered the University of Pennsylvania, where he had a distinguished career, particularly in oratory and philosophy, and was graduated in 1872. Meanwhile, his boyhood pastor, Albert Barnes, had died, and had been succeeded about the time when young Purves

was entering upon his university life by Dr. Herrick Johnson, now of McCormick Seminary. It was Dr. Johnson's privilege to receive his public confession of faith. He speaks of him, as at this time "giving sign and token of all the characteristics that marked his subsequent career; ready, nimble, versatile, scholarly, genial, and gentle—a winsome follow." After his graduation from the university, he devoted yet an additional year to the study of Greek under the guidance of his university Professors in that language. It was thus with an exceptionally careful preparation that he came to the study of theology.

In the autumn of 1873 he entered Princeton Theological Seminary, and gave himself with characteristic energy to laying the foundations in solid theological learning for his future life-work. It is safe to say that no more faithful pupil ever sat upon the hard benches of the Old Seminary class-rooms. He neglected nothing. He accomplished with distinction every task set him. His easy mastery of the subjects embraced in the curriculum was, however, only one of many ways in which he exhibited a vigor and richness of mental life that won from the first the respect of his preceptors and the admiration of his comrades. He was by common consent pronounced the best preacher in his class. And who will deny his claim to have been the best of good companions? Who that enjoyed his goodly fellowship can forget those hours when without restraint he freely gave the best that was in him to his friends? The somewhat meagre opportunities for extra-curriculum work then offered by the Seminary, he, of course, took full advantage of. These included rather extended studies in Shemitic philology, under the instruction of Dr. J. F. McCurdy, then J. C. Green, Instructor in Hebrew,—in the course of which he obtained a good acquaintance with Biblical Aramaic and Syriac, and a fair introduction to Arabic. But they particularly embraced continuous and loving study in the exegesis of the New Testament under Dr. Caspar Wistar Hodge, in the prosecution of which he laid the basis of a lifelong enthusiastic study of the New Testament.

He was graduated from the Seminary in 1876, but remained in connection with it an additional year pursuing advanced studies in Biblical Literature and Biblical Theology under the direction of Dr. C. W. Hodge and Dr. W. H. Green.

He profited, of course, from all the instruction he received in the Seminary, as only a mind like his, at once docile and independent, receptive and fertile, could profit. But the formative influence exerted upon him came from Dr. C. W. Hodge. What he felt he owed to the noble personality and inspiring example as well as impressive teaching of that wide-minded scholar, and the affectionate gratitude with which he bore him in memory throughout life, he has himself told us only last spring in the beautiful eulogy he pronounced upon his revered teacher at the unveiling of a tablet to his memory in the chapel of Princeton Seminary. Probably no other instructor throughout the whole period of his youthful development exercised so moulding an influence upon him; although he always acknowledged a large debt also to Rev. Dr. C. P. Krauth, who had imbued him with his philosophical conceptions at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Krauth's philosophy proved, however, rather his point of departure and he worked himself gradually more and more free from its characteristic features: while Dr. Hodge was not only a quickening but a determining influence throughout his life.

Meanwhile Mr. Purves had, in May, 1876, been licensed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia to preach the gospel; and immediately on completing his graduate studies at the Seminary, he was, on April 27th, 1877, ordained by the Presbytery of Chester and installed pastor of the little church at Wayne, then a hamlet already beginning to show signs of becoming the beautiful suburban town it has since grown into. The church had only sixty-three members when Mr. Purves took charge of it, and its growth under his labors was but slow, if steady; ninety-two members are reported for 1880, just after he had left it. But the young minister was showing his qualities as he was quietly working in this somewhat retired parish, and even attracting attention. Accordingly, when, in 1880, the Boundary Avenue Church, in Baltimore, was established, he was chosen to put the new enterprise on its feet. This he did. After seven years labor in that field, he was able to leave behind him a flourishing communion of 257 members, comfortably housed in a handsome building, and girded for steady growth in membership and influence. Meanwhile, the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburg, whose pastor, the Rev. Sylvester F. Scovel, had been taken from it in 1883 to become

President of Wooster University, had fixed upon this vigorous young preacher and organizer as the very man it needed to carry on its high traditions and compact its scattering energies. Its membership had fallen off, during its three years of vacancy, from 720 to 639, and otherwise its condition began to show the signs of decay incident to a shepherdless flock. From the moment that Mr. Purves came to it, in 1886, however, the floods of life surged up again into all its arteries. That its membership increased, during the six years of his pastorate, to 853—a growth of over 200—inadequately measures the power of his ministry. The whole organization had become vital and throbbing with energy. It stood out to public view as a unified organism, abundant in grace and good works, whose pastor had become in some sense the pastor of the whole community. Especially was he looked up to as teacher and guide by the young men of the city, and his Sabbath evening service—the sermon at which was understood to be especially adjusted to their needs—came to be almost a young men's service, crowded from week to week with young men who held no other special relation to this church.

Throughout all this faithful and abounding pastoral work, Dr. Purves—for he was made Doctor of Divinity by Washington and Jefferson College in 1888—had never intermitted the most painstaking and enthusiastic critical study of the New Testament and related topics of scholarly investigation. A specimen of his attainments was given the world in his "Stone Lectures," which were delivered in Princeton in 1888, and published shortly afterwards (1889), in a goodly volume of three hundred octavo pages. The choice of the subject of these lectures—*The Testimony of Justin Martyr to Early Christianity*—was itself characteristic of Dr. Purves' genius. It did a great deal more than indicate the engagement of his mind with the problems that surround the origin of Christianity. It established his faculty for seizing upon the really salient point in a problem and for entering a debate at an angle which clears it at once of many irrelevant issues. The selection of the writings of Justin Martyr for comprehensive examination with a view to determining the relative places taken by the teachings of its founders and heathen thought in the formation of what has come down to us as Christianity, was as fine in its way as the admirable treatment he gave to the theme after he

had selected it. The reception accorded the book by competent judges was most flattering. Pretty nearly the only adverse criticism passed upon it,—except, of course, that which arose out of irreconcilable difference in standpoint,—was that it leaned rather heavily upon von Engelhardt. Well, it does lean rather heavily on von Engelhardt; and the reason is not far to seek. Von Engelhardt was the right man to lean upon. It was creditable to Dr. Purves' acumen that he saw this and acted upon it. But let no one suppose that he leans in any slavish way upon von Engelhardt or any one else; he did his own independent work, he kept his own independent way, and he drew his own independent conclusions. Only he neglected no one who had passed that way before him, and least of all, one whose passage along the road had blazed out the most commodious and the most profitable path. How the matter really stands with reference to his relation to his predecessors, we will let Dr. Egbert C. Smyth tell us. "He has given," writes this scholar, "a better account of the opinions of Justin Martyr than can be found in the works of any of his distinguished German predecessors; and though no one, we doubt not, would more readily acknowledge indebtedness to them, it is a mark of supreme qualification for historical research, that he has estimated so accurately their contributions and known how to advance on their labors."

The quality in the book which struck even its unfriendly critics most strongly was its transparent honesty, both in purpose and in achievement; its evident determination not merely to support a cause but to ascertain the truth,—to marshall all the facts and to elicit from them all their message. Thus Lüdemann, for example, while decisively rejecting Dr. Purves' standpoint and roundly declaring that "no scientific treatment" of the material is possible from it, yet is constrained to confess that Dr. Purves exhibits "thorough knowledge," and proceeds by means of "an exact presentation of the data." "It is above all to be recognized," he remarks, "that Purves sets forth the facts exactly and fully, covering up nothing and concealing nothing" (*nichts vertuscht, nichts verschwiegt*). We are tempted to dwell on this because it is not merely characteristic of the book, but reveals a fundamental trait of Dr. Purves' mind. His was, above everything else, a fair mind: sometimes he might appear slow and

over-cautious in reaching or announcing a conclusion; never too little so. He earnestly desired to have all the facts before him before he formed an opinion; perhaps, he sometimes found it difficult to recognize the truth until he could see it whole; but he spared no pains in seeking to see it whole. In a notable address which he delivered at Emporia College at the Commencement of 1894, on *The Value of the Highest Culture*, he enunciated one of the guiding rules of his own life, when he declared that "such culture induces caution and modesty in reaching conclusions." There spoke Dr. Purves' scientific conscience; and we could not obtain a better characterization of his uniform practice in his scientific work. Whatever we think of his conclusions, we must needs recognize that they were always prudently formed, and were announced with the utmost modesty.

The general thesis which Dr. Purves develops in his *Justin Martyr*—his "Alpha and Omega," as Lüdemann prefers to speak of it—is that post-apostolic Christianity was not created by fusion with, but yet was modified by paganism. This general thesis he set forth in a comprehensive paper published in *The Presbyterian Review* contemporaneously with the delivery of his lectures (1888). In this he was able to handle the question more broadly and to orient himself with more effect. Other articles of similarly broad scholarship succeeded. It was quite plain that a light of learning had been lifted up that could not be hid under a bushel. The Seminaries began to besiege this brilliant young scholar to bring his gifts and acquisitions to their service. He was sought by more than one institution for more than one chair of instruction. Among others, Princeton Seminary sought in vain to secure him for its chair of Church History. During a vacancy in the chair of Dogmatic Theology in the Western Seminary at Allegheny, he actually taught that branch throughout a whole year to delighted classes. But his heart was fixed in its devotion to the criticism and interpretation of the New Testament; and he steadfastly refused to listen to any of these solicitations. At length, in 1892, however, on the death of his revered instructor in the New Testament at Princeton, he was prevailed upon to take up the work that had fallen from Dr. C. W. Hodge's hands, and so he became Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis at Princeton.



To the work of this chair he brought not only eminent general abilities and a remarkable special aptitude, but a trained exegetical tact, and a great store of accumulated special knowledge gathered through the entire period of his pastoral labors, throughout which his critical study of the New Testament had been untiringly prosecuted. He brought also an unbounded energy and zeal, and a depth of religious sentiment which rendered every word of the New Testament precious to him, and made its exposition and enforcement his highest delight. It is using language altogether inadequate to call his eight years as instructor in Princeton Seminary successful. His instruction was enthusiastically given and enthusiastically received. The church to-day is richer in men who know and love the New Testament for those years of his work in the Seminary; and he lives and will live many years to come in the fine scholarship of his pupils, formed under his example and instruction.

His class-room work did not, however, suffice him. His burning zeal in communicating his treasures of divine knowledge led him ever to seek and to find other channels of expression. He wrote much for the religious press. He was in great demand as a public lecturer, and made long journeys for that purpose. Even this was not enough. He was soon found preaching regularly every Sabbath evening in one of the Princeton churches with an especial view to the needs of the unevangelized classes, and to the young men gathered so numerous in this University town. Just as, while he was in the pastorate, he was besieged by the Seminaries seeking his gifts and learning for their chairs of instruction; so now, when he was at last in the Seminary, he was besieged by the churches, seeking to secure for their pulpits, such marked ability and tried skill. Numerous calls came to him from the most outstanding churches in the land; he was called back to Pittsburg, to Baltimore, to Philadelphia, to New York. Every one of these calls tempted him. He loved to preach and was conscious of the power that went out from him. But he contented himself for a time with becoming Stated Supply to the First Presbyterian Church at Princeton (1897), though this soon ripened into his settlement as regular pastor over that church. He put his shoulders under the double burden with an enthusiasm that knew no bounds. An assistant was given him in the Church; an assist-

ant was given him in the Seminary. But he appeared to be concerned not so much to shift some of his work to them as to invent enough additional work in the congregation and Seminary to keep them also busy. These superabounding labors proved, of course, too much for his strength, sapped as it now proved to be, by the inroads of a fatal disease. So, in the spring of 1900, he laid down his work in Princeton and became pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York, as the fourth in that series of remarkable pastors by which the history of that church has been distinguished,—James W. Alexander, Nathan L. Rice, John Hall, and George T. Purves. Less than eighteen months were granted him for the cultivation of this new field, before he “fell on sleep,” having literally worn himself out in a service of love. But even there he was already garnering fruit of his labor.

It is doubtless idle to ask whether Dr. Purves was most the preacher or most the scholar. The greater portion of his active life was spent in the pulpit and it would be but natural if he should be remembered longest as one of the most impressive preachers of his day. In truth, however, the two things cannot be separated in his case. He was never more the scholar than when he was in the pulpit; he was never more the preacher than when he was in the class-room. He certainly was not a “scholastic” preacher, and he certainly was not what is called a “homiletical” teacher. But his scholarship was far more in evidence in the pulpit than merely as a refining influence, as there was far more of the preacher in his class-room exercises than his earnest purpose and profound engagement with the vital elements of the truth. Probably Dr. Purves never developed a theologoumenon in the pulpit in a technically theological fashion. But he was habitually one of the most theological of preachers. It was not merely that he had thought deeply on theological themes and held firmly to a developed theological system, which underlay, sustained, and gave body to all his preaching. This was eminently true of him, and it went far to account for the consistency, strength and edifying effect of his pulpit ministrations. But he not only preached out of his theology; he preached his theology—not technically, nor even with professed intent, but really and with remarkable point and precision in conception, clearness in development and detailed completeness in exposition. And as he

preached his theology, so he preached his "criticism." The boldness with which he introduced into his sermons the results, and, on the positive side, even the processes of his critical studies was equaled only by the skill with which he bent it all to serve a vitalizing effect. I have known him at the sacramental table to introduce a careful and minute refutation of the modern assault on the institution of the Lord's supper by Jesus, which traversed every point and yet with an effect that was so far from controversial, that it was eminently and markedly sacramental. But the staple of Dr. Purves' preaching was Biblico-theological, and I do not think a better description of his sermons could be found than one given by Dr. DeWitt: they were "didactic orations of which the substance was yielded by studies in Biblical Theology." But they were cast into truly homiletical moulds and so governed by the vital interest of the preacher in the truths presented as fitted to make men wise unto salvation that they were always truly and purely sermons.

I must briefly revert to what I have said of Dr. Purves' introduction of "critical" material into his sermons, for two reasons. It contributed a special character of modernness to his preaching which gave it a peculiar freshness. And it illustrates finely his controversial method. Though he never mentioned an opponent as held in view nor even formally posited an objection, his sermons and popular addresses were often controversial to the finger tips. That is to say they traversed with care and completeness a series of objections held constantly in the mind of the speaker and conscientiously answered by him, but never revealed openly to the audience, who got thus only the positive presentation. This was Dr. Purves' theory of the best method of controversy. He held that all controversy should be carried on as far as possible solely by the positive development of the case in hand, not indeed without reference to the opposition, but without announced reference to it. Of course, he was not unaware that his controversial purpose was often missed by the majority of his audience; he considered that it would not be missed by those who, being aware of the views controverted, needed it, while his positive presentation would stand as a prophylactic for all. I believe as time went on, he began to suspect that more missed it than he was willing should miss it; that sometimes even the very persons he was intending

to confute would not be aware they were confuted until they were told so in so many words; and accordingly he seemed to be driven gradually into a more direct method of controversy, when he felt refutation was necessary. But his decided preference was for the indirect method, and he developed great skill in it. Some of his most innocently sounding addresses were accordingly really bristling with controversial points.

Of Dr. Purves' preaching from the purely formal side perhaps a word or two will suffice. The most striking quality of his very effective delivery was its nervous expenditure. He preached all over. He threw a tremendous energy of bodily action into what he said, gesturing not so much with fore-thought and calculated effect, but as if the force of his conviction and the earnestness of his purpose must find exit in something more than his mere words. His style of composition in itself considered perhaps lacked in brightness. He was no phrase-maker; he used illustrations sparingly. But it did not lack in dignity and directness, in vitality or force. His periods were rotund, balanced, and as clear as crystal. He was incapable of forming an unintelligible, weak or unvitalized sentence. His power of popular exposition was remarkable. He could develop an abstruse theme and pursue it into all of its ramifications,—it was a maxim with him that a preacher should take all of its contents out of his subject and work out its implications to the last detail,—in a way that for lucidity and forcefulness of effect was marvelous. The eminent characteristic of his preaching was instructiveness. He was not a revivalist; he was rather a master-builder. His churches grew steadily and solidly under his hands and gave to the onlooker the impression of having been compacted into thoroughly vitalized organisms. To this result no doubt the faithfulness of his pastoral care contributed; for, he became ever more and more a model pastor, going in and out among his people with an untiring devotion which attached them to him in a touching affection, and to the church as "members" in the right sense of that word, ready to fulfill their functions as such. But much of it must be attributed to the solidity and faithfulness of his preaching.

Cut off as he was in the midst of his days, Dr. Purves has left behind him no such literary product as will convey to posterity an adequate measure of his powers. He served his own gener-

ation. Outside the pulpit and class-room it was in numerous addresses and equally numerous "flying leaves" of magazine and newspaper articles that he expressed himself. I am far from valuing these lightly. We are perhaps prone to overestimate the relative importance of the *litera scripta*, because, forsooth, it *manet*; the "winged word" of speech is the real lever by which the world is moved; and it is better to build characters than to make books. Dr. Purves seems to have thought so; and freely—let me rather say, prodigally—gave himself to the oral communication of his thought. Nor did he fail of his abundant reward. At every place where he spoke he produced the profoundest impression. He published but two books. One of them we have already spoken of—his admirable treatise on *Justin Martyr*. By its side, he placed in the waning days of his professorship at Princeton, his equally admirable handbook on *The Apostolic Age*. It is nothing but a handbook, compelled to be such by the limitations, not of his preparation, but of the requirements of the series to form a part of which it was written. But in compressed fulness of information, sobriety and balance of judgment, fine and discriminating historical insight, strength and lucidity of presentation it is something of a wonder among handbooks. There is a type of "modern critical scholarship" which does not like it and has spoken evilly—perhaps I should be justified in saying, unworthily—of it. But this type of "modern critical scholarship" will have to reckon with it. It may be easy to damn it with faint praise and to suggest that, with all its obvious fullness of information and clearness of grasp, it "lacks in historical sense"—by which, so far as I can see, is meant only that it does not violently force apostolic history into the formulas of a naturalistic criticism. But it is apt not to prove so easy fairly and squarely to meet the issue that Dr. Purves raises in this book, and does a great service to Biblical learning and indeed to the purity of Christian thought in this twentieth century of ours by fairly and squarely raising—the issue, to wit, of the origination of Christianity in an immediately supernatural interposition. This he rightly felt, and more and more felt, to be the real issue of present-day religious thought; as the hearers of his noble centenary address delivered in the Philadelphia Academy of Music on May 17th last, will readily understand. And this is the real

meaning of this little book of his; it is nothing but a calm, quiet, thoroughly informed, thoroughly thought-out presentation of the origins of Christianity as a supernaturally given supernatural religion.

In passing, it is worth while to note that if Dr. Purves is to be judged by his published works—and so posterity will be likely to judge him,—he was first of all and before all, a historian. Both of his books are historical studies, most minute in their underlying basis of investigation, most masterly in their presentation of the material. His major articles are also of historical tendency: *The Influence of Paganism on Post-Apostolic Christianity* (*Presbyterian Review*, 1888), *Apostolic Literature and Apostolic History* (*Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, 1898), *The Formation of the New Testament* (Do., 1895). The same is true of a large number of his minor publications. This historical interest shows itself even in the most important group of his published writings after those I have just cited, I mean his contributions to the Bible Dictionaries of Drs. Hastings and Davis, to both of which he was a somewhat copious contributor. Nevertheless, his interests were not primarily historical but Biblico-theological. His engagement with historical themes was due partly to the exigencies of the situation,—so that his historical studies were really ancillary to an apologetical motive,—and partly to his unquenchable zeal for the exploration of every side of New Testament study. Alongside of his historical studies we find others, therefore, the interest of which is textual (e. g., on Acts xi. 20, in the *Presbyterian Review* for 1883), isagogical (as in the majority of the articles contributed to Dr. Davis' *Dictionary of the Bible*), and especially theological. It was a Biblico-theological theme that he chose as the subject of his inaugural address when he was inducted into his chair at Princeton Seminary,—*St. Paul and Inspiration*, and he treated it *con amore* and with immense effect. The chief article he contributed to Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* is of theological character,—on the *Logos*. Papers like that he wrote for the American Institute of Christian Philosophy on *The Incarnation Biblically Considered* were those in which he most delighted. Here at the heart of his subject his own heart was really set.

I have no space left to speak of Dr. Purves' large public

work,—his faithfulness as a presbyter and his readiness to spend himself in the organized work of the church. No voice was more potent in the church courts. He was a member of four General Assemblies. He served on two of the great Boards through which the church performs its evangelizing functions. He was a much sought after committeeman in every good enterprise. As a member of the faculty at Princeton, his counsel was always valued and his faithfulness and wide-minded loyalty to a high ideal of ministerial education most marked. Into his private life, which was exceptionally beautiful, I must not here intrude. Suffice it to say that he fulfilled in every department of life his full duty in the gladness of willing service. He was married on October 11, 1881, to Miss Rebecca B. Sellers, of Wayne,—his first parish; and she remains with six children lovingly to cherish a memory which must be to them a joy and a blessing throughout life. Wise in counsel, prudent in speech, faithful in performance, he has left behind him the inspiration of a high and devout life, lived in close imitation of the Master who went about doing good. Unsparring of himself, he literally wore himself out in unremitting labor. It was on the 24th day of September last, after forty-nine strenuous years of well-packed, well-directed work, that he escaped from the labors of earth and entered into the rest of God. It would be cruel to begrudge him his well-earned rest:—

His body is at peace in holy ground,  
His spirit is at peace where angels kneel.

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## THE PASSOVER.

PROFESSOR ROBERT DICK WILSON, D. D., PRINCETON, N. J.

The English word "passover" is a noun derived from the verb "to pass over," which was used by the English translators to express the meaning of the Hebrew word employed in Exodus xii. 13, where God says: I will pass over you when I see the blood. It is used in three senses: first, of the paschal lamb; secondly, of the supper; and thirdly, of the whole festival of unleavened bread, extending over the week from the fourteenth of Nisan to the twenty-first.