

A DISCOURSE

ON

THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF THE

REV. JEREMIAH CHAMBERLAIN, D. D.,

LATE PRESIDENT OF OAKLAND COLLEGE.

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OAKLAND COLLEGE, ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12TH, 1851.

BY REV. JOSEPH B. STRATTON.

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DISCOURSE.

“THE LORD REIGNETH, LET THE EARTH REJOICE.”—*Ps. xcvi, 1.*

“THE LORD REIGNETH, LET THE PEOPLE TREMBLE.”—*Ps. xcix, 1.*

IF IT were proposed to invent a formula by which the constitutional frame and spirit of a mind, pervaded by a true faith in God, should be most fitly expressed, I know not that a more apt one could be found than we have in the first of these passages which I have selected as my text. Only such a mind could consistently use such language, and such a mind, I may add, could never consistently use any other language. It does, and it must apprehend, in the fact that God reigns, and in every particular act by which His sovereignty is demonstrated, a ground of rejoicing. For in the sovereignty of God, and in every practical exhibition of it, it perceives only that infinite excellence which it has been wont to contemplate, with pious pleasure, in the nature of the Deity, exercising itself in the supervision and government of the world. With the consistency which always marks a true faith, it carries its creed with it, into every place and every event in which God presents Himself to its notice, and sees only that creed acted out in all that God does;—beholding still, in the darkest of His works, the clear outline of His all-perfect nature.

It is the effect, too, of that personal trust in God which such a mind has learned to exercise, to make it rejoice in His supremacy. It has resigned that independence, which man naturally seeks to maintain, and which keeps him ever in bondage, by involving him in perpetual strife with the thousand things that oppose, and cripple, and disappoint him—it has resigned this wisely, to find a sweet freedom in an entire dependence upon God. Baffled and betrayed in all its attempts to reach a centre of repose in itself, or in other intelligences kindred to itself, it has been lifted aloft by its faith, and poised upon the wisdom and rectitude of the Infinite In-

telligence ; and there its weary oscillations cease. Resting in the infallibility of God, the indications of His sovereign good pleasure become the law of its own volitions, and the actings of His power, the arguments which challenge its unquestioning assent to His most mysterious decrees.

And more than all this, it is not too much to say of such a mind, that it has entered into such communion of perception and feeling with God, that it shares, in a degree, in the emotions with which He himself surveys His works. "Partakers of His nature," (2 Peter, c. 1, v. 4,) as all true believers are declared by inspiration to be, what shall we expect of them, but that their experiences should accord with His? But His sovereignty and His blessedness are coincident facts. He is "God over all," and, at the same time, "God blessed for ever." (Rom., c. 9, v. 5.) He rejoices as He reigns: rejoices whether the product of His will, be a world created or a world destroyed. Enthroned in the consciousness of His own unchanging perfection, He looks out upon the theatre, where the machinery of His government is ever working, accomplishing His holy purposes, and fabricating the sure result of His glory—and He is infinitely happy. And in this happiness, faith prepares His people to participate. Assimilating their minds to His, and blending the exercises of both in one harmonious current, it fits and enables them, whatever may be the operations of His hand, to contemplate them with a joyful satisfaction, and spontaneously add their testimony to His own—"Behold all is very good."

It is peculiar, therefore, to a true faith to behold unmoved, even those terrible workings of a sovereign God, which make the people tremble;—to see providences, which confound and appal the minds of men, sweeping like a whirlwind through the earth, and laying in ruins the calculations, and reasonings, and hopes of finite wisdom and ordinary experience, and, yet, never waver in one note of its joy, or drop one syllable of its song. Nay, paradoxical as it may seem, it is just these startling acts of the Deity, that shock the minds of men by their seeming incongruity—that come abruptly athwart the track of events, as human saga-

city had forecast and defined it—just these things that sometimes become the means of quickening faith, and elevating it to its highest level of action and experience. It is the habit of a fallen and disloyal soul to forget God, so long as it can find an adequate security for what it wishes or projects, in the laws of God or the creatures of God. It recognizes and trusts in a God in nature, a God in history, a God in science, but it sees not a God above, or apart from nature, and history, and science. To counteract the force of this habit, and awaken in the hearts of men that true faith, which finds its object in Himself absolutely, God surprises the people by anomalous exhibitions of His power—shows Himself to them in unprecedented and unexpected forms—and throws into the regular and familiar economy of His Providence, under the cover of which they are quietly reposing, some terrific prodigy, which, like the shell bursting in the citadel, converts in a moment the stronghold of ages into a crumbling ruin. And such exigences make faith, where it exists at all, mature and expand rapidly. They lift it at once to its highest altitude, placing it under the very wings of Him who is riding in the whirlwind and directing the storm; for between this height and the opposite extreme, the nethermost abyss of unbelief, there is no middle ground for the mind to stand upon. To see God at all, at such times, is to see nothing but God. To trust in Him at all, is to trust in Him alone—to embrace Him, as the one all-sufficient support, concentrating in Himself all possible and all necessary grounds of human confidence and security. It is through the chasm thus made by the overthrow of second causes and created agencies, that God, with His infinite resources, reveals Himself to the believing soul. Thus Job, crushed to the earth by a tempest of woes, could still, out of the depths, bless the name of Jehovah. Thus the Prophet's ecstatic boast, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation," was made in view of the wreck and loss of all the visible means upon which men depend for happiness. Thus, we have seen martyrs going to the stake with an uncarthy rapture in their hearts, and the high praises of

God on their tongues. And thus, doubtless, it was, through some signal elevation of himself above nature, that Abraham was sustained, when called to bear the child of his love to the altar. And thus it is, and has ever been; the very acts of God's sovereignty, which naturally fill the hearts of men with terror, become, to His believing saints, the occasions of fastening their confidence most firmly to His throne, and raising their souls to the loftiest frames of pious joy. Like Moses, they go up, through the quaking mountain and the flashing thunder cloud, to hold their nearest interviews with God; and it is from such awful interviews that they often bring away that shining aspect that makes humanity almost Divine.

A principle, as pregnant and potent as this, I need hardly say, is an element of vital importance in forming the character, and determining the efficiency, of the church of Christ. It makes of that Church, what it ought to be—the kingdom of God and the salt of the earth. Without it, piety in the soul degenerates into mere worldly wisdom and natural virtue, and the institutions of Christianity become a dead profession and a mechanical form. It need not surprise us, therefore, brethren, that He who stands amidst the golden candlesticks, the guardian and the King of Zion, in adjusting his regimen to the wants of His Church, and in administering that culture which is needed to fit her for her mission, takes care that much of His policy should be directed to the awakening and stimulating in the hearts of his people, this principle of faith. And here, I doubt not, is the key to that most mysterious act of His providence, which has created the occasion of our meeting to-day. The meaning of this unwonted assembly—such a one as never met before on this classic ground, and such as none of us ever dreamed would be here convened—its meaning in part, at least, is just this: that God requires of those who represent His church and kingdom, in this part of the world, a higher measure and a purer quality of faith in Himself than they have heretofore attained. He detects the wants of His people with unerring accuracy; and His measures are wisely adapted to meet their wants, and wisely ordered, therefore, often to disappoint their expectations and

confound their judgments. He denies them what they ask, that He may give them what they need more than what they have asked. And they learn, from what they receive, what it was, for which they ought to have asked.

My brethren, there is a rebuke upon us to-day; but, I thank God, I think I can discover a blessing in the rebuke. I see before me a bereaved and sorrowing community; and I see, beyond the little circle here assembled, the population of a wide country, moved by one of those electric shocks of feeling, which, for the moment, abolish all distinctions, and melt neighborhoods and nations into one family, coming here in sentiment and spirit, and mourning with us for a Father who is not. Every thing around us speaks to us of loss—a loss, so big and so absorbing, that the actual objects which survive, seem to strike our senses and stir our thoughts, rather as mementos of the dead, than as present living realities. By the magnitude of our loss, or rather of our sense of it, we may learn where it was that we supposed our chief want lay. We felt that the interests of this Institution, and as connected with these, the interests of the Church and the Country, demanded the life and energies of a **DR. CHAMBERLAIN**. We asked these from God. We asked that his strong arm, and wise head and broad benevolent heart, might stay with us. And as each year brought its new exigences, creating new occasions for the exercise of his diversified talents, and at the same time, made the event naturally more probable, that the benefit of his services might be lost to us, we urged our petitions with increasing importunity. And what has been the result? Ah! brethren, yonder grave will tell you! That dark day, which we recall still, with a shuddering and sickened heart, will tell you! The shrinking awe, and hushed air, with which we tread these, once so cheerful scenes, will tell you! This loss, which meets us wherever we look—this sudden wresting from our hands, of the staff of our trust—this fearful catastrophe, which has sent us to-day, like orphans, to weep by the hearth-stone, where we have always before met a father's welcome and a father's smile,—*this* is what we have got! This is our rebuke. God has denied us what we asked.

But I said, I believed there was a blessing in our rebuke. And this blessing is, the gift of that faith in Himself, which God saw we needed more than what we asked. I am sure—it must be so, unless Christians, during these last few months, have been sleeping like the very dead,—I am sure, there is this moment, a power of faith, pure, simple, direct faith in God, awake and astir in the bosom of the Church, within our particular territory, such as never, till this awful demonstration of Jehovah's sovereignty shocked it into life, could have been found in it. And if this be so, bereft and trembling with terror as we are, we have *that* in us, which makes us, as a Christian body, mightier than the energies of a thousand Dr. Chamberlains would have done. The beauty of our Israel is slain upon the high places—our mighty one is fallen!—But the Lord of Hosts is with us,—the God of Jacob is our refuge. “Therefore, will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea,—though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,—though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”

And to this solution of the mystery which we are called to contemplate to-day, I feel impelled to couple an inference, which bears, almost, the presumptuous aspect of a prediction. When the Lord causes the trumpet to be blown in Zion, it is, that His hosts may be mustered for the battle. Providences that startle and arouse his people, generally foretold providences which are to call for the exercise of their vigilance and activity. With due diffidence, let me say, I believe that such an extraordinary summons as has here been made to God's people, especially his ministry, to equip themselves with faith, has not been made without a purpose. The instrument has been provided, because there is work to be done by it. We have seen a sight, my hearers, which has almost seared our eye-balls—Jehovah kindling His fierce furnace, and smiting at His flashing anvil;—and now, the swift product of His art lies before us,—*a weapon for the times and the men!* Can we doubt that there is a use for it? That

the occasion is coming, or is now here, when there will be a need for all this faith, which God has sought, by his recent dispensations, to infuse into his Church? Either, my brethren, there has been in us, a most criminal recreancy to our duties as servants of Christ, in time past, or there must be duties of tremendous difficulty and magnitude impending, in the time to come, or the stern discipline we have experienced would not have been applied. Probably, there is truth in both of these alternatives. What more alarming demonstration can we have, of the boldness with which Satan works; or of the extent, to which those evil passions and false principles, by which he rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience prevail amongst us, than we see in the events which closed with the tragedy at Oakland College? What has the Church been doing in years gone by, to leaven this land with the virtues of the Gospel, and to breathe into society, the peace-loving, truth-speaking, wrong-forgiving spirit of Jesus? Or if her skirts are clear for the past, and her mission lay in some other direction, what but this work has she got to undertake and prosecute, for the future? And for what, but this, and other works, it may be, which we know not yet, has she been challenged, by this crisis which has befallen her, to lay hold of the mighty arm of God, and entrench herself within His infallible resources? God expects much, doubt it not, from the weapon He has so fearfully forged for his Church in this part of our land. And she must have more of the life of God in her, and be more consecrated to her calling, her members and her ministers must become more identified in motive, and spirit, and labor with Christ, must have less of things visible, and more of eternity, in their thoughts, less of self, and more of God, in their affections, and less of worldly thrift, and more of the wisdom from above, in their policy, must act more under the obligations of redemption, and the engagements of their covenant with their Lord—must be more bold and more earnest in contending for the truth, more prompt in upholding Christ's cause, and more prayerful, and meek, and holy, in their lives, or God's controversy with her, will not be ended, and another recreancy to

her trust, will bring down upon her, another thunderbolt from the cloudy pavilion of her King.

While contemplating, thus, these demands which God seems to have made upon us, as His people, for a higher order of piety, and a more energetic devotion to His service, I am led to remark, by something more, I am sure, than the mere partiality of affection, that a rare example of very much, if not all, that we are required to be and do, may be found in the character and life of him, through whose removal, God has sent us His admonitions. In that peculiar class of heroes—the noblest which the world contains—which it belongs to Christianity to produce, DR. JEREMIAH CHAMBERLAIN deserves an honorable place. His life was the hard-working, on-going battle of a patient, resolute spirit, which having, through Divine grace, got the victory over itself, was struggling with a host of external difficulties, in its attempts to honor God and do good to man. His history is the narrative of a mind, endowed naturally with superior gifts—trained by judicious discipline and instruction—nerved by fortitude and courage of no common kind, in the discharge of duty—animated by the constraining love of Christ—expanded by a generous benevolence towards the world—and aiming ever, as the grand capital end of its projects and aspirations, at the glory of God. These phrases are not lightly uttered, and will not be considered by those who hear me, extravagant. And if they are correct, they make him what I have pronounced him to be, an honorable exemplification of the heroism of Christianity. It is with very great regret, that I have found myself, owing to the brief period allowed me for preparation, and the remoteness of many of the sources of information, supplied with a meagre stock of the materials needed, for a sketch of the personal history of our venerated brother and friend.

He was a native of Pennsylvania, born in the town of Gettysburg, in the year 1795, of pious Presbyterian parents. At an early age he entered Dickinson College, at Carlisle, and received from that institution his degree of Bachelor of Arts. While in College, it is supposed, he became the

subject of that religious change which led to his union with the Church of Christ and his dedication of himself to the sacred ministry. He pursued his Theological studies at the Seminary in Princeton, where he was graduated in the spring of 1817, having been a member of the first class ever educated at that institution. The affectionate intimacy formed at that period with his two preceptors, Drs. Alexander and Miller, continued unabated through subsequent years; and almost without a break in their fellowship, they may be said to have gone up together to their Heavenly rest.

Having received licensure to preach the Gospel, from the Presbytery of New Brunswick, he accepted a commission from the General Assembly's Board of Domestic Missions, in 1817; and, choosing the South-West as the field of his labors, in January, 1818, accompanied by his personal friend, Rev. Sylvester Larned—then on his first visit to his future charge—he landed at New Orleans. From this point, he very soon proceeded to the city of Mobile, where, it is said, no Protestant Minister, previously to his visit, had ever preached. Here he devoted himself to missionary labors, during the remainder of the winter, experiencing difficulties, and, at the same time, kindnesses from the people, such as furnished him illustrations of the Divine faithfulness and care, upon which he delighted, in after life, to dwell. In the summer of 1818, he returned to his native State, having accepted a call to the church in Bedford. To his labors as a Pastor, he here added the charge of an Academy, which he opened immediately upon his settlement. He remained in Bedford till the year 1822, when, having accepted an invitation to the Presidency of Centre College, he removed to Danville, Ky. His appointment to such an office, at the early age of twenty-seven, is an evidence of the high estimate which had been already formed of his talents and learning. In this new position, he manifested his characteristic prudence and energy, and contributed materially to establish the infant institution under his care, upon a sound and permanent basis; and, in grateful acknowledgment of his useful services, one of the literary societies of the College at present bears his name.

During his administration, a new charter was obtained for the institution, in which he succeeded, with considerable effort, in having introduced a clause, authorizing the establishment of a Theological Department, whenever the funds of the institution should permit; an illustration of that policy which he attempted to pursue, in the whole course of his labors in the West and South, of making learning subservient to religion, and multiplying the means of education, in order to raise up a ministry for the country.

In December, 1826, he resigned the Presidency of Centre College, with a view to assuming a similar office in the College of Louisiana—a new institution established by that State, and located in the town of Jackson. The hope of increased usefulness, had led him to accept this appointment; a hope, however, which he soon found must be defeated, in consequence of the restrictions which were attempted to be laid upon him, in the exercise of his functions as a Minister of the Gospel. For, to his honor be it said, Dr. Chamberlain never, in any position, forgot his call to preach the Word, and never ceased to labor diligently, through the pulpit, for the salvation of men. Under such discouragement, he resigned his office in the institution at Jackson, in the spring of 1829, and devoted himself for a short time to teaching pupils, in a private Academy, established by himself.

At this period it was, that he was led to reflect upon the importance and practicability of establishing a College, which should be under the care and supervision of the Presbyterian Church. The primary motive that directed him to the framing of this project, was the hope, that could the opportunity of obtaining an adequate education be furnished upon their own soil, many pious youth in the South-West would be induced to avail themselves of it, and thus a native ministry be provided for this destitute and neglected field. At that time, no College commencement had ever been held, nor had a single scholar ever been graduated South-West of Tennessee; nor had a single educated native of Mississippi ever entered the ministry. Dr. Chamberlain submitted his plan to the consideration of the Presbytery of Mississippi, first, at a meeting

held in the town of Baton Rouge, La., in April, 1829. It was at once approved of, and having been subsequently matured, was adopted by the Presbytery, in April, 1830, when a Board of Trustees was appointed, and the originator of the plan invited to assume the Presidency of the projected College.

He entered upon the work assigned him, with an energy and hopefulness which gave confidence, at once, to all enlisted with him, and seemed to indicate, what the event has proved, that, thenceforth, his life was to have no interest apart from the success of the institution, which for Christ's and His Church's sake, he had undertaken to build up. Every thing comprised in the practical execution of the enterprise, had yet to be done; and upon the President, more than any other man, or body of men, depended the successful accomplishment of it. The history of his difficulties and labors, in this truly heroic work, I need not recount to this audience. You know it all;—from the day he took up his abode in the log-house, near James' Creek, with three pupils as his entire charge, to that later one, when his own sturdy arm felled the first tree on these grounds, to make a home for the College edifices which now adorn them; and thence, on to that last fatal one, when his life-blood, shed by violence, stained the soil on which the monuments of his philanthropy and patriotism were towering all around him. For more than twenty years, he devoted himself faithfully to the interests of Oakland College, during the most of which time, at least since 1838, when a series of extraordinary reverses prostrated the business of the country, and swept away the funds of the institution in the general bankruptcy, he was obliged to struggle against all the embarrassments growing out of deranged finances and accumulating debt. Through all this period of trial, the resources of his courage, and faith and skill never failed; and he lived long enough, as we believe, to see cheering tokens, that the good ship he had so nobly conducted, was destined to weather the storm. The result of his protracted and self-denying efforts, (a part of it, I mean, for the whole that he accomplished can never be known on earth,) appears before us to-day, in the matured strength

and promising prospects of the institution, in the one hundred and twenty graduates it has sent forth to the world, besides the hundreds more, who have enjoyed, in a partial degree, its instructions, in the competent functionaries it has given to the State, in the able ministers it has provided for the Church, in the gifted lawyers it has furnished for the bar, in the cultivated minds with which it has embellished the social and family circles, in the healthy sentiment in favor of education it has diffused through the community, in the support it has lent to the religion of the Bible, and in the heavenward aspirations it has awakened in multitudes of young hearts that, but for its aid, would have grovelled through life in forgetfulness of their immortal birthright. Far be it from me to claim, for our departed friend, all the good that Oakland College has done, or to undervalue the services of the many associates and patrons who have co-operated with him; but this is what I would affirm, that to no individual, so much as him, is the usefulness of the institution due, and that there is no good that it has done, which has not sprung, more or less, from his personal influence.

That his character was no ordinary one, the history of his achievements sufficiently indicates. His intellectual endowments and acquirements, without being brilliant or profound, were such as qualified him to be a ready and clear-sighted student, and an able and perspicuous instructor. His life was too crowded with extraneous duties, to allow him the opportunity to seek the scholastic eminence, which otherwise would have been easily accessible to him. It was rather as the man of practical energy, of high toned loyalty to principle, of self-possessed sobriety, of forethought and far-sightedness, of fertility of invention and aptness in execution, of firmness tempered by suavity, of strict uprightness and disinterested devotion to whatever his heart and conscience approved; it is rather as the paternal counsellor, the warm-hearted friend, the cheerful companion, the sincere and simple preacher, with the clear doctrine of Scripture ever on his lip, and the tear of emotion often in his eye, as the comforter in sorrow, and the helping brother to all who asked his sympa-

thy or his aid,—it is in such characters as these, that Dr. Chamberlain won distinction, and merited all he won.

That his portrait cannot be drawn, without some blemishes to deform the picture, is as true of him as of other men. But of him, this can be boldly said:—that, when the difficulties and embarrassments of the various positions he occupied, the variety of minds and tempers he had to deal with, the conflicting interests and opinions he had to harmonize, the misconception and prejudice he was continually exposed to; when these, and other things like them, are duly estimated, the wonder is, not that he had faults, as he doubtless had, but that these faults, through such a life of trial and contradiction, had not been multiplied a hundred fold. To use his own language, in an address made at the College, in 1845,—“we have had our troubles, and made our mistakes; and if any man should desire to know them, let him go into a new country, where public sentiment is almost wholly against even making a trial, where the truly liberal have been discouraged from many failures already, where the educated of other colleges and of other lands, are generally disposed to sneer, and where the whole community seem ready to cry out, on the first symptom of faltering, or the first ground of complaint. For the little success we have had, we give thanks to the great Head of the Church, and for the confidence reposed in us by our fellow citizens,—*we have tried to deserve it.*”

One word, perhaps, is needed, in regard to that whisper of yesterday, that Dr. Chamberlain departed from the line of his duty as a Christian minister, and an officer in an institution of learning, to interfere in political contests. The charge is the creature of a mere occasion; one of those semi-articulate murmurs, that go floating by in the track of a storm, and that die away as soon as the commotion in the atmosphere subsides. It has no foundation, whatever, in fact. I have no hesitation in affirming that not a President or a Faculty in the land, have been more cautious to avoid offence in this particular, or have more jealously guarded the institutions over which they preside, from alliance with political parties, or disturbance from political animosities

than those of Oakland College. Dr. Chamberlain had his opinions of measures and men, and expressed them as they came up in the discursive range of social conversation, and maintained them by the votes he cast into the ballot-box. And this was all. To be less than such a politician, is to fall below the character and the dignity of an American citizen. The catastrophe that terminated his life, had an apparent connection with the political controversies of the time, only because it followed in the train of an erroneous publication, which sought to give a partizan bearing, in a particular case, to the discipline of the College, and the denial, which he, as guardian of the interests of the College, felt bound, promptly to make, to the mis-statement. No; this audience knows, and this whole community knows, that it was at his appropriate station, within the sacred enclosure, where he presided as head of an institution of learning, and not as a gladiator on the stage of political strife, that Dr. Chamberlain was sacrificed.

His death occurred on the 5th of September, 1851, in the fifty-sixth year of his age; so that the sudden eclipse, which fell upon his sun, struck it when it was scarcely past its meridian altitude. We had anticipated for him, an honored old age, and a calm departure, where loved ones and friends could have seen his triumph, and caught his parting blessing. We had gazed long and admiringly upon the noble pyramid, that reared itself amongst us, broad-based, symmetrical and lofty, while the mid-day radiance was revealing its grandeur and its strength; and we had hoped, to have stood long in its lengthening shadow, as the evening came on, till its massive form had melted away in the amber haze of the twilight, and been lost to view in the immensity of the starlit heaven. But God had written his history differently, in the book of his holy purposes, and it is His record that we now read, in that strange tragedy which so awfully closed his career.

That he should have been the victim of a murder—perishing too, by the hand of a neighbor, with whom no controversy had ever existed, and with whom not an unkind word

was ever known to have been exchanged, is to us an astounding prodigy in God's works. It is one of those paradoxes before which reason stands baffled, and bleeding affection can scarce restrain its complaints. But it did not seem so, apparently, to himself. For we are told, those last few moments which intervened between the sudden summons and his spirit's flight, were characterized by serenity, not perturbation; and that his last expression of intelligence, was a smile, that spoke anything but complaint against God. This incident, in what seems, all else, a monstrous dream which my mind refuses to make real, I love to concentrate my thoughts upon, when I must contemplate the spectacle of his death. I there see, in that out-beaming of the placid soul, the Dr. Chamberlain whom I loved, and see him dying, as I would have Dr. Chamberlain die. In that serene look and hopeful smile, I read the volumes of precious sayings, which his mute tongue could not utter. I read his joyful testimony, "I have fought a good fight—I have finished my course—I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day." I read his consolations to the weeping household flock he was leaving shepherdless,—“sorrow not as those who have no hope,”—“to depart and be with Christ is far better,”—“to me, to die is gain,”—“in my Father's house are many mansions,—let not your heart be troubled.” I read his counsels to his associates in duty,—“my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know, that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” And I read his Christ-like prayer for him on whose soul was the guilt of his blood—“Father, forgive him, for he knew not what he did.”

The removal of this good and venerated man, creates a strong and affecting appeal to all who loved and honored him, to be the friends of this institution, to whose interests he had devoted the best years and energies of his life. The fond regrets that follow him to his grave, could he direct them, would all unite in a tide of generous zeal in behalf of Oakland College. With this enterprize, and the objects it was

formed to promote, Dr. Chamberlain's life was linked; and in the prosecution of it, he lives still. The fruits of his life will only be ripening, from age to age, in its progressive success. And he will be truly dead only when its abandonment, shall be assented to by an unthankful community and a recreant Church. Would you then—friends of the departed,—build a monument to his memory? Behold it, already here! And all that affection, that would tax itself to show its fidelity to the lost, has to do, is to keep the structure strong and towering. Would you keep his name and honor green upon the earth? Behold them, incorporated with this goodly tree of his own hand's planting! You have only to cherish it, and foster it into nobler proportions and enduring vitality, and your work is done! I am persuaded, that all this must happen. There is sacred dust sleeping now, within this soil, which assures me, that these walls which guard it shall never be given up to the ivy and the reptile, and that through these retired groves the feet of grateful generations, yet unborn—our children, and our children's children,—shall track their way to the honored grave of him, who built for them, this sylvan home of piety and learning.

One thought more, and my message is done. Let us learn from the history we have been studying, this great lesson:—that the only way to make life close fitly, whatever be the outward circumstances which attend its closing, is to fill it, while it lasts, with those deeds which bless mankind and glorify God. Such a life asks no reward, or success from the world; it is its own reward—its own success. The prejudice and suspicion of a blind and ungrateful age may follow it, persecution may harass and worry it, and malice, even, may cut it short with the assassin's steel—still it has had its wages and its crown. It is complete in itself, and so, complete, whenever and however it ends. Death may come, as with Chalmers, like a thief stealing softly upon the soul in its tranquil night-dreams; or, as with Alexander, like the frost of autumn, tinting with a gradual glory, the leaf it is preparing for the dust; or, as with our departed brother, like the thunderbolt sniting the oak of the forest, and ma-

king the earth tremble with its fall—but come where, and come in what form it may, it comes to such a life—never to mutilate, or damage, or destroy—but always to stamp it with the seal of triumph, and lead it, a crowned victor, into the boundless expansion and endless progression of eternity. And in the ears of those who have marked its close, a voice from heaven seems ever breathing the benediction—**BLESSED ARE THE DEAD, WHICH DIE IN THE LORD,—YEA, SAITH THE SPIRIT, THAT THEY MAY REST FROM THEIR LABORS, AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM.**”