

Funeral Discourse,

OF THE

REV. HIRAM DOANE,

CHAPLAIN OF THE 47TH ILLINOIS REGIMENT,

Who Died at Vicksburgh July 22, 1863.

PREACHED AT

Rutland, N. Y., October 4, 1863,

BY THE

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SERMON.

Deuteronomy XXXIV, 5th: So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

The history of the personage referred to in our text, is familiar to the Bible reader; his remarkable deliverance from the death appointed to the male increase of the Israelitish nation by the King of Egypt, jealous of the rapid growth of that enslaved ~~nation~~, and fearful of the results of insurrection or self-deliverance that might issue from such increase in numbers and in power; his adoption into the family of Pharaoh, and prospective heirship to the dignities of the throne itself; his culture in all the learning of the Egyptians; his devotion to his kindred and people "when he was come to years refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;" his long moral preparation for the work God had appointed him as a leader of his people, and deliverer from bondage, in the mountains of Midian for forty years, there learning the lesson of patience and kindness and vigilance, as David afterward did, in the duties of the shepherd, guarding brute animals before he engaged in the labors of leading and guarding the Israelitish flock, but little less brutish and far more perverse than they, taxing to very exhaustion in the desert the meekness and patience gained in the long discipline of the mountain; then his summons of God in that mountain and the burning bush to his work; his doubts and his fears; the haughtiness of the proud Pharaoh, who

people

scornfully defied the Lord of the Hebrews, and refused to let his people go; the miracles of power, of terror, and of desolation which followed, each stroke more terrible than that which preceded it, until at last amidst the wail of Egypt for all her first born, both man and beast, they let the enslaved nation go free.

Nor did his labors and trials here end. On the borders of the Red Sea, when the Israelites saw the pursuing host of Pharaoh, they murmured at their leader, that they should find graves in the wilderness rather than in their former place of bondage, and though delivered by a stupendous miracle that buried their foes in a watery grave, yet they forgot how speedily the God of their deliverance, and set up for their adoration the molten calf of Egyptian worship, and loathing the manna from Heaven, sigh for the flesh pots of their bondage. At last, by the weight and the torment of these repeated complaints, the disciplined patience of "the meekest of men" breaks down at the rock of Horeb. The land which he had sought so many years to gain he may see, but he is not permitted to set his foot thereon. He ascends the mountain of Nebo, views the beautiful land of promise, and then lies down to die, still in the vigor of life, "his eye undimmed and his natural strength unabated."

This great lawgiver and leader, in his attainments, his duties, his labors, and his trials, is but a type of all those appointed by Providence to the work of expounding the word of God to their fellow men and leading them to that true land of promise of which Canaan was but a symbol.

"Thou art but Type

Of what all lofty spirits endure that vain
Would win men back to strength and peace through love."

Moses is called a lawgiver, and such he properly was, but not in the sense of originating laws from himself, or of devising laws by the power of his own unaided or uninstructed intellect. He received his laws from God, and gave them to men. His special intellectual preparation for this work was gained in his culture in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. It is true that he may not in all of Egyptian lore have acquired much of knowledge that was of value, but in the acquisition of that learning he gained what was of high importance for his work as lawgiver, mental discipline and strength. For the right exposition of the word of truth the law of God, that he may not be "unskillful in the word of righteousness," "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth," intellectual culture and discipline are no less needful now to the minister of the

Gospel than to the lawgiver of ancient Israel. Like Moses, he is also a leader of God's people, and is appropriately styled in the New Testament pastor or shepherd, and bishop, which means overseer, or one who watches or keeps guard over. His work is not only to feed, to instruct, but to lead, as a shepherd to watch over, to guard the flock of God.

Nor are his labors and trials by any means ended any more than were those of Moses, when once by the power of the spirit and the truth, a power greater and more illustrious than that of miracle, he has subdued the pride of the human heart, a pride in the obduracy of depravity, but faintly typified in that of the obstinate Pharaoh. Alas, how many who profess "to have tasted and known the grace of God," sigh for the flesh pots of Egypt, and murmur at the sacrifices which their deliverance from the bondage of sin has cost, valuing religion only as it conduces to worldly thrift and security, and measuring the worth of the ministrations of the sanctuary by the rental of its pews, or even by the sale of village lots. What wonder that in grief and holy indignation at such perverse worldliness, such brutish preference of things earthly to things spiritual, of things temporal to things eternal, even disciplined Christian meekness sometimes breaks down as it did with the lawgiver and leader of ancient Israel.

We are assembled this morning to review the life and character of one who formerly sustained, after the type we are considering, the relation of Pastor to this people, not only as a tribute to departed worth we esteem and would honor, but still more as an incentive to like devoted labor for God and humanity, according to our ability and sphere of action.

Rev. Hiram Doane was born in the town of Lorraine, March 17, 1806. He was descended from the old Puritan stock, and came forth from those ranks of labor, from which hardy energy and success in the trying competition of active life almost uniformly spring. By an accident which deprived him in part of the full use of one of his limbs for the remainder of his life, he found himself laid aside from the possibility of active labor in that sphere to which his early youth had been trained. By this Providence his mind was directed to the necessity of seeking some other sphere of labor and usefulness. Though he had a mutilated body, he had yet in a vigorous intellect, resources for usefulness still left him. He directed his attention at once to the means of improving that intellect. Encountering the adverse circumstances of poverty firmly and courageously, he overmastered them, although suffering in his privations to the detriment

and almost to the sacrifice of his health, and achieved his education, graduating at Yale College in the year 1833 among the foremost in his class. His theological course of study was subsequently pursued at the same institution. He commenced his ministry in Smithville in 1838, where he remained but two years, having received a call to this church over which he was installed Pastor Nov. 25, 1841. Here he labored for nine years with great acceptance as a preacher and success as a Pastor, receiving about forty persons to the membership of this church during that period by profession and letter.

In 1850 he took charge of the Congregational church in Carthage. The difficulty which had long distracted that church in fixing upon a permanent location for its house of worship, at last culminated in a division. Of one portion was formed a Presbyterian Church, of which Mr. Doane became the Pastor, continuing in this relation for five years. During the most of this period he supplied the pulpit of the Congregational Church at Deer River, performing the duties of Pastor there also. His labors at Carthage were attended with an interesting revival, of the fruits of which, about twenty were added to the church at that place. The Congregational Church at Deer River also received a considerable addition to its membership during the period of his ministrations. In February, 1856, Mr. Doane commenced his labors in the 1st Congregational Church of Norwich, where he remained until September, 1860. During his ministry there he received thirty-seven persons to the membership of the church at profession of faith. Of this number thirty-five united as the fruits of a powerful revival in the months of February and March, 1857. Beside these, fifteen persons were received by letter to the fellowship of the church, making in all an addition of over fifty to its membership during his ministrations there.

Having made a purchase of some land in Wabashaw, Minnesota, where some of his brothers and friends were residing, with a view of providing himself and his family a home, when old age might render him unable to fulfil acceptably and successfully the labors of the ministry, he resigned his pastoral relations to the church in Norwich, and removed to Wabashaw, Minnesota. He was soon invited to take charge of the Presbyterian Church in that place, where he labored with customary acceptance and success for two years. In 1862, he was invited to undertake the labors of a city missionary in Peoria, Illinois. He left his farm and charge at Wabashaw, and entered upon this noble and laborious field of labor, for which, by his strong

sympathy with the laboring classes, his Christian appreciation of the worth of the human soul, even in the outcasts of society, his ready power of adapting truth to the comprehension of the masses, his earnestness and force of delivery, he seemed peculiarly adapted. His labors there were extended to an encampment of soldiers near the city. Here his services were found so valuable that the Christian Association of young men of Peoria elected him army Chaplain. He received a full and formal commission from the Governor of the State, and in the month of February last went with his regiment, the 47th Illinois Infantry, to its destination before Vicksburgh, under Major General Grant. He was with his regiment on every field of battle, and though often warned and exhorted to retire from the position of exposure, yet fearlessly remaining and going wherever he felt that duty called him, to encourage the faltering, or to administer consolation to the dying, or relief to the wounded. But his vigorous constitution at length succumbed to the malarial influences to which he was exposed, and on the 22d of July he lay down quietly and unconsciously to his last sleep. With his country's banner floating over him, the glorious emblem of freedom which that devoted patriot and high-souled lover of liberty honored, and freely gave his life to vindicate, surrounded by the bared heads and reversed arms of those who revered him as a father, and loved him as a brother, he was borne to his fitting burial.

"Go to the grave in all thy glorious prime,
In full activity of zeal and power;
A Christian cannot die before his time,
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour.

Go to the grave; at noon from labor cease,
Rest on thy shroud, thy harvest task is done,
Come from the heat of battle, and in peace
Soldier go home; with thee the fight is won.

Go to the grave, for there the Saviour lay,
In death's embraces ere he rose on high,
And all the muzzled by that narrow way,
Pass to eternal life beyond the sky.

Go to the grave! no, take thy seat above,
Be thy true spirit present with the Lord,
Where thou for faith and hope hast perfect love,
And open vision for the written word."

In a brief description of his more peculiar and prominent characteristics, we mention first a deep and strong sensibility. There was in him a depth and strength of sensibility such as few men possess. It was not that he restrained his feelings less, but that he felt more than others who enjoy perhaps a higher reputation for prudence, a grace easy of attainment to a stolid nature. It was this deep and strong sensibility which gave such general intensity to his thought

and utterances, which especially gave that burning scorn of baseness, and prompted those scathing words with which he sometimes excoriated its perpetrators. His feelings of the dignity and rights of Humanity was one of the keenest emotions of his soul, as it is one of the noblest of any nature. He had no adulations for wealth, as he had no contempt for poverty. He valued men according to their intellectual and moral worth, and deferred only to that. He could see through meanness though garnished and adorned with gold, and despised it as heartily and denounced it as boldly as though it were arrayed in rags. He knew the worth of the human soul because he felt its power within him. He knew of its capacity for grief, and pain, and sorrow, and he could not look on the sufferings of others with a cold or indifferent eye. It was the acuteness of his sensibility that caused him to enter so readily into the feelings of others. He suffered in the sufferings of others, and no condition or grade of humanity was beyond the reach of his sympathy. He felt for those who were in bonds "as bound with them." He loved freedom with the love of a true and strong manhood, not only for himself but for others. He had a high and true appreciation of the rights of manhood, and those rights he would maintain at every sacrifice. There was no bribe large enough to purchase the compromise of his utterance of that he thought and felt to be truth; there was no threat formidable enough to cower him into silence.

It was this sensibility which gave him that power of ready and almost unconscious self sacrifice, forgetting self in others, living in others, "rejoicing with them that rejoice, and weeping with them that weep." It was this that constituted that spell of sorcery which drew around him such devoted friends wherever he went. There was a peculiar tenderness which made him especially susceptible to the influences of friendship. I think I never made the acquaintance of a man who, possessing his native strength of intellect and of will, was so easily moved by another whom he trusted in as a friend.

Another prominent characteristic was courage. No one need look but for a single moment into that firm and resolute face to perceive this peculiarity of his nature. Danger only awakened, but did not intimidate him. Threats only aroused, but did not daunt him. I doubt if any powerholder, though esteeming himself one of his principal supporters, ever dared the presumption of attempting to dictate to him his pulpit utterances. He had a Pauline boldness of speech, and never glozed over baseness and guilt with ele-

gant phrase to save offense to a rich and influential hearer. Patronizing airs found no place in his presence; he stood on his manhood, and never bent a servile knee in homage, or in suit for favor before wealth or power.

Another trait was generosity. He had a hand not to grasp, but to scatter. He had a soul not to hoard, but to give. At the call of want or friendship, he gave with almost lavish prodigality. With no less freeness, he gave himself in earnest, self-sacrificing effort to advance the ends and interests of others. It was not in him to desert a friend in the hour of his need for fear that some disadvantage might result to himself. He was "true to the last of his blood and his breath."

I have spoken of these traits as natural characteristics, although grace had doubtless deepened, refined, and exalted them all, because they constitute the foundation of Christian character. They are the soil in which the heaven-descended seeds of Divine truth and love take root and grow. The rocky and shallow soil will never bring forth abundant fruitage, no matter what the seed. "Unstable as water thou shalt not excel," is true in spiritual as well as material labors. Christianity does not make our faculties, it simply consecrates them to right ends and noble uses. It restrains the native impulses that are low and base; it fosters, strengthens, and refines those that are right. It exalts the spiritual above the earthly. His faith the root of all the Christian graces, his consecration to the cause of his Master had all that depth and strength, that self-forgetting devotion which might be expected from a nature possessing his sensibility, courage and generosity.

As a preacher, he was pre-eminently Calvinistic in Doctrine. He seized upon a subject with a powerful intellectual grasp, that made his hearers feel at once that he was master of it, unfolded it with logical precision, penetrated to its very depth and exhausted its significance. The preaching that was of a practical character was especially his forte. His forcible and apposite illustrations drawn from the common incidents and familiar objects and processes of life, his copious fund of narrative, his earnestness and his facility in extempore speaking, gave him a peculiar adaptation to the masses. He sought to cultivate himself to this adaptation, that with him as with his Master "the common people might hear him gladly." He had also a power of satire, caustic and severe, which made him a formidable opponent in debate, and which was most aptly used in exhibiting the real character of deeds of meanness, pettiness and shame,

which nothing else can effectively illustrate. As a writer, these mental characteristics were conspicuous, combined with a rich vein of wit and humor flowing throughout, as exhibited in his published letters from the West and from the Army.

As a Pastor, he was sympathetic with the afflicted, and devoted to the interests of his people. His chosen and most congenial field of labor was with the youth of his people. He looked on them with peculiar affection and tenderness, feeling that here his work was the most hopeful in those possibilities of good to be attained as a possession, or achieved as a work, which, irretrievably past to the old, lie before the young as a harvest ready for the reaping. Who can tell what shall be the beauty and perfection of developed being in the full unfolding of these buds of promise? Our work is pre-eminently for those who succeed us. The progress of humanity, the advance of truth and goodness in this world, must be through them if at all. Here are the sources of future influence and power, and he who would reach far out his own influence for good, must work for them and through them.

It was impossible that such a nature, so strong and so bold, when devoted to the cause of truth and humanity, should not encounter opposition in a world of baseness and knavery, of wrong and oppression. Some men are like grass, any foot may trample on them without difficulty, others again stand like the oak, and they are hard to beat. Nor is it an argument at all conclusive against the piety of any minister of the Gospel, that he encounters opposition, or has difficulty even in his own church. The Judas Iscariots, who love the thirty pieces of silver more than Christ, have not yet all hung themselves in honorable remorse, they still stretch forth their hand in professed fellowship and communion with Christ at his table, even while counting the gains of his betrayal. Against that Nazarene, the purest and noblest One of our humanity, was raised the accusation, "he stirreth up the people," and from lips burning with Pharisaic zeal, went up the cry, "crucify him! crucify him! away with such a fellow from the earth!"

"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is *enough* for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub how much more shall they call them of his household."

It is the business of the true man of God to denounce it wherever he may find it, with a prophet's fearlessness, and

real, no matter what may be his relation of dependence or affection, though it be his country's, his kindred's, or supporter's, though it clothe and feed him, and confer on him place and honor, he must be true to his God or he is not true *Trina* mission. He knew well the devices of flattery and complaisance by which power, favor and high position are won; but he prized manhood and truth too high to make the sacrifice.

I have presented you with but a brief and imperfect portrait of a character which many of you know from long and mature acquaintance far better than I can describe.

So far as human character presents to us the lineaments of that faultless model revealed in Christ, so far it is for our imitation. Says the Apostle Paul: "Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ."

A man may be great according to the greatness of the gifts and powers with which God and Nature have endowed him; but he is noble and worthy only according to the use which he makes of these powers, whatever they may be—small or great. And every example of noble consecration to the cause of God, of truth and of humanity like that we contemplate to-day, should awaken in us a new aspiration, should incite us by a new stimulus to labor more devotedly in that work which allies us to God and makes our labor eternal in its fruition and results.

To this widow I scarcely need to attempt an address of consolation, when the true source of consolation in God and his promises have been so long approachable and familiar. You cherish a memory that is indeed blessed, and you doubtless feel in your advancing and swiftly-gliding years that this separation at longest must be brief. May the favor of God that sustained and blessed him in his labors, sustain and bless you in your declining years.

May those who have held the relation of children and grandchildren remember the counsels of christian affection both spoken and written, and by lives of like consecration to the service of God be prepared to meet him where death and parting are no more.