

LIFE  
OF  
J. B. JETER  

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HATCHER



William B Saunders

April 1889

For punctuality

Trinity Grace St Baptist  
Sunday School



Hatcher, William Eldridge  
Life of J. B. Feter

1872



**To Mrs. M. C. Jeter.**

I DEDICATE TO YOU THIS MEMORIAL VOLUME OF YOUR  
HONORED HUSBAND,

**Dr. J. B. Jeter.**

TO THIS ACT I AM MOVED, NOT ONLY BY MY RESPECT FOR  
YOUR CHRISTIAN VIRTUES AND EMINENT USEFULNESS, BUT  
BY A GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF THAT DEVOTED AND  
INSPIRING LOVE WITH WHICH YOU BRIGHTENED HIS OLD  
AGE.

THE SATISFACTION WHICH I HAVE FOUND IN THIS  
MODEST EFFORT TO HONOR A VENERATED KINSMAN IS  
ENHANCED BY THE OPPORTUNITY NOW AFFORDED ME, OF  
ATTESTING PUBLICLY MY SINCERE REGARD FOR YOU.

*Wm. E. Hatcher.*



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## PREFACE.

IN presenting this volume to the public, I beg respectfully to accompany it with several brief explanations.

Soon after Dr. Jeter's death, it was announced that I had undertaken to prepare his biography. It happened that I encountered difficulties in the prosecution of the work, which compelled its temporary suspension. Happily, these obstacles, at length, were removed, and, during last autumn, I was enabled to resume my cherished task. The material formerly collected for the work, has been of great value, but it is due to myself to say, that all the original matter in this volume has been written during the last five months, and that too, in the midst of the cares and interruptions of a large pastorate.

The reader will be pleased to learn in advance, that many of Dr. Jeter's "Recollections of a Long Life," which appeared in the *Religious Herald* several years before his death, are reproduced in this work. Lack of space has rendered it necessary for me to omit some of these racy and delightful papers, but I have been careful to incorporate all that possessed any special historical interest.

In preparing this biography, I have received valuable aid from various sources. As these kindnesses have been acknowledged in the course of the story, I need not mention here the names of my helpers. As I had to draw freely on my own resources for material, I trust that my personal candor will not be mistaken for egotism.

And now in the fear of God, and with a desire to help the living, as well as to honor the dead, I send forth this book to its fate.

WM. E. HATCHER.



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# LIFE OF JEREMIAH B. JETER D.D.

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## CHAPTER I.

### HIS KINDRED AND HIS HOME.

**B**IOGRAPHIES are often encumbered with elaborate genealogies. In some quarters the opinion seems to prevail that one's title to public respect is to be measured by the length of his ancestral line. I harbor no grudge against noble birth, and would not disparage the benefits which belong to those who spring from distinguished families. At the same time, I am so intensely American in my sentiments and convictions that I heartily indorse the popular verdict, that men are to be estimated not by the accidents of fortune, but by what they are and what they do. Real honor is personal and not hereditary.

In attempting to present to the public a biographical sketch of Jeremiah Bell Jeter, I am saved from the necessity of loading the story with a tedious and bewildering account of his ancestry. A brief chapter will contain all that needs to be told concerning his parentage and kindred. In the dense forest of family trees, his is modest and undistinguished. He had no great ancestry. He inherited neither wealth nor honor from his fathers. It would not add one cubit to his stature for me to multiply paragraphs in

eulogy of the stock from which he sprang. His forefathers sleep in unmarked graves.

If he deserves to be remembered, it is not so much on account of the good which he received, as for the sake of the blessings which, by his character and deeds, he bestowed upon his fellow-men.

And yet, let me not be misunderstood. It would not only be unpardonable, but unnatural in me to speak contemptuously of Dr. Jeter's kindred. If they were not famous, they were at least free from any stain of reproach. He sometimes indulged the modest boast that while his family had never risen to distinction, they had never sunken to disgrace. But while he had no occasion to be ashamed of his family stock, it is due to him to say that he rose far above his level and became the conspicuous ornament of his house. The story of his life unveils one who, born of honest and unambitious parentage, and in a large measure denied the advantages of early culture, wrought out for himself a high destiny. Entering the track of his earthly journey with very little in his environments to inspire him, he had within him, even from his childhood, a consciousness of strength, linked with a modest purpose in all things "to do his very best." That was his motto, adopted in his youth, and it became the guiding star of his career. For nearly four-score years he walked the earth, inspired at every step by that lofty sentiment. When he adopted it he was an ignorant and unnoticed youth; but when he came to the end a crown of honor was upon his brow.

The Jeter family hold a large and respectable place

in the county of Bedford, as well as in other portions of Virginia. They have always seemed to be wedded to rural life, and fond of agricultural pursuits. While never distinguished for wealth or genius, they have usually stood above the average of their neighbors in intelligence and self-respect. A few of them have taken rank in professional life, though not in those professions which depend for success upon public speaking. Now and then some of them have sought their fortunes on the treacherous sea of politics, but owing either to the madness of the waves, or to the piratical character of rival crafts, they have never ventured very far from shore.

In an autobiographical sketch which Dr. Jeter commenced, but never finished, he has this to say of the Jeters,—

Of my family-name I have not been able to learn the history. It is obviously a French name. The first Jeter, according to the family tradition, settled near Port Royal, in Caroline County, in the early colonial days. From all that I can learn I deem it probable that the family was of Huguenot origin, was settled a while in England and thence emigrated to this country. All the Jeters, so far as I can learn, sprang from a common stock. They have been remarkable for their mediocre character. They have been neither rich nor poor, learned nor illiterate, eminent nor infamous; but with scarcely an exception a plain, substantial, independent and respectable people.

There is something characteristic in the foregoing description which Dr. Jeter furnishes of his family. He mentions that the Jeters are French in their origin, and it is an interesting fact that after the changes of many generations and the interminglings of other blood they still possess, in a marked degree,

the buoyancy and volatility of their forefathers. Even to the present day they are remarkable for their impulsiveness and their easy and hopeful views of the future. The sun of hope rarely sinks below the Jeter horizon. They never cease to dream of the good day that is to come, and often they dream of good days which never come. This elastic and irrepressible spirit, chastened by experience and restrained by intelligence, was a capital feature in the character of Dr. Jeter. The joy of spring time was in his temperament and sparkled in his life even down to old age.

His father's name was Pleasant Jeter. "He was," says Dr. Jeter, "one of ten children, all of whom lived till the youngest was thirty years old; and all but one lived until the youngest had passed the age of sixty years."

Mr. Pleasant Jeter was a man of eccentric character. Good native gifts he unquestionably possessed, but he was uncultivated, vacillating and improvident. He never gave his thoughts to religion, and was so thriftless in his habits that he squandered the little inheritance which he received and made but a scanty provision for his family. He drifted from place to place, and for a good part of his life had no permanent abode. He was often in desperate straits, and now and then, in the vain hope of rebuilding his fortunes, he crossed the mountains, and dwelt in the counties of Roanoke and Pulaski, until his necessities drove him back to Bedford.

That I have not stated the case too strongly, I present here Dr. Jeter's severely candid opinion of



his father, which he wrote when he was himself almost three-score years and ten. He said: "My father was remarkable for nothing except bad management in his secular affairs and air-castle building."

He relieves in part the sharpness of his criticism by admitting that he inherited from his father, in large measure, his fondness for building air-castles. He says that in his earlier years he was incessantly employed in that cheap style of architecture, and erected some towering structures of that sort. It seems almost inconsistent with the seriousness of his character, that even in his old age he found comfort in the reflection that his indulgence in idle dreaming "lightened the toils of many a wearisome hour, and gilded with hope a prospect that else had been gloomy." Perhaps there was enough of the Frenchman in him, not only to love dreaming, but to feel that there was a substantial value in well-built castles, even though built in the air. That dreamy disposition was the never-failing mark of his father's life. His estate consisted in futile and unsubstantial dreams. He was always concocting plans which promised vast revenues, but whose outcome was only disappointment. Schemes the most visionary infatuated him, and set him wild with hope, and then speedily collapsed.

It was during Dr. Jeter's boyhood that his father's life was most unsettled and migratory. Some of his most affecting and humorous recollections were connected with the wandering life which he had in his childhood.

When he was about nine years of age his father

returned with his family to Bedford and settled in an isolated community, located a few miles north of Liberty. That section was known in my early days as "Powell's Hollow." It is about as grim and unattractive a spot as can be found in almost any part of Virginia. It is broken, sterile and inaccessible, abounding in rugged and rocky hills, deep gullies, and mingled briars, broom-sedge and pine, with nothing to relieve the dismal picture, except the rippling laughter and the gleaming beauty of the North Fork of Otter Creek; and even that dashes along with a speed which seems to indicate an impatience to hasten onward to more attractive scenes. I remember well that in my boyhood days that out-of-the-way place was accounted the most cheerless and desolate part of North Bedford. Sometimes, when a man fell out with his neighbor, and wished to set out his resentment in the most cutting phrase, he expressed the wish to have the offender exiled, not to Calcutta, but to "Powell's Hollow." Dr. Jeter said in his later life that he had travelled extensively, and had seen many rough and ugly localities, but that his eye had never rested on any place more forbidding or gloomy than the neighborhood in which he spent the days of his boyhood. It seems strange, indeed, that a youth brought up in the midst of such surroundings should have possessed such a quenchless yearning for knowledge and such lofty moral and religious aspirations.

It is pleasant to add that his associations were not restricted to the limits of the narrow section in which he had his home. Other and brighter com-

munities were in his reach, and, as he grew toward manhood, he began to emerge from his hiding-place and to find better companionships among his kindred and neighbors.

His mother's name was Jane Eke Hatcher. She was the daughter of Rev. Jeremiah Hatcher. This Mr. Hatcher, if we can trust a tradition, was the descendant of an English officer, who, far back in colonial times, retired from the navy, came to America, settled near City Point, in Chesterfield County, Va., and reared a family. Jeremiah Hatcher was a native of Powhatan County, and was baptized by Elder Eleazar Clay, and in early life entered the Baptist ministry. Not much is known of his ministry in Lower Virginia; but it is a matter of history that he was, for a season, the pastor of the well-known, but cruelly named old Tomahawk Church in Chesterfield County. This church still survives, but maintains a very feeble and unprogressive existence.

In the prime of his manhood Mr. Hatcher moved to Bedford. It was then comparatively a wilderness, but with a fast-incoming population. He secured the possession of an extensive area of mountain land, and reared many sons and daughters. He was a man well suited for the times in which he lived. While unhelped by the discipline of the schools, he was yet a man of marked strength and influence. He possessed a rugged mind, a fiery zeal and an intrepid spirit. If he did not have culture, he at least had that heroic courage which made him a man of valor in his Master's service.

He was an earnest believer in the gospel, and had an ardent love for the souls of men. His ministry brought him neither riches nor popular applause; but it won for him an honor which grows brighter as the days go by. At his own charges and for many years, he traversed the hills of Bedford and the adjacent counties, and preached the good news to the people. He did a good work. He was a pioneer, and bore a conspicuous part in laying the foundation for that sturdy moral and Christian sentiment which so strikingly marks the inhabitants of that part of Virginia. He did much also to implant that deep-rooted Baptist conviction which so largely prevails even to the present day in Bedford.

I remember well the ruins of a long, rude log-house, which stood about a mile distant from my childhood home, and which, though it had long been abandoned as a place of worship, was still known as "Hatcher's Meeting-House,"—so called because built on the land and by the efforts of this man of God, and because, too, it was the chief scene of his ministerial labors. For many years it was the centre of religious influence in Northern Bedford, and continued to be so for years after the old veteran had ended his labors and gone to his reward. Out of that church went forth several other Baptist churches, which still exist and steadfastly maintain the faith of their fathers. Mr. Hatcher died about the opening of the present century, and possibly not until he was permitted to look upon the face of the grandson that was to inherit his name and take up his fallen mantle.

The mother of Dr. Jeter is said to have been a woman of shrinking modesty and deep religious convictions. So far as I can ascertain, she never became a church member; but Dr. Jeter delighted to testify that she exerted over him a quiet and potent religious influence. He said that while she rarely spoke to him on Christian themes, he knew well where she stood. Now and then she ventured to utter a plea for Christ, and it fell upon him with irresistible force. Her feeble health, her household cares and her poverty, combined to debar her from the privileges of the Lord's house. But her father's faith lived in her soul, transformed her life and consoled her in the midst of her sorrows. Her lot was a harsh one for a spirit so timid, sensitive and grievously tried. Her shifting life and the dissipated and reckless habits of her husband overburdened her; and worn down by many adversities, she sank a victim to consumption in the later prime of her life.

Her life was happily spared until her children had attained to maturity, and what was yet better, until they had become imbued with her meek and patient spirit. In number her children were seven,—three sons and four daughters. Of the sons, Jeremiah Bell was the oldest; Ira, the second, was feeble-minded, and died while yet in his youth; and Andrew, the youngest son, was considered by many as the most gifted of his family. By the generous assistance of his oldest brother, Andrew was well educated, entered the medical profession and won distinction as a practitioner and teacher. He died many years ago, before he had reached the meridian

of life. At the time of his death he held a professorship in the Medical University of Missouri.

The names of the daughters were Margaret (always called Peggy), Edith, Betsy and Sarah. These all married worthy, substantial men, and resided for many years in the State of Missouri. All of them became Baptists in their youth, and emulated the piety and zeal of their brother. Two of them preceded him to the eternal world; the other two still survive.

During the life-time of his mother it was Dr. Jeter's custom to pay her an annual visit, and from that act of filial devotion no trivial obstacle could divert him.

They were often separated by great distances, and the modes of travel in those days were rude, tiresome and inconvenient; but he could not be deterred. Ah, those were sunny days in the life of that mother! Who can describe the pride and joy with which she hailed his coming? What charming breaks did these yearly visits make in her monotonous life! With what swelling rapture did she gaze upon her son, now rounded into full manhood, decked in thickening honors and with the seal of God's blessing upon him! What a balm she found for her wounded spirit in his sympathy and devotion!

Those were the days of his poverty. He started with nothing, and his income was small. But he was never too poor to help his mother. His care for her in her misfortunes was exceedingly tender. Of the substance which the Lord gave him, he reserved for her a goodly part. I well remember the

“presents,” as they were proudly called, which he so often brought or sent to the family, while they yet remained in Bedford. The fountain of his kindness never ran dry; but it grew in volume and richness as he grew in prosperity. I think that the later chapters of this volume will reveal a character with which even the strange reader must fall in love, and yet there is nothing to tell more worthy of admiration than Dr. Jeter’s affectionate concern for his mother’s comfort.

It seems no great thing to say that he robbed himself to supply the needs of his mother. That is what any son ought to be always ready to do, but I am not sure that all young ministers are quite so thoughtful about their mothers as was Dr. Jeter. Many of them come from humble homes, and leave overtaxed and impoverished parents behind them. From the schools they often step into lucrative pastorates; but their eagerness to enlarge their libraries, their impatience to marry, and the temptation to expensive styles of living, sometimes make them forget the sweet mother at the old home, who tugged and struggled so patiently to give them a start in life.

There are many worthy ways in which a preacher can spend a part of his income for the good of others, but I know none which is more pleasing to God than that of helping the old folks at home. A new dress for mother, the mending of the old carriage, the repainting of the homestead, a few shining dollars in the mother’s purse to spend as she pleases, or shoes and hats and suits and dresses for the younger

brothers and sisters—ah, these are tokens of ministerial piety, very beautiful, but far too rare.

I have said that Dr. Jeter was named Jeremiah for his paternal grandfather. He tells us that he was called Bell after his paternal grandmother, whose maiden-name was Bell. He represents her as a woman of strong character, and says that he once heard his father say, after her death, that he had never in all of his life “seen her angry,” though she did not die until she was in the eighty-seventh year of her age.

While speaking of his grandmother it seems worth while that I should give the reader the following quaint and interesting extract from his autobiographical papers with reference to his great-grandmother on his father’s side.

“My father’s grandmother, named Miller from her third marriage, died after I commenced my ministry, in the ninety-sixth year of her age. I heard her say that she kept a register of her descendants until they numbered one hundred and fifty, and that they then multiplied beyond her knowledge, but that she supposed they amounted to three hundred. Shortly after that time I know that I had one hundred and twenty-five living first cousins, eighty of whom were her descendants.”

The name by which Dr. Jeter was always known in Bedford was Jerry Bell. That was the name by which he was called in his childhood, and in his old community he continued to be called by it to the end of his life. This is somewhat remarkable, for I can recall no other man who was invariably called by both of his names. This may have arisen from the fact that both families were represented in his name,



and each was anxious that its own side should not be forgotten. At any rate, it was the custom alike of his kindred and his early acquaintances to use that double title in addressing him or in speaking of him, and the name was often found on the lips both of white and colored, when they chanced to mention him.

I need not say that the Bedford people were very proud of Dr. Jeter. His kindred recognized him as a prince in genius, wisdom and piety, and always hailed his visits with delight. His kinspeople were for the most part thrifty and comfortable, though unpretentious in their styles of living, and they coveted no higher earthly honor than to have him cross their thresholds and share the hospitality of their boards. It was a high day in their history when he came, and they gave him the best that they had. It was particularly gratifying to the people at large when he preached in the neighborhood churches. The simple report that "Jerry Bell" would preach at Mount Hermon or Suck Spring on a given day was sufficient to empty the mountain gorges, and flood the church-yards with the multitudes.

It is a fact not always recognized that country people are more intellectual than are the busy and rushing dwellers in the cities. While they may not be so easy in their manners, or glib in their speech, they are far more thoughtful. They are much given to speculation and controversy. They delight to gather in groups, in the store, or at the post-office, or in the grove, or around the wood-fire in the winter evenings, and discuss problems in nature, politics or

religion. This seems to be peculiarly true of the Bedford people. They are a race of thinkers. They love to ask questions and seem never so happy as when wrestling with each other in hot debate. It was an unconscious tribute which they often bore to the wisdom of Dr. Jeter, that when unable to settle some knotty question, they would determine to appeal to his judgment. They seemed to think that he knew almost everything, and when he uttered his verdict, the discussion was closed.

His *ipse dixit* with many was the end of controversy.

I may be pardoned for adding here that no class of the Bedford people more sincerely admired Dr. Jeter than the negroes. They were then, of course, in slavery, but they attended public worship in the same houses with their masters, and many of them were devout and consistent members of the same churches. Their eagerness to hear "Mars Jerry Bell" whenever he preached in Bedford was intense. They would walk for miles and miles to hear him. If his sermons chanced to come on a week-day instead of the Sabbath, they would manage to persuade their masters to proclaim a holiday that they might go. If, in the excitement of the occasion, they found themselves crowded out of their accustomed place in the house, they would swarm about the doors and windows, and, with open ear and eye and mouth, catch every word that fell from his lips. It was amusing and sometimes very affecting to hear the comments which they would make upon him after the sermon was over.

"Lord bless you, master," the old colored brother

would say; "Wa'n't it good? Dat's what I call preachin. Mars Jerry Bell is mighty in de word, and knows how to put it."

The doctor was fond of relating a ludicrous and laughable incident which occurred during one of his visits to Bedford. While passing along one of the public roads on horseback one morning, he went by a field in which, a little distance away, a colored man was ploughing. As he went galloping by, the negro checked his horses, scanned him with a searching eye, and then, in a tremor of excitement, shrieked at the top of his voice, "I say dar." Dr. Jeter reined in his steed, drew up to the fence and awaited further developments. "I say dar," continued the simple-hearted ploughman, "ain't you Mars Berry Jell?" Amazed at the odd tangle in which his sable brother had gotten his name, he asked, "Am I what?" "Ain't you Mars Berry Jell?" He made a polite bow and replied, "Yes, this is Berry Jell," and then speedily swept on his way, but not until he had seen two rows of snowy teeth grinning out the poor fellow's pride and satisfaction in having actually spoken to "Mars Berry Jell."

This story suggests another. The colored people of Bedford often expressed their admiration for Dr. Jeter by naming their children for him.

During a certain summer he was spending a part of his vacation at the home of my father. One afternoon he set out on foot to pay a visit to a cousin. His walk took him through a forest, and quite unexpectedly he stumbled upon a colored urchin who was stealing a nap on the wayside. The approach

of Dr. Jeter aroused him, and he sprang to his feet in surprise and fright. Dr. Jeter, in a spirit of mischief, with well-feigned severity, said, "And who are you?" Never dreaming that he was in the presence of his illustrious namesake, the scared youngster replied, "I am Jerry Bell." The doctor said he had been laboring for some time under the impression that he was Jerry Bell, but that after that interview he had begun to think that it would not be very easy to determine, in Bedford at least, the exact identity of Jerry Bell. The stock seemed to be embarrassingly numerous.

Dr. Jeter was proud of the name of Jeter. He said that he had rarely ever known a man by that name that was not an honest man. That may have been claiming too much for his family, but the Bedford Jeters have always been distinguished for their probity and their high sense of honor. He said on one occasion that it was a matter of humiliation to him, that many persons who had been called after him brought reproach upon the name. In some cases that was true, but there have been many Jeters (I mean those named for him) who wore the name worthily.

Some time before his death I met him one morning, and upon inquiring after his health, he said that he was not well and had been suffering with a slight attack of insomnia. He told me that, as he was unable to sleep the night before, he spent a part of his time in calculating the number of ways in which the name of Jeter could be spelled. He said he counted three hundred different combinations of let-

ters which exactly spelt the name and that he supposed there were others. This may strike the reader as incredible, but let him try it.

I have already spoken of the mercurial and buoyant temperament of the Jeters. The Hatchers are not their equals in elasticity and ardor of nature—but they are more practical, sober and thoughtful. Dr. Jeter combined in himself the best characteristics of both families.

## CHAPTER II.

### HIS BIRTH AND EARLY SURROUNDINGS.

**J**EREMIAH BELL JETER was born in Bedford County, Va., on the 18th of July, 1802. According to his own statement, his birth-place was the old homestead of his maternal grandfather. The house in which he was born would cut a sorry figure if brought into comparison with the stately and imposing edifices which are now quite numerous in Northern Bedford. At the time of its erection, however, it was probably the most commodious private residence in the entire community. It was a framed building, one story and a half in height, with shingled roof and stone chimneys. It had four main rooms, with small windows, and doors, high from the ground and approached by block steps. It never knew the refining touch of paint, and as a consequence presented to the eye of the stranger a weather-beaten and neglected appearance. But it was not without its attractive features. It was delightfully situated on an elevated plain, and, with its blue-grass turf, its rows of locusts, its mammoth old acorn tree, its adjacent garden of roses and lilacs and its great orchard, it made an enchanting picture as it nestled near the base of the Piney Mountain. It commanded above the line of the nearer mountains a lovely view

of the Peaks of Otter on the one side and of the No-Business Mountain on the other. It was never honored with any name of its own, but it was known far and near as the homestead of the old Baptist preacher, Jeremiah Hatcher. For many, many years he dwelt there, and the place became the favorite resort of his children and grand-children, not only during his life-time, but long after he had passed away. Almost every Saturday night some members of the scattered household knocked at the door, and the idle Sundays, sadly common then, often drew together groups of kindred, attracted by their love of the dear old spot, who gave their hours to happy fellowship. It was not the most religious method of spending the Lord's day, but such was the custom of the times, and social visiting on the Sabbath was not then accounted a sinful thing. If there chanced to be preaching in the neighborhood, you might be sure that the Sunday dinner in that house would be prepared with bountiful care, for the dear old mother knew that the loved company would inevitably come.

That dinner was the highest triumph of the simple-hearted hospitality which reigned in those days. There was no costly plate, no rare dishes, no tiresome courses and no pompous ceremony. It was only a country dinner, composed of the simple products of farm and garden, but it was, at least, abundant, cordially dispensed and richly enjoyed.

Inasmuch as it happens that in describing the birth-place of Dr. Jeter I am at the same time describing my own childhood home, I must be pardoned for the warmth and tenderness of my words. One

is fairly entitled to charity if, in speaking of his early home, he drifts into a candor which seems unduly personal. At the death of Jeremiah Hatcher, my father inherited what was in those days called the "home place," and there, of course, my boyhood life was spent. Oh, with what deep passion did I love that quiet old mountain home! To my boyish fancy it was the centre of the world. It seemed always to have been what it was, and for a while I never dreamed that it could change. In all the heart-breaks and woes of subsequent life I have known no sorrow to be compared with that sickness of heart which came with my first absences from my father's house. Even now, under the glow of an affectionate memory, the faces and scenes of those early days take on a beauty so mellow and sad that I cannot recall them except with moistening eye-lids. Beneath the cherry-tree at the corner of the garden slept the dust of my Presbyterian mother, who died on my fourth birth-day, and who, with her dying breath, prayed that her two sons might become ministers of the gospel. There, in his lonely old age, dwelt my father, who made his last-born his companion by day and always locked him fondly to his breast through every live-long night. One could not be poor who was enriched with the treasure of such fatherly affection. Royal evenings that household used to have around the winter fires, with ample stores of apples, chestnuts and cider, sometimes singing the old songs, sometimes reading aloud the paper or the book, and always ready for the spicy jest or the crafty practical joke. Alas! the house is now in



the hands of strangers and its former inmates are either dead or scattered beyond the hope of reünion.

The simple old mansion had at its rear a shed-room, which, I know not for how long, was called the "little room." It had no fire-place, no out-door, and only one window, which looked toward the West. Such truant sunbeams as ventured to peer through that little window on the 18th of July, 1802, enjoyed the distinction of being the first to hail the advent of the then nameless little stranger, whose subsequent story is to be unfolded in these pages. It is believed that the birth of young Jeter occurred just a little while before the death of his grandfather.

Bedford County lies in Middle Virginia and at the eastern base of the Blue Ridge Mountains. While it has been justly admired for its grand scenery, its thrifty population and its productive soil, I must agree with Dr. Jeter that it has not much in its history to give it eminent rank in the family of Virginia Counties. It has at least one magnificent natural characteristic, of which any land might justly boast. I refer, of course, to the celebrated Peaks of Otter. This spur of the Blue Ridge is singularly beautiful in its form, and affords one of the most commanding views which can be enjoyed from any mountain summit. It is easily accessible, and has been for generations, as it yet remains, an attractive resort for travellers from almost every quarter of the globe. Of that majestic old mountain Dr. Jeter sometimes feelingly spoke as his only Bedford friend that had never changed.

Dr. A. B. Brown once said that God's plant-bed

for raising Baptist preachers lay along the eastern base of the Blue Ridge. His remark is specially applicable to Bedford. It is not only true that many of her young men have entered the Baptist ministry, but the ministerial ranks of other denominations have also received numerous and valuable recruits from the same quarter. Indeed, Dr. Jeter is frank enough to say that Bedford was never remarkable for anything except for the production of preachers. With that opinion I do not agree. The sons of Bedford have achieved eminence in almost every walk of life. But he is right, beyond question, when he claims pre-eminence for that county in the matter of furnishing men for the ministry.

Why this has been so I cannot explain. Viewed from the human standpoint, the question has often perplexed me. The Bedford people are not distinguished for piety, and they have never shown any marked anxiety for their young men to go into the ministry. They are not conspicuous friends of ministerial education and by no means famous for liberality in sustaining their young brethren in their struggles to educate themselves for the Lord's service. It is a suggestive fact that when a Bedford boy becomes a preacher he invariably leaves the county. The churches often lament this state of things, but they have as yet done nothing to change it.

We will pause here and invite Dr. Jeter to furnish his recollections of the social aspects of Bedford as they were three-quarters of a century ago. After pondering what he has to say, the reader will conclude that there was not much then in the situation

to impel young men to enter the ministry. I have sometimes thought that in the fact that so many Bedford youths have become preachers, we have a strong incidental proof that God, by His own sovereign authority, chooses the men who are to preach His gospel. Here follows Dr. Jeter's portrayal of the social and religious condition of Bedford, as seen by his boyish eyes,—

#### THE STATE OF SOCIETY.

The state of society in my native county, in the days of my boyhood, did not differ materially, I presume, from that of the Piedmont region, or, indeed, of the rural districts generally. The people were plain, and mostly industrious and honest. Their notorious vices were drunkenness and fighting. In that day the use of strong drink was universal, or limited only by the ability to obtain it. Many of the farmers had large orchards, and made brandy for their own use and for that of their neighbors. As there was no tax on the distillation of spirits, almost every neighborhood had its distillery for the manufacture of whiskey. At every place of public resort, store, blacksmith's shop or mill, the liquid was freely offered for sale, and everywhere found a ready market. Most families kept it in their "case," and all, from the hoary-headed father to the little child, partook daily of the morning "dram" and the noontide "grog" or "toddy." Families too poor to indulge in its daily use would drink it freely on holiday and festive occasions. At musters, courts, "corn-shuckings" and "log-rollings" all drank, at their own expense or that of their friends. It is not surprising, where drinking was universal, that drunkenness was common. It is proper to remark, however, that the excess was occasional rather than habitual. There were many drunkards, but few sots. Men were preserved from habitual inebriety, partly from a motive of economy and partly from the incessant demands of their business. On muster-days and court-days the frequency of drunkenness stripped it, in a great measure, of its shame and reproach; but at other times and on

other occasions it was more disreputable. It must be said, in honor of the society, that the vice was almost unknown among females. Many of the old women smoked their pipes, and women of all ages drank, constantly or occasionally, toddy ; but not until I had passed my majority, and left the county of my nativity, did my eyes behold that monstrous sight—a drunken woman.

As already stated, “fighting” was a prevalent vice in the community. When men got at variance, they settled their controversies, not in the genteel and refined method of blowing out one another’s brains with powder and ball, but by furious quarreling, too often accompanied by revolting profanity, ending in a regular game of fisticuffs. The combat brought no disgrace on the pugilists; and though they were sometimes “parted” by their friends, they were usually permitted, with what was called “fair play,” to continue the fight until the one having the least strength or the least “pluck” was constrained to cry “enough.” Every blow struck after that sign of surrender was deemed cowardly and mean. Rarely a muster passed without one or more fights. A half-dozen on court-day was deemed a very moderate number; and sometimes the excitement and the combats would become what was termed a “battle royal.”

It is not strange that a vice so common and so popular should have developed professional fighters. They were known as “bullies.” Men of great muscle, courage and powers of endurance gained for themselves a renown resembling that of the knights-errant of old, by their pugilistic exploits. They were viewed by the vulgar crowd as men of great distinction. They very naturally became haughty, insolent and defiant, awakening fear among all the feebler combatants, and contempt in all persons of refinement and virtue. They strutted on the muster-fields and court-greens, conscious of their physical superiority and their acknowledged prowess.

It may assist the reader to form a proper estimate of the times by stating an event, as we heard it in our boyhood, in the life of a celebrated bully. It occurred at a roadside tavern. A dispute arose between him and a Kentucky traveller. The rowdy was tall and muscular, weighing two hundred pounds, and in full training for single combat. The Kentuckian was a small, well-

formed and agile man, of perfect self-possession. From some difference of views, the Bedford hero was induced to use insulting language to the traveller, who coolly stated that if the language were repeated he would chastise the offender. Of course, such a threat was not to be endured. A fight ensued, in which the bully was thoroughly whipped and humbled. The best of the story is, that he never again attempted to distinguish himself in the game of fisticuffs.

It will not seem surprising that a vice so common and so glorious among men should have found imitators among boys. Fighting might almost have been classed among the amusements of some of the schools. To endure an insult was contrary to the ethical code of the boys. They might be restrained, by natural timidity, parental authority or the dread of an unequal conflict, from resenting an offence or an injury; but *lex talionis* was the law of boyhood. Few boys of that day reached manhood without fighting; and many of them had more combats than they had fingers and toes. These impotent conflicts were usually attended with very little harm. A scratched face or a bitten finger was ordinarily the worst result of these juvenile pugilisms. The boys deemed it prudent not to allow any serious injury to be inflicted in these combats, lest they should become implicated in the guilt, and the rod should be substituted for the fist.

The amusements were such as corresponded with the times and the people. Dancing was not a common, but an occasional and holiday exercise. It was rarely practiced without special preparation; and then its devotees aimed to indemnify themselves for its infrequency by excessive indulgence. They danced till the exercise became a weariness, and nature imperatively demanded its needed repose. The plays in which the sexes united were blindman's buff, thimble, whiffling pin, and many others whose names I have forgotten, and which, if I could mention, would convey no definite conceptions to the mind of the reader.

The sports in which men alone took part were mostly athletic. Hunting was a favorite exercise of many, both young and old. Squirrels, hares, partridges, ducks, wild turkeys, opossums, foxes, raccoons, deer and bears were all hunted by sportsmen. The game, on the whole, was not worth the powder; but it created

excitement, which was no little valued by the population of a quiet rural district. Hounds, traps and guns, both smooth and rifled, were put in requisition for the sport.

In hunting and shooting I was undistinguished. The first time I was trusted with a gun, I came upon a squirrel standing in a path a few steps from me, nibbling an ear of corn, which he had feloniously taken from a contiguous field. I was seized with an instant tremor. After hasty consideration, my plan of assault was laid. I ran at the thief to drive him up a tree, and succeeded admirably. He climbed a tall oak, thickly covered with boughs, and I saw him no more. It was fully six months before it occurred to me that I might have shot him on the ground. My subsequent success in sportsmanship fully corresponded with this unpromising commencement. I could never kill anything, either running or on the wing. I could take aim as accurately, or fire as quickly, as any marksman; but if I fired, I did not take aim; and if I took aim, I did not fire. In either case, the game was unharmed. If slaughtered animals were permitted to indict their relentless pursuers, few of all the Bedford boys would be freer from blame than I, provided that guilt be graduated, not by the intent, but by the execution.

The religious privileges of the people were few, and not of the first quality. They were divided in their opinions and preferences between the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist denominations. Their houses of worship, with scarcely an exception, were either built of logs or framed, without plastering, ceiling or stoves, fitted merely as shelters from sun and rain. In the winter seasons preaching was kept up chiefly in private dwellings. Religious services were conducted monthly, or at greater or shorter intervals; but in no case weekly. Most persons, provided with conveniences, could, within a radius of six or eight miles, conveniently attend worship every Lord's day, conducted by one or another of the prevalent denominations. Sunday-schools were unknown. They existed in older and more advanced communities, but if the rumor of their existence had reached Bedford, I do not remember it. Meetings for social prayer were rarely held. I have no recollection of attending one until I had reached maturity, and that was a notable failure.

The preaching of the day was evangelical. It might be confused in arrangement, meagre in thought, obscure, ungrammatical and coarse in style, and vociferous and awkward in delivery ; but, with few exceptions, it disclosed, with more or less distinctness and force, the atonement of Christ and the necessity of regeneration. It was remarkable for its experimental character. Most sermons contained an account of the conversions, conflicts, sorrows and perplexities of a soul in its passage from death to life, somewhat after the manner of Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress. There was little variety in the preaching. Many sermons began with the fall of man, touched on the principal doctrines of revelation, gave a Christian's experience, conducted him safely to heaven and wound up with the resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, the retributions of eternity and an application of the subject according as "light and liberty" were granted. These discourses were generally an hour and a half, and sometimes three hours in length. A few were of moderate length, and delivered in better taste.

Many of the preachers "spiritualized" their texts—that is, they would take plain, historical passages of Scripture, and, by fanciful resemblances, draw from them lessons of which their authors never dreamed. The Songs of Solomon were an inexhaustible source of texts for the allegorizers. There was scarcely a verse in the book which they did not torture into pious absurdity. Some of these mystifiers found the matter for a tedious sermon in a single word. A godly, worthy and highly-esteemed preacher took for his text : "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind," etc. He based his discourse on the word "loins," which he confounded with the word *lines*. There were various kinds of lines—lines by which carpenters executed their work, lines for the division of land, lines of stages for travellers, lines for guiding unruly teams—and in all these uses of the word he found a mystical import, which he unfolded to the delight and for the edification of his hearers. Other preachers went still further, and found a spiritual import in every letter of the Bible. A pious minister declared that he believed not only every text, but every letter, and every crook and dot of every letter, had a spiritual meaning. His trouble was, that he could not discern all these mysteries. I

will give a brief outline of a discourse of one of these spiritualizers. His text was: "Salvation is of the Lord." To him it seemed that there was something mystical in every letter of the word SALVATION. He proceeded to evolve its mysteries. "S," said he, "saving salvation (not very luminous); A, almighty salvation; L, lasting salvation; V, vast salvation; A—this A my brethren, signifies the same as the other A; T, eternal salvation (he was probably a better divine than an orthographer); I, incomprehensible salvation; ON—we will take both these letters together—honorable salvation." The preacher had now a broad foundation for his sermon, on which he built leisurely and for an hour or two.

It must be conceded that these are the poorest specimens of the allegorical style of preaching. In merit, however, there was little distinction between the best and the worst, the most ingenious and the most absurd discourses of this style. They were all drawn from an exuberant imagination, and not from the oracles of God. It is proper, too, to state that, amid much that was puerile and disgusting, there was frequently mingled momentous truth, illustrated by apt analogies and enforced with unaffected pathos. It should be remembered, also, that this method of expounding the Scriptures claimed high authority. It originated with, or was, at least, greatly encouraged by Origen, one of the most learned and voluminous of the early Christian Fathers. Dr. Gill, unrivalled among modern commentators for Hebraistic lore, gave no little encouragement to it. It must be noted, too, that the practice was not limited to the illiterate, but prevailed, more or less, with ministers of the highest culture and of all denominations. This remark was certainly true within the range of my juvenile observations.

There was another striking peculiarity in the preaching that I heard in my early years. It was eminently controversial. Every preacher was a polemic. Whether his text was doctrinal or practical, historical or poetical, gracious or denunciatory, he could find in it a hook on which to suspend his distinctive notions, and a club with which to defend them. If he was a Methodist, his hearers would have no doubt that he rejected predestination, believed in Christian perfection (whatever that may be), and the liability of



believers to fall from grace, and, quite probably, infant baptism and the validity of the ordinance by sprinkling. Presbyterians and Baptists were quite ready to assert and defend the doctrines of election and the certain salvation of all believers; nor were they slow to attack what they considered Arminian errors. Baptists did not then, certainly very few ministers among them did, give undue prominence to their distinctive views.

To the candid and fair discussion of doctrinal questions on which Christians differ there can be no objection. It is demanded by the love of truth and fidelity to Christ. Unfortunately, however, the religious controversies of those days were too often conducted in a bitter and abusive spirit. The aim of the contestants seemed to be, not to convince their hearers and win them to the truth, but to wound, overwhelm and bring into contempt their opponents. Had their hearers judged of Calvinists from the representations of Methodists, they must have concluded that the believers in predestination were not only infatuated, but on the high road to the perpetration of all manner of crimes. "It came from hell," it was said, "and would be the means of conducting multitudes thither. If it were true, God would be worse than the devil." These violent assaults were returned by Calvinists in full measure, heaped up and running over. Said a preacher, who, by the sharpness of his sarcasm, had acquired the title of "The Arminian Skinner,"—"From fifty to a hundred souls are converted at a Methodist camp-meeting. In a little while they all fall from grace. What a disappointment! The poor souls were disappointed, the Methodists were disappointed, and God was disappointed. The only way to save Methodist converts is to cut off their heads and send them straight to heaven, before they have an opportunity of falling from grace."

It must not be supposed that all preachers labored in this spirit and manner. The general tendency was to doctrinal and controversial preaching, but there were many preachers who avoided in the pulpit all acrimonious and discourteous remarks. They preached the gospel with simplicity and earnestness. Among these may be mentioned Rev. William Harris, the venerable pastor of my youth, of whom I may have occasion to speak more particularly hereafter.

It is questionable whether ministers of the present day are not in danger of drifting to the opposite extreme from that of the early preachers of the century. A sickly sentimentalism is leading them, not only to avoid offensive language in the pulpit, but to efface the distinction between truth and error. Bigotry is bad; but not so bad as religious indifference. There is a sharp conflict between truth and error, right and wrong, and God requires that his servants shall espouse and earnestly, but lovingly, maintain the teachings of his word.

I must notice another peculiarity in the preaching of those times. Much of it was uttered in a monotonous, singing tone. This tone usually indicated the higher and more impassioned parts of the discourse. There was power in it. Among a plain, uncritical people, it had a wonderful mastery over the sympathies. Many of these unsophisticated preachers carried the art of intoning their sermons to the highest excellence. There were most touching melody and pathos in their voices. Rev. Andrew Broaddus, of Carolina, one of the most polished speakers I have ever heard, would occasionally, in the highest strains of his enrapturing eloquence, glide into the "holy tone" with thrilling effect. The tones of the voice have much to do with the influence of all kinds of public speaking. It is supposed by some Hellenists that Demosthenes delivered his splendid orations in tones resembling those adopted by the old preachers.

There is something peculiarly refreshing in the subjoined description which Dr. Jeter gives of his early experience in the matter of whiskey-drinking. It shows the stuff of which he was made :

I have already referred to the almost universal custom of drinking alcoholic liquors. I drank, as did other boys. When I was a little over eight years old I heard a wagon-boy, somewhat older than I, say: "I have not drunk a drop of spirits for three years." I had no acquaintance with him, but instantly resolved that I would follow his example. I cannot now remember the motive which gave birth to the resolution. I had no conviction that the use of strong drink was either sinful or dangerous; and suspect

that I was influenced in my purpose more by a desire to be singular than to be safe. I made no boast, or even mention, of my resolution. The pledge was entirely mental. When spirit was afterwards offered to me, I simply declined drinking it. A course so singular soon attracted attention. My friends were surprised and troubled that I should have adopted a resolution fraught with so much peril. They were quite sure that I would become a drunkard. In confirmation of their opinion, they referred to at least half-a-dozen men who had abstained entirely from using strong drink, had become sots, and some of them died drunkards. I supposed I had made a dreadful mistake, and was much troubled at it; for I had great horror of becoming a drunkard. I counselled with no one on the subject; but concluded that my safest course would be to glide back, without attracting notice, into the use of strong drink. It occurred to me, however, that this might be the means of fulfilling the prediction of my friends. I was perplexed. I can never forget the pleasure which I experienced when the truth broke on my mind that if I should never drink intoxicating liquors it would be impossible for me to become a drunkard. My good resolution was confirmed. My friends were correct in their facts, but erred in their conclusion. There was a mighty factor in the account which they entirely overlooked. The persons they named abstained from using strong drink for a time, in the vain effort of breaking the habit of intoxication, which they had formed by the long-continued use of strong drink. I had no such habit to break. Their reasoning was sound as it applied to persons in a condition like that of those named; and the soundness of the reasoning constitutes one of the strongest motives to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks. It is easy to avoid forming the drunken habit, but almost impossible to break it.

I continued steadfast in my resolution until, in the twentieth year of my age, I made a profession of religion; and then, strange to say, I concluded to abandon it, on the ground that the gospel had set me free. It seemed unreasonable that I should bear a self-imposed yoke. Using strong drink appeared to be numbered among the privileges of the kingdom of heaven. All Christians enjoyed it, from my venerable and very temperate

pastor down to the humblest church member ; and why should not I ? This delusion did not long continue with me. It is probable that I did not take half-a-dozen drinks, and possibly not a single drink, of intoxicating liquor before I renewed my resolution. Of this transaction, my late friend, Dr. Witt, retained a more distinct recollection than I did, and shall furnish the history of it. He says :

“Some time during the summer of 1822 an event occurred which I ought not to pass over in silence, as it contributed largely to the safety and the felicity of my life. We (he and myself) were attending a meeting at Hatcher’s meeting-house, and had spent the night at a Brother White’s, who lived in that neighborhood. In the morning, as the custom was, a decanter of spirits, with sugar and water, was set out and we were invited to partake of it. We were in the habit of tasting, occasionally, of the insidious cup ; but I do not now recollect whether on this occasion we drank or not. We were led into a conversation on the subject. We concurred in the opinion that it was not only a useless habit, but that it was fraught with pernicious consequences. We then and there, on a bright and beautiful Sabbath morning, mutually resolved to *abstain, during the remainder of our lives, from the use of intoxicating liquor as a beverage*, and to use it only as a medicine, if used at all. We pledged ourselves each to the other in a hearty shaking of hands ; and that sacred pledge we have religiously kept for half a century.” (*Life of Witt*, pp. 58, 59.)

It is painful to learn, from the foregoing paper of Dr. Jeter, that drunkenness was so prevalent among the Bedford people a century ago. I venture to follow his statement with two explanatory facts.

It is quite certain that the dissipation of those times sprang not so much from the saloon as from the distillery. Almost every prosperous farmer who had an orchard of his own had his arrangements for making peach and apple brandy. This was manufactured more for domestic than commercial pur-

poses. Many ran their stills for the benefit, or more truly for the injury, of their neighbors as well as of themselves. The poorer people brought in their fruit, and had it converted into brandy on shares. In this way almost every family kept a constant supply, and esteemed it one of the highest rites of hospitality to bring out the decanter for the refreshment of the visitors. They drank at home, and not at the public bars. It is true that at the court-houses and on muster-days whiskey was plentiful, and as public sentiment was not against it, good men sometimes fell into drunkenness on public occasions.

But this was not common. If I mistake not, the popular belief was that the use of brandy was justifiable, but that the drinking of whiskey was a criminal act. Brandy was a domestic article, and the people thought that they had the right to use the products of their own toil. If it made them drunk, it was a private matter, and outsiders had no right to interfere. Of the truth of this statement, I recall a ludicrous illustration. In one of the Baptist churches of Bedford, about a half-century ago, a well-known member was arraigned for discipline for drunkenness. The suspicious form of the indictment was that the brother had been "drunk from drinking whiskey." His accuser testified that he had seen him staggering along the streets of Lynchburg in a state of helpless intoxication. The accused was present, and heard the grave charge with quiet and unruffled composure; indeed, there was a twinkle of triumph in his eye. When asked if he had aught to say in his defence,

he arose leisurely and said: "Nothing, except to deny the charge; it is not true." The situation became extremely awkward. His accuser was non-plussed, but at length declared again that with his own eyes he "had seen the brother reeling through the streets." But once more the accused man renewed his denial. He received the benefit of the doubt, and was acquitted. When they left the house, the brother who had brought the charge said to him: "I thought you were a man of truth; but after your denial to-day, I can never believe that you are an honest man. You know that you were drunk." "Why," said the man, "I do not deny that I was drunk; but I do deny that I got drunk by drinking whiskey: it was brandy." Evidently he felt that to drink excessively of whiskey was a crime; but that the use of brandy was not to be condemned.

It is pleasant to add that in twenty-five years after Dr. Jeter left Bedford there had been a marked change in the habits of the people. The still-houses had fallen into decay; social drinking had, in a large measure, ceased, and drunkenness was no longer common. I grew up in the same neighborhood from which he had gone out, and I think that I can safely testify that there were not a half-dozen men in that community that were addicted to excessive drinking. This happy change came in part through temperance societies and from the increased self-respect and piety of the people. The older men still indulged their morning toddies, and Christmas insisted on its bowl of egg-nog; but social drinking had ceased to be respectable.

In our times drunkenness is disreputable, and yet not a few of our young men defy public sentiment and become drunkards. What a contrast between them and the youthful Jeter, who boldly defied a vicious sentiment in favor of drinking, and chose the path of sobriety, even though he had to walk alone!

It will entertain the reader to recur to some superstitious notions which prevailed in Virginia a century ago. I append here a brief extract from Dr. Jeter's "Recollections." Things have changed for the better since the time of which he writes, but the spirit of superstition still exists among the uneducated classes of our population. The ghost-story has not lost its charm or its terror, and perhaps will not to the end of time.

#### PREVALENT SUPERSTITIONS.

The word "superstition" has quite a variety of meanings. I use it to denote the dread of imaginary beings or evils. It has prevailed, more or less, among all peoples, barbarous and civilized, and in all ages. It is more common among the ignorant than among the cultivated classes of society; but is by no means limited to them. The grosser superstitions of my neighborhood were passing away at the time of my boyhood. I never saw a witch, or a woman reputed to be one, though I heard many thrilling stories of witches that had recently resided in the vicinity. My father and mother were entirely free from superstition. They never gave the slightest credence to the witch and ghost stories then current in the community. I adopted the views of my parents; but, in spite of my incredulity, in the dark and alone, I was terribly afraid of seeing something which I might imagine was a ghost. In about a mile of my residence was a place called Gatson's. It was an old field overgrown with bushes and young pines, from which almost every vestige of a dwelling

had been removed. Here, before my birth, resided old Mrs. Gatson. Her neighbors believed most unquestionably that she was a witch. I heard my grandfather, who lived near her, tell this story about her :

One of her neighbors suffered loss by a disease among his cattle or hogs ; and Mrs. Gatson was strongly suspected of having bewitched them. It was resolved that the matter should be put to a test. It was believed that if new needles were boiled in a pot, the witch would come to the house, and not be able to enter it, unless she could pick up something in the yard to take with her. Arrangements were made for the trial. The yard was carefully swept, and every movable thing was taken away. New needles were put into a pot of boiling water, and all were on the *qui vive* for the arrival of Mrs. Gatson. Sure enough, she soon made her appearance, walked through the yard, and, picking up a little child that had been permitted to stray beyond the door, went directly into the house. The trial had been a partial failure, but the measure of success had been sufficient to strengthen the suspicion that she was a witch. She removed from the neighborhood ; but left behind her, among the superstitious, the unwavering belief that she was a witch.

There had been, in my early days, a great abatement of the superstitions of the past, but still they lingered among ignorant people, and especially among the negroes. Story-telling was one of the common amusements of the times ; and these stories usually related to witches, hags, giants, prophetic dreams, ghosts and the like. The dread of jack-o'-lanterns, graveyards and ghosts was quite common, and extended much beyond the avowed belief in their reality. Haunted spots were quite common, to which timid passengers usually gave a wide berth in the night. Ghosts were not unfrequently seen gliding about in the twilight, or in the moonshine, clothed in white. Indeed, I came very near seeing a ghost myself. When I was a lad, having been at work in a distant field, I was returning home by moonlight. At a sudden turn in the road I saw, directly before me, an object, ghost-like in color, but of a dim and undefined shape. I surveyed it with more alarm than pleasure. At first it seemed still, but after I had gazed at it awhile, it seemed to move slowly from side



to side in the road. My father had a servant, an old man, who was coming not far behind me, who made great boasts of his heroism. He had no fear of ghosts. He was, however, when he came up, startled by the apparition. After carefully eyeing it, and duly considering the danger, and arming himself with a bludgeon, he resolved to approach it. As he advanced with slow and trembling steps, I marched close behind him, and found that the supposed ghost was a wagon, loaded with white plank, that had broken down and been left in the road. Many such ghosts were seen in that day.

In my early years I resided a short time in the county of Campbell. Near my residence was a haunted spot, which most persons passed with dread in the dark. It was known that a timid man was to go that way on a certain night. A mischievous wight determined to frighten him. He communicated his purpose to a young man, who resolved to play the same prank on him. Quite early, this latter trickster was at the haunted place, wrapped in a sheet, and carefully concealed. In due time the other mischievous fellow, in ghostly garb, took his position. Soon the unsuspecting, but faint-hearted passenger made his appearance; and, frightened by what he supposed to be a ghost, took to his heels, with the ghost in pursuit. At the proper moment ghost No. 2 joined in the chase. The scene became intensely exciting. The foremost ghost, alarmed in turn, cried to the object of his pursuit: "Stop, Dick! stop, Dick! I am not Plunket" (the name of the man whose ghost was supposed to haunt the place), "but here he is behind me." It was a great relief when it was discovered that the supposed ghosts were mischievous spirits, clothed with flesh and blood.

In speaking of the asceticism so common in his youth, Dr. Jeter furnishes an insight into the difficulties which stood in the way of the conversion of young people. It was then thought that if a young man became a Christian he must extinguish every trace of buoyancy and merriment from his nature. Indeed, it was a physical impossibility for vigorous

and healthy people to live the life which a false view of the Scriptures led the ministers of those times to prescribe for the followers of Christ. To the present day the influence of those ascetic notions is felt among us. The young shrink from the gospel as from the enemy of human happiness. It was much worse then. There is something positively heroic in the attempts made by the bright and happy-natured young people of those days to crush out their very temperaments in order to be pious.

#### ASCETICISM.

This term denotes the practice of "undue rigor and self-denial in religious things." It is an evil peculiar to no age and to no form of religion. It has its origin in the desire to substitute for moral duties austerities congenial with the carnal mind; or to atone for neglected duties by the performance of works of supererogation. It gave birth to monasticism, with its multiplied evils, among Roman Catholics. Its mischiefs, however, are by no means limited to them. There are few Christian sects whose views and lives are not, more or less, influenced by it.

In my boyhood days ascetic notions were quite prevalent in all the Christian denominations around me. The Methodists were specially strict in their religious discipline. Their female members were rigidly forbidden to adorn themselves with jewelry, bows, ribbons or curls. Their simple style of dress was, as I then thought, and as I still think, becoming and beautiful. The evil referred to lay not in the simplicity of their dress, but in its enforcement as a duty. Men, for drunkenness, dishonesty or other vices, might be tenderly dealt with and pardoned; but woe to the thoughtless damsel who ventured to deck herself with rings, or curls, or plumes, or to engage in the giddy dance. Nothing could save her from excommunication and disgrace, except the most penitent confession and the most solemn promise to abstain in future from these ungodly practices.

Before I reached maturity a young Methodist preacher of

respectable family and of fine promise was stationed in the town of Lynchburg. A great revival took place under his ministry, and many were added to his church. A writer, in a paper of the town, gave a glowing description of the labors and success of the young pastor. Among other things which he preached, it was stated that he told the people: "Except ye wear your hair straight, ye cannot be saved." Whether the remarks of the evangelist were fairly reported, I cannot say. This much, however, I may confidently affirm: The oracular remark created no surprise; but was rather received as a proof of the sanctity and fidelity of the young minister. A man so strict in matters of fashion, it was inferred, could not be neglectful of "judgment, mercy and the weightier matters of the law."

Baptists, less rigorous than Methodists in their notions of religious duties, were quite ascetic in their practice and discipline. They were lax enough in regard to morals, but severely intolerant of what were called worldly pleasures. These were from the devil, and led straight to perdition. On becoming a Baptist, one was expected to renounce the pleasures of the world—not only dancing, but all games, sports and amusements—and to be grave, avoiding mirth and frivolity. This rule was not rigidly enforced, but its observance was deemed essential to high Christian character, and peculiarly necessary to ministers of the gospel.

I have stated the ascetic notions of the times mainly for the purpose of showing their influence on my own life. In that day it was customary for young men to wear their hair curled on their foreheads, an adornment secured, in most cases, by the use of pomatum. In the commencement of my religious course I combed my hair straight, thus bringing myself within the possibility of salvation as taught by the Lynchburg divine. My compliance with this rule was easy, as my hair was naturally straight. All amusements I abandoned at once, and without difficulty, as I had little opportunity, and less inclination, to indulge in them. There was one duty which I did not find it so easy to practice. Laughing was deemed, if not sinful, at least quite unbecoming for a Christian, and especially a preacher. In this view I concurred. Living in a world filled with sin and cursed of God, with thousands passing daily to perdition, it appeared to me most

inappropriate that I should indulge in mirth. This view seemed to be confirmed by the fact that, so far as the Scriptures teach, "Jesus wept, but never laughed." The duty seemed clear, but its observance was quite uncongenial with my temperament. This was vivacious, cheerful and strongly inclined to mirth. I resolved, however, to maintain my gravity. For a time I succeeded well. Not a laugh escaped from my lips, and scarcely a smile lightened my countenance. At length, however, some amusing thing was said or done that upset my gravity, and my laughter was all the more convulsive and vociferous because of the long-continued restraint that I had imposed upon it.

This untimely and sinful outburst of mirth was followed by a season of gloom, confession, penitence, tears, prayer and earnest resolution not to be overtaken again with the fault. For some time I carefully watched against my besetting sin, and maintained an unbroken solemnity of countenance. It was not long, however, before, in an unguarded moment, some facetious remark or ludicrous event overcame my resolution, and threw me into a paroxysm of laughter, to be followed by another season of humiliation, sorrow and promised amendment.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE SCHOOL BOY AND HIS SCHOOLS.

**D**R. DANIEL WITT, in his Autobiography, gives a charming account of his first meeting with J. B. Jeter in 1821. His description is a poem, in which he celebrates the birth of the friendship which at that time sprang up between himself and Jeter, and which grew in trustfulness and devotion until they were put asunder by death. Of that memorable intimacy I shall have occasion to speak in a later chapter; but I refer to the subject at this time, simply to recall the first impressions which these two mountain boys made upon each other.

Jeter was, at that time, nineteen years of age—a rude farmer boy, tall and slender in form, awkward in manners and clad in homespun; but the observant Witt detected in him the marks of unusual power. He tells us that he “was full of fire and enthusiasm, and that in point of general information, and in force of native intellect he seemed to be far in advance of the boys with whom he was in the habit of associating.”

Dr. Jeter, in referring to the same event, mentions an amusing little incident which first excited his interest in Daniel Witt. “I remember definitely,”

he says, "that my attention was drawn to him, and my desire to cultivate his acquaintance was awakened by hearing him use the word 'circuitous.' It did not belong to the vocabulary of the plain rural people with whom I lived. Its use indicated a degree of mental culture above that of my neighbors, and as I had a strong aspiration for knowledge, I immediately sought his society."

In this simple paragraph we have revealed to us the youthful Jeter. There was in him a mind hungry for knowledge, and unconsciously yearning for intellectual sympathy. In the circle of his kindred and neighbors he had not found such companionship as met the cravings of his burning and restless nature.

When by chance a kindred spirit crossed his path, he opened wide his arms, and took him to his heart. There is nothing more interesting than the fellowship of kindred minds, and we can readily understand how it came to pass that these two young men, until then unknown to each other, should so speedily link themselves together in friendship. They had their respective associates, but they were both superior to those upon whom they had been dependent for society, and when they came together, they found at once a basis for equality and mutual respect. They touched each other with their intellectual elbows, and found it pleasant to walk in company. Their thirst for knowledge, so strong in both, made them brothers.

I have sometimes thought that the most wonderful feature in Dr. Jeter's character was his interest and

independent longing after knowledge. His mind seemed to be perpetually on the alert.

His enthusiasm in study was as fresh and eager when he was seventy-five years of age as it could possibly have been at any other point in his life. His mind was sharp, penetrating and inquisitive. New questions always excited his profoundest interest; and when once he became absorbed in the pursuit of information, it was hard to stop him. He would consult experts, ransack libraries and vex his own brain until he had reached his conclusions. I know that he was thoroughly reverent in dealing with truth; but he was sometimes so outspoken in his doubts, and so persistent in his inquiries, that timid people became alarmed, lest in his impetuous pursuit he would trample the truth beneath his feet.

This much I have ventured to say before inviting the reader to go back with me to his childhood, and study his character as a school-boy. Almost from his cradle he was known as the question-asker. He was a perplexing member of his household. He had a way of propounding conundrums of his own invention which no member of the family could unravel. His curiosity was so sincere and insatiable that it was impossible to keep him down. If a neighbor dropped in for the evening, and fell into easy chat with the family, this little white-haired urchin was not only a greedy listener, but if any point was left unsettled, he sprang eagerly into the arena, and opened a volley of questions. When strangers appeared with anything singular in their

garb or manner, he was quick to observe it, and he had no rule in the code of his etiquette which restrained him from demanding an explanation. Some persons considered him offensively pert, and wofully lacking in good manners. They did not fancy the idea of being cornered by such a self-asserting youngster, and transfixed with questions which they knew not how to answer. But they did the little fellow injustice. He had no thought of making himself disagreeable. He was not attempting to show off his own smartness to the disadvantage of others. It never crossed his mind that there could be any harm or impoliteness in trying to find out something that he did not know. As a fact, it was impossible for him not to ask questions. Thirst for knowledge was his master passion, and it pervaded his entire personality. It was a fire in his bones, consuming him day and night, and he knew not how to suppress it. For him to see a thing, was to begin to think about it. If he did not understand it, he looked at it, walked around it, touched it and thought of it until he settled down into some opinion which for the time at least satisfied him. When not talking he was thinking, and when not thinking, he was dreaming.

Such was the child when the time came for him to be sent to school. He was then seven years old, a slender, blue-eyed, clumsy boy. His father was an overseer for General Preston in the western part of Montgomery County, and the boy was sent to Peter Burns, who was employed to teach in the Preston family. What manner of child he then was we can



best learn from his subsequent writings. I present here some extracts from his "Childish Philosophy," an account of which is found in his "Recollections of a Long Life," which he published a few years before his death in the *Religious Herald*:

#### CHILDISH PHILOSOPHY.

From the earliest period of my recollection my mind was given, as I suppose from instinct, to speculating on the nature and causes of phenomena which I saw around me. I do not know that my thoughts on these subjects differed materially from those of other children; but I write some of them to afford an opportunity for comparison.

I early adopted a rain-theory. The clouds, I supposed, were made of tin, or some similar metal, filled with water and perforated with small holes—after the manner of a watering-pot, which then I had never seen—each hole was stopped with a small peg, to each peg a long string was tied, the great man of the skies held every string in his hand, and, when he wished it to rain, he jerked the strings, drew out the pegs, and down came the rain. The theory seemed to me to be not only plausible, but the only one that could be formed. I was as firmly convinced of its truth as is Elder John Jasper that "the sun do move." How the clouds were filled with water, or how the pegs, once drawn from them, were restored to their holes, were questions which did not enter into my juvenile philosophy.

I had quite an early and well-defined system of cosmogony. The world I believed to be flat, with such inequalities as I observed on its surface; and, residing in sight of the Peaks of Otter, these did not seem to be inconsiderable. I was fully convinced, by what appeared to me to be conclusive reasoning, that the earth floated on water. It must rest on something; for all my observations satisfied me that nothing could stand without a foundation. That the world was supported by water, there were two decisive proofs. One was that, by traveling a certain distance in any direction, the end of the land was reached and the water on which it floated was seen; and the other was that, by digging wells in the earth the water, on which it rested, was found. What

supported the water was a question that never entered my juvenile brain. The intelligent reader will perceive the striking resemblance between my childish theory and the Hindoo cosmogony—that the earth rests on the backs of elephants—the elephants stand on turtles—the turtles swim in water—and below the water there is mist down to the bottom.

One thing greatly surprised me. It was that my father's house had happened to be set precisely in the middle of the world. That it was, I had the most conclusive evidence. The horizon, which I conceived to be the end of the world, was equidistant from my home in every direction. I supposed that its favorable location was simply accidental, and that no other house in all the world occupied a similar position.

The most incomprehensible mystery to my boyish intellect was the shoeing of a horse. For that my philosophy could find no satisfactory explanation. I saw that a horse stood firmly on the ground with his four feet. How a shoe could be nailed on his foot, while in this position, I could not conceive. It seemed equally impossible to perform the operation from above or from beneath. I came to the deliberate conclusion that the horse's foot was cut off, the shoe nailed on, and the foot restored to its place. This theory was the best that I could devise; but it did not quite satisfy my mind. It was a mystery to me that the operation could be performed without inflicting a wound or leaving a scar on the horse.

The thoughtful reader will be struck with the fact that many of the theories, discoveries and pretensions of the scientists and philosophers of past ages were quite as puerile as my childish speculations. It has been their chief labor in each successive generation to overthrow the theories of their predecessors. Many notions, popular in past ages, seem now to be ridiculous. Modern scientists claim to have passed far beyond the ancients in their researches and discoveries. Probably they have; and yet it is not unlikely that the time may come when many of their notions, falsely called science, will be regarded as the wild conceits of dis-tempered brains.

It is not easy to restrain a smile, as we read some of these childish speculations. At the first blush

they strike us as odd and illogical, and we are almost ready to conclude that their author was an idle dreamer, and stupid beyond redemption. But not so. Let us remember where and what the boy was at the time he was indulging these ruminations. He did not dwell in some beautiful city home, abounding in choice books, pictures and other helps for his intellectual quickening. In years he was only a child, and he was as one walking in the darkness. His feet were upon a new path, and he had no one to hold his hand and lead him. He could not have been much more severely alone if he had been the only child in the community. In his "Childish Philosophy" he records his first experiments in original thinking. He undertook to deal with really profound problems, concerning which he knew next to nothing. He was a reasoner, but with the disadvantage of being without adequate premises. In the fact that he grappled such grave questions, and sought to master them, he evinced the vigor and intrepidity of his mind, even at that early point in his life.

It is pleasant to look upon the glowing face of such a boy. We instinctively feel that he is one of a thousand, and not destined to company with the common herd. In the tumult of his childish thoughts there was the prophecy of his greatness. It pointed to a world of latent forces enfolded within him, and already clamorous to come forth. It foreshadowed that strength which, in after-years, bore him upward to the heights on which God had chosen him to walk. It seems a grim Providence indeed that a youth of such imperial endowments, and

so pervaded with lofty aspirations, should have been hedged about with such appalling obstacles. We see around us many schools crowded with boys that have neither capacity nor ambition for learning. Parents lavish their treasures in efforts to educate sons who are so ignoble in their ambition, and so mean in their tastes, that they idly cast away the priceless blessing thus brought within reach. I am reminded of the remark recently made by a friend of liberal education, that he was often called to gaze upon a revolting spectacle. He said that those young men who have the privilege of obtaining a liberal education seem to spurn their opportunity, while those who, above all things, yearned after knowledge, had not the means of securing it. This often seems to be the case. In almost every neighborhood there can be found some generously-endowed youth longing for an education, and yet apparently shut off from it by the inexorable decree of Heaven.

If we turn for a moment to the condition of Jeter, in his early youth, we can find nothing in his circumstances which gave promise of a bright future. We are painfully touched by the seeming harshness of his lot. His father was visionary and neglectful of his family's comfort. When yet of very tender years the boy was forced into the field to aid in making bread for the family. He could not attend school during the cropping seasons, and had to take his chances during the short days of winter. The weather was often rigorous, the school-houses were always uncomfortable and sometimes situated at long distances, and his lessons at home were not studied under the light of

gas or oil, but by the uncertain flame of the log-fire or the lightwood's torch. Besides, the text-books used in those far-away days were few, costly and very imperfect. To all the other drawbacks must be added the inefficiency of the teachers. In those times it was supposed that only indolent and thriftless men ever taught school. Among the sturdy tillers of the soil there lurked a very deep suspicion that when a man set up as a school-teacher it was because he had not sufficient energy to enter more active pursuits. There were no examining boards to sit in judgment upon the qualifications of those who undertook to teach. Few parents had sufficient intelligence to estimate the intellectual calibre of those who asked for their patronage. Men who were in that line of business frequently entered a neighborhood on their own account, and, by beating around among the people, "made up the schools," of which they were the sole managers. I would not reflect upon the school-master of the former times. He was a pioneer, and if he did not do the best work, it was due, in part, to the fact that he had not received the best preparation. I will presently permit Dr. Jeter to speak in his own terms of the teachers at whose feet he sat, and from whom he received the scanty training with which he entered life; but it seems proper here to say that his history ought to be full of cheer and happy encouragement to the poor youth of our land.

It is not surprising that they sometimes chafe and murmur under the bondage of their poverty. They read of the colleges and universities, and imagine that

if they could share their advantages, they would have an easy march to distinction and usefulness. That may be so, or it may not. After all, it is very largely what is in a young man—his gifts, his patience and his resoluteness—which fixes his destiny. Without these a college can confer no great blessings upon him, and with these he may rise to honor, even though he may never enter a college. His progress may be slow and painful, but in a lifetime he can climb to wonderful heights. It was Dr. Jeter's purpose to "do his very best," which led him through the old field schools of Bedford, and then outward and upward along the way of knowledge, until he had attained such a rank in life that colleges, which had never helped him, were glad to honor him.

We now present to the reader Dr. Jeter's account of his schools and teachers,—

Bedford is a Virginia County, lying between the James and Staunton Rivers, and at the foot of the Blue Ridge. The celebrated Otter Peaks are on the northwestern border of the county. It is distinguished for the number, ability and usefulness of the ministers of the leading evangelical denominations who have been reared within its limits. At the house of my maternal grandfather, Jeremiah Hatcher, and in full view of the towering mountains, my eyes first saw the light. My early recollections relate chiefly to events and scenes in this old and respectable county.

I pass over many of my childhood memories, which, however interesting they might be to the young, are hardly compatible with the design and gravity of my articles. It may be proper, however, to notice the educational advantages enjoyed in the county, especially that part of it in which I was reared, the Fork of Otter, in the days of my boyhood. The school-houses were of a primitive style of architecture, bearing a very slight resemblance to the Doric, Grecian or Roman order. They were

constructed of logs, notched at the corners, daubed with clay, covered with boards, kept in their position by weighty poles laid across them, and lighted, not by glass, but through an aperture between the logs, at a convenient height, which might be closed for comfort by a plank suspended above it on leather hinges. They had wide chimneys. Those who have seen them need no description of them; and to those who have not seen them, no description could impart any just conception of them. These houses were furnished with benches, without backs, on each of which a dozen or more pupils might sit, in close contact. A chair and a table for the teacher, with one or more good rods, completed the furniture of the school-room.

The teachers were in admirable correspondence with their school-houses. Persons too lazy to work and unfit for other profitable employments were usually engaged as pedagogues. School-books were scarce, but of divers kinds. Dilworth's spelling-book had gone out of print, but many copies of it were in existence, having been used and preserved by the parents, and possibly the grandparents of the pupils. Highly favored were the children who owned Webster's spelling-book, then just coming into use. For reading, every pupil brought to the school such book or books as were found in his family—they might be the *Columbian Orator*, *Scott's Lessons*, the *Arabian Nights*, *Robinson Crusoe*, the Bible or fragments of it, or anything else in print, historical or fictitious, didactic or heroic, solemn or amusing. This diversity in school-books was not so inconvenient as a modern teacher might suppose. Schools were not divided into classes, but every pupil "said" or read his own lesson. A slate and pencil, with paper and ink for the advanced students, completed the outfit for an education in the "Old Field Schools." In most of them neither a dictionary, a grammar, nor an arithmetic could be found.

This outfit, meagre as it was, was quite equal to the demands of the curriculum, comprehending only reading, writing and ciphering as "far as the rule of three." This last art was taught by means of a manuscript book belonging to the teacher, in which the arithmetical questions were not only propounded, but the process of their solution was fully recorded in figures. From this source

the pupils received their sums, and to this standard it was required that their answers should conform. Boys, after toiling days or weeks over a sum in long division, would go up to the teacher to report their answer, and to hear the appalling words: "Not right." They would then have to go over the tedious and perplexing calculation, with the probability of arriving at a similar result. One poor fellow labored three months at a single sum.

The rod bore an important part in the discipline of these primitive schools. Fortunately or unfortunately, the forests furnished switches which, for toughness and punitive power, threw into the shade the far-famed birchen rod. The virtues of the hickory were well understood by all the disciplinarians of the school-room; and its penal application was held in extreme horror by all the unruly urchins of the region. It was employed with more or less freedom and severity, according to the temper and views of the pedagogue. Some irascible teachers used it, occasionally, at least, with unquestionable cruelty; while others employed it to terrify rather than to punish. Castigation was inflicted usually by retail; but in some cases by wholesale. One teacher frequently flogged his pupils by the bench. Ten or a dozen were called up at once, and each received his share of the whipping. The punishment was not severe. While those at the head of the line were receiving their stripes, those at the other end were sniggering; and by the time the infliction was ended all were in a glee.

It is time to inquire after the attainments of the pupils in these plain, rural schools. Of course, they did not learn much. If most of the teachers had ever heard of accent or emphasis, they furnished to their scholars no proof of their knowledge. Of punctuation, they had some vague conception. He was deemed the greatest proficient in reading who could read the fastest. The teacher would often call out to the pupil, reading with breathless velocity: "Mind your stops!" and the teaching in punctuation was limited to this stern command. Spelling was the only branch of learning cultivated successfully in these schools. The pupils spelled in classes, the best spellers ascending to the head, and the worst descending to the foot, of the class. By this means an emulation was excited among them, which made them quite ready in spelling the words found in their meagre school vocabulary.



All the schools in the county were not alike. A grammar school was taught, in the neighborhood of Liberty, the metropolis of the county, by a Mr. Flood, which had quite a local reputation for the thoroughness of its instruction. In this school my lamented friend, the late Dr. D. Witt, had the good fortune to be taught. Considerable improvement was made, during my school-days, in the quality of the teaching in the schools. In some cases, what was lacking in merit was made up in pretension. One teacher proposed to give instruction, not only in the common branches of learning, but in the English grammar and in "the arts and sciences" as well. As his capacity for instruction in these branches was not in requisition in the school, I never knew, and cannot now conjecture, what "arts and sciences" he proposed to teach. I enjoyed the advantage of his instruction in grammar. I was taught to commit the large print in Murray's grammar to memory—from which attainment I afterwards derived great benefit; but if the teacher ever uttered a sentence which gave any intimation of his acquaintance with the design of grammar, I have no recollection of it, and think that if he had, I should remember it.

To one of my teachers, Lewis Parker, I was under great obligation. He was a poor young man, reared in the county. His opportunities for acquiring an education had been meagre, and his literary attainments were small, but he was conscious of his deficiency in learning, thirsted for knowledge, and labored earnestly to instruct his pupils. He had Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary in his school, and paid attention to accent, emphasis and punctuation in his instruction. I was greatly indebted to him for his tuition; and have long lamented that his early death prevented me from making this acknowledgment to him.

"There is no royal road to learning." Certainly no such road led through the Bedford schools in my boyhood days. We sat on no cushioned seats, handled no gilt-bound volumes, received no tempting premiums and feasted on no dainty luncheons. Going to school was no holiday procession, but a stern reality. Many of the pupils walked three or four miles, over stony paths, bare-footed, to reach the schools. In winter the attendance was larger than in the summer, because more boys could then be

spared from the labors of the farm. The worse the day the larger the school, as the greater number of children were released from home services. The pupils had invariably to cut in the forests, and bear on their shoulders, the fuel by which their school-rooms were warmed.

This system of education had its advantages.

“Its studies turned no student pale,  
But took the eel of science by the tail.”

If it did not make scholars, it made vigorous, self-reliant men and women. In those days and in that region, neuralgia had never been heard of. The girls and boys knew what hunger meant, but were strangers to dyspepsia. They had muscles, if they had not refinement. They had brains, too, healthy, well-developed brains; and though, in general, there was not much in them, they were capable of thinking and of indefinite improvement.

Nor was this all. The art of reading lies at the foundation of all learning. The man who can read has access to all the treasures of history, science and philosophy; can revel amid all the charms of fiction and poetry; and can master all the intricacies of statesmanship, and all the secrets of professional knowledge. His learning must be acquired with greater toil and with slower progress than if he had received early and thorough educational training; but when he reaches it, he may have it all the more perfectly at his command because of the perplexities through which he acquired it.

Not all the Bedford boys of the olden time became distinguished. In the best-taught and best-regulated schools only a small proportion of the pupils become scholars or prominent in life. Quite a fair number of the youth trained in these ill-supplied and ill-taught country schools became distinguished, if not for their learning, at least for their good sense, their practical wisdom and their usefulness. Some with their meagre educational advantages, through long years, struggled up the rugged hill of knowledge to no mean elevation. Others found in contiguous regions means of intellectual improvement denied to them in their native county.

## A SPELLING MATCH.

When I was a lad, probably ten years old, there were two rival schools in my neighborhood. The rivalry culminated in a "Spelling Bee," to adopt a modern Americanism, but it was then called a spelling match. Reading was taught in the schools, with no regard to accent or emphasis, and with very little to punctuation; and the glibbest reader was deemed the best. Composition was an art unknown; and the word would have been accounted outlandish in most of the schools. Spelling was the one branch of learning on which they prided themselves. The schools above alluded to boasted of their attainments in this popular exercise, each claiming to excel the other. Public opinion was divided on the subject, and it was resolved to submit the question to the test of experiment.

Each school selected a champion speller. John Houston was the standard-bearer of one school. He was a bright, modest, promising boy, not far from a dozen years old. I was chosen to vindicate the honor of the other school. I was larger, but probably not older than John, and certainly was not less ambitious to excel than he was. We were, for some weeks, carefully trained for our literary contest. All things were in readiness for it.

The schools, situated four or five miles apart, met at an intermediate blacksmith-shop. Under the shade of oaks, rude seats had been prepared for the accommodation of the schools and their friends. Quite an audience was present, as the match had excited no little interest in the quiet, rural neighborhood. Fortunately for their comfort, the day was calm, bright and pleasant. The boys spelled alternately in the geographical vocabulary of Noah Webster's spelling-book. Each school looked with confidence for the success of its champion. For some time the race was equal; but John began to misspell words rather frequently. I had failed in one or two, and he on six or eight. His teacher, gazing at him with anxious look, said: "John, you are falling might'ly behind the stump"—an expression then common in that region. It was the language of solicitude, and not of reproof; but whatever might have been the interpretation that John put upon it, his feelings became uncontrollable, and he burst into tears and sobs; all the audience sympathizing in his grief, and none more sin-

cerely than I. This ended the spelling match. I had triumphed, but I would have more heartily enjoyed my success had it not been associated with the deep mortification of my opponent, for whom I had a kind regard. More than sixty years have passed since the event, and quite half a century since I saw or heard of John Houston. He has probably departed from the land of the living; but if he is still on earth, it would afford me great pleasure to grasp his hand, for I am quite sure, from the excellent qualities of his boyhood, that he ripened into a solid, worthy man.

The spelling match was as far removed from gaming as the most ascetic moralist could desire. It was agreed that if John won, his teacher would give him a knife; and if I was successful, my teacher would give me one. In that day, and in that region, where so little was contributed to the enjoyment of boys, the knife would have been to me a treasure; but I never received it. Whether my teacher thought I had not fairly won it, or it would be too heavy a draft on his meagre resources, or his memory was less tenacious than my own, it is needless now to inquire.

The droll episode described below is not really connected with his school-life, but as it belongs to the days when he was a school-boy, I venture to admit it at this point.

#### FALSE ECONOMY.

When I was eleven years old my father resided in the town of Salem, then Botetourt, now Roanoke County. As a reward or a gift I received four pence ha'penny—a small silver coin, worth six and a quarter cents—then in general circulation. From my childhood I have had greater aptitude for spending than for gaining or keeping money. After due consideration, I resolved to spend my first four pence ha'penny for ginger-cakes—a kind of sweet bread, then sold at musters and other public gatherings. An old woman cake-baker resided on the suburb of the town. To her house I repaired to invest my money. On arriving at the place I inquired of her if she had any ginger-cakes. She replied that she had none. This was a damper. I was disappointed, for

I was fond of the cakes and had anticipated much enjoyment in eating them. I was balked, but not defeated. The money was of no use to me unless I could spend it. As cakes and beer were usually sold together, I asked the old woman if she had any beer. She answered that she had no beer, but had some cider. For several years I had abstained from the use of distilled liquors, but had indulged in drinking cider. I had no special desire for it, but, as there was no other way of using my money, I requested her to let me have four pence ha'penny worth of cider. The old woman soon brought out a quart of it, and I handed her my money. On tasting it I was sorely disappointed. It was hard, bitter and positively nauseous. If my father had had a thousand gallons of such cider I should not have drunk a spoonful of it. I was, however, in a dilemma. I must either drink the cider or lose my money. To drink the cider was revolting to my taste, and to lose money was in violation of my economy. After some hesitation my love of money triumphed over my aversion to hard cider. I resolved to drink it and save the four pence ha'penny.

How much of the cider—vinegar, more properly—I drank I do not recollect, but I remember that my head became dizzy and I indulged in some rudeness to the cake-baker, which she threatened to report to my father. I was not so much intoxicated as not to know that it would be unpleasant for my condition to be known in my family. I returned home, crept cautiously to my room and went to bed. At supper-time I was missing, and my absence caused no little surprise, as I was usually present at meals. Search was made for me and I was found in my bed fast asleep. Some time during the night I awoke, felt qualmish, went to a window and got rid of both my cider and my four pence ha'penny.

My intoxication differed widely from ordinary cases of the evil. Usually men get drunk with a knowledge that their drunkenness will cost them money; I got drunk simply from a desire to save it. Ordinarily persons get drunk for the pleasure of indulging their appetite; I got drunk by offering a disgusting offence to mine. Most persons who get drunk once repeat the offence, and many of them until the vice becomes habitual and ruinous; one indulgence in the luxury satisfied me, and from that day to this

I have carefully eschewed it. Drunkenness is not necessarily a sin. A man may be intoxicated by accident, through false views, or from deceptive motives, without guilt. I have recalled my inebriation with amusement rather than penitence, and have recorded it to teach that it is false economy to endeavor to save money by eating or drinking what one does not need.

It is an exciting point in a boy's life when he first enters school, and all the more when he has not been already taught at home. It is a new business with him—his first venture beyond his father's gate, and he goes forth with mingled emotions of dread, curiosity and pride. He sees things with keen eyes, and the smallest incidents fasten deeply upon his memory. He is easily pleased, and just as easily shocked and estranged.

Young Jeter met on the threshold of his school life one of the severest trials which he ever had. I have spoken of the incompetency of his teachers. It was bad enough that they were so lacking in the ability to give instruction; but it was even more to be deplored that they had no tact for management. They were often vain of their authority, suspicious and ready to punish every impropriety, and that too when they had only the crudest notion as to what constituted a real misdemeanor. In the subjoined incident, Dr. Jeter tells of an outrage perpetrated upon him when seven years old by his first teacher, Peter Burns. It was a shock to his nature which so awakened his youthful wrath that nothing but the grace of God enabled him to subdue his resentment. He was mad with Burns, even to the fighting point, for twelve years. Here is his story:

## PETER BURNS.

When I was seven years old, my father resided at a place called the Horse Shoe, in the county of Montgomery, now Pulaski, as a manager for General John Preston, who is well remembered as a defaulting Treasurer of Virginia. He had a teacher in his family called Peter Burns. He was an Irishman, small of stature, quite advanced in years, who had taught school in Richmond; I know not how long, nor with what success. The late John Valentine, long clerk of the Second Market, knew him as a schoolmaster in this city. In the family school of General Preston my literary training was unsuccessfully commenced. I remember but a single event in my brief course of study, and that made an indelible impression on my mind.

One morning I was early in the school-room. On reaching it, I found there John, a colored boy, belonging to General Preston, who was being educated with his children. Soon the teacher arrived, and it was discovered that a copy-book had been scribbled. I was asked if I knew aught about the matter, and declared, with perfect sincerity, that I did not. John, however, testified that I had scribbled the book. On the testimony of John, I was convicted of the offence, against my tearful protestations. My condemnation, under the circumstances, was a folly and an outrage; but if I had been guilty, the offence was trivial. The scratching of a copy-book by a boy seven years old, just entering a school, and without any knowledge that such an act was criminal, was surely a very venial offence. It did not, however, so appear in the eyes of Mr. Burns. He made me take off my jacket, and stand with my hands upon a bench before me in a convenient position to receive a flogging. I do not think that I was much hurt; but I was frightened almost to death. So soon as I could make my escape, I returned home, and never again entered the school of Peter Burns.

The trial had passed, but was not forgotten. I made up my mind that if I ever grew to have sufficient strength, I would chastise Peter Burns. The resolution was formed in my inmost soul, and grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. At any time after I reached the age of seventeen years, until I made a profession of religion, if I had met my

tyrannical schoolmaster, neither a regard to his age, nor respect for law, nor reverence for public opinion, would have prevented me from inflicting on him personal chastisement.

Many years ago the old man ended, under I know not what circumstances, his earthly career, and I have no motive to form a harsh opinion of his conduct. Possibly he thought he was doing right, and seeking my interest, in the fright he gave me. In that case, only his judgment was at fault. In so far as passion influenced his judgment, he was morally culpable. I judge him not; but I may surely avail myself of the case to make a few cautionary remarks. Great care should be taken in dealing with children. They are entitled to justice, and generally understand what it is. They do not readily forget the wrongs they suffer, nor the favors they receive. Mr. Burns might more easily have made me his friend than his foe. By flagrant injustice, he inspired my heart with a burning resentment, which grace, I trust, quenched, but of which neither time nor grace has effaced the remembrance. School-teachers are in great danger of acting with rashness and cruelty toward their pupils. Not a few instances, more in former than in later times, of false judgment and severity exercised by teachers toward their defenceless scholars have come to my knowledge. I protest against these outrages. Children are thoughtless, impulsive, indiscreet and liable to be perverse; but they should be dealt with at least justly. Parents and the managers of public schools should see to it that children under their control are treated with due tenderness and moderation; and teachers should be made to understand that all passionate and unjust dealings with children are criminal, and will provoke at least a righteous public indignation.

It will be noticed in his "Recollections" that he makes a playful allusion to one of his teachers who claimed to add to his other accomplishments the ability to furnish valuable instruction in the arts and sciences. It seems that gradually the inquisitive pupil began to suspect that these pretensions on the part of the new teacher were not well founded. His



quick eye discovered in the pompous personagè who talked so glibly about the "arts and sciences" some suggestive symptoms of fraud. He did not believe in him and he resolved to put him to the test. But let him tell his own story :

Light was being radiated from a neighboring school. That school enjoyed the advantage of possessing a Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary. I had learned that Walker pronounced the word *panegyric* differently from what my teacher of the "arts and sciences" did, and I resolved to put his scholarship to the test. I selected a reading-lesson, containing the word of doubtful pronunciation, and read it distinctly, calling the word according to Walker's standard, pan-e-gyr-ic. "Pa-neg-y-ric" said the teacher. "Walker," I said hesitatingly, "pronounces it pan-e-gyr-ic." "The best rhetoricians," he replied, in an excited manner, "that I have ever seen pronounce it *pa-neg-y-ric*." "*Pa-neg-y-ric*," said I, and continued my reading.

It seems that he did not learn to read until he was nine years old. His flight from the school in which Peter Burns held such cruel sway secured for him a vacation of two years. At the end of that time his father, who, as his son said, "always thought that he could do better somewhere else than where he was," left Montgomery County, and returned to Bedford. There the boy was sent to school again. The history of that school is very brief; but it was not without its advantages. This is what Dr. Jeter has to say about his second advent into school-life :

I went to school fourteen days, at the end of which time my teacher got drunk, left the school, and I never heard of him afterwards. That short season of instruction was an epoch in my life. I commenced with the alphabet, and learned to read before the elopement of the teacher. I learned to read by chance. I

had been taught to spell in monosyllables; I was one day looking into my spelling-book, and my attention rested on the line: "No man may put off the law of God." I spelt one word after another till the sense of the line burst upon my mind, and the mystery of reading was revealed to me. From that moment my thirst for learning became insatiable, and I pursued it in all its accessible paths with increasing pleasure.

It is enough to melt a generous heart to deepest pity to read Jeter's description of the obstacles which stood between him and even the scanty and imperfect educational facilities which were offered in the days of his youth. He says that he could go to school only in leisure seasons, and on rainy days, and at irregular and sometimes long intervals. His father and mother had but a meagre education, and no gift for imparting instruction. Except his few school-books, there was no printed page in his father's house save the fragments of a Bible.

What he learned he did not understand; so quick was his mind, and so tenacious his memory, that he speedily committed to memory all the coarse print in Murray's Grammar; but that was all of it. He was then under the tutelage of the professor of the "arts and sciences," but that distinguished oracle did not really understand the design of grammar. He simply sat in silence and heard the scholars glibly rattle off what they had mechanically packed away in their memories. The substance of his school-life was that he had not half a chance to go to school, and when he did go, he was compelled to sit at the feet of those who were utterly incompetent to instruct him.

Of the utter lack of literary enthusiasm among his associates he has this to say :

I went to school with several boys of bright minds, who learned with great facility, but they had no aspirations for learning, and were never aware of their latent powers. In my neighborhood there was nothing to awaken or cherish a literary spirit. There was no library, and but few books, and they were of little value; no literary society, nor a single individual who took a newspaper. In a contiguous neighborhood, when I was nearly grown, a debating club was formed, of which I became a member. I made my *début* as a public speaker on the question, "Is beauty real or imaginary?" I espoused the side of its reality, and after the lapse of more than half a century I have quite a vivid recollection of my speech.

Evidently the one redeeming incident in Jeter's school-life was his association with Lewis Parker. He never recalled his name except with tender and grateful pleasure. He was a poor, ambitious youth, who had made a manly struggle for an education, and who joined with his anxiety to learn, a keen relish for teaching. He was painfully conscious of his deficiencies, and not ashamed to confess his ignorance. In his candor and sympathy this aspiring boy found encouragement. He could ask as many questions as he pleased without the dread of rebuke. He could state his objections without exposing himself to the charge of impertinence. In his contact with this studious and kind-hearted young man he found great advantages. They became companions and helped each other. It would often happen that young Jeter would be kept at home; but so refreshed and inspired was he by the influence of his beloved

teacher, that he tells us that many a day he followed the plough, with the book or manuscript containing his lesson fastened between its handles, so that he might read while he worked.

In his later days Dr. Jeter was always glad to talk about Lewis Parker. He thought of him as one of his early benefactors. He stood out upon the canvas of his memory as a lovely and honored figure. Of all his teachers, Parker was the most inspiring and helpful to him. He records with evident sorrow the fact that this friend of his youth died while yet a young man, and before he had the opportunity of expressing to him his grateful recollection of his kindness.

## CHAPTER IV.

### HIS CONVERSION.

**N**INETEEN years out of Christ! Nineteen years in the service of Satan! Nearly a score of years spent in darkness, and almost worse than wasted! Truly a sad fact in the history of Dr. Jeter. It was a pity indeed, that one-fourth of his appointed years on the earth, and those in many respects the most important, should have been given to earthly things. We can never estimate the loss which he suffered in the delay of his conversion. He felt it most keenly, and was never more earnest than in urging the claims of Christ upon the young.

And yet, we cannot be surprised that his acceptance of the Gospel did not come sooner. He grew up at a time when it was not expected that children would turn their thoughts to religion. Ministers made no appeals to the young, and any exhibition of religious emotion on the part of children was regarded with suspicion. To this fact we must add another. In the household where young Jeter grew up there were no church members, and in a large degree he was cut off from religious privileges. He did not often hear the Gospel, and the preachers in those days took no pains to make their sermons specially

applicable or attractive to the young people. Hence it came to pass that not until he had entered his twentieth year did he know the grace of God.

Let it be said, however, that he was never decidedly irreligious. He was always free from vicious habits and from his childhood he believed in the existence of God. But he did not have any decided conviction that it was his duty to become a Christian. With such a nature as his, and without the controlling influence of the Gospel, we can well understand what manner of boy he was. He was brimful of vitality, ambition and restlessness. He gave himself freely to such pleasures as fell within his reach. He was full of frivolity, merriment and mischief. He had an inborn passion for pre-eminence and he sought to lead in whatever he undertook. In the sports of the play-ground and the amusements of social life he was always conspicuous. He was fond of jesting and always ready for a practical joke. His sense of the ludicrous was keen even to excess, and his fondness for laughter and fun amounted to a contagion. He made things lively wherever he went. He could tell a story with fine effect, and he was an expert in caricature. A gleeful, rollicksome, light-hearted boy he was, joyous in the flow of his young life, and with no dread of evils to come. Had he remained out of Christ, his self-respect and native self-mastery would probably have saved him from a corrupt and wantonly wicked life, and yet it is hard to tell into what path his wild ambition would have led him. Had he served the devil, he would have been a leader of

dangerous power and his example would have been mighty for evil.

But beneath the gleam and laughter of his youth there was always a sober spirit. When he was yet a child his soul was often burdened with deep and solemn thoughts. Unusual events often turned the current of his thinking towards eternity. He mentions that when he was a little boy, an aged woman, who was an inmate of his father's house, died. The spectacle of death startled him with overwhelming surprise. It thrilled him with awful thoughts of the grave and of the world to come. He caught a glimpse of the spirit-world and for many days he was quiet and afraid. If, then, some Christian teacher had opened before him the gateway of spiritual life, it is not too much to say that his restless spirit would have gladly entered it.

The real difficulty in his case was, that he was ignorant of the Gospel. His religious education had been utterly neglected. He did not know the way of life, because there was no man to point it out to him. In reading the story of his conversion we will find that he came to the cross by slow and irregular steps. That weary and chequered experience through which he passed was the journey of one who, with many hindrances and few helps, was stumbling in the dark. He was a "seeker" for many weeks, and indeed for several years he was the subject of many harrowing and distressing convictions. To us who have long walked in the heavenly way, and have found it so clear and pleasant, it seems odd that he should have been so slow in finding it.

But we must not reproach him. No man cared for his soul, and he struggled alone. Had the light been brighter, he would have walked faster.

But I will not anticipate. It will be better to allow him to celebrate in his own way that matchless grace which rescued him from bondage and brought him into the kingdom of Christ Jesus. It seems fitting that the account of his conversion should be introduced with his history of that celebrated revival which swept over Bedford in 1821, and during which his conversion occurred.

#### THE GREAT REVIVAL.

In the beginning of the century there was a considerable religious awakening in the land of my nativity. I frequently heard my seniors tell of the preachers, meetings and converts of those times. They had been succeeded by a long-continued season of religious coldness and sterility. Local revivals, of very limited influence, undoubtedly occurred; but when I had reached the age of nineteen years, none had come within the range of my observation. People attended religious meetings occasionally, but rather to see and hear what was passing than to be profited by the word of God. Churches were small, and composed exclusively of members who had reached or passed the meridian of life.

In the summer of 1821 there began to appear signs of an approaching religious revival. Congregations were larger, preaching was more searching and earnest and was heard with greater attention and solemnity, tears furnished proof of more tender feeling, and prayers for the conversion of sinners were more importunate than in years past. The churches hoped for a speedy and copious ingathering of precious souls. In the latter part of August, a meeting of several days was held at Hatcher's meeting-house. On Sunday the assembly was large. The pulpit in the grove was occupied, successively and without intermission, by Elders John Davis, Absalom Dempsey, William Harris and William Leftwich. Their sermons, not abridged in length, but



increased in power, were heard with unabated interest to the close. The time to favor Zion—yea, the set time—had come. The ministers had preached the same doctrine, to the same people, under similar circumstances, many a time, without any apparent effect. Now there seemed to be a mysterious, pervasive and subduing influence attending their ministrations. The thoughtless became attentive; the frivolous were awed into solemnity; eyes unused to weeping poured out rivers of water; and not a few persons gave utterance to sobs, sighs and lamentations. The preaching was followed by singing, prayer and appropriate counsels and exhortations. Many who had come for amusement remained for devotion. Gradually and slowly the congregation dispersed, some remaining till the approach of evening admonished them to depart.

At that time "protracted meetings," in the present acceptation of the phrase, were unknown. Meetings of two or three days were held, but no religious interest or prospect of usefulness suggested their longer continuance. After the awakening services referred to above, religious meetings were greatly multiplied. They were mostly held of nights at private houses, or of afternoons in arbors, prepared for the purpose, in forests. At these meetings the attendance was large and solemn—heed was generally given to the gospel. Inquirers were invited to kneel for prayer, and sometimes to occupy special seats for receiving private instruction. There was, I now think, a serious defect in the directions given to the anxious. They were taught the necessity of passing through a round of experience in order to be prepared to receive Christ. Whether the excellent fathers intended to make this impression, I cannot say; but such was the result of their teaching. Awakened, troubled souls—polluted, guilty and helpless—instead of learning that it was their duty to believe in Christ, cherished the delusion that they must come to him only as penitent or renovated sinners. They must be good before Christ could accept them. They must be healed before they could apply to the Physician. Under this mistake many burdened souls labored for weeks and months in the vain effort to make themselves worthy. In spite of the delusion, and the embarrassment and delay consequent on it, the work of conversion went on. The revival spread steadily from neigh-

borhood to neighborhood, from church to church, and from Bedford to the contiguous counties of Franklin, Pittsylvania, Botetourt and Campbell. Several things were notable in this revival.

It was of long continuance. Most modern revivals, dependent on protracted meeting efforts, are transient. They resemble a hasty summer shower, refreshing while it lasts, but followed soon by drought and barrenness. This revival continued for many months, not all the time in one community, but spreading gradually, as fire in dry stubble, wafted by a gentle wind, from church to church, and from one neighborhood to another. Neither the heat of summer nor the cold of winter, the toils of autumn nor the attractions of spring arrested its progress. Pastors, after weeks of absence, would return to the flocks to find that there had been no abatement in their religious feelings.

In a remarkable degree the revival was promoted by agents created by itself. In almost every neighborhood where it prevailed young men were called into the ministry. They were very imperfectly equipped for their work, but they labored among a plain people, whose demands for ministerial gifts were not high and whose spirit was not critical. If these young evangelists could not present a logical argument for the truth of the gospel, they believed it with all their hearts, and preached because they did believe. They were unacquainted with many scriptural doctrines, and especially with the proofs of their divinity, but they understood the way of salvation. If they could not contend with astute skeptics, they could guide the honest, earnest inquirer to life eternal. Their sermons were impressive, rather than instructive, and were noted, not for the variety, but for the importance of the truths they conveyed. They had learned the corruption of their own hearts, and the fearfulness of their own guilt, and could testify, from sweet experience, the power and freeness of redeeming grace. They went forth to their work plainly clad, without conveyances, and some of them without a pocket-Bible or a hymnbook, but with glowing zeal for the salvation of souls. Whether they had been called to the ministry, or were in the apostolic succession, were questions which did not occupy their minds. The people desired to hear something about Christ, and what these young brethren knew concerning him they were willing to tell in

such language as their hearers could understand. The desire to listen to their ministrations was general and intense, and due, doubtless, in part, to the prevalence of the revival, and, in part, to their juvenility and the freshness of their preaching. Everywhere their visits were received with pleasure, their congregations were large and their labors were crowned with success. They did not labor alone, but in harmony with, and under the direction of, the settled pastors of the churches.

The revival was distinguished for the excellence of its fruits. I have no means of estimating the number added by it to the churches. It was common for persons, under conviction of sin, to fall, lie on the floor or ground for hours, and to exhibit the signs of deep feeling, such as tears, groans and crying for mercy. These exercises, I am convinced, were not unavoidable, neither were they feigned. They sprang partly from an excitable temperament, and partly from an erroneous impression that they were the proper signs of true repentance. Honest, but ill-informed persons cherished these bodily exercises as the best means of securing salvation. Time demonstrated that those who made the greatest show of their feelings were not always the most profitably impressed. One man, whose intense emotions and violent convulsions I heartily envied, proved to be, in after times, a most unsteady and unfruitful Christian.

This revival was specially important as forming a sort of connecting link between the old and new dispensations of the Virginia Baptists. The fathers preached without salaries, maintained themselves by their secular toils and trained the churches most successfully to give nothing for the support of the gospel. Many of them were opposed, not to learned ministers, but to the training of ministers for their work. They were unfortunately driven to these extremes by their opposition to the colonial religious establishment. As they charged the clergy with preaching from mercenary motives, they deemed it necessary to show their own disinterestedness by preaching without fee or reward. As they maintained that the clergy were men-made preachers, they aimed to demonstrate that they themselves were God-made teachers by preaching without special training for it. With all their excellent qualities and noble works, they erred on these points.

These mistakes the progress of knowledge and experience was sure to correct. The new dispensation—the time of missions, Sunday-schools, and ministerial and general education—was coetaneous with the revival above described. It was not the cause, but an important factor in the change. It would have taken place had the revival not occurred, but certainly not in precisely the same way. It gave a mighty impulse to the Baptist cause in the upper portion of the State—an impulse that was soon felt to its utmost limits—and furnished the first missionaries to the General Association.

The fathers who labored in that revival long since ceased from their labors, and entered into rest. Of all the ministers called out by it, only two or three are now living. It is pleasant to consider that the cause which they loved, and for the promotion of which they labored, still lives, and, so far as it is right and pleasing to God, will live and prosper, and finally triumph.

#### MY EXPERIENCE.

“Experience,” as it was generally called, occupied a much more prominent place in sermons and in religious conversation fifty years ago than it now does. It signified that series of convictions, emotions and conflicts intervening between the time of the awakening and the conversion of a sinner. The term might not have been well chosen; but it was well understood by those who used it. Every Christian has, and must have, an experience. Conversion is invariably preceded and accompanied by certain mental exercises, more or less intense and lasting, and these constitute an experience—a Christian experience. It is not the whole of a Christian’s experience, but that part of it which is essential to constitute him a Christian. There is great diversity as well as great harmony in the experiences of Christians. They all have the same sense of guilt and depravity, the same sorrow for sin, the same despair of salvation by works, the same trust in Christ, the same feeling of deliverance from sin and guilt, and the same joyful hope of eternal life; but the order, intensity, intermingling and continuance of these exercises vary with every true convert. I had an experience, which I am willing to record for the encouragement of anxious inquirers

on the subject of religion. I give it publicity with the greater pleasure because it contains nothing, except mere circumstantials, which is not common in the experience of every Christian. If I state some things that are trivial, and scarcely compatible with the gravity of the theme, it is because they may afford encouragement to inquirers and assist in guiding sinners assailed by similar temptations.

I was brought up without special religious instruction. Neither my father nor my mother was a member of a church. My mother, having been trained by a pious father, had strong religious convictions; and her conversation on pious subjects, though rarely addressed to me, made an early and deep impression on my mind. From my childhood I considered religion as supremely important, and viewed all Christians with veneration. My opportunities for gaining religious knowledge were little better abroad than at home. I heard preaching not oftener, perhaps, than once a month, and much of that was of a kind not adapted to my instruction. The sermons of the time, long and tedious, were largely devoted to the fierce discussion of abstruse doctrinal points. Occasionally my sympathies would be excited by a warm, sing-song discourse.

In my boyhood I cherished the hope that, in due time, I would be converted. That it was my duty to be a Christian, was a thought which never entered my mind. The preaching that I heard made on me the impression that I must quietly wait until God's time for my conversion should come—if, indeed, it should ever come. With these views I grew up, spending the Sundays in which I had not an opportunity to hear preaching in visiting and in the amusements and sports of the times.

I remember distinctly the first prayer that I ever uttered. It was in the summer of 1810 when I was about seventeen years old. As I was plowing alone, my thoughts were suddenly arrested by the presence and majesty of God. I was overwhelmed with awe, and, falling on my knees, pleaded with God for mercy. Though I knew that no being but the Omniscient saw me, I was filled with deep shame that I had attempted to pray. For days I went with a downcast countenance, not having courage to look my friends in the face, and ashamed that even God should have

heard my prayers. My impressions, however, were not immediately effaced. For several weeks I carefully concealed my emotions, but continued to pray for Divine aid. In this time I became quite self-righteous. I was growing, as I supposed, very good, and looked with great compassion on my companions in their levity, guilt and danger. In a few weeks my impressions were effaced, and my fair resolutions were abandoned. My goodness, as the morning cloud and as the early dew, passed away.

I have referred, in another article, to the revival which commenced in my neighborhood in the year 1821. In the early summer I attended a Sabbath service at the Suck Spring Baptist meeting-house, near my paternal residence. I did what it was unusual for me to do—remained without the house during the sermon. It was a communion season. After the congregation had partially dispersed, I went into the house. The service was about closing, as usual on such an occasion, with singing a song and shaking hands. There was much warmth of feeling among the communicants. It was one of the signs of the approaching revival. At first I amused myself with a young lady of my acquaintance, who was looking gravely on the scene. Soon my own attention was arrested by it, and I burst into an irrepressible flood of tears. My mortification at this unexpected, and, as it appeared to me, unseemly demonstration of feeling, was intense. I left the house, concealed myself until the congregation had all left, and then rode home alone and in anxious thought. This was the commencement of my second effort to become a Christian. I betook myself to reading the Scriptures, meditation and prayer. In a few days I attended the burial of a young man whom I had known. He was of respectable connections, but had become intemperate, and, by a reckless course of dissipation, had brought himself to an untimely end. As the body had been brought a considerable distance to be interred, it was deemed proper to open the coffin. I looked into it, and such a sight I have never elsewhere seen. The eyes and mouth of the corpse were stretched wide open, and neither force nor skill could close them. The unfortunate death of the young man and the horrid appearance of his ghastly face made a deep impression

on my nervous system, that had been weakened by anxiety and sleeplessness. I lost all interest in society, pursued my daily labor with a heavy heart, ate my food without relish, and could not close my eyes at night without having, full in my view, the revolting sight of the young man in his coffin. My religious convictions and my nervous disorder were inseparable. Together they formed an intolerable burden. All nature was veiled in gloom, and my existence was a weariness. Prayer seemed to add to my distress, and my nervous excitement made my prayers a confusion and a mockery. I deliberately came to the conclusion that, to get rid of my nervous trouble, I must suppress my religious convictions, and, for the present, at any rate, abandon all hope of salvation. Fresh air, exercise, society and amusements soon restored me to health, and my restoration to a sound nervous condition found me free from all religious concern, and as frivolous, worldly and far from God as I had ever been. If I could reach the kingdom of heaven only by the dismal road that I had been traveling, I had no wish to make the journey. Here ends the second chapter in my religious experience, if religious experience it may be called.

In another article I have given a pretty full account of the commencement of the great revival at Hatcher's meeting-house in August, 1821. The event was to me fraught with momentous consequences. I was slightly advanced in the twentieth year of my age, and as volatile and as full of delusive hopes as any stripling in the community. On a Saturday afternoon, at the house of a neighbor, I became acquainted with Daniel Witt, a few months my senior, but in appearance much my junior. A slight intercourse satisfied us that our views, tastes and aims were congenial, and gave birth to a friendship and intimacy which, till the time of his death—a period of fifty years—knew no abatement and scarcely admitted of any increase. Sunday morning we rode together to church. In all my life I had never been more volatile or more set on amusement and mischief. I need not repeat the account of the meeting, elsewhere given. Witt and myself sat together. Both became impressed about the same time, and, apparently, in the same degree, by such preaching as we had often heard without concern. A solemn, deep and pervasive

feeling was produced in the large assembly. The services were continued till late in the afternoon. When I raised my head and opened my eyes, I was astonished to find that all the congregation, excepting a few of my friends, were gone. Even my new companion, Witt, having a dozen miles to travel to his home, had left an hour or two before.

My purpose to become a Christian was now fixed. From my very childhood, I had been ambitious to excel. With me it was a settled aim never to follow, if I could lead. My natural temperament had its share in shaping my resolution to become a Christian. It was not merely my purpose to enter into the kingdom of heaven, but to outstrip all my associates in the celestial race. I engaged in the execution of my purpose in a thoroughly earnest and a thoroughly self-sufficient spirit. My subsequent course was in full harmony with my resolution. I forsook all known sins, did not indulge myself in a smile, withdrew from all society except religious, thought of nothing but my salvation and mingled prayer with almost every waking breath. My aim was to become good enough for Christ to receive me.

My experience antedates the commencement of protracted meetings; but, in seasons of revival, meetings—especially night-meetings, at private houses—were greatly increased in number. I attended all those within my reach, if my engagements would permit. A short time after the memorable meeting at Hatcher's meeting-house there was an appointment for a night service in the neighborhood of my abode. There was a crowded house. Of the sermon I recollect nothing. At the close of it the minister said: "If any one present desires prayer, let him manifest it, and I will pray for him." It was the first time I had ever heard such a proposal made. Had he requested those who desired prayer to rise, kneel or occupy a particular seat, I should have had no difficulty in complying with the request, for I did most fervently desire that prayer should be offered for me, and I was not ashamed to acknowledge it. The preacher, however, asked that any one wishing prayer should manifest his wish. I could think of but one way of manifesting it, and that was by publicly requesting him to pray for me. It was a fearful task. I was unused to speaking in public, and was in the presence of my com-



panions, among whom I had been a leader in amusements and in mischief; how could I ask for prayer? It was an urgent case. My soul was in peril. In all my life I have never had a greater conflict between a sense of duty and a feeling of timidity. The struggle was short. In a few moments I said distinctly: "Pray for me!" I have said many things since which I have had cause to regret, but I have never been sorry that I made that request. The minister, after a slight delay, said: "Is there only one sinner in the congregation who desires prayer?" Instantly, and as by a common impulse, the assembly rushed around the spot where I was sitting, fell on their knees, and broke forth into sobs and lamentations.

At once I was assailed by a most painful temptation.<sup>1</sup> I had alone gone through the fierce conflict of asking for prayer, and now its benefits were to be divided between so many that I should derive but small advantage from it. I was sadly out of humor. My heart, that had been tender, instantly became hard and resentful. My tears, that had flowed copiously, were arrested, and I was utterly unfitted for the solemn service in which I was engaged. I left the house with far less hope of salvation than I had when I entered it.

A few weeks later another night-meeting was appointed at the same place. I resolved, if possible, to be ready for conversion by that time. In view of the period that I had been seeking deliverance from my sins, the many prayers I had offered, the many tears I had shed, and my undeviating diligence in efforts to secure my salvation, I concluded that the hour of my conversion must be near. I attended the meeting with high hope, almost confident that I should find relief, but I was doomed to a sore disappointment. The meeting was crowded, and the religious excitement was intense. Among the inquirers was a rough, uncouth and ignorant lad named Bill Carter. Occupying a prominent position, he opened wide his mouth and roared like a lion. The scene was indescribably ludicrous, and, in spite of the solemnity of the occasion, and my deep concern for my salvation, I burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. I quickly left the room, retired to a private place in the yard, and prostrated myself on the earth, fearing that I had committed the unpardonable sin. I meditated

on my lost condition and my unaccountable levity, and my solemn feelings returned. I confessed my sin, prayed, wept and resolved to be more watchful against levity. As I was beginning to think my condition more hopeful, the image of Bill Carter, with his mouth spread and his cries deafening the congregation, rose before my mind, and the ludicrous scene again upset my gravity, and I laughed long and convulsively. I left the meeting, at which I had hoped to be converted, with an alarming apprehension that my day of grace had passed.

I was becoming acquainted with my own heart and my guilt before God. In the beginning of my religious exercises my heart was quite tender. I felt deeply, and wept frequently and profusely. Soon, however, my heart seemed to grow as cold as ice and as hard as flint. Nothing was capable of moving it. I desired to weep, because I confounded weeping and repentance. To move my heart and draw forth my tears, I meditated on the purity, majesty and goodness of God, the evil of sin, the solemnity of death, the terribleness of a future judgment, the joys of heaven, the woes of perdition and the sufferings of the Son of God, but none of these things moved me. Nor was this all. I found in my heart evils of whose existence I had not dreamed. I discovered truly that it was deceitful above all things. Deceit mingled with my confessions of sin, my prayers and my tears. I could not get rid of it. It haunted me like a ghost. I seemed to be aiming to deceive, not only my fellow-men, but God. I drew nigh to him with my mouth, and honored him with my lips, while my heart was far from him. I offered him sacrifices which I knew he would not and could not receive.

Nor was this the worst. In spite of all my efforts to prevent it, the most corrupt and blasphemous thoughts would nestle in my bosom. They were such as I had no recollection of having had before, such as I dared not to reveal to my most intimate friend, and such as could find a lodgment only in a depraved heart. These evil thoughts, sad to say, haunted me most when I attempted to pray, or to read and study the word of God. The proofs of my depravity cured me of my self-righteousness. I despaired of salvation by my own works. Indeed, after weeks of anxiety, watchfulness, prayer and mourning, I seemed to be much

farther from salvation than I was at the first. All hope of making myself worthy for Christ to receive me died within me.

About this time, hearing of the conversion of a young female friend, who was awakened some weeks after I was, it seemed a reasonable conclusion that I had missed the road to heaven. The farther I traveled the more gloomy seemed to be the prospect of reaching the end of my journey. My ambitious purpose of outstripping my companions in the celestial race was not only abandoned, but remembered with shame. Whoever would might enter into the kingdom; if I could only be the least and the last to enter it, I should enjoy a privilege infinitely beyond my merit, and have cause for unspeakable and everlasting gratitude.

About two months after the memorable meeting at Hatcher's meeting-house I attended a night meeting in a private house near the same place. My recollections of the meeting are limited entirely to my own exercises. A song was sung, which I do not remember to have heard before or since. It was poor poetry, and, no doubt, poorly sung; but it made an indelible impression on my mind. I can remember but a part of a single stanza. It is this:

“Come, all you tender-hearted Christians,  
Oh, come and help me for to mourn;  
To see the Son of God a bleeding,  
And his precious body torn.”

The words arrested my attention, and turned my mind into a new train of thought. Is it possible, I inquired, that the Son of God suffered and died for such a corrupt and guilty creature as I am? The grace appeared too great. I was utterly undeserving such favor. It seemed a pity that so great a sinner as I should be the recipient of so rich a blessing. While I meditated on the subject, my heart, long cold and insensible, was dissolved in unfeigned sorrow—sorrow that I had sinned against Christ, so great, so good and so condescending; and my eyes, for weeks unused to weeping, became a fountain of tears. I had no further controversy with God. He was infinitely wise, pure and kind, and worthy of my supreme confidence, reverence and love. His law was holy, just and good, and should be obeyed by every intelligent creature. Sin was a wrong, a folly and a mischief, calling for sorrow and reformation.

One point was settled, so far as aught could be settled by a creature like myself. I would sin no more, if watchfulness, prayer and an earnest purpose could preserve me from sinning. Whether I should be saved was doubtful; but if my fearful doom were sealed, I would endeavor not to aggravate it by multiplying my transgressions and augmenting my guilt. If I should be saved, through God's infinite mercy, of all the race that fell, or all the heavenly host, I should have the greatest cause for gratitude and praise. I left the meeting in a very different state of mind from that in which I entered it. I did not suppose that I was converted—I feared that I should never be—but there was sweetness in my tears, and my sorrows were soothing and led me to suppose that my condition was not absolutely hopeless.

Two or three days after this time I attended a night meeting fifteen or twenty miles from my home, at the foot of the southern slope of the Blue Ridge, near the point at which it is now crossed by the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. Of this meeting, as of the preceding, I remember nothing but what occurred in my own breast. The preaching, the praying and the singing were all, doubtless, good; but my thoughts were concentrated on my own unfortunate condition. As instructed by one of my religious guides, the Rev. William Leftwich, I had often attempted to adopt the words of the father of the demoniac child: "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief." I dared not utter the words. I feared that it would be hypocrisy, and augment my guilt, if I should repeat them. I would hardly speak extravagantly if I should say that I made a thousand unsuccessful attempts to utter them. The sentence invariably changed in my lips to, "Lord, I *would* believe; help thou my unbelief." On this night, in the midst of the religious services, but entirely independent of them, it seemed to me that I could heartily adopt the language of the afflicted father. Mentally, I called over the words: "Lord, I believe," etc. Instantly my conscience smote me. I feared that I did not believe, and my words were deceitful. If that were believing, there had been no need for the long and painful conflict through which I had passed. I might as well and as easily have believed at first. This certainly was not the kind of faith

which I had been expecting and endeavoring to exercise. After all my doubts and reasoning, the impression came over me that I did believe, and I repeated the words with emphasis: "Lord, I *do believe*; help thou my unbelief." The burden of guilt and anxiety, which I had borne so long, instantly departed. My mind was in a calm, pleasing frame, which to me was inexplicable, and which I was not careful to analyze.

For several months my sleep had been disturbed and uncomfortable; but that night I slept as if I had been in paradise. No wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast. In the morning I arose early, greatly refreshed, and walked out to enjoy the balmy air and gaze on the surrounding scenery. The sun rose in cloudless splendor. Never before had he seemed so bright and beautiful. He was radiant with the uncreated glories of his Maker. His rising beams, caught first by the mountain-tops, gradually descended into the valleys, clothing the autumnal forests with a golden hue. The scenery was naturally lovely and sublime; but such mountains, valleys and forests I had never seen before. All nature seemed to proclaim the wisdom, power and goodness of God. The mountains and the hills, the brooks and the vales, broke forth in songs of praise to their Creator; and all the trees of the forests clapped their hands for joy. Before I was aware I had joined the rapturous anthem. My heart was overflowing with gratitude, love and joy, and longed to give utterance to its emotions. My conscience told me that I was a poor, guilty, condemned sinner, and had no right to praise God; but my feelings triumphed over its remonstrances. Whatever might be my doom, I resolved to praise him for past mercies, and that I was not then in perdition, whither I had so long deserved to be sent.

I strolled to a retired spot, at the head of a ravine, where I might engage in secret prayer. I had unanticipated freedom in the exercise. Till that hour I had never offered a petition for any being but myself. That morning I prayed for my parents, my brother and sisters, my remoter kindred, my friends, and I continued to extend the circle of my intercession until it comprehended the whole world. My prayer was a mystery to me. I had intended to pray, as I had ever before done, simply for

myself; but my feelings had borne me quite beyond the limit prescribed by my judgment.

As I was returning to the house, where I had been hospitably entertained, no little perplexed about my new, strange and inexplicable emotions, I met Elder Harris, my venerable religious instructor, who was staying with me in the same family. He kindly inquired after my religious condition. I told him, as well as I could, the exercises of my mind, as stated above. "You are converted," said he. This was a revelation to me. I had not even suspected that I was converted. I had hoped that my exercises were favorable and might lead on to conversion; but I had not experienced such a conversion as I had heard described, or as I had been seeking. I had heard no voice, seen no light, felt no shock and had no strange manifestation. I was willing, aye, and resolved, to forsake my sins and serve Christ; but conversion must be something more wonderful than this. Elder Harris commenced and related to me his experience. It bore a striking resemblance to my own. Of the genuineness of his conversion I had no doubt. As my exercises bore a strong likeness to his, I could but cherish the hope that I might be a subject of renewing grace. The chief difficulty I found in accepting this conclusion was in my utter unworthiness of a blessing so glorious. I cannot better express my bewilderment than in the language of one of Watts' excellent hymns:

"When God revealed his gracious name,  
And changed my mournful state,  
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream,  
The grace appeared so great."

In the uncertainty of my condition, I resolved to conceal from my friends the dim and questionable hope which I had found; but the resolution was not easily carried into effect. For months my face had been covered with a cloud, which no smile, except in some unguarded moment, had been permitted to brighten. To preserve the gloom of my countenance was impossible. The gratitude, hope and joy of my heart broke out in smiles and tears as I met the pious friends who had so long sympathized with me and prayed for me. I did not need to tell them that

my burden had been removed, and that the dark night of conviction had been succeeded by the cheering dawn of hope. The tearful eye and the warm grasp of the hand told the story more eloquently than words could have done.

More than half a century has passed since I had the experience that I have imperfectly related, and the reader may desire to know my estimate of it after the studies, observations and trials of a long life, and I will cheerfully gratify the desire. Much of my experience was circumstantial and not essential; some things which then seemed important I have learned are of little value, and some things appear now to be of greater consequence than they did then; but in its chief elements, I deem it to be sound and evangelical. At any rate, I would not exchange it, with the influence it has had on me, and through me on others, for all the wealth and all the honors of the world. Conviction of sin, godly sorrow, reformation, despair of salvation by works, trust in Christ, love to him, joy in the Holy Ghost; in short, an experience which comprehends the struggles of a soul in passing from death unto life—are indispensable to the existence of genuine piety, and a reasonable hope of eternal life

## CHAPTER V.

### PUTTING ON THE ARMOR.

**D**R. JETER'S account of his entrance into the ministry, which will appear in this chapter, is so full and satisfactory that I am happily relieved from the duty of adding much to the story. He was baptized in the North Fork of Otter, the first Sunday in December, 1821. The scene of the baptism is located at the point where that stream is crossed by the public road leading from Mt. Hermon Church to the little village of Otterville. It is a singularly beautiful spot. The mountain creek at that point is about twenty feet in width and flows through a narrow valley with lofty hills on either side. It is well-nigh hidden from public view by the alders, willows and poplars which fringe it on either side. There is a large rock which juts into the current and so blocks the tide as to make a sufficient depth for baptismal purposes. More than once I have stood, on the calm Sabbath morning, upon that rock and witnessed baptisms. The old pastor, William Harris, would read the Scriptures, offer a brief prayer, and then, with cane in hand, feel his way along the rocky bed of the stream until he found a sufficient depth and then signal for the candidates to follow. The sympathetic and tearful group on the shore



would sing: "We are going to join in the army of the Lord." One by one the happy converts would be buried with Christ in baptism and then emerge from the waters with radiant countenances and sometimes with exultant shouts. There, on a winter's day, young Jeter was baptized. It was to him a great event—the crisis of his career, and he always recalled it with profound emotion. Indeed, he seemed averse to relating the story of his conversion, except when his soul was aglow with unwonted spiritual fire, and he told it then in the hope of helping others who were inquiring the way.

I have mentioned that he was baptized by Elder Harris, and for that old servant of God he always cherished the most grateful affection. It was impossible to know "Father Harris," as the Bedford people called him, without revering and loving him. What a noble type of Christian manhood! In form he was lofty, round and erect. His eye, blue as the sky, seemed always enkindled with a gentle and tender love. His hair, soft as the fleece and white as the snow, touched his shoulders. His voice was the music of the harp, and when it floated out, freighted with the heavenly message, not even hearts of stone could withstand it. In his movements, grace and dignity seemed to blend. His dress was faultless—his suit of black, his white cravat and his spreading collar. From beneath the flap of his coat-pocket, always peered his pipe-stem, except when in his mouth, and positively it was a benediction to note the gentle, restful way with which, after his sermon, the old man, with the aid of spunk and flint, would light his clay

pipe, and stroll quietly out into the forest. In genius and culture he was not an equal of Jeter, but in purity, meekness, and heavenly wisdom, he was the peer of any. His meat and drink was "to do the will of God." He had no ambition except to glorify Christ, and no resentments except against the enemies of his Lord. Dr. Jeter sometimes said, in pleasantry, that Elder Harris called him to the ministry, and, indeed, he mentions it in his "Recollections" as a matter of history. This does not mean that Dr. Jeter did not believe in the divine element in the ministerial call, but simply that "Father Harris" discovered in him the preaching gift, even before he was made conscious of his duty. This faculty or grace which the old man possessed, by which he was enabled to discover the adaptations of young men, and to interpret to them their own convictions, was one of his most striking characteristics. He seemed to possess an intuitive power for finding those whom the Lord had chosen for himself. He would lay his hand upon the heads of little children, and with a sort of prophetic authority mark them for the ministry. Perhaps it would have been proper for me, when in a former chapter I was seeking to account for the fact that so many Bedford young men entered the ministry, to have said that it was because "Father Harris" lived there. I was often with him and knew him well, and yet I never heard him speak of the fact that he had baptized so many of the preachers. He baptized Witt and Jeter, and although they were in the zenith of their fame when I was most intimate with him, he never alluded to

the fact that he was so closely connected with their early religious lives. He loved and admired them, but seemed to be thoroughly unconscious of having had anything to do with their character or usefulness.

It may seem surprising that young Jeter began to preach so soon after his conversion, and also that so ignorant a boy should have so soon become an effective preacher. Let it be remembered that from his childhood he was singularly thoughtful and a constant reader of the Bible. My uncle, who was the companion of his youth, related to me an incident which finely illustrates at once this young man's eagerness to excel and his passion for reading.

When he was a mere stripling he went one day to assist in a wheat harvest. He brought his cradle with him and took his place with the reapers. When everything was in readiness to begin work, this audacious youngster leaped to the front and took the lead in the race of the harvesters. The old cradlers sneered at his presumption and predicted that their young rival would soon lose his place. They knew not the spirit which reigned within him. He was born for leadership, and it was not possible for him to surrender while there was life. All through the morning, beneath the glare of a summer's sun, the contest went on, and the sweating racers bent to their work. Far out to the front steadily swept on this boy, at the head of the line, never yielding his place till the sun touched the zenith and the horn blew the signal for dinner. Then throwing down his cradle, and springing high in the air, he shouted in wild, boyish glee, over his victory. When they

returned to the house for dinner and the harvesters stretched themselves on the grass for rest and talk, young Jeter was gone. When discovered, he was alone, deeply absorbed in reading the Bible. This was before his conversion, and it is more than likely that he was reading the Bible, not so much because he preferred it, but because it was the only book in his reach. The Bible was one of his text-books at school, and so it came to pass, that when at twenty, he was converted, he possessed considerable acquaintance with the histories and doctrines of that holy book.

Another fact must be taken into account. He possessed an ardent and fearless spirit. He felt strongly, and what he felt he was not afraid to speak. His conversion was thorough, decided and joyful. His soul was on fire with the love of Christ, and he felt a boundless desire to honor him. He loved his kindred and neighbors, and as soon as he found the heavenly way, the impulse to bring them also, overmastered him. It was on a December day that he was baptized in the chill waters of the Little Otter; but he tells us, that as he emerged from the water he sprang to the shore and delivered his first sermon. The old people said that he shouted, by which I suppose they meant simply that he broke out in exultant praise of his Redeemer, and as according to the custom of the times, he shook hands with the spectators on the bank, he commended to them his newly-found Saviour. For such a boy, so intense in his nature, so ravished with the love of God, and so full of hope and joy, it was an easy thing to tell the gospel story.

He conferred not with flesh and blood; he was unabashed by a sense of ignorance or awkwardness; he waited not for mental discipline or theological training, but went forth proclaiming the good news, and before he knew it, was a preacher. By almost a single bound he rose from the plow to the pulpit. That sweet seraphic light which glowed upon his boyish face never went out, but shone with softened beauty, even when he lay dead in his coffin. That shout which broke from his lips at his baptism, and rolled along the mountain vale, instead of dying, deepened into an anthem of thanksgiving and joy, which sounded through all his life. That tearful exhortation which he spoke to his rustic neighbors on the icy edge of the river was the first blast of a trumpet whose solemn notes were heard for sixty years, and on two continents, and whose echoes will be slow to die.

Here is the account of his entrance into the ministry:

#### MY ENTRANCE INTO THE MINISTRY.

I do not remember when I first began to preach. In my boyhood I was accustomed to repeat, at the handle of my plow, the sermon on Monday, with all its intonations, which I had heard on Sunday. This I did, not from any special fondness for preaching, or any expectation that I should become a preacher, but merely because it was the most pleasant intellectual exercise within my reach. Having access to few books suited to interest and improve my mind, I was glad to repeat, as an amusement, such sermons as I heard.

Having made a profession of faith in Christ, I had no hesitancy in deciding on the manner of my baptism. When I was a small boy, I learned that there was a controversy between Baptists and Pedobaptists concerning the mode of its administration.

Just as I was learning to read in the New Testament, I came to the account of the baptism of the Ethiopian treasurer, in the Acts of the Apostles. I read it with amazement. In my simplicity I supposed that it had never been discovered by the disputants on baptism. This passage, I thought, must surely end the controversy. I ran to my mother in great excitement, saying: "Ma, the Baptists are right. I have found a place which shows that they are right." From that day to this I have never doubted that immersion was the primitive baptism. On the first Lord's day of December, 1821, I was baptized by Elder William Harris in the North Fork of Otter River, near the place of my abode. My first religious address was delivered on the bank of the stream, immediately on my emerging from it. It was impulsive, unpremeditated and without method, but it was earnest, and impressed by its novelty, if nothing else, my neighbors and companions. Had I been wiser, it had probably not been delivered; but, timely or untimely, it was the beginning of my ministry.

During the winter I was several times invited to speak in prayer-meetings and at the close of sermons, and I performed the service without embarrassment and seemingly to the acceptance of my hearers.

I was called more formally to the ministry by my venerated pastor, on the night of the 15th of January, 1822. A meeting had been appointed at a Mr. Lockett's, in the gorge between the Flat Top and Suck Mountains. The congregation attending was small, and composed of plain, uncritical mountaineers. I had no more expectation of preaching than of a visit to the moon, when my excellent father in the gospel said to me: "You must preach to-night." I hesitated, but he insisted, and I, having boundless confidence in his piety and wisdom; consented to perform the service. After an experience in the ministry of more than half a century, I should be very reluctant now to preach without more time for preparation; but in fifteen minutes after I was called to the ministry I entered on its duties. I selected for my text 2 Cor. vi. 2: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." My sermon was about thirty minutes long, delivered with composure, without much feeling, and certainly with little method or force. I was neither elated nor de-

pressed by it. It seemed to be such an effort as might reasonably be expected from one so illiterate and inexperienced as I was.

The next day a meeting was to be held at Mr. Palmer's, a few miles from the place of my first sermon, and in a more populous neighborhood. My revered bishop ordered that I should preach again, which I was not loth to do. The morning I spent in earnest preparation for the service. I read the Scriptures, prayed, studied and came to the work with a profound sense of my weakness and unworthiness. On reaching the place of preaching I found a large congregation, composed chiefly of my acquaintances and friends, and among them my mother, not then a professor of religion. I was appalled at the prospect of preaching before such an audience, but I had proceeded too far to retrace my steps. I took for my text 2 Cor. viii. 9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." No doubt I have preached many a sermon more methodical, more lucid in style, more original in thought and less faulty in taste, but I seriously question whether I have ever delivered one better suited to interest, impress and profit a plain audience. It was heard with unwavering attention and many tears.

The sermon was to me the occasion of a great temptation and a mortifying failure. Some of my indiscreet friends spoke to me in terms of high praise of it. They might well have spared themselves the trouble. My own heart assured me that I had preached a wonderful discourse. On this assumption I reasoned, as I judged, most logically. If from my first to my second discourse I had made such surprising progress, to what rapturous heights I must soar in my third sermon. That night there was to be a meeting at the house of the pastor, near Liberty, where I was particularly anxious to acquit myself creditably. It was decided that I should preach again, but, having succeeded so well in the morning I dismissed all care on the subject, supposing that I would only have to stand up and open my mouth, and thoughts and words, pertinent to the occasion, would flow freely.

The congregation was full, and it was arranged to have two sermons. The first was preached by Rev. P. P. Smith, of Buckingham County, a nephew of Elder Harris. I was to follow. My

text was Psalm cxlvi. 8: "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous." I stood, but my eyes were not opened. I opened my mouth, but words did not flow. I made a desperate effort to speak, and continued to babble six or eight minutes, and then took my seat in utter confusion and deep mortification. I would gladly have sunk beneath the floor, or concealed myself in an auger hole, had it been possible, but there I sat exposed to the view of all the congregation, none of whom could have had a stronger conviction of my stupidity than I had myself. My ministry, as I supposed, had come to an early and inglorious end. I had become a wiser, if not a better man. From that hour to this I have never dreamed that religious knowledge is gained in arithmetical progression.

The next day I was again persuaded to try my gift at preaching in another neighborhood. I acceded to the request the more readily to redeem myself from the disgrace incurred by the failure of the preceding night. I was cured, at least for a time, of my self-confidence, and entered on the service with painful anxiety and trembling in every joint. My success was such as to soothe my shame for the past failure, and inspire me with hope for the future.

I continued to preach from time to time, as opportunities offered, sometimes with freedom and pleasure, and not unfrequently with confusion and shame. I glided into the ministry, without carefully inquiring whether I had been divinely called to it. After some months my mind became quite anxious on the subject. I feared that I had run before I was called. My call, if call I had, seemed to differ widely from that of many of the old preachers. They represented, or seemed to represent, that they had been constrained to enter the ministry sorely against their wills. The words of the apostle were often on their lips: "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" Unfortunately for me, as I supposed, I had a wish to preach the gospel. Of all employments, preaching seemed to me to be the most desirable and the most honorable. I preferred being a preacher, poor, despised and persecuted, to being a king or an emperor. I might have found in the context of the oft-quoted



Scripture a corrective of my error. The apostle adds to the threatened woe of failing to preach the gospel the promised reward of preaching it cheerfully: "If I do this thing (preach the gospel) willingly I have a reward." Neglecting to examine the passage in its connection, I missed the instruction which it contained. It was several years before my mind was entirely relieved of its doubts and anxieties by the words of Paul: "If any man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." If a desire for the episcopal office was a qualification for it, I certainly had that. I dared not affirm that my desire was free from selfish and worldly considerations, but of its sincerity and earnestness, and that it originated in Scriptural views of the duties and design of the office, I had no question. From the hour that I discerned the bearing of that text on the subject, I have had no more doubt of my call to the ministry than I have had of the genuineness of my piety.

It is well known that Dr. Jeter wrote his "Recollections" at the earnest solicitation of others. He undertook the task with serious misgivings. He said that old age was notoriously garrulous and egotistic, and he was anxious to save himself from such a temptation. As he really never grew old in spirit, retaining, in a wonderful degree, the spring and ardor of his nature even to the last, he never betrayed any excessive fondness for talking of himself. Besides, he lived in such thorough sympathy with the present, that he was not specially given to the habit of recalling the incidents of the past. I think that he was needlessly cautious and sensitive about his personal recollections, and when he speaks of himself it is always in terms so mild and diffident that he hardly does justice to the facts. We have an illustration in his reference to his second sermon,—that preached at the residence of Mr. Palmer. It is true

that he alludes to it in terms which sufficiently indicate that he thought quite well of his performance. Father Harris told me that the sermon produced a phenomenal impression. Its effect defied all description. It thrilled the audience into the wildest excitement, and those simple-hearted mountaineers instantly sprang to the conclusion that there never had been so great a preacher as they had discovered in this fiery and impetuous youth.

He also was carried away with his success. His elation knew no bounds, and he did not attempt to conceal his satisfaction. His carnal ambition took possession of him and he fancied that all he had to do was to stand up and his sermon would leap spontaneously to his lips. His old pastor, who recounted to me the incident, had found it difficult before to induce the young man to exercise his gift in public, but after that delicious experience, he was quite ready to try it again.

The following night he was to address a more intelligent audience in the neighborhood of Liberty, and became unduly anxious to make a good impression. He had become the zealous custodian of his sudden fame, and was ambitious to enhance it by the sermon on that occasion. Alas, for the inflated youth! Satan had blinded him with pride, and he went forth in his own strength. His failure was a tragedy. It was a downfall which he never forgot. He emerged from the disaster, crushed in spirit and covered with shame. It taught him a lesson in humility, which remained with him, and in every subsequent temptation pointed him to the source of true strength.

He began to preach in January, 1822, and as he was appointed a missionary in the summer of 1823, I infer that he is mistaken in saying that he preached for several years without any definite plan. He was never trustworthy in the matter of dates, and I think it is clear that his evangelical rambles with Daniel Witt did not last more than eighteen months. But it was a brisk and busy campaign. They traversed five or six counties, and spoke at many places. They did not hold prolonged meetings, but pushed steadily from point to point, and preached to thousands of people. The paper which follows gives an account of these travels and labors.

#### MY EARLY LABORS IN THE MINISTRY.

As I glided into the ministry without design, so I pursued it for several years without any definite plan. I had no pastorate, no prescribed field of labor, no means of support, no earthly guide, no purpose concerning the future, but to do good as I found opportunity, and was drifted along by the current of events. My young friend, Daniel Witt, commenced preaching in a few weeks after I did. He was a little over, and I was a little under, twenty years old. He had, however, greatly the advantage of me in appearance. He was low, slender, beardless and of boyish appearance; I was tall, slim, gawky and seemingly older than I really was. His educational advantages had been slightly better than mine, and he had been more favored in home opportunities for acquiring religious knowledge than I had been. Possessing a fine memory, an easy elocution and a plaintive voice, his sermons began at once to attract attention. I can hardly err in saying that, in eighteen months, he became one of the most popular preachers in the State. He was not the most learned, the most profound, the most instructive or the most impressive preacher; but, in view of his youthfulness, fluency and pathos, none attracted larger audiences or were heard with

deeper interest. He was unquestionably a more popular preacher than I; though I may be excused in saying that there were persons who judged that, in originality of thought, logical acumen and the power, under favorable circumstances, of moving the passions of an audience, I was his equal, and in this opinion, it is proper to say, he always concurred. There was no rivalry between us. He rejoiced in my success as I rejoiced in his. We were almost constantly together, and of us it might be said as pertinently as of the primitive disciples, that we "had all things common." We had a common stock of knowledge—quite meagre—a common sermon, which we diversified with different texts and with fresh arguments and illustrations as we could find them, and a common purse, which was never bloated with supplies. Dressed in home-spun clothes—the common apparel of the time—with steeds neither fine nor pampered, and saddle-bags containing our entire wardrobe, we commenced our humble labors.

For several months our preaching was confined to our native county, and chiefly to its southwestern border. By degrees, and as doors of usefulness were opened to us, our labors were extended into the counties of Franklin, Pittsylvania, Henry, Botetourt, Campbell and Amherst. Everywhere we received a hearty welcome, were met by large congregations, heard with deep interest and treated with great hospitality and kindness. Several causes contributed to augment our audiences. The revival, which commenced in Bedford, had spread, gradually but steadily, into the adjoining counties. In many neighborhoods there was a pervading interest in the subject of religion. There was a general desire to hear the gospel preached, and any minister of any name could draw a good congregation on any day of the week. The juvenility of Witt and myself added greatly to the attractiveness of our ministry. In every place our fame, if I may use so grand a term to express our notoriety, preceded us, and lost nothing in its progress. It was represented that two Bedford plow-boys had suddenly entered the ministry, and were turning the world upside down. At that time, and in that region, young preachers were a great rarity, and excited almost as much interest as a dancing bear, and an interest of the same kind. To all

these considerations I may add, as the result of my matured judgment, that the inexperienced lads preached with rather remarkable freedom, force and fervency. Account for it as we may, few houses would hold their congregations, even on week-days, and they were compelled to deliver their message in groves and under arbors, prepared, in some cases, for the purpose. The night meetings were usually held in private houses, which, in most cases, could not contain the congregations. As a remarkable specimen of these meetings, I furnish an account of it from my *Life of Dr. Witt*, pp. 101-103 :

“When Witt and myself first went into Franklin County we had an appointment to preach at the house of Mr. Aquila Divers. It was a sparsely-settled neighborhood ; but the news had been widely spread that two boys from Bedford would preach. The facts, as is usual in such cases, had been greatly exaggerated. An intense curiosity to see and hear the juvenile strangers had been excited, and the people flocked from all the surrounding region to the meeting. There were probably five hundred persons in attendance. The house and yard were filled with a plain, rustic, wide-awake night congregation. Witt preached. He felt deeply the importance and responsibility of the occasion, and laid off his coat and rolled up his sleeves, as one intent on business. This may seem strange to one accustomed to the fastidiousness of the present day ; but it was nothing unusual at that time and in that region. I often saw ministers of piety, age, dignity and reputation preaching in hot weather in their shirt-sleeves. I must think that the custom is more rational and defensible than many of the fashions and ceremonies which accompany the preaching of the word in the present period. Witt removed his coat, not from vanity or affectation, but for comfort and convenience. Its removal meant earnestness and labor. Nor was there any disappointment in the case. I have forgotten the text and the sermon ; but the effect of the service I well remember. When the discourse was ended there were suppressed weeping and sobbing throughout the audience, in the house and in the yard. It was the commencement of a revival, not like some modern revivals that pass away as the morning dew ; but it spread far and wide, continued for months, and brought hun-

dreds into the fold of Christ. No doubt but that, to this day, traces of that sermon may be seen in the county of Franklin."

Our mode of preaching, as was common at that time, was to have a series of appointments, day and night, from place to place, rarely spending more than a day in a neighborhood. We would have two sermons in the day and one at night, ordinarily alternating the service. The one who preached first in the day had usually great advantage over the other. If he had freedom in the service, he reaped our whole theological field, and left but meagre gleanings for the other. In time, however, we so increased our stock of theological knowledge that the preacher of the second sermon was not much incommoded by the wide range of remarks in the first. Had the present method of conducting protracted meetings been known to us, our usefulness, I judge, might have been greatly increased.

Of the fruits of our desultory labors it is impossible to make any accurate estimate. Many I knew professed conversion under our ministry. Large additions were made to the churches by the labors of their pastors, in which the religious awakening seemed to be the result of our ministrations. I may overestimate these effects. I give the impressions of my young, ardent, inexperienced mind, which the sober judgment of age may not fully correct. Some years ago I visited a place where, in my boyhood, I resided and played. There were the houses, fields, hills, roads and streams which I remembered after long years of absence, but how strangely diminished in size! A similar change might occur in the seeming importance of the events of my early ministry, were it possible for me to return to them with the judgment which time, observation and experience have given me.

I must close this bright article with a gloomy tale. Soon after Witt and myself labored in Franklin and the adjoining counties, the strife in the Baptist denomination concerning missions commenced. The ministers in that region generally took the anti-mission side. Many of them were good men, of narrow views and scanty information. They were apprehensive that missionary efforts would take the work of human salvation out of God's hand and transfer all its glory to men, not considering that the same objection, and with equal force, or rather inconclusiveness, might

be urged against all means employed for the salvation of sinners. Most of the churches in Franklin and Henry Counties withdrew from the Strawberry Association, and organized the Pig River Association, a body most earnestly and successfully devoted to doing nothing. When Witt and myself labored in that region, Baptists were numerous, with a cheering prospect before them; but under the withering influence of anti-mission, antinomian views, their progress has been greatly hindered, if, indeed, their number and efficiency have not been decidedly diminished.

In the summer of 1860, Dr. Jeter and myself labored together for several weeks in a protracted meeting in Liberty, Va. Our home during the time was at Col. Otey's, and Dr. Witt was there also for several days. Thrown together once more in their native county, after many years of absence, they indulged very freely in reminiscences. I recall one laughable incident which Dr. Jeter related of their visit to Franklin County, of which he speaks in the foregoing paper. It seems that on a given Sunday morning he preached at the Court-House and Witt had an appointment at some church in the country. Jeter announced in the morning that there would be another service at night, and that Brother Witt would preach. Their stock of sermons was very meagre, and such sermons as they had were common property. In the morning the young man who officiated at the Court-House delivered one of their favorite discourses, but, for some reason, neglected to tell the other which of the sermons he had used. They sat together in the pulpit until the time for the sermon, and then Witt arose and announced his text. It fell like a peal of thunder upon the ear of young Jeter. It was the text from which he had preached

in the morning, and he was quite horrified. It occurred to him, however, that he ought in some way to indicate the fact, and give his brother an opportunity to change his course. Accordingly, he took hold of the skirt of his coat, gave it a gentle jerk, and then instantly dropped his head. Witt paused, turned around and found his co-laborer, apparently in a deeply devotional frame. He did not understand the signal, and proceeded with his sermon, opening with exactly the same sentence with which the morning sermon was begun. He ran smoothly along for a minute or two, until the situation became intolerable to Jeter. He was greatly perplexed, but he felt strongly that Witt must be made aware of his mistake, and so he nervously grasped his coat again and gave it a sudden and vigorous pull. He thought that would be sufficient, and once more bowed his head and covered his face with his hands.

Witt was sorely disconcerted. He came to a sudden halt and turned about for an explanation. He found his disturber with his head meekly bowed, and apparently wrapped in profound meditation. He was puzzled and vexed, and strangely enough, never dreamed of the cause of the interruption. He was greatly flurried, and it was quite a while before he became sufficiently collected to resume his discourse. By degrees, however, he worked upon the old track and began to repeat the sermon which the people had heard that morning.

Jeter was desperate; he could stand it no longer. It was painful to interrupt his beloved companion, but he felt that it would never do for both of them



to preach the same sermon in the same house on the same day. But what could he do? He dared not speak, and indeed no course was open to him except to repeat the experiment already twice tried. Once more, and quite violently, he jerked Witt's coat, and this time with such force that he brought him to a sudden pause. The young speaker was completely unmanned, and, stung with chagrin and anger, he took his seat.

In relating the story, Dr. Jeter said that he supposed, when he interrupted him, that it would only be necessary to tell him why he did it, in order to satisfy him. To his surprise, however, he found the young brother quite irritated, and slow to receive his explanation.

Dr. Jeter related this incident with fine dramatic effect, laughing heartily while he told it, and closing with the remark that he believed it was the only time that Dr. Witt ever really got mad with him. During its recital Witt listened in silence, with a bland smile on his face, and when it was ended, he said, "Yes, I was mad, and I don't believe that I have forgiven you for it yet."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE YOUNG MISSIONARY.

**B**E it said to the praise of the Gospel that friendships among ministers are too common to excite any especial attention. It is not strange that men of common faith, educated in the same schools and absorbed in the same work, should become wedded in the strongest ties of affection. There are some who are always ready to call attention to the jealousies which mar the relations of Christian ministers. They would do well to note with equal care the warm attachments and mutual intimacies which often bind Christian ministers together. Preachers constitute an exceedingly congenial and affectionate brotherhood. They are sometimes criticised for the jocose and sportive spirit which they manifest in each other's presence. It is not surprising that men so trustful and sympathetic should unbend, when, momentarily released from their cares, they meet for social fellowship.

The friendship between J. B. Jeter and Daniel Witt has become historic. It began suddenly, continued without interruption for a half-century, and deepened in ardor and strength till they were sundered by death. In many respects they were unlike. Witt was slender in form, delicate in health,

of a singularly nervous temperament, intensely sentimental, and remarkably soft and gentle in his manners; Jeter was of towering height, quite slender in form, fearless in his movements, and notoriously ambitious. Witt was poetic, rhetorical and graceful; Jeter was unfortunate in voice, logical in his methods of thought and unattractive in his delivery. Witt had no great thirst for popularity, and yet in his earlier days was surpassingly popular; Jeter possessed a craving for admiration not easy to restrain, and yet his companion far outstripped him in popular favor.

The differences between them offered ample occasion for envy, jealousy and strife; and yet they were fast friends from the first—a fact which admits of easy explanation. They were natives of the same county, belonged to the same walks of life, entered the Christian life at the same time, respected each other thoroughly, and were providentially associated in their early ministerial labors. Like kindred drops their spirits blended, and their intimacy never knew the shock of a moment's estrangement. Their friendship never dwindled into unseemly familiarity, and never exhausted itself in needless professions. They treated each other with unflinching courtesy, and were too generous to strain their attachment by any act of injustice. Each admired the other, and while they avoided mutual flatteries, they were always outspoken in their praise of each other when in the presence of others. Witt declared that their friendship had not been exceeded in permanence or purity since the days of David and Jonathan; Jeter said that it was not inferior in its

strength or tenderness to that of Damon and Pythias. It sometimes happens that friendships naturally expire. There may be no marked alienations and no open outbreaks, but men grow away from each other. Their habits, employments and tastes draw them asunder; and without falling out, they cease to love. This was not so with Jeter and Witt. They grew into each other as long as they lived. Their careers were widely divergent, but their friendship knew no abatement. They were sundered only by the stroke of death, and it is pleasant to believe that even that dread event brought only a brief separation.

A few years before Witt's death Jeter fell seriously ill, and little hope was entertained of his recovery. The news of his sudden sickness speedily spread, and in my anxiety, I hastened to Richmond to ascertain the facts as to his condition. It chanced that the beloved Witt, who had come down from his home in Prince Edward County to see him, entered the house just as I did. We were conducted to the parlor, and sat together, anxiously awaiting the news from the sick chamber. The tidings which came after a little delay were discouraging enough. The patient was worse, and it seemed that nothing could be done for his relief. Witt was almost heart-broken, and uttered a lamentation so pathetic that, I can never forget it. He said: "Alas, for my brother and my friend! It has not gone as well with me as I had hoped. I always told him that he must attend my funeral, and now he is about to go before me."

But to the surprise of all Dr. Jeter recovered, and

not long after, the cherished wish of Witt that Jeter might attend his funeral was fulfilled.

As already mentioned, Witt and Jeter preached through the mountain counties for a year and a half after their conversion. They were raw recruits in the King's service, and operated upon an independent line. They drifted from point to point, and put in their work wherever there seemed to be a prospect of usefulness. But this free and roaming life was now to end, and they were soon to enter upon more formal service.

Up to that time the Baptists of Virginia had no general organization. They had their district associations, which had been organized for mutual counsel and help. Some time before they had instituted measures for promoting friendly intercourse and a better understanding among the district meetings. But the missionary spirit had already entered many of the churches. There was a clamor for organization, and after some preliminary steps, a convention was called to consider the propriety of consolidating the Baptist forces of the State. That meeting was held in June, 1823, in the city of Richmond. Among those who attended it were the two boy preachers from Bedford, and as they had never been present before at an important deliberative body, we can imagine with what high and throbbing expectancy they set forth upon their journey. Of that meeting, I will here present Dr. Jeter's recollections. It seems remarkable that he was able to recall so few incidents connected with the proceedings of the body.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BAPTIST GENERAL ASSOCIATION  
OF VIRGINIA.

This event occurred in the city of Richmond, in the month of June, 1823. At its meeting in the town of Lynchburg, in the previous year, the Baptist General Meeting of Correspondence, organized some years before, merely to keep up a friendly intercourse among the Associations of the State, resolved so to change its constitution as to become a domestic missionary society. Arrangements were made to consummate this plan at the place and the time named above. My friend, Daniel Witt, having in the preceding winter visited Richmond, and preached with great acceptance, received a cordial invitation to attend the meeting for the proposed organization. Without difficulty, I was induced to accompany him. In due time, on horseback, equipped in such style as our means would permit, we set out to attend the meeting. We were accompanied and guided by Elder Robert Tisdale, a minister from the lower part of the State, who had spent two or three years among the mountains to regain his health. He was well acquainted with the route over which we were to pass, and with the arts of economical traveling. Of nights we stayed at private houses, and were hospitably entertained—a custom then quite common with traveling ministers, and one well suited to our financial condition. Nothing of special moment occurred on our journey; but I was intensely interested in all that I saw and heard. I had never before been so far from home, and to me everything had a fresh and charming appearance. In my view, the James River was of magnificent size, and the city of Richmond, then about a fourth of its present dimensions, seemed to me to be of surpassing grandeur. The capitol exceeded all my conceptions of architectural greatness and beauty. The city made an impression on my youthful imagination more delightful and overpowering than, in my declining years, was made by the vastness of London, the beauties of Paris or the wonders of Rome. I and my traveling companions put up at a boarding-house on Governor Street, between Main and Franklin, kept by an excellent brother, who treated us very kindly, and at our departure charged us moderate board, with many apologies for charging us at all—apologies justified, doubtless, by his cramped pecuniary circumstances.

The meeting for organizing the Association was held in the Second Baptist Church—a building, then incomplete, situated on a cross street, between Main and Cary. The congregation, at the opening of the services, was small. The introductory sermon was preached by Rev. R. B. Semple, from Heb. xiii. 16: “But to do good, and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” I had heard of the fame of Semple, but was greatly disappointed in his sermon. It was not the kind of preaching that I had been taught to admire. Its want of adaptation to my taste was no proof that it lacked merit. It was, I have no question, a plain, sensible, practical and very appropriate discourse. Of the proceedings of the meeting, I have no distinct recollection. After due consideration a constitution was adopted, and the Baptist General Association of Virginia was organized. At that time there was great jealousy in the Associations, and among Baptists generally, of any body that was supposed to be able to encroach on the liberties and prerogatives of the churches. The fathers, who organized the General Association, were tremblingly alive to this jealousy, and intensely anxious to adopt such measures as should disarm all prejudices. In consequence, they placed the Association under such restrictions that it could do little good or evil. Through long years, it was crippled in its efforts to be useful by needless constitutional shackles, which had, one after another, to be cast off, with no little discussion, and not always in a lovely spirit.

Though my recollections of the proceedings of the meeting are dim, my remembrance of many of the preachers and their sermons is quite vivid. I heard them preach with intense interest, and their discourses made an indelible impression on my mind. Luther Rice preached at night, in the Second Baptist Church, from Matt. xvi. 17: “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” The sermon fell far below my expectation, and equally below the reputation and abilities of the speaker. Rev. Edward Baptist preached in the Presbyterian Church in the Valley, known as the “Pine-apple church,” on Lord’s day afternoon. His text was Hab. iii. 2: “O Lord, revive thy work.” The sermon was chaste in style, beautiful in imagery,

and graceful in delivery, but was hardly equal to the fame of the orator, and was far less eloquent and impassioned than sermons which I afterwards heard from his lips. Rev. O. B. Brown, of Washington, preached on Sunday morning in the First Baptist Church, from Hab. ii. 14: "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." It was a missionary discourse, delivered to a crowded audience, and was evidently *the* sermon of the occasion. Rev. Jas. Fife preached on Monday afternoon, at the close of the business of the meeting, in the First Church, to a pretty full congregation, from Heb. ii. 3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" His sermon was quite pathetic, and produced a deep impression on his hearers, as was evinced by their tears. Witt preached, but, preferring to listen to some strange minister, I did not hear him. His sermon, however, was heard with great pleasure, and its praise was on every tongue. On comparing these sermons, I would say that of Rice was the feeblest, that of Baptist the most beautiful, that of Brown the most profound, that of Fife the most impressive, and that of Witt the most popular. I preached on a week-day night at the Second Baptist Church. The congregation was good, and Semple, Brown and others, distinguished for their knowledge and venerableness, concealed themselves in a remote part of the church that I might not be intimidated by their presence. My text was Psalm xxvii. 1: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" Semple, who afterwards heard me preach frequently, always said this was as good a sermon as he ever heard me deliver. It was well for me; for it was more than seven years before I preached in Richmond again without embarrassment and mortification.

At this time I first saw several ministers, whom I did not hear preach, but whom I afterwards knew well and prized. Among these I may mention the venerable Philip Montague (Blacky, as he was called, to distinguish him from a cousin of the same name), William Todd, the clerk of the Association, Eli Ball, then just arrived from Massachusetts, and subsequently the General Agent of the body, Addison Lewis, a scholarly man, whom, after the lapse of more than twenty years, I met in Mis-



souri, and John Bryce, who had been long an associate pastor of the First Church, was then residing in Fredericksburg, and, after many years, ended his days in Kentucky:

On this visit I became acquainted with Rev. John Courtney, an aged and revered pastor of the First Baptist Church. He was quite superannuated; and did not attend any of the meetings of the Association. He was a tall, raw-boned man, bowed beneath the infirmities of age, and occupying a plain framed house, now standing in the rear of the Roman Catholic cathedral. He was held in high esteem within and without the church, not for his learning or his eloquence, but for his good sense, incorruptible integrity, earnest piety and faithful and useful labors. Rev. Henry Keeling was nominally his assistant, but really the sole pastor of the Church. Rev. David Roper, a very intelligent, but not popular preacher, in rapidly declining health, filled the pulpit of the Second Church, but was not its pastor.

It is to me an affecting thought, that of all the men, ministers and laymen, engaged in the formation of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, I only am in the land of the living. Elder Jas. Fife, one of the fathers of the body, after a long life of useful labors, was the last to depart. These good brethren built more wisely than they knew. They laid the foundations of an edifice of whose noble proportions and grandeur they formed no just conception. How would their hearts have swelled with gratitude, and their tongues broke forth in strains of praise, could they have foreseen the thousands of souls that would be converted, the hundreds of churches that would be founded, and the mighty missionary and educational influences that would be exerted, by the feeble agencies they were putting in operation. If it is permitted to them in heaven to know the results of their earthly labors, their felicity is, doubtless, augmented by their view of the rich harvests that have been reaped, and are yet to be reaped, from the handful of seed cast by them in a seemingly unfruitful soil.

Dr. Jeter possessed great facility in recalling facts, but where dates were involved his memory was not to be trusted. If dependent upon his statements

alone, we would be compelled to infer that at the close of the meeting in Richmond he went directly to Sussex County, and established himself in the home of Rev. Nathaniel Chambliss. The fact seems to be that he and Witt did at that time visit Sussex, and probably remained there until midsummer, when they went to King and Queen County to confer with the Board, and to complete their arrangements for their missionary tour. They were appointed with instructions to traverse Western Virginia, and to ascertain the religious condition of that portion of the State. It is easy enough from our standpoint to criticise the action of the Board in selecting these two ministerial neophytes for a mission so arduous and responsible. Perhaps it was not wise. Their campaign was not expected to bear much fruit. They moved with great rapidity and made only the briefest pauses at the prominent points along the way. It was indeed simply a tour of inspection. The young missionaries were hardy, courageous and zealous. While inexperienced and ignorant of the country, they were watchful and capable of forming an intelligent opinion on the matters which they were sent out to investigate. They possessed the additional recommendation of being used to rough experiences, and unused to expensive methods of living. They were cheap laborers. If their appointment proved nothing else, it at least evinced a purpose on the part of the Baptists of those times to preach the gospel in every portion of Virginia. The sending forth of those young men was a significant event; it meant a new and aggressive movement. Their appoint-

ment marked the birthday of State Missions. Witt and Jeter went out as pioneers, and constituted the vanguard of that imperial host of Baptist missionaries, who, from that day to this, have been pushing their triumphs into every portion of Virginia.

Witt and Jeter returned from their expedition, bringing with them startling accounts of spiritual destitution, and urging a vigorous and onward movement on the part of the denomination. Their modest counsel found a warm response among their brethren, and the cry rang along the Baptist lines: "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are able to overcome it."

With steady and hopeful faith, the Baptists of Virginia have been laboring for more than sixty years to establish their principles in every quarter of the State. How marvellous have been their successes, and how wonderfully they have multiplied! For how much of this progress they are indebted to these two young men, is a question which I must not undertake to settle.

I present here Dr. Jeter's description of that memorable missionary tour:

#### A MISSIONARY TOUR.

At the time of the formation of the General Association of Virginia, it was arranged that Daniel Witt and myself should, in the month of August, appear before its Executive Board, of which Dr. Semple was the president, in the county of King and Queen, then a centre of Baptist influence. The object of the interview was that we might be appointed to explore the western part of the State as a missionary field. At that time the Baptists of Virginia knew little of one another. Then there were no railroads, telegraphs or religious newspapers. Traveling was

performed almost entirely by private conveyances. Intercommunication between different portions of the State for political and commercial purposes was infrequent, and for religious objects almost unknown. The Board, before entering on its work for evangelizing the State, very naturally desired to know something of its religious condition.

According to appointment, we presented ourselves before the Board, and were duly appointed missionaries, to explore its field of labor and report its spiritual condition. At that time there was quite a romance thrown around the missionary work. There seemed to be something peculiarly sacred and inspiring in it. We deemed ourselves highly honored in the unsought and unexpected honor conferred on us. We accepted the appointment, and received our instructions, carefully written out in the beautiful chirography of Rev. Andrew Broaddus. After preaching several times in the county, as we had afterwards reason to believe with some profit to our hearers, we returned to Bedford to prepare for our western tour, with no slight sense of responsibility upon us. With minds immature, and with little knowledge and experience, we were very imperfectly fitted for our mission; but, perhaps, under all the circumstances, the Board could not then do better.

On some day in October, 1823, two young men, one beardless and the other nearly so, might have been seen journeying toward the setting sun. They were rudely, but after the common style, equipped for their tour, mounted on steeds, strong but not gay, with well-stuffed saddle-bags and overcoats and umbrellas strapped behind them. It was to them a movement of no little interest and consequence. Their first point of destination was the New River Baptist Association, to be held, if my memory is not in fault, at Reed Island meeting-house, in Grayson County. Their route, with which, in part, they had some acquaintance, was through the counties of Franklin and Patrick. In due time they reached their destination.

The Association was a small body. Its ministers were plain and illiterate, of narrow views and strong prejudices. The anti-mission spirit was then just beginning to develop itself, and muster its forces for the conflict which soon followed. Witt and

myself were looked upon with suspicion, as spies sent to search out the resources of the country. Another thing rendered us unpopular. Here we met Rev. Robert Tisdale, who had recently left the eastern part of the State to live and labor in the western. He resided in Monroe County; but in some of his journeys, within the bounds of the New River Association, he heard rumors of the disorderly conduct of a church member—desecration of the Lord's Day, I think it was—and preferred a charge against the supposed offender in his own church. The trial of the accused stirred up strife. Retaliatory charges were brought against Tisdale, and, though they were of a trivial nature, they rendered him extremely unpopular. Our previous acquaintance with him led us, perhaps indiscreetly, to espouse his cause; and being identified with him, in the minds of the brethren, we shared in his reproach. At Reed Island we did but little to promote the object of our mission; when, doubtless, if we had been wise, we might have done much.

From this point we made a hasty circuit through the counties of Wythé, Giles, Monroe, Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Bath, Alleghany and Botetourt. We were accompanied on our route by Brother Tisdale as far as to Pocahontas County. He was of great service to us, as he was acquainted with the country, and secured for us an introduction into many families, and many facilities for acquiring information, which otherwise we could not have enjoyed. We found, in most places, great destitution of religious instruction. . Methodist circuit-riders had penetrated almost every neighborhood; but their labors were desultory, and many of them were very imperfectly fitted for their performance. There were Presbyterians in Lewisburg, and at a few other points; but we neither saw nor heard of Episcopalians. Baptist Churches were few, feeble and widely scattered, supplied with occasional preaching by illiterate pastors, with whom, for the most part, the ministry was a secondary matter. Almost everywhere we met with isolated Baptists, and persons entertaining Baptist views. Our reception was generally very cordial. The plain people welcomed us, we being as plain as they, to their coarse, but abundant fare, and opened their houses freely for us to preach the gospel. There was no lack of mission fields. In

almost every neighborhood we were invited to establish mission stations, and send ministers to occupy them. Court-houses, school-houses and private houses were offered for our occasional or constant use. We preached as often as our opportunities permitted; but as we were traveling, and had no means of sending appointments ahead of us, our congregations, gathered on short notices of limited circulation, were generally small.

The trip, though intensely interesting to us, with our very limited knowledge of the world, was not distinguished by any stirring incidents. A few events may not be unworthy of brief notice.

I preached at a private house in the Little Levels of Greenbrier—think that was the name of the valley. At that time religious controversy was common, and frequently conducted with great folly and fierceness. Almost every preacher was a polemic, and every polemic was ready on all occasions to do battle for his tenets. One of the subjects of controversy between Calvinists and Arminians was the doctrine of sinless perfection. Arminians affirmed, and Calvinists denied it; and each party was equally eager to defend its opinion. In my sermon I took occasion to attack the doctrine of sinless perfection. A Methodist class-leader present was resolved that no such heterodox notion should be proclaimed in the Little Levels of Greenbrier; and by means of shuffling his feet, stamping and contradicting, he well-nigh, on this occasion, accomplished his purpose. I became embarrassed, and brought my remarks to a speedy, but by no means triumphant, conclusion. I was glad to learn, however, that the course of the class-leader was generally condemned in the community, even by his brethren.

I had the privilege of being present at the first regimental militia muster in the newly-formed county of Pocahontas. The hunting of bears and wolves called for different tactics from those taught in modern warfare. The muster was a farce. The regimental column, according to the description of a militia parade which I read in a comic almanac, "was zigzag at both ends, and crooked in the middle." The perplexed colonel, not knowing by what evolution to extricate it from its confusion, rode in front of the tangled line, and, with his drawn sword pointing out

the ground, cried, in a stentorian voice, somewhat mellowed by despair: "Come along here." The muster was of no religious importance, except that it afforded an opportunity for publishing an appointment for preaching in the neighborhood the next day.

I was at Huntersville, which figured so largely in the late war, when there were no buildings there except the log cabins of Mr. Bradshaw. It had recently been selected as the metropolis of the county of Pocahontas; and Mr. Bradshaw, the owner of the land, seemed as proud of the distinction as if he had been elected Lord-Mayor of London. He named the place Huntersville, in honor of the distinguished class of persons in that region of bears and deer, of wolves and foxes, of which Mr. Bradshaw was himself a prominent member. At the time of my visit his cabins served all the purposes of court-house, clerk's office and hotel, and prison, too, if any prison was used. I am sorry that I did not preserve a copy of a notice to his customers, which Mr. Bradshaw had posted in a conspicuous place on his premises. He had credited them, and fearing that they might repudiate their debts, he generously proposed an adjustment of his claims by receiving, at a fair valuation, whatever commodities his mountain friends might have to spare. In conception, language, orthography and punctuation, it was fairly entitled to a place among Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature*.

About the close of November we reached our homes, thankful for the mercies which had accompanied us through our journey. After some delay, we appeared in King and Queen County to report to the Board the results of our mission. Both Witt and myself had kept diaries of our tour. His, as he was the senior missionary, was read before the Board. In answer to questions proposed by our employers, we gave them all the information that we had gathered concerning the religious condition of the people, and the openings for the preaching of the gospel, in the regions through which we had passed. Guided by this imperfect report, the Board selected the early fields of its operations, and commenced its evangelical labors in the State, which, through a period of more than half a century, have been prosecuted with a good degree of earnestness, diligence and success.

I may mention an incident in conclusion. We stated before

the Board that some man, whom we saw in our travel, said of Brother Tisdale : " He is too learned a man to be a preacher ; he ought to be a lawyer." He was a sensible man, with very little education, and no large stock of knowledge. When the statement was made, Andrew Broaddus, with a twinkle in his eye, and with his inimitable grace, looking at Semple, said : " Brother Semple, if you and I had to try Brother Tisdale on that charge, we should acquit him."

I must be candid enough to say that Dr. Jeter's account above given of his and Witt's missionary excursion is not so full or satisfactory as that furnished by his co-laborer. Dr. Witt tells us that their track lay through the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, Montgomery, Grayson, Giles, Wythe, Monroe, Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Alleghany, Bath, Rockbridge and Botetourt. He adds that they discovered great spiritual destitution, and that they were greeted with a hearty welcome wherever they went. They found only a few feeble Baptist churches, and in some counties they did not meet a Baptist minister or even a member of a Baptist church.

How long their expedition lasted, they have failed to tell us. After their return to Bedford they started out upon an even more extensive exploration through the southern and eastern portion of the State. They journeyed on horseback through many of the counties lying between Bedford and Isle of Wight, and then crossing James River, they made their way through James City, York, Gloucester, Matthews and Middlesex, and finally returned to King and Queen to make their report to the Board.

To that meeting these young ministers submitted



a question of vast importance to themselves, agreeing to abide by the decision of their brethren. In Robert Semple and Andrew Broaddus, the ruling spirits of the Board, and then the two foremost Baptist preachers in the State, they found ready and conscientious counsellors, but whether they received from them the wisest counsel on the point at issue is a question on which there might be an honest difference of opinion.

From the beginning, Witt and Jeter had felt profoundly their lack of qualification for the ministerial office. Their later experiences and their contact with cultivated men had served to render their desire for an education more intense. Now there was opened to them an opportunity to secure better mental culture and more careful theological training. Luther Rice was then in Virginia, and he had become deeply interested in these two mountain boys. He was anxious for them to step aside from active service and seek more effective training for their future work. He proposed to secure for them the advantages of a collegiate education. It was a tempting proposition, and fell in with the current of their strongest desires. It seemed to be providential, and yet, unwilling to settle the question for themselves, these modest young brethren referred it to Semple and Broaddus. After due consideration, the old brethren gave their voice against a collegiate course of study. This they did, not through any prejudices against higher education, but on the ground that the call for ministers was peculiarly urgent at that time, and that these two young men could not afford

to immure themselves in a college for four or five years.

This fact is taken from Dr. Witt's autobiography. He tells us, with a rare delicacy of humor, that these grave counsellors presented a special reason against his going to college. It seems that his health was then supposed to be very feeble, and it was believed that he could not live to be thirty years old. This opinion was brought into the council, and treated as a foregone conclusion. They assumed it as fixed that he was to die in six or eight years, and the only question was as to the best use that he could make of the little fragment of time that remained to him. They thought it quite absurd that a young man already on the verge of the grave should be harboring the notion of going to college; but he did not die on schedule time. He was over sixty years of age when he made the record of these facts. "It seems," he says in speaking of the matter, "as great a wonder to me now, as it would have been to Semple then, that a harp of a thousand strings could keep in tune so long."

The counsel of the elders prevailed, and the college course was abandoned. It was determined, however, that the young brethren should give themselves to study. This decision led to a sudden break in their hitherto united and happy lives, and from that time forth they pursued divergent paths. It was decided that Witt should be placed under the tuition of Brother Semple for a season, but it is probable that he spent only two or three months there, after which he was sent on another missionary tour to the

Valley of Virginia. At the close of that engagement he went to Charlotte County, and pursued a course of study under the direction of Abner W. Clopton. In a few years he settled in the county of Prince Edward, and spent the remainder of his life in a quiet country pastorate. He was a man of spotless purity and ineffable gentleness of character. Dr. A. M. Poin-dexter said of him, that he possessed in high measure, "*converting power*," and Dr. Jeter said of him, "Few pastors were the direct means of the salvation of so many persons as he was."

From King and Queen, Jeter, after a sad parting with the companion of his former labors and travels, returned to Sussex County.

## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS LIFE IN SUSSEX AND CAMPBELL.

IT was an odd whirl of events which carried young Jeter into the county of Sussex. It really seemed that he had no business there. He was an entire stranger to the people and the place, and they knew nothing of him. He went without being sent for, and had no thought of making it the place of his abode. His traveling companion, Daniel Witt, was invited to visit Rev. Nathaniel Chambliss, and Jeter went along for the lack of something else to do.

But such is the lot which falls to all of us. An invisible hand guides our steps. Call it what we will, there is a subtle force which dominates our life, and determines our course. It is stronger than our caprices and mightier than our purposes. It shifts us from our chosen track and thrusts us into situations of which in advance we could never have dreamed. It was, by a way which he knew not, that this roaming youth was conducted to Sussex.

It is the improbable that usually happens. It seemed likely enough that young Witt, so winsome and lovely, and whose fame had gone before him, would meet such a reception at the hands of the Sussex brethren, as would constrain him to abide with them. As a fact, he paid his promised visit, and then

took his speedy and final leave. But Jeter, who entered the county somewhat as an intruder, won the heart of the venerable Chambliss, and became an inmate of his home.

It is not easy nor important to estimate the length of time which he spent in Sussex. He went there first in June, 1823, and probably remained until August, when he proceeded to King and Queen County to confer with the Board with reference to his entrance into its service as missionary. It is not certain, but quite probable, that he returned immediately to Sussex and remained there until he and Witt went forth upon their missionary tour in October. Their journey through Western Virginia was made during the autumn of 1823, and that through Southern and Eastern Virginia was, I judge, made during the winter of 1824. This gave him an opportunity of reaching Sussex in the spring,—in ample time for his ordination, which occurred in May of that year.

Of his life in Sussex we know very little—next to nothing, except what he has told us. There were, however, some facts connected with that portion of his career which exerted an important influence in fixing his character, and which must have a brief mention here.

Though he entered that county as an uninvited stranger, he quickly secured the gracious kindness of old Elder Chambliss. It must have been a case of love on first sight. That venerated and saintly man of God saw something in this lank and blundering mountaineer to excite his respect and sympathy.

He felt for him in his poverty, and in his manifest lack of preparation for his calling. Beneath his rustic garb and awkward manner he saw the stuff for building a noble manhood. He was a stranger, and he took him in. So far as I am aware, he was the only man, excepting Luther Rice, who evinced a practical solicitude for young Jeter's education. He opened to him the gates of hospitality, invested him with the privileges of a son, gave him free use of his books, honored him with his confidence and companionship, and furnished him money to improve his wardrobe. I do not know much of Elder Chambliss' private character, but this incident is sufficient to mark him as a man of worth. It shows his discrimination, his kindness of soul and his care for the Christian ministry. There are many interesting lessons suggested by the Scripture story of the young man in Elisha's college who lost the borrowed axe. To me the most touching feature of the incident is one that is not even mentioned—that is, the kindness of the man who loaned the axe. It was a deed of helpfulness wrought for a poor young preacher. Of that same kindly and unselfish sort was the unsought favor exhibited by Elder Chambliss for Jeter.

It is charming to picture the grateful young brother, cosily ensconced in the Chambliss mansion. He had not had things after that fashion before, and he was almost dumb-struck by his good fortune. There was much in his new circumstances to quicken and encourage him. In the atmosphere of that home he grew speedily in knowledge, refinement and self-respect. There, really for the first time, he was ad-

vantageously situated for study. His facilities were far short of the best, but they were greatly superior to all that he had known in the past. Mr. Chambliss was a gentleman of far more than ordinary intelligence, and was deeply devout in his spirit. He was full of kindness, and was very companionable with his youthful *protégé*. In his society there was much to arouse a young man to noble endeavors.

Another happy feature of his new home was the library. From his early boyhood he had been hungry for books. The sight of a book would charm him away from almost any circle of company. He had always read everything that he could put his hands upon, but for most of the time there had not been many books of any kind in his reach. Now there was a change for the better. He came in contact with the written thought of the world. Not that his benefactor had any great collection of books, but there was a better assortment than he had enjoyed before. We can readily imagine with what intense relish he devoured the new feast there spread before him. His long-famished mind revelled in its new luxuries, and grew wonderfully in wisdom and strength.

Up to that time he had not been creditably equipped for public life. Beginning without means, he had toiled along without salary, and really he had not been able to provide himself with a comely outfit. He was not fastidious, and far too sensible to allow a false pride to curb his religious zeal. At the same time, as he was brought in contact with others who dressed in more attractive style, he must have

sometimes felt humiliated. He had a decided fondness for display, and, of course, it cut him to the bone when he was put at a disadvantage. The tradition of his ill-fitting suit of home-spun which he always wore in his early preaching days has had a long and popular run. It has been repeated a thousand times and with many variations. His "jeans uniform," with its loose and slouchy swing, with coat-sleeves too short, and with pants exaggerated in width, and notoriously deficient in length, was no mean part of "the stock in trade" of some who delighted to tell ludicrous incidents at his expense. The tradition was not without its historic basis. His manner of dress was conspicuously plain, and that from stern necessity. When his uncouth costume had become a thing of the past, he sometimes spoke of it with mingled merriment and pathos. This he could well afford to do, as in his later life he had become accustomed to dress with almost faultless taste, but I venture to say that he enjoyed it far more in the retrospect than he did at the time. When he went to Sussex, his thoughtful benefactor furnished him means for providing a more creditable outfit.

There was another advantage. His residence in Lower Virginia gave him access to a better class of churches. The Baptists in that section were strong and, for the times, intelligent and well organized. In almost every congregation there were trained and critical auditors, and this stimulated him in his studies and in his public ministrations.

Of his experience in Sussex he has this to say.



## MY RESIDENCE IN SUSSEX COUNTY.

My visit to the county occurred in this way: Elder Nathaniel Chambliss, pastor of the High Hills and Sappony Baptist Churches, had relatives residing in Bedford County, near the home of Daniel Witt. Through them he heard of the popularity and success of the young evangelist, and invited him, just before the meeting in Richmond, which organized the General Association, to visit the county and preach to his churches. Witt requested me to accompany him, and I cheerfully acceded to the request.

At the close of the General Association we commenced our journey to Sussex, which then seemed to me to be a remote part of the world. Our first destination was Petersburg. Here we spent a Lord's Day. We were hospitably entertained by Brother Davenport, the main supporter of the Baptist Church in the place. It was a feeble body, had recently erected a house of worship on a rivulet, far below the subsequent grade of the street, for which they were deeply in debt. They had sent out, or shortly after sent out, an itinerant English minister, named Marcher, to collect money for the payment of their debt. The arrangement added slightly to its amount; but the generous agent accepted his collections as full compensation for his labors. It was arranged for brother Witt and myself to preach on Sunday. Brother Davenport had heard Witt preach in Richmond, and was greatly pleased with his gifts; but he had serious doubts of my capacity to edify a Petersburg audience. It was appointed that Witt should preach in the morning and in the evening, the usual times of preaching; and, to avoid mortification, it was provided that I should hold an afternoon service. Witt acquitted himself well, as he was one of the surest *extempore* preachers I have ever known. The afternoon was warm, my congregation was very small and sleepy, and, in my sermon, I fulfilled the most gloomy forebodings of good brother Davenport. He, no doubt, felt thankful that he had so judiciously arranged our appointments that I had brought but slight reproach on the cause which he had deeply at heart.

On Monday we renewed our journey to Sussex. Of the trip I remember nothing, except my surprise and amusement at seeing,

on the road, long poles attached to tall posts, with a bucket at one end, to draw water from the shallow wells. Such an arrangement was not only new to me, but would have been impracticable in the deep wells of the Piedmont country. We reached the hospitable home of Brother Chambliss late in the afternoon. It was a comfortable dwelling on the road from Petersburg to Bellfield, not far from the point at which the Petersburg and Weldon Railroad now crosses the Nottoway River, but long before railroads had been heard of. We were received with great cordiality; and, for several weeks, preached in the surrounding neighborhoods to large and interested congregations. Witt's engagements necessitated his early return to Bedford; but, through the persuasion of Brother Chambliss and the churches, and the encouraging prospect of usefulness, I was induced to remain in the county.

This was my first residence beyond my paternal roof; and certainly no stranger ever found a more pleasant home. Brother Chambliss boarded me and my horse gratuitously, made me generous and timely presents, and urged the churches to contribute to my support. His excellent wife vied with him in kindness, and spared neither pains nor expense to render my situation pleasant. Had I been an only son on a visit to them, after an absence of seven years, and expecting to leave them in a few weeks to see them no more on earth, they could not have treated me with greater consideration and kindness than they did throughout the three years that I sojourned with them. They laid me under imperishable obligations. While they lived I venerated them; and, though they have been dead many years, I have not ceased to hold them in grateful remembrance, and rejoice in this opportunity of making a record of their excellence. Elder Chambliss was an honest, earnest, consistent Christian. In industry and management he was an example to the whole community. As a preacher he was sensible, solid and faithful, laboring for nothing, and contributing largely to the pecuniary support of his churches. Mrs. Chambliss, ("Aunt Judy," as she was generally called), was in all respects worthy of her husband—gentle, discreet, hospitable, a neat and systematic housekeeper; in short, a pastor's model wife. If their monuments corre-

sponded in height and beauty with the excellence of their characters, they would attract the attention and win the admiration of all who might pass them.

My labors were not confined to the county of Sussex. The house of Mr. Chambliss was not my constant home, but my headquarters. It was far more common then than it is now for preachers to itinerate. Pastors labored much as evangelists. I had but little seed to sow, but I scattered it unsparingly over a vast field. I preached through the counties of Greensville, Brunswick, Lunenburg, Dinwiddie, Prince George, Surry, Southampton, Isle of Wight, and, indeed, all the counties from Sussex to the seaboard, between the James River and the North Carolina line, besides in several counties of that State. Sometimes I labored under the patronage of the General Association, and at other times as an independent evangelist. One year I preached monthly, as a *quasi* pastor, at Mill Swamp Church, in Isle of Wight County, to large congregations. Of the results of my desultory labors I can form no estimate. During my residence in Sussex an interesting revival occurred at High Hills, by which many disciples were added to the church, and the members were greatly refreshed.

My stay in the county was attended with very important consequences to me. It gave such opportunities for reading and studying as I had not before enjoyed. Elder Chambliss had a small, but well selected library; and I was enabled to buy such books as I most needed. Of these advantages I diligently availed myself. When I was at home, especially in the winter seasons, I read and studied with an unquestionable thirst for knowledge. I devoured Dwight's Theology, Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, and many other volumes of real merit. Probably, in no equal period of my life did I acquire so much useful knowledge, or contribute so largely to my habit of studying as during my sojourn in Sussex.

On the 4th of May, 1824, I was ordained to the work of the Christian ministry, at High Hills meeting-house, by Elders Nathaniel Chambliss and John D. Williams. It was to me an occasion of deep and solemn interest. In the morning I read, on my knees, the epistles of Paul to Timothy, with earnest atten-

tion, that I might understand the weighty responsibilities I was about publicly to assume. At that time not more than two or three Baptist ministers in the State received salaries adequate to their support. I solemnly resolved before God that, so long as I should receive the necessaries of life by preaching, I would give myself wholly to the ministry. The sermon on the occasion was preached by Elder Williams, from Matt. xxiv. 45: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?" Of the services after the lapse of more than half a century, I remember but little. The ordaining prayer was offered, as I suppose, by Elder Chambliss. That it was sincere and fervent, I have no question; but in what measure I have been indebted to it for my usefulness in life, only God knows. I desire to record that, in a period of more than fifty-four years, I have maintained inviolate the solemn pledge I made on the day of my ordination, and, though my labors have been mostly among a plain, poor people, and my earthly supplies have often been meagre, I have never known want, or been hindered in my appropriate work by secular care.

I never considered Sussex my permanent home. I was not pastor of any church, but merely the assistant of Elder Chambliss in the pastorate of two small country churches. In the spring of 1826 I deemed it my duty to leave my pleasant Sussex home. On the morning of my departure I read, at family worship, the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. There was some similarity between the separation of Paul from his Ephesian brethren and my departure from my Sussex friends; especially in the fact that I "kneeled down and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore." The venerable Chambliss I saw no more. After a few years of absence I visited his home, and had the melancholy pleasure of standing by his grave, and calling to grateful remembrance his paternal kindness to me in years past. Sister Chambliss I saw but two or three times after I ceased to dwell in her house. She lived several years, filled up her life with deeds of charity and devotion, and was peacefully dismissed to enter into the enjoyment of her eternal reward.

While in Sussex he attended a meeting of the Portsmouth Baptist Association, and below is his account of it. It is worthy of note that in his reports of those early associational meetings he touches very lightly upon their proceedings. With all respect to the dear old fathers of those times, it may be said that they did not "proceed" very vigorously. They moved at a leisurely pace. They had no important missionary enterprises on hand, and they had no place for those thrilling and memorable discussions which are often enjoyed in the district meetings of the present day. It is interesting to notice that even in those days the "Baptist layman" was a prominent figure, and was heard on every occasion.

#### THE PORTSMOUTH ASSOCIATION.

In May, 1824, the Portsmouth Baptist Association held its anniversary in the town of Portsmouth, where it was organized in 1791. I then resided in Sussex County, and accompanied the venerable Chambliss to the meeting. We made the journey by private conveyance, and shared in the hospitality of the brethren by the way. The Association convened in the Baptist Church, a framed building, on or near the spot where now stands the neat and comfortable Baptist worship-house. Rev. David M. Woodson, from Campbell County, Va., was the pastor of the flock. Doctor Bowers, a layman of fine appearance, polished manners, and great intelligence, was Moderator of the body. Jacob Darden, Reverend, I think he was, though from age and feebleness of health he preached but little, was clerk of the Association. He was tall, spare and of venerable appearance. He was the Nestor of the body, and would have been considered wise, discreet and excellent in any assembly of intelligent, good men. The prominent ministers of the Association were, beside those already named, Chambliss, Murrel, Sherwood, Cornelius and Brown. The meeting was remarkable for the number and

the ability of laymen who took part in its business. Besides the Moderator, I remember Josiah Holliman and Benjamin Griffin, all of whom, at one time or another, were members of the State Legislature. Among the visiting ministers whom I call to mind were Richard Poindexter, the father of the late Dr. A. M. Poindexter, and William H. Jordan, the half-brother of the doctor, from Bertie County, North Carolina.

Of the proceedings of the Association I recollect nothing, except a discussion on the validity of Pedobaptist immersions. In this conflict I fleshed my youthful sword, and was ingloriously defeated. I had associated with Semple, A. Broaddus and others among the fathers, who maintained the validity of such baptisms, and had adopted their views. As this side of the subject seemed to be feebly supported, I ventured, with probably more courage than discretion, for the first time in my life, to engage in religious controversy. My rashness evoked the chastising rod of Richard Poindexter. He was about fifty years old, of medium size, of swarthy complexion, possessed of a mind remarkable for astuteness, and great self-possession and readiness in *extempore* debate. Dr. Poindexter, with greater culture and more breadth of mind, bore a strong intellectual resemblance to his sire. It may reasonably be supposed that I was over-matched in the debate. I remember but a single illustration in the speech of Elder Poindexter. "Roundness," he said, "is essential to a bullet; beat it flat, and it will cease to be a bullet. So certain things—an authorized administrator among them—are essential to baptism, and without these things it is not baptism." I made, so far as I can recollect, no attempt to reply. The Association decided by an overwhelming vote that Pedobaptist immersions are not valid baptisms. I was defeated, but not convinced.

William H. Jordan was the central object of attraction at the meeting. He was nineteen years old, a widower, of pleasing appearance and manners, possessed an ample fortune, had just been converted and baptized in a most extraordinary religious revival, which prevailed in Bertie and the contiguous regions, and had entered the ministry coetaneously with his baptism. He preached in the Baptist Church in Portsmouth, at night, to a crowded audience. His text was Eccl. xii. 1: "Remember now thy

Creator in the days of thy youth." Considering his age and inexperience, it was a remarkable sermon. It was less pathetic and winning than the best efforts of Daniel Witt; but certainly equal, and probably superior, to them in fluency and in brilliancy of illustration. I went immediately from Portsmouth to the first anniversary of the General Association in Lynchburg, and reported that I had heard a young preacher in Portsmouth who was destined to be a rival of Whitefield in pulpit eloquence.

On the Sunday of the Association I preached for Brother Cornelius in the Cumberland Street Church, Norfolk, from the text, Rom. v. 1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Of the sermon I retain no remembrance, except that it was delivered with freedom and pleasure, and secured words of approval and encouragement from the pastor.

The pleasure of my visit was greatly enhanced by my hospitable entertainment in the family of Dr. Schoolfield. A more pleasant and agreeable home I could not have had. For many years the doctor's house was known as the attractive resort of Baptist ministers visiting Portsmouth. He was an intelligent and successful physician, a genial companion and a generous friend; but, in some respects, quite peculiar. He was morbidly conscientious. He had been for many years a Baptist, but whether he was in communion with the church I cannot say. He was upright, temperate, prudent and universally respected; but he was constantly despairing of his salvation. No one doubted his piety but himself; and his doubts arose from his offences, which to others seemed mere trifles. On one occasion he made me his father-confessor. He was in deep sorrow and gloom, and anxious to learn whether his salvation was possible. This was the cause of his trouble and despair. When he was a boy (he was now near sixty years old) a house was burned in the town of Portsmouth. He and other boys gathered the iron from the ruins, sold it for a trifle and divided the money among themselves. It did not occur to him till many years afterwards that the act was a theft. He endeavored earnestly, but unsuccessfully, to find the person robbed or his heirs, that he might restore the ill-gotten treasure. Failing in this effort, he paid to

the mayor of the town a sum equal, as he supposed, to the amount which he obtained from the spoils, with interest down to the time of this settlement, to be distributed among the poor. Yet his mind was not at ease. He wished me to tell him whether I thought it was possible for him to be saved without making reparation to the persons injured by the theft. I do not call to mind the counsel which I gave him, but I was convinced that he needed physic more than instruction. No teaching can heal a mind diseased. I pitied, but greatly admired the man, against whom a morbid, sensitive, searching conscience could find no graver accusation, in a period of forty years, than a boyish indiscretion. The doctor became later in life a confirmed hypochondriac, and died, I think, as he had lived, almost or quite despairing of his salvation. In view of such an affliction, how consolatory and cheering are the words of the Psalmist: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

Jeter remained in Sussex County for nearly three years. While a diligent student, he was also an active preacher. It seems that he never became a pastor while living in Sussex, but preached as an itinerant, extending his labors into five or six counties. Whether his failure to become a pastor was a matter of choice with him, or whether the conservative Baptists of those times esteemed him too young for the bishop's office, are questions which he does not answer. We only know that in the spring of 1826 he bade adieu to the lowlands of Virginia, quit his adopted home, and turned his face once more toward his native mountains; but he did not go to Bedford. He was now to enter upon regular pastoral duty, and according to the inexorable law, he who was a Bedford man could not be a Bedford pastor.



It was in the county of Campbell that he was for the first time to undertake the pastoral *rôle*. He has not told us how it came to pass, that he determined to settle in that county. He was evidently influenced in part by his anxiety to escape the malarial troubles of Lower Virginia.

He was not a pastor in Campbell, but preached regularly at Union Hill and Hill's Creek churches. One of these had a pastor, and both were very feeble bodies. He regarded himself as an assistant.

It went not very prosperously with him in his chosen field. It was a tame and uninspiring position. The romance and excitement of his rambling life utterly vanished, and he found himself linked with a dull and uncongenial field. For some unexplained reason he did not take. He tugged away with all his ardent and inflexible energy, but he won little fruit, and when at the end of eighteen months he handed in his resignation, he felt that it was good to get away.

He always recurred to his Campbell pastorate as the most unproductive and discouraging part of his entire ministerial life. He told me that he left the field with a poignant sense of failure, not knowing, indeed, that he had accomplished any good.

It was a withering experience for a young man of his mettle. It was a terrible chastisement. It unveiled before him the trials and obstacles of a minister's life as he had never seen them before.

And yet it is quite certain that he exaggerated his failure. It was not so complete as, in his mortification, he imagined. Years afterwards, when he had

risen to distinction, and could well afford to admit that his first pastoral service was unsuccessful, he chanced to meet a cultivated Christian woman, prominently connected, and highly honored for her usefulness, who told him that she was led to Christ under his ministrations, while he was preaching in Campbell. Perhaps there were other fruits which sprang from the seed that he sowed in that seemingly barren soil, of which he will know nothing till the last day.

It may occur to some that this is a fit place for the historian to speculate on the causes which led to the comparative failure of his labors in Campbell. Inasmuch as I do not know that it was a failure, and since, too, I would not know how to explain it if I knew that it was a failure, I beg to be excused. One fact, however, may be mentioned. He declined a far more important call to the northern neck of Virginia, in order to accept the field in Campbell.

This was evidently a mistake, which in time he realized and corrected. The Lord had need for him in the position from which he had turned away, and by his own inscrutable dealings, he led him to the post of duty.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE NORTHERN NECK.

**D**R. JETER spent nine years in the Northern Neck of Virginia, and he ever afterwards regarded it as the most important period of his life. After the cheerless experiences of Campbell, he must have found the change delightful. He was brought in contact with new people, and many of them were devout and intelligent, far beyond the average. The churches to whose charge he went, had been anxious for several years to secure his services, and when at last he came, they received him with many demonstrations of joy. He always said that really his first pastorate was in the Northern Neck; there he found an open path to usefulness, and from the outset the blessing of God manifestly attended his labors. When in his old age he wrote his "Recollections," he dwelt long and lovingly upon that portion of his life. Of no other portion of his life did he write with such peculiar unction.

There is nothing for me to do, except to present his several papers which bear upon his career in the Northern Neck, and to add such facts as have been gleaned from other sources.

His first visit to that section of country was made

near the close of 1825. He was then in his twenty-fourth year, and yet so pleasantly did he impress the people who had enjoyed the able ministrations of Samuel L. Straughan and Lewis Lunsford, that they at once called him to be their pastor. He declined the invitation, and assigned three reasons for his action. Tidewater people will probably smile when he tells them that he was influenced in part by the dread of the malarial diseases, prevalent at times in the Northern Neck. A mountaineer would regard his decision as a sufficient proof of his excellent sense and discretion.

In those days especially, people in the upper portions of Virginia looked with actual terror upon chills and fever. I recall distinctly the fact that I never saw a real victim of that dread affliction until I was twenty years old.

A young man came into our community who had been living in the malarial region, and he shocked his friends one day by having a chill. Very few had ever witnessed such a spectacle. His case excited alarm, and if he had suddenly expired, many would have supposed that it was only such a result as ought to be expected under the circumstances.

It was not surprising, therefore, that young Jeter should have recoiled from the idea of settling in a community where he might, at any moment, inhale the deadly miasma. I must confess, however, that it was a little singular that after living for several years in the swamps of Southeastern Virginia, he should have been so afraid of the Northern Neck. But we will let him tell the story of his first visit to

a community in which afterwards he was to play so brilliant and conspicuous a part.

## THE NORTHERN NECK.

The Peninsula between the Rappahannock and the Potomac Rivers, bounded on the east by the Chesapeake Bay, is called the Northern Neck, because it lies on the northern border of the State. It is distinguished as the birth-place of Washington, Madison, Monroe, the Lees and other persons famous in American history. It was consecrated in my eyes as the abode and field of labor of Samuel L. Straughan and Louis Lunsford, two Baptist ministers, who had left behind them a fragrant reputation. I was desirous to visit the region, and occupy the pulpits honored by the presence and the ministrations of these venerable men.

At the Dover Association, held in Essex County, in the year 1825, where I first saw John Kerr and Alexander Campbell, I met several brethren from Lancaster County, seeking a pastor for Moratico Baptist Church. Through their solicitation I made arrangements to visit them at the close of the year. On Christmas morning I left the city of Richmond, on horseback, in company with the late Rev. Addison Hall, not then a minister, but a member of the Virginia Legislature, who availed himself of the holidays to visit his family in Lancaster. There was nothing of special interest in the trip; but my arrival in the Northern Neck was an epoch in my life. It had no little influence on my destiny. The Neck was to be, for some years, the scene of toils, anxieties, pleasures and sorrows which were to exert a moulding power over my character.

The first event that I remember, after reaching the peninsula, was a trifle that might well have been forgotten. Colonel Hall, on meeting one of his neighbors, said to him, "How are you, Mr. G.?" "About," he said, "all to a bad cold." He was about, in spite of his cold, with no mark of disease upon him. I afterwards found the expression common among a people quite remarkable for the purity of their English.

My first night in the Neck was passed at Merry Point, the residence of my honorable guide. Here I met for the only time Rev. Daniel Davis, of Fredericksburg, who was on a preaching

tour through the Peninsula. He was a brother of Elder John Davis, under whose ministry I had been awakened some years before in Bedford County, of medium size, about sixty years old, and of rather rugged appearance. He differed widely from his brother John in spirit, views and manner of preaching. He was not opposed to missions, but held extreme Calvinistic doctrines, bordering on antinomianism. It was my misfortune to get into such a controversy with him as I had had, a few years before, with his namesake of Henry County. They bore, in many respects, a striking resemblance to each other. They were both endowed with vigorous minds, had small culture, held extreme doctrinal views, were leaders in their respective spheres, impatient of contradiction and overbearing in debate. I had not proceeded far in the discussion before I was imperatively ordered by my antagonist to hush. The command was probably wise; and, while I questioned his authority to issue it, I promptly obeyed it.

Here I was first introduced to Deacon Rawleigh Dunaway, the grandfather of Dr. Dunaway, of Fredericksburg, a man of peculiar and striking qualities, one of the warmest friends that I have had in the journey of life, and whom I shall have occasion to mention again.

My first sermon in the Neck was preached to a good congregation in Lancaster Court-House, on the 1st day of January, 1826, from the text, if I mistake not, Phil. iii. 8: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Of the sermon and of the occasion I remember but little.

On this visit to the Northern Neck I spent several weeks, and preached at all the Baptist meeting-houses in Lancaster and Northumberland, at Farnham Church in Richmond County, besides in several private houses. The trip was to me, on various accounts, interesting and pleasant. The people were hospitable, kind and sociable. I formed an acquaintance with many brethren notable for their intelligence, piety and usefulness,—disciples of Straughan and Lunsford, whose memories were redolent in all the region. Few could remember Lunsford; but anecdotes of the sermons, sayings and deeds of Straughan dwelt on almost

every tongue. He must have possessed a rare power of impressing his hearers. I have seldom conversed with a man who heard him preach that did not remember his text, his manner of treating it, and many of his illustrations and remarks. Yet I never talked with a man who had heard both Straughan and Lunsford preach, that did not give the preference to the latter. In judging, however, of their comparative abilities, it should be remembered that the witnesses heard Lunsford in their youth, while their judgments were immature, and heard Straughan in their maturity, when their taste was refined and their acumen was sharpened by exercise. They were both extraordinary men for their times and their circumstances. With small advantages for mental culture and few sources of religious information, they became, through the native vigor of their minds, their studious habits and their close observation, preachers of rare eloquence, power and success, who would have adorned the pulpit in any land and in any age. I drank in with delight the stories of their labors and achievements, and deemed it an honor to preach in the pulpits which they consecrated, and to the congregations which once sat under their enrapturing ministry.

After I had spent a short time in the Neck, I was invited to the pastorate of Morattico Church. Its membership had been much reduced since the days of Straughan; but it was still a respectable body, containing many estimable members. I promptly declined the call, for three reasons. *First*: The region was isolated, having, in those days, before it was visited by steam-boats, but little intercourse with the rest of the world. It was then quite a trip to get beyond the limits of the Peninsula. *Secondly*: I feared the malarial diseases, more or less prevalent every autumn. The apprehension was not imaginary. After my settlement there I had several sharp and protracted biliary attacks. *Thirdly*: The country was in an impoverished and depressed condition. It had not recovered from the injuries inflicted on it by the then recent war with Great Britain. Perhaps no portion of the United States had suffered more severely from the conflict than the Northern Neck. The enemy kept a large and unresisted fleet in the Chesapeake Bay during the war, and the Neck was bordered on three sides by deep, navigable water,

and intersected by many bold and undefended streams. It was entirely at the mercy of the enemy; and they made good, or rather bad, use of their irresponsible power. A large number of slaves was enticed away, many valuable dwellings were reduced to ashes, the country was pillaged and the inhabitants lived in constant dread of arrest or spoliation. Many of the best and most thrifty settlers, unwilling to live in such constant peril and alarm, sold their lands at greatly reduced prices, or left them without tenants and removed to the upper country. The Neck was slowly recovering from the evils inflicted upon it by the war; but it was far from being what it was in the favored times of the past, or what it became a few years afterwards.

From these considerations, I deemed it my duty and my interest to decline the invitation so kindly extended to me. I left the Neck, with many regrets, to return to my Sussex home. My removal to Campbell County soon followed. I had no expectation of residing in the Peninsula. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are our ways his ways. Already influences were in operation which changed my purpose. These influences I need not detail. After my short stay in Campbell, I removed, in the autumn of 1827, to the Northern Neck, and I was installed pastor of Morattico Baptist Church, at Kilmarnock Meeting-House, in Lancaster County. It was organized in the year 1778 by Lewis Lunsford, who continued his pastorate till near the close of the century, when he was succeeded by Elder Jacob Creath, for a few years, and afterwards by Straughan, who was my immediate predecessor. The sermon on the occasion of my installation was preached by Rev. Eli Ball, of Henrico County. I do not remember the sermon or the text; but they were deemed appropriate to the occasion, and the services made a fine impression on the large congregation in attendance.

It had been more than six years from the death of Straughan before I became pastor of Morattico church. During this time a great change had taken place in the religious condition of the community. The pulpit had been only occasionally, and not very profitably, supplied with preaching. Wicomico Church, in Northumberland County, had called to the pastorate a young man, Rev. Eli S. Patterson, who died in a short time, leaving



the church entirely destitute of the regular ministrations of the word. At the death of Straughan, the churches were large, prosperous and aggressive; but in half a dozen years, receiving no accessions, they had been greatly reduced in numbers by deaths, removals and apostasies, and in efficiency by the lack of instruction and leadership.

The Northern Neck was included within the limit of the Baltimore Methodist Conference, one of the ablest and best organized of all their conferences. It sent strong, earnest and active ministers into the counties rendered vacant by the death of Straughan. They penetrated every nook and corner of the country, and wrought a great revolution in the religious views and preferences of the people. A very large majority of the population became Methodists, or were brought under Methodist influence.

I commenced my labors in the Neck under great disadvantages. Not only were the Methodists exerting a preponderating influence, but preach when or where I might, my appointment was almost sure to be in conflict with some Methodist meeting. They, too, had almost invariably something to attract a congregation beyond the simple merits of their preachers. Sometimes circuit-riders would be preaching their introductory, and sometimes their valedictory, sermons. Quarterly meetings, camp-meetings and other extraordinary services filled up almost every Sunday, and constantly attracted the crowd.

One circumstance was much in my favor. Baptists were comparatively few; but they were mostly of excellent quality. They were gold tried in the fire. The unstable and the unprincipled had been carried away as chaff before the wind; but the sincere, the firmly grounded and the devout remained as the well-winnowed wheat. The Wicomico Church was soon included in my pastorate, and no bishop ever had more confiding, affectionate, earnest and efficient helpers than I had.

I remained in the Northern Neck to the beginning of the year 1836—a little more than nine years. It was probably the most important period of my life. A great and striking change took place in the field of my labor during this period. I baptized about one thousand persons, nearly an equal number of

whites and of negroes. Among the whites were many of the most intelligent, respectable and influential persons in the counties of Lancaster and Northumberland. My congregations became large, and were intelligent and respectful as well as respectable. Long before I left that region it was a matter of indifference to me what new or old circuit-rider or popular presiding elder was to preach in the vicinity of my meetings. My congregations could not be materially diminished.

I may mention a fact illustrative of the change which had taken place. During my residence in the Neck I was sued for slander. Of all the events of my life, it seemed to be most promotive of my interests. I need not give the details of the case. The suit was brought on a misconception. I had not slandered the plaintiff, but, if opportunity had offered, would have shown him favor. There was, however, great excitement in the community on the subject, some favoring and some condemning me. For my own part, I was thoroughly mortified and humbled. I have never prayed so earnestly, never preached so pathetically, and never labored so diligently as during that season of trial and anxiety. Inquiry and a candid statement of the cause of offence turned the public sympathy in my favor. A great religious revival ensued. I baptized a large number of the inhabitants of the county. When the trial came on at Northumberland Court-House, no jury could have been summoned indiscriminately the half of whom would not have been Baptists. The clerk and sheriffs were Baptists. The judge directed the high sheriff, some of whose family I had recently baptized, to summon a jury that should have no Baptists on it. Faithfully, no doubt, he performed the service, but summoned three or four persons whom I expected to baptize at my next meeting in the neighborhood. The suit broke down from the failure of the plaintiff to prove the statements in his declaration; but had he been entitled to damages, the jury would have been under a strong bias against awarding them.

Several causes contributed to the success of my ministrations in the Northern Neck. Among these, I may mention my permanent residence among the people. The circuit-riders were mostly intelligent, pious and attractive preachers; but they were

comparatively strangers. They did not remain on their circuits long enough to become intimate with the people. While their preaching had the attractiveness of novelty, they lacked the influence secured by friendship and intimacy. I met the people at their court-houses, took part in measures designed to promote their secular interests, visited them at their homes, sympathized in their afflictions, rejoiced in their prosperity, and, in short, became identified with them in interest. They considered me not only as a Christian pastor, but as a fellow-citizen concerned with themselves in the permanent welfare of the country. In deciding whether they would attend my ministry or that of a stranger, if their religious principles were not settled, they were usually governed, not so much by a regard to talents or novelty, as by friendship and sectional partiality. I became convinced that in rural districts, at least, an itinerant ministry cannot successfully compete with settled pastors of equal gifts and activity.

It is also proper to state that my success in the Northern Neck was largely due to the aid that I received from visiting ministers. The camp-meetings, of which notice will be taken in future articles, and other protracted religious services, in which I was assisted by ministers of rare gifts for usefulness, had a large share in building up the churches and turning public sentiment in favor of the Baptists.

The period of my residence in the Northern Neck was probably the time most potential in the formation of my character and the development of my gifts, of which, by the way, I have no cause to boast. I had full scope for the exercise of my powers. I labored diligently and faithfully, and never preached a sermon which I did not think I could excel, and which I did not earnestly endeavor to excel. By such reading as my desultory and constant labors would permit, by diligent studies, performed chiefly on horseback or in a sulky, and by the frequent exercise of my gifts, I made such attainments in knowledge and in the art of employing it usefully as I could. I mention these facts for the encouragement of young men, who, thirsting for knowledge, that they may be useful, with small opportunities for its acquirement, may find some inspiration in my example.

A singular event occurred in my ministry while I lived in the Neck. I had an appointment to preach at White Chapel, in the upper end of Lancaster County. It was an old colonial edifice, large, much out of repair and little used. The day was showery; but the congregation, considering the weather, was good. My text was Luke xiii. 24: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." I had proceeded some distance in my discourse with usual freedom, when a large mass of plaster, more than two feet square and several inches thick, fell from the lofty ceiling, just grazing me in its descent. Had it fallen on my head, it would probably have killed me, or would certainly have stunned and seriously wounded me. I was alarmed; but finding the danger over, I quickly proceeded to make extempore remarks, suggested by the event, on the perils to which we are constantly exposed, the uncertainty of life and the importance of being always prepared for our end.

At that period of my ministry I preached, not without careful preparation for the work, but without taking notes into the pulpit. On this occasion I had read my text, shut up the Bible and had no memento of my discourse. When I had finished my unpremeditated remarks, I essayed to re-commence my sermon; but all recollection of the text and subject was entirely effaced from my mind. I stood and endeavored to recall the theme of my discourse. My efforts were vain, and my situation was becoming more and more embarrassing. I turned to the left, where sat my friend Deacon Dunaway, and asked him if he could tell me what I was preaching about. He seemed to be paralyzed, or rather petrified, by the question. He sat with his eyes and mouth stretched wide open, without moving a muscle. He would have been a model of a perplexed mind for an artist. Finding no help from that source, I gradually turned to the right. Deacon Norris, a careful hearer, and noted for remembering the texts of sermons, seeing that I was directing my eyes toward him, cast his head down on the back of the pew before him,—as much as to say "Don't ask me for your text." So thoroughly were the congregation in sympathy with me in the alarm caused by the falling of the plaster, and the remarks

which the event had suggested, that probably not one of them remembered my text.

Just as I was about to take my seat, the text and my discourse flashed on my mind, and I commenced my remarks precisely at the point at which they had been interrupted, and finished my sermon with freedom and a solemnity perhaps intensified by the danger which I had escaped.

As he states in the foregoing paper, Dr. Jeter removed to the Northern Neck in the autumn of 1827. It will be noticed that he mentions that he was "installed" as the pastor of his new charge. This term he did not hesitate to use in describing those public services which were held upon the occasion of a pastor's entrance upon a new field of labor. In recent years the use of this word by Baptists has been strongly denounced; but Dr. Jeter, who was an adept in the use of terms, seems to have employed it without the faintest suspicion as to its propriety.

His residence in the Northern Neck was pre-eminently the time of his growth. Dr. J. A. Flipppo, now an honored physician of Caroline County, Virginia, was a resident of the Northern Neck at the time that Dr. Jeter was the pastor of the Morattico Church. He was then a small boy, but as his father was a devoted member of the church, he was brought in frequent contact with the pastor. He remembers him as an eager and industrious student. It seems that he was then particularly ambitious to make himself master of the English language. He studied the grammar with intense zeal, and was greatly interested in the origin, history, structure and meaning

of words. If he met a school-boy, he would examine his books, and ask him questions, in the hope of adding something to his stock of knowledge by the exercise. Dr. Flippo remembers that on one occasion he heard him challenge a youth to parse a given sentence. In the progress of his effort, the boy described some verb as *ur-regular*. Jeter promptly arrested him with the question: "Does your teacher call that *ur-regular* or *ir-regular*?" It was impossible for him to hear a word uttered, without beginning at once to examine it, so that he might know how to pronounce it, what it meant, and when it could be properly used. He searched books, conferred with educated men, and, indeed, seized every opportunity for perfecting his knowledge of his native tongue.

He was equally pains-taking in the matter of spelling. As he was the victor in the spelling match in the Bedford school, he continued to advance in the art of spelling even to the end of his life. He would not write a word, if he was the least doubtful as to its correct spelling. He made a companion of his dictionary, and consulted it on all occasions. Dr. Flippo says that even in those early days of Jeter's life he was distinguished for the accuracy of his speech. This explains his critical habit. He gained much of his acquaintance with the English language by conversation with others. He was ever on the lookout for new words and correct methods of speech. This he did for his own improvement, but he was equally honest in his wish to aid others. If they spoke incorrectly, he thought it was according to the Golden Rule for him to point out their mis-

take. He had a critical ear, and could not easily permit a sin against correct speech to go unrebuked.

It is known that Dr. Jeter, in time, became in an eminent degree a master of English. He possessed a large vocabulary of the choicest words. He spoke and wrote with marvellous perspicuity, felicity and force. His style was hardly inferior in its beauty or variety to that of Addison or Washington Irving. This ripened acquaintanceship with language was the result of long and earnest study. He gained it by his own efforts, and that, too, under manifold difficulties.

He was exceedingly popular as a preacher in the Northern Neck. While he lived there he was visited by many distinguished ministers. The people heard them with high satisfaction, but it was the verdict of the community that not one of them surpassed him in pulpit ability. He was then vigorous in health, full of fiery enthusiasm, and careful in the preparation of his sermons. He won completely the hearts of his people, and had the inspiration of a truly phenomenal success. An intelligent and spiritual-minded old deacon, after hearing Kerr, Taylor and other famous men, said: "They preach well, but they can't cope with Brother Jeter."

Dr. Flippo ventures a suggestion which probably helps to explain the rapidity with which Jeter grew in those days. He says that Straughan and Lunsford had made a lasting impression upon the Northern Neck people. They accounted them men of unsurpassed power, and never wearied of their praises. When young Jeter entered the field, he found the

names of these two preachers upon almost every lip, and always spoken in terms of admiration. He felt the delicacy and embarrassment of his situation. He could not brook the idea of being brought in unfavorable contrast with his predecessors. He was fired with a spirit of emulation, and was made a better preacher by reason of the fact that he stood as the successor of such illustrious men. He entered upon life with the simple resolution, always "to do his best," and he would have done well under the most adverse conditions, and yet, Dr. Flippo is probably right in believing that the high encomiums which were constantly pronounced upon Straughan and Lunsford in his hearing became fuel to the flame of his youthful ambition.

A friend relates a pleasant story of his father, who was one of Jeter's regular hearers. The old brother was one of the most ardent admirers of the young preacher. He never failed to hear him, and seemed to take in his sermons bodily. It was his custom, upon returning home, to regale his household by repeating the sermons. This he did in the greatest detail. He would read the text, and then beginning with the exordium, he would give every division, every sub-division, every illustration, every eloquent flight, and re-produce even the gestures and tones of the preacher. This was a remarkable exploit on the part of the man himself, and a fine tribute to the simplicity and magnetism of the pastor.

The Northern Neck people always claimed Dr. Jeter as their peculiar property. They believed, and not without reason, that they made him what



he was. It was a high day when, in after-years, he would visit them, and they always gave him a great welcome. But some of them openly maintained that he never preached so well after he left the Neck. They found a sort of grudging pleasure in believing that in his removal to Richmond, a first-class preacher was spoiled in order to make a metropolitan pastor. Perhaps they were not altogether wrong. There is a freedom and independence in a country preacher's life peculiarly favorable to the highest forms of pulpit power. The town preacher may have more polish and art, and work more rapidly, but his strains and burdens are not friendly to the attainment of the highest eloquence.

It is no disparagement to Dr. Jeter to say, that for no small part of that almost unprecedented success which attended his labors in the Neck, he was indebted to the ministers who aided him in his camp-meetings. He often confessed that he was sadly deficient in that "converting power" for which Daniel Witt was so famous. Not that he lacked power with the unconverted. He was so logical, direct and impassioned that he could not fail to be impressive. Many persons were brought to Christ under his preaching, but there were some phases of ministerial work in which he was more effective than in converting people. He was not a great revivalist.

It is one mark of his unconscious candor, that in his "Recollections" of the camp-meetings, he awards the human glory of their success to others. He rarely ever wrote anything more refreshing than the following accounts of his camp-meetings:

## NORTHERN NECK CAMP-MEETINGS.

The year 1831 is memorable for the number, power and extent of the revivals among the Baptist Churches in Virginia. During the summer I aided Rev. James B. Taylor in a series of meetings held in the Second Baptist Church, Richmond, the fruits of which were abundant and very valuable. I was desirous that Brethren Taylor and Kerr should assist me in meetings in the Northern Neck. A camp-meeting having been recently conducted in Halifax County, I think, with great success, they proposed, if the brethren in the Neck would prepare for holding a camp-meeting, to attend it. On my return, I laid the proposal before the churches. They greatly desired a visit from the ministers—especially from Kerr, of whom they had heard much, and few of them had seen; but against a camp-meeting they had earnest objections. It had long been an annual meeting among the Methodists, and conducted, as was supposed, with many extravagances. Between the desire for a visit from Kerr and Taylor and the aversion to a camp-meeting, the brethren were much perplexed and divided. As the discussion of the subject added to the confusion, it was agreed that the question should be decided by lot. After earnest prayer for divine guidance, the lot was cast, and the decision was in favor of the meeting. All promptly acquiesced in it.

The meeting was held near Lancaster Court-House, at a place called Ball's Woods, where the Methodists had made permanent arrangements for their annual camp-meeting. At the appointed time quite a fair proportion of the members of Morattico and Wicomico Churches were on the ground, prepared for the services. True to their appointment, Brethren Kerr and Taylor, accompanied by Rev. Eli Ball and other ministers, made their appearance. The situation was so singular, and so much at variance with the views and tastes which had long prevailed among the brethren, that they could scarcely look one another in the face without laughing. There had been much prayer for the success of the meeting. A few were hopeful, many were in doubt and some predicted an utter failure. The first service was held, I think, on Friday afternoon. I do not remember who preached; but there was nothing remarkable in the sermon. At its close, persons were invited to come forward for prayer. About twenty

inquirers accepted the invitation, most of them heads of families, and several of them among the most respectable and influential members of the community. Instantly all doubt of the success of the meeting vanished; and from that moment the hearts, tongues and hands of all the brethren and sisters were united to promote its interests. I have never seen a meeting open with such cheering prospects of success. It proceeded with increasing interest until Saturday night.

At this time a rain commenced, which, for its abundance and duration, probably exceeded any that I have ever known. It was a young flood. The roads were converted into streams, the streams were swelled into rivers, the mills were swept away, and the whole country was covered with water. The encampment was not prepared for such a deluge. The cabins leaked like riddles, and the water ran in a great sluice through the camp. To keep dry was impossible. The beds, bed-clothing and raiment of the people were all moistened or saturated by the rain. All religious services at the stand were suspended, and those held in the tents were greatly interrupted. It was a notable fact that among the persons encamped on the ground were some in delicate health, who could not bear without injury, as they supposed, the slightest exposure to inclement weather. They could not leave the place, and were compelled to fare like the rest. They slept between wet sheets, and were constantly exposed to the pitiless storm. Their death was judged to be inevitable; but not one of them, so far as I could learn, suffered any damage from the exposure, and some of them were decidedly benefited by it.

One remarkable preservation deserves to be recorded. There was a wide-spreading oak near the preachers' stand, around which, when the weather would permit, a crowd was constantly assembled. At a time when it was not raining, the tree was struck and barked by a flash of lightning. Not an individual was hurt. The flash occurred at the dinner hour, when all were drawn from the lounging-place. At another time a dozen or twenty lives might have been destroyed.

The rain continued to the close of the meeting, but its results were most cheering. About forty-five persons professed conversion, but the importance of the meeting was to be estimated by

the quality rather than the number of the converts. Scarcely any of them were children or youth, more than twenty were heads of families, and half a dozen were prominent citizens. They resided in different portions of the Neck, and exerted a mighty and beneficent influence so long as I remained there.

One case is entitled to special notice. John Grinstead, of Northumberland, was, in several respects, a remarkable man. He was more than six feet high, weighed upwards of three hundred and fifty pounds, and had the strength of an ox. He was a good-natured, genial, pleasant companion, full of all manner of pranks and mischief. In comfortable worldly circumstances, he devoted himself to amusements, and was a ringleader in all kinds of sports and frolics. He was not intemperate, but far from being a teetotaler. He was not specially wicked, but his influence was decidedly hostile to piety. No man in the county had more or warmer friends than Grinstead. He had recently lost a pious daughter, who, on her dying bed, had pleaded with him to become religious, and had probably secured from him the pledge that he would attend to the interests of his soul. He appeared at the meeting at its commencement, though residing at a distance of more than twenty miles from it, was among the first to come forward for prayer, and was joyfully converted before the close of the meeting. The news of his conversion spread rapidly through the Neck, and an earthquake would scarcely have produced a greater sensation. I have never known an instance of conversion the moral effects of which were more obvious, widespread and momentous than was that of Grinstead. Nobody doubted his sincerity. No feeble power, it was universally conceded, could have wrought so great a change in one so devoted to pleasure and dissipation as he was. As an army becomes demoralized and panic-stricken when a great general falls at the commencement of a battle, so the devotees of pleasure and the sons of frolic and fun were terrified and lost heart when Grinstead, their leader, deserted their cause and enlisted under the opposing banner. In a short time I baptized him in Coan River, where there was much water for the purpose, and to the end of his life he continued an earnest, upright and consistent Christian.

This meeting, held under almost unparalleled disadvantages, slew all the prejudices against camp-meetings among the Baptists in the lower end of the Northern Neck. Those who had most stoutly opposed it became its warm friends. It was seen that, conducted under favorable circumstances, and with proper order and prudence, by ministers commanding the respect of the community and wielding an influence over it, it was eminently adapted to be useful. It was at once resolved to have a camp-meeting the next year, provide ample accommodation for families and guests, and guard against the discomforts of the present meeting.

This camp-meeting gave a strong impulse to the Baptist cause in the Neck. The converts were about equally divided between Morattico and Wicomico Churches. Their baptism at different places awakened a lively interest and inspired the brethren and sisters with fresh zeal in the Master's cause. It was the commencement of a new era among the Baptists of that region, and led to the adoption of more extended plans for the promotion of their cause.

One event must not be overlooked. At this meeting, Henrietta, daughter of the late Rev. Addison Hall, afterwards Mrs. Shuck, the first American female missionary to China, was converted. She had just returned from a school in Fredericksburg to pass her vacation at home. She was among the first converts at the meeting. Her convictions of sin were pungent, her feelings intense, and her deliverance joyful. She ascribed her first permanent religious impressions to a question propounded to her by her pious teacher, Mrs. Little: "Where will you be a hundred years hence?" It awakened in her bosom serious meditation, a sense of accountability to God, and a conviction of her guilt and danger, which, by the divine blessing, led her to repentance and prepared her for a happy reception of the gospel. She commenced on the camp-ground, among her young associates, the evangelical work which, with constantly increasing fervor and fidelity she continued to the close of her eventful life. She was baptized at Waverly, the family residence in Lancaster, in the presence of a deeply impressed audience. In her last letter, written from China a few hours before her death, she referred with

pleasure to this solemn act of her life: "Twas you, my dear Brother Jeter, who led me into the liquid grave. Oh! how well I remember that day, that precious day, and the dear friends (some, yea, many of them now departed—1844) who accompanied me to the water's edge."

We have already stated that the brethren resolved at the first camp-meeting to hold a second. The ground selected for it was nearly equidistant from the court-houses of Lancaster and Northumberland, and not far from the line dividing them. It was in a primeval forest, and on a ridge, at the foot of which there was a bold and perennial spring. Neither expense nor pains were spared in preparing the encampment. It was a square. On one side of it were the preacher's tent and the stand for preaching. In front of the stand were arranged seats for the accommodation of a large congregation. Around the square were erected substantial, water-proof cabins, suited to the warm summer weather. Quite a large assembly could find comfortable lodgings on the ground.

The meeting was anticipated with great hopefulness and no little anxiety. Kerr, Taylor and many other ministers were present at it. Of its services and progress I remember but little. One scene, however, I distinctly recollect. The services had been going on some time, and the prospects were not very bright. The morning prayer-meeting was addressed by Kerr. He was in his best mood, and delivered an overwhelming exhortation. He urged the brethren to retire to the surrounding forest, and make private and importunate prayer for the conversion of their friends. At the close of the service, the brethren, greatly affected and moved by the appeal, dispersed in every direction, singly and in small companies, to present their prayers to God. For hundreds of yards around the encampment, the forest resounded with the low, solemn voice of supplication. Persons coming to the meeting, retiring from it or going into the forest for any purpose, could not avoid the sound of prayer. A solemn and earnest tone of piety was imparted to the meeting, and it proceeded with unabated interest and power to its close.

At the termination of the meeting, all who had found peace in believing since its commencement were requested to come for-

ward and occupy appropriated seats. About one hundred and forty promptly presented themselves; of these, ninety were males, most of them of mature age, many of them heads of families, and several of them persons of prominence and influence in the community. Most of these, in a few weeks, were baptized, and became members of the contiguous churches, adding much to their strength and efficiency, as well as to their numbers. Nor do these statements indicate the full results of the meeting. The converts who came forward on the invitation were not all the trophies of grace secured by the services. Some of them had left before the close; others, cherishing hope, lacked confidence to present themselves as subjects of grace, and not a few had received impressions which ripened, in after-times, into piety. The close of the meeting was a most inspiring scene, and indicated as large a measure of success as I have ever known to follow a week's religious services.

While I continued in the Northern Neck, a meeting was held every year on the camp-ground described above, with varying, but always with gratifying success. The meeting of 1834 deserves special attention. In that year the Congregational Union of England and Wales sent Drs. Andrew Reed and James Matheson to visit their brethren in this country. Dr. Reed, to extend his inquiries and make observations on the religious condition of the country, attended the Baptist camp-meeting of the Northern Neck. He was one of the most eloquent and popular of the dissenting London pastors. He was in the prime of life, of medium height, rather corpulent, an unmistakable Englishman, but fairer and of more delicate appearance than his countrymen usually are. His dress, manners and conversation gave proof of his intelligence and refinement. His arrival awakened a lively interest in the congregation, and in the surrounding country. He was invited to preach, and somewhat reluctantly consented to do so; for he was fatigued from travelling, and had been much broken of his rest.

A large congregation was assembled to hear him. The weather was propitious. Everything was favorable to a pleasant service. Earnest prayer had been offered for the divine blessing on it; deep solemnity pervaded the audience, and all were intent to

hear a London preacher. At eleven o'clock A. M. the doctor arose in the stand, and took for his text Acts iii. 19: "When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Of the matter of the sermon I remember but little; but of its manner and its effect I have a vivid recollection. It was delivered without vociferation, but in a clear, well-sustained voice, growing more earnest and tender from the beginning to the end. It was not profound, not sublime, not overpowering; but it was pertinent, plain, eloquent, evangelical, impressive. I have heard greater sermons, but rarely a more faultless and fascinating one. It was heard throughout the large assembly with almost breathless attention, with a deepening interest and few tears, but with a strong undercurrent of feeling. At the close of the sermon a most remarkable scene occurred. I will allow the doctor to describe it, as he drew the picture, when its impression was fresh upon his mind, in his report to the body which had sent him to this country:

"There were not less than one thousand five hundred persons assembled. Mr. Taylor offered fervent and suitable prayer. It remained for me to preach. I can only say that I did so with earnestness and freedom. I soon felt that I had the attention and confidence of the congregation, and this gave me confidence. I took care, in passing, as my subject allowed, to withdraw my attention from anything noisy and exclamatory, and there was, throughout the discourse, nothing of the kind; but there was a growing attention and stillness over the people. The closing statements and appeals were evidently falling on the conscience and heart with advancing power. The people generally leaned forward to catch what was said. Many rose from their seats, and many, stirred with grief, sunk down as if to hide themselves from observation; but all was perfectly still. Silently the tear fell, and silently the sinner shuddered. I ceased. Nobody moved. I looked around to the ministers for some one to give out a hymn. No one looked at me; no one moved. Every moment the silence, the stillness, became more solemn and overpowering. Now, here and there, might be heard suppressed sobbing arising on the silence. But it could be suppressed no longer; the fountains of feeling were burst open, and one uni-



versal wail sprung from the people and ministers, while the whole mass sank down on their knees, as if imploring some one to pray. I stood resting on the desk, overwhelmed like the people. The presiding pastor arose, and, throwing his arms around my neck, exclaimed: 'Pray, brother, pray! I fear many of my charge will be found at the left hand of the Judge! Oh, pray, brother! pray for us!' And then he cast himself on the floor with his brethren to join in the prayer. But I could not pray! I must have been more or less than man to have uttered prayer at that moment! Nor was it necessary. All in that hour were intercessors with God, with tears and cries and groans unutterable. So soon as I could command my state of feeling, I tried to offer prayer. My broken voice rose gradually on the troubled cries of the people, and gradually they subsided, so that they could hear and concur in the common supplications. It ceased, and the people rose. . . .

"Thus closed the most remarkable service that I have ever witnessed. It has been my privilege to see more of the solemn and powerful effect of divine truth on large bodies of people than many; but I never saw anything equal to this,—so deep, so overpowering, so universal."—*Christian Library*, 640.

The above is a very fair account of the scene, except that, I think, the request for prayer by the pastor preceded the general outburst of feeling in the congregation. It was a very remarkable scene. I have observed deeper and more abiding impressions made on large audiences by the preaching of the gospel; but I have never seen so sudden and general and overwhelming an effect produced on a great assembly as occurred at the close of the doctor's sermon. Its results it was difficult to estimate. The emotions produced were generally as transient as they were intense. The meeting was less successful than were those of previous years; but still its fruits called for great gratitude to the Giver of all good. From fifty to seventy persons professed to find salvation through faith in Christ.

It may be proper for me to present my own views, the result of no inconsiderable experience, on the expediency of holding camp-meetings. They may be adopted wisely or unwisely, according to circumstances. In a sparsely-settled country, under

good religious influence, where the grounds and its surroundings are controlled by the friends of good order, where comfortable arrangements are made for the entertainment of an assembly, where public sentiment is sufficiently strong for the suppression of disorder, and where the ministers have gifts and influence for properly conducting such a meeting, it may, by God's blessing, be eminently useful. Some of the best, if not the very best, meetings which I have attended were camp-meetings. There is, however, great danger, certainly in Virginia, that they will be perverted to evil. There is a strong tendency to make them occasions of social pleasure, festivity, and even of frivolity, dissipation and vice. Satan usually attends camp-meetings, and musters and trains his servants for mischief; and much care, discretion and firmness of purpose is needed to restrain the tendencies to evil.

Dr. Jeter mentions that his proposition to hold a camp-meeting in the Northern Neck excited opposition, and that after some discussion it was decided to settle the question by lot. Dr. William H. Kirk, one of the greatest friends that Dr. Jeter ever had, his beloved son in the gospel, and for many years a useful Baptist minister, gave me a peculiarly thrilling account of that contest between Jeter and several of his leading brethren. Jeter had then been in the Northern Neck for several years, and had become very influential. He was not an obstinate man, for he was always candid and conservative. But when he believed a thing, he believed it thoroughly, and it was not easy to move him. He was fearless and determined. He was not afraid to fight, provided there was something to fight for.

In 1831 he attended the General Association in Petersburg, Virginia. There he met with John Kerr and James B. Taylor, who gave him a stirring account

of a camp-meeting which they attended the previous summer in Halifax County. Instantly he decided to attempt a similar meeting in his field, and invited those brethren to assist him. This they readily consented to do. It never occurred to him that his people might have some opinions of their own on the subject of camp-meetings. He tarried in Richmond to aid Brother Taylor in a meeting at the Second Baptist Church, and authorized Dr. Kirk, who had accompanied him to Petersburg, to return to the Northern Neck and inform his people of the proposed meeting. In a few weeks he returned to his home, jubilant in spirit, in view of the camp-meeting soon to be held. Upon his arrival he was greatly startled by the news that some of his brethren were violently opposed to the meeting. He was brought to a painful pause. He knew not what to do, and took time for reflection. He found himself confronted by some of his best personal friends, whom he could not afford to offend. At length he resolved that he would fight the battle for the meeting. The church was called together to settle the question. Each side was eager for the fray, and yet uneasy as to the issue. The discussion was earnest and prolonged, and threatened to end in bad blood.

At last a motion was carried in favor of settling the question by lot. The brethren retired in a body from the church, and went into a grove, where earnest prayer was offered for divine direction. Two slips of paper were prepared, on one of which was written "Meeting," and on the other "No Meeting," and these were placed in a hat. For some reason a

blind old brother (named Oliver, I believe) was chosen to do the drawing. He thrust in his hand and drew out one of the papers, while the breathless company awaited the result. The lot favored the pastor, and the meeting was agreed upon. The decision was accepted in good faith, and a committee was appointed to arrange for the meeting.

There was one brother whose surrender was not quite unconditional. The two most formidable antagonists of the meeting had been Deacon Rawley Dunnaway and Col. Addison Hall. The latter was a prominent citizen and a true Christian gentleman, but he was then comparatively young, self-willed and sorely chafed by the result of the lot. He could not quite acquiesce, and perhaps was not so anxious for the meeting to succeed as he ought to have been. In the course of the preparations there came a hitch which unsettled things and revived his hope that the whole scheme might miscarry. He approached Deacon Dunnaway and said: "Brother Dunnaway, we can break up this meeting now, if we will act together." The old man shook his head and replied, with great solemnity: "Don't talk to me about that, Col. Hall; I was as much opposed to the meeting as I could be, but we left it to the Lord, and He went against us, and now I am in for the meeting."

That settled it. In due time the preachers came and the meeting was held. The Spirit of the Lord was present in a wonderful measure, and many were brought to Christ. There was a thrilling and memorable episode in the beginning of the meeting. At the first service there were about twenty conversions,

and the first of these was a daughter of Col. Hall, who afterwards became a missionary to China. From that day Brother Hall was always an ardent champion of camp-meetings.

While Jeter withstood the first appeal of the Northern Neck people to become their pastor, he at least met one during his first visit to that country whose charms he could not resist. That was Miss Margaret P. Waddy, of Northumberland County, Va., to whom he was married October 5th, 1826. At that time he was residing in Campbell, and when he went to claim his bride, he took with him his beloved Daniel Witt, by whom his first nuptial vows were sealed. Alas! his new joy speedily perished. The lady of his choice was of slender frame and frail constitution, and in a few months she fell suddenly sick, and soon after sank to her grave.

Concerning this first partner of his life, I have been able to gain very little information. She was the bride of his youth and linked her fate with his in the days of his obscurity, when he was yet homeless and uncrowned. Her death overwhelmed him with sorrow, and he lamented her loss with great bitterness of soul. To the end of his life he tenderly cherished her memory. His testimony was that she was a woman of marked gifts and superior intelligence.

At the time of his removal to the Northern Neck, during the later months of 1827, he was a widower. It is not surprising that he did not remain in that condition long. In his tastes and affections he was thoroughly domestic. While aspiring, busy

and wedded to public life, he yearned for the comforts and sympathies of home. A woman's love was the necessary complement of his being, and without it his life was one-sided and intolerable. It was not the lack of heart, but rather the warmth and purity of his heart, which turned his thoughts again to matrimony.

This time the lady who gained his affections was Miss Sarah Ann Gaskins. Her father belonged to a family of high rank whose name had formerly been Gaskoins. There is a tradition that there was another family in the community of the same name, but of questionable character. This was an occasion of chagrin and grief to the genuine Gaskoins stock.

To escape the suspicion of being in any degree akin to the other and less reputable family, they changed their name to that of Gaskins. The sequel was a disappointment. It was the finishing stroke to their humiliation when they ascertained soon afterwards that the other Gaskoins had also bloomed out into Gaskins.

The second Mrs. Jeter was the daughter of Mr. Richard Gaskins, who was a devoted member of the Morattico Church. He was a man of melancholy temperament, and so distressingly dismal in his manners that his brethren nicknamed him "Brother Hyppo." Soon after Brother Jeter went to that country to live, he and this brother were actors in a very ludicrous occurrence. After his sermon on Sunday morning, Jeter called on Brother Flippo to lead in prayer, but that was a thing which up to that time Brother Flippo had not learned to do. In his terror

he turned about to find some brother to act as his substitute, and hit upon Brother Gaskins. As soon as the prayer commenced, the people, who had never heard Brother Flippo pray, were struck with the resemblance between his voice and that of Brother Gaskins. In their surprise and curiosity they raised their heads to see how matters were going. They found that it was not Flippo, but Gaskins who was making the prayer. And then it broke suddenly upon them that Brother Jeter had forgotten himself to the extent of calling Brother Gaskins by the name of "Hyppo." Such an odd conjuncture of surprises at a moment so solemn upset the risibles of the congregation and played havoc with the proprieties of the occasion.

Miss Sarah Gaskins is reported to have been of medium size and attractive person. She was thoroughly amiable in her temper and had enjoyed unusual educational advantages. She had, however, two characteristics which put her at great disadvantage. For one thing, she was shy, sensitive and shrinking. While a loyal and affectionate wife and always anxious to please her husband, she dreaded society. She had little confidence in herself, and was always uneasy lest she should speak unadvisedly or do some unseemly thing. She trembled at the coming of company, for fear something in the domestic machinery might not go well. On this account her ever hospitable husband often denied himself the pleasure of entertaining his brethren. As a fact, he was not more hospitable than she. The difference was that he made companions of his

guests, while she became their servant, and always served with fear.

She was also remarkable for her habitual reticence—a trait for which some excellent women have never been eminent. Her habit of taciturnity was so confirmed and stubborn that it became a matter of general comment. Her husband took it in good part, though sometimes he made it a point for his raillery and amusement. There is a story that this couple were once making an extensive journey in a two-wheeled gig. They were traveling alone, and Brother Jeter, always observant and quick of speech, sought to engage her in conversation. She rewarded him only with monosyllabic responses. Finally he concluded that he too would inaugurate a policy of silence, resolving not to open his lips until she spoke. He said afterwards that they travelled for twenty miles without the utterance of a word by either party. Her silence did not spring from moroseness or a lack of intelligence, for she was really an amiable and intelligent woman. Dr. Jeter always spoke of her as a model of devoutness and generosity. For personal display she cared nothing, but she found her happiness in helping others. While usually reticent almost to a painful extent, she was never afraid to talk to others on the subject of religion. I met recently an aged Baptist lady who told me that she was led to Christ by Mrs. Jeter's influence, and that she once heard her remark that she had sometimes been criticised for talking so little, but that she, at least, had the humble satisfaction of never having spoken a word which afterwards caused her shame or sorrow.



Dr. Jeter's marriage with this lady occurred on the 9th of December, 1828. They lived together for nearly twenty years, and he ever found in her a gentle helpmeet and a faithful counsellor. As a fruit of their union there was one child, a son, that lived only a few weeks. That was the only child, I believe, ever born unto Dr. Jeter, and by its death he was made childless for life. This to him was a deep and oft-confessed sorrow, for he was a devoted lover of children. He said once to a lady, on congratulating her on the birth of a daughter, that he wished that he had a hundred girls.

The time spent in the Northern Neck was well used. He often went out to aid neighboring pastors in their meetings, and his services were in constant request.

He always took the liveliest interest in denominational gatherings. He was fond of attending the district associations, and never failed to be present at the meetings of the General Association. From his youth he was passionately fond of travel, and I have no doubt if he had had an opportunity of circumnavigating the globe, he would have accepted it on a single day's notice.

In 1829 he paid his first visit to Baltimore, and in the following extracts from his "Recollections" he gives us a few of his experiences during that visit. He also mentions the fact that he received a call to become pastor in Baltimore, which he declined under circumstances somewhat peculiar.

## A VOYAGE TO BALTIMORE.

During my residence in the Northern Neck, and in the year 1829, I made a trip to the Monumental City. Then no steamer plied between that place and the Neck. The only communication between them was by sailing craft. I arranged to make the voyage in a small schooner, engaged in the Baltimore trade. I had long desired to be in a storm on the water, strong enough to give me a conception of its grandeur, without arousing my fears. I got aboard the craft in the evening, and, not having fully recovered from an attack of malarial fever, went into the cabin, took my berth and slept soundly until the next morning. To my surprise, I learned that, in crossing the mouth of the Potomac, we had been in a severe storm, and that the vessel had been terribly rocked, if not in danger of being capsized. The skipper, who had been long engaged in navigating the Chesapeake Bay, stated that he had never before encountered so rough a storm. Quite likely I enjoyed my sleep more than I should have enjoyed the howling of the wind and the dashing of the waves.

In two or three days' run we reached the city of Baltimore. To me it seemed a great city, containing about ninety thousand inhabitants. The few days I spent there were employed in traversing its streets, surveying its fine buildings and examining its curiosities. I had often expressed the wish that I could meet myself, without knowing who I was, that I might form an impartial opinion of my appearance. Strangely enough, on this visit, my desire was gratified. I went to Peale's Museum. While I was employed in examining the curiosities in a large room, I observed a tall, gawky-looking man who was engaged with equal interest in inspecting objects in an adjoining room. I eyed him occasionally, but not very minutely. Having finished my examination in the room where I was, I concluded that I would pass into the apartment where the stranger seemed to be intensely occupied. He had closed his inspection of the curiosities in his room and appeared to be making his way into mine. We met face to face, and it was some time before I could perceive that the stranger was my very self reflected from a mirror that had been fitted in the wall, and surrounded by a frame appearing like a door.

I spent a Sunday in Baltimore. My first aim was to hear the Rev. John Finlay preach. He was then pastor of the First Baptist Church, meeting in the round house, on Sharp Street, so long occupied by Dr. J. W. M. Williams. Mr. Finlay had the reputation of being a very eloquent preacher. Many considered him the equal of Summerfield, who had recently died, but who, while living, was a star in the Methodist pulpit of Baltimore. I asked Luther Rice what sort of preacher Mr. Finlay was. He replied that he was such a preacher as a Scotchman would make. I inquired what sort of a preacher a Scotchman would make. And he answered that he would make a Scotch preacher. As his answers were equivocal, he illustrated them by a Western story. A witness was called to testify in a case of assault and battery. The accused had struck his opponent with a stone. The witness was asked the size of the stone, and replied that it was a sizeable stone. The attorney requested him to state how big it was, and he answered that it was of certain bigness. The court, interposing, required him to compare it with something whose size was known, and he said it was the size of a piece of chalk. The explanation was quite as equivocal as the original answers. For some reason he declined to give me his opinion of the preaching abilities of Elder Finlay. He was a Scotchman, and some of the finest preachers of the present century have been Scotchmen. I heard him in his own pulpit on Sunday morning. His text was Eph. iv. 22-24: "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind," etc. The congregation was not large, and the circumstances were not exciting; but I can well judge, from the clearness, fluency and correctness of his style, that, under favorable conditions, he preached with eloquence and power. This discourse, however, was graceful rather than profound, and pleasing rather than impressive.

At night I went to hear Elder E. J. Ries, who preached in a church on Calvert Street. I had often heard of him. When I met Rev. Daniel Davis, on my first visit to the Northern Neck, he spoke in glowing terms of Elder Ries. He was the greatest man of God that he had ever seen. His talents were not appreciated

in Baltimore. Elder Davis thought that he must remove to Baltimore to aid Brother Ries in his unequal conflict with false religious doctrine. From other sources I have learned that he was a high Calvinist, if not an Antinomian, and a leader of the Anti-mission party. He was a small man, and, when I saw him, quite beyond the meridian of life. His congregation, on a pleasant evening, in a central part of Baltimore, numbered about twenty persons. His text was Matt. v. 20: "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." The sermon was sound in the faith. Though the text did not demand it, he discussed the high points of Calvinism with intense earnestness, before an audience that was thoroughly indoctrinated, and had listened, no doubt, a hundred times to the same discussion. He was not discouraged, because he considered that, as his congregation was diminished in size, it was increased in purity and merit. Elder Davis, we learned, afterwards removed to Baltimore to assist Brother Ries in his labors: but it was not long before he discovered that his helper was unsound, and denounced him as an Arminian. Elder Davis returned to Virginia a wiser man, and quite changed in spirit. Elder Ries, by a most faithful ministry, as he deemed it, succeeded in annihilating the church—a result which, so far as I know, invariably follows the preaching of Antinomianism.

I may here mention a matter out of its chronological order. The Baptists in Baltimore being few, and their cause feebly sustained, Deacon William Crane, the founder and architect of the Second Baptist Church of this city, a few years from this time, resolved to remove to Baltimore for the purpose of establishing a new church there. After the dissolution of Mr. Ries' church, the deacon purchased the house on Calvert Street in which it met. I was invited to unite with him in the enterprise. To decide the matter judicially, I made another trip to the Monumental City. I shared in the hospitality of Mrs. H., a venerable sister who sympathized with Brother Crane in his scheme. I preached to a small congregation in the Calvert Street house. Sister H. inquired, after the sermon, whether I was frightened. On being assured that I was not, she said she

supposed that I was, that something was the matter with me as I did not preach so well as she had expected. What was the measure of her expectation or how it had been created I knew not. I admired her frankness, but was in nowise discouraged by her disappointment; for I had learned that no sermon could be so excellent but that some persons would find fault with it, or so poor that others would not praise it. It was for some time undecided whether I should remove to Baltimore or remain in Virginia. Finally it was agreed to leave the question to the decision of a committee of ministers of the Dover Association at its session with the Upper King and Queen Church, in the year 1834. The committee decided adversely.

In 1832 he paid his first visit to New York. He went to attend the Baptist Triennial Convention, and his account of that trip is so fraught with pleasant incidents that, even at the risk of extending this chapter to an undue length, I present it in full :

At that time a journey from the Northern Neck to the American emporium was not what it now is. Accompanied by my friend, Colonel Hall, I traveled in a steamer to Baltimore, and thence to Frenchtown, at the head of the Chesapeake Bay. Here I first saw a railroad, on which the passengers were drawn by horses across the peninsula, at the rate of six or eight miles an hour, to Newcastle, on the Delaware River. From this point my companion and myself ascended the river in a steamer, touching at Philadelphia, and landing at Trenton, N. J. From this place we went with a long line of coaches by Princeton to New Brunswick, on the Raritan River. Down this narrow stream we were carried in a steamer to its mouth, and across the bay to New York. I have described our journey that the reader may see how great a change has taken place in the manner of traveling in a period of forty-seven years.

New York impressed me as a great city. At that time there was a strong commercial rivalry between it and the city of Philadelphia. Each was striving for the pre-eminence. A glance at the shipping in New York Harbor, and its crowded,

busy streets, furnished decisive proof that the contest could not last long, and was of no doubtful issue. It then contained a population of about two hundred thousand, and was rapidly growing and extending its trade. My companion and myself shared in the hospitality of Brother Luke Davies and his family. He was a minister, without charge, was engaged in the manufacture of stocks, then just coming into use. I was quite surprised to see Rev. S. H. Cone with one on his neck, as he was the first minister whom I had seen following that fashion. By our host and his family we were courteously received and treated with princely fare.

The Convention assembled in Oliver Street Church, then under the pastorate of Elder S. H. Cone. Since the last meeting of the body the Rev. R. B. Semple, who had presided with dignity over its deliberations, had passed to his reward, and the popular pastor of Oliver Street Church was elected to fill the chair. Cone was in the prime of life, rather below the ordinary size of men, with a peculiarly open and cheerful countenance, and a head prematurely white. He presided over the Convention with great promptness, efficiency and firmness. He assumed more authority than would have been tolerated in a strictly parliamentary body; but he exercised it for the dispatch of business.

Here I first met many prominent Baptist ministers, whom I subsequently knew more or less intimately. Some I will mention. Dr. Sharp was a Boston pastor, an Englishman by birth and education, a slow, hesitating speaker, but calm and weighty in council. Dr. Bolles, Secretary of the Board, led by his office to take an active part in the business of the Convention, without brilliant talents, was a judicious and diligent officer. Dr. Kendrick, President of Hamilton College, New York, was a tall, raw-boned, rough-looking man, with strong sense and decided influence in the Convention. Wayland, Knowles and Stow were the rising men of the body. Wayland had established his reputation as a preacher by his published sermon on the Moral Dignity of the Missionary Enterprise; but his manner of speaking did not correspond with the beauty and strength of his written style. Knowles had gained renown by his admirable *Life of Mrs. Judson*, but added nothing to it by anything which he said in the Convention; and, to the universal sorrow of the denomi-

nation, soon fell a victim to small-pox, the scourge of the human race. Stow had distinguished himself as the editor of the *Columbian Star*, and preached, if I mistake not, the introductory sermon before the Convention, without derogating from his reputation or diminishing the promise of his usefulness. I must not omit the names of Fathers Bennet and Peck. They were ministers of the old dispensation, residing in the western part of the State of New York, venerable for their age, and distinguished for their piety, good sense and usefulness. They were among the most devout, zealous, heart-stirring preachers that I have ever known. If wise councils were needed, or oil was to be poured on the troubled waters, or the blessing of God was to be invoked, Fathers Bennet and Peck were always in demand; and they were not called on in vain. Time would fail me to speak of Maclay, Dodge (of New Jersey), Galusha, Choules and many others—all trusted for their wisdom, loved for their piety and honored for their gifts.

The representation from the South was small. Luther Rice, then laboring there, Brantly (the elder) and Dagg, both Southern men and pastors in Philadelphia; Saunders and Judge Stocks from Georgia (if my memory is not at fault), with others, doubtless, whom I have forgotten, were all present, and some of them prominent in the Convention.

The routine of the body was dispatched without special interest. One matter almost absorbed its attention. The Board supported a mission among the Indians of Georgia. The Legislature of the State had passed laws extending its jurisdiction over the Indians within its territory, and requiring that persons residing among them, missionaries as well as others, should, on pain of incarceration in the penitentiary, acknowledge its authority. The Baptist missionaries, without complaint or reluctance, submitted to the authority of the State, and, without its interference, successfully prosecuted their work. The Presbyterian missionary in the Indian territory deemed it his duty to pursue a different course. Denying the right of the State of Georgia to exercise jurisdiction over the Indians in their territory, he refused to yield to its authority; and was, consequently, arrested, tried, condemned and actually sent to labor in the State penitentiary. The matter created great excitement in the country, and became the theme of political and sectional controversy.

The committee of the Convention on Indian Missions brought in a report approving the course pursued by the Baptist missionaries in Georgia. The report was calm in its spirit and prudent in its statements; and would have been promptly adopted had it not been supposed that by implication it approved the course of Georgia, and censured the conduct of the Presbyterian minister. It led to a protracted and heated discussion, in which Galusha and Choules took prominent part in opposition to the report, and Rice in support of it. After a wearisome and, no doubt, quite able debate, the subject was referred to a select committee, of which J. L. Dagg was chairman, or for which, at least, he prepared and read the report.

The next day, when the heat of the controversy had, in a good measure, subsided, Dagg read the report of the select committee, modified to avoid the objections which had been urged against it. He followed its reading with a speech, which, in my judgment, was the speech of the Convention. It was calm, clear, forcible and in a lovely spirit. It was simply a question whether the Convention should approve or censure the conduct of their missionaries in Georgia. They had violated no law of God or man. They had acted prudently, their labors had been owned of God, and they were entitled to the commendation of their brethren. If the Presbyterian missionary deemed it proper to pursue a different course, that was no concern of the Convention. Let the Presbyterians attend to it. I do not give an outline, but merely the topics of the speech. It made a deep impression, elicited no reply, and the report was adopted, I think, unanimously.

I heard but little preaching during the meeting of the Convention. Dr. Wayland preached at night in the Oliver Street Church. The congregation was not crowded. Indeed, I was surprised at the little interest awakened in the proceedings of the Convention in the great, bustling city of New York, so strikingly in contrast with what I had seen on similar occasions in the cities of Virginia. The doctor preached from Rom. vii. 13: "That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." His theme was the sinfulness of sin; and he illustrated his doctrine by showing the obligation which sin violates—as seen in the power it defies—the goodness it abuses—the holiness it offends—



and the long-suffering it rejects, and in the effects it produces—as seen in the happiness it sacrifices—the punishment it incurs and the reward it offers. From the doctrine, he inferred the justice of God in punishing sin, his grace in providing a Saviour for sinners, and concluded by pointing out the bearing of the subject on the mission cause. The sermon was plain, sensible and solemn, but lacked the graces of oratory and the impressive fervor which I had expected. Masculine common sense, as I afterwards more fully learned, was the characteristic of Dr. Wayland's mind and sermons.

Sunday morning I preached to a small Welsh congregation in Brooklyn. The town contained at that time, if I remember rightly, twelve or fourteen thousand inhabitants, and gave, to my unpracticed eyes, no indication of its rapid growth and its coming prosperity. I do not recollect the subject on which I preached, or anything pertaining to the services. At their close I was assured by a Welsh brother that my manner of preaching was very much like that of the Welsh ministers. I received the remark as a great compliment, as about that time the celebrated extract from a sermon of Christmas Evans, concerning the appearance of Christ at Calvary, after a lapse of four thousand years, to fulfill his covenant obligations for the redemption of sinners, was widely circulated and greatly admired. Howbeit, the good brother did not intimate that my sermon bore any resemblance to the eloquent and seraphic specimen of Evans' preaching, but only to the ordinary style of the Welsh sermons.

We now have reached the end of his happy and successful career in the Northern Neck. How abundantly God had blessed him! He had grown in intelligence, confidence and public favor, and now the Lord had other and more important work for him to do. In the modest words which follow, he tells us of his unsolicited call to one of the most prominent and responsible pastorates in the country. The summons was promptly heeded, and in a few

weeks this servant of the Lord, then only thirty-three years of age, retired from his rural pastorate and began his work in the capital city of Virginia.

In the autumn of 1835 I was invited to the pastorate of the First Baptist Church of this city. The honor was by me unsought and unexpected. I have made a few changes in my ministerial life; and usually with great anxiety, doubtfulness and sorrow. I accepted, after a short delay, the invitation to settle in Richmond, without a lingering doubt of the propriety of the measure. During my residence in the Northern Neck two young men had been called into the ministry, and solemnly ordained to the work—Col. Addison Hall and Dr. William H. Kirk—the latter baptized by me and the former by Straughan. They were men of piety, culture, useful gifts and high respectability. They were well fitted to occupy the field in which I was laboring; but while I remained in it, being older in the ministry and pastor of the churches, it was not probable that their talents would be fully developed or successfully employed. It was more convenient for me to change my location than it was for them. I followed the leading of Providence, and never have had cause to regret my course. Hall and Kirk became pastors of the churches, and accomplished a greater amount of good than would probably have been effected had I continued in charge of them.

My firm conviction that I should leave the Northern Neck did not prevent my removal from being a trying and sorrowful event. Most of the members of the churches I had baptized. I had received from them the kindest and most brotherly treatment. If there was a man, woman or child in all my congregations, except one, who was not opposed to my leaving, I did not know it. That one was Deacon Thomas S. Sydnor, among the truest and most devoted of all my friends. Under all the circumstances, he gave it as his opinion, in opposition to the warmest feelings of friendship, that it was my duty to accept the call in Richmond. To add to the trial, the change involved the necessity of leaving the grave of my first wife, and breaking, in a measure, the tender ties of my second to her family and the place of her nativity.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SETTLEMENT IN RICHMOND.

**D**R. JETER entered upon his duties as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., on the first Lord's day in January, 1836. That event, so memorable in his history, was emphasized by special services, of which he makes brief mention in his "Recollections." If we judge that occasion by the notice which it received in the *Religious Herald* of that week, we must infer that it was quite unpretending, and in harmony with the severely simple tastes of those times. The editor consumed only ten lines in celebrating Jeter's advent into the city. He mentions the fact of his installation as the bishop of the First Church, and states that three addresses were delivered at the time—one to the pastor by Rev. S. Cornelius, one to the church by Rev. J. B. Taylor and one to the deacons by Rev. W. F. Nelson. The extra attention paid to the deacons on the occasion must have been peculiar to that day, since, in the programmes of more recent installations, that item never appears. This omission may help to explain why it has gradually come to pass that the subordination of the diaconate to the pastoral office, so clearly indicated in Scripture, is now often overlooked. Dr. Jeter found in his

board of deacons the most cordial support during his entire service in that church.

While the new pastor was inducted into his office in a manner so free from ostentation, it must have been to him an event of thrilling importance. It marked a solemn and critical turn in the current of his life. The little mountain stream upon which, a few years before, he had set his bark, had been growing wider and deeper. Suddenly it turned in a new direction, and opened before him a vast and startling prospect. The change must have filled him with mingled solicitude and exultation.

The First Church was even then historic. It had behind it a record of fifty-six years. It is not for me to recount, at any length, the story of that excellent old church. It was born in 1780, amid the throes of the Revolution, and began its career as a feeble and homeless band. In the face of manifold hindrances it grew steadily, until in 1836 it had become a vigorous and intelligent body. From the beginning it had enjoyed the ministrations of strong and faithful men.

Joshua Morris was its first pastor. It was by his paternal care that the infant church was nursed into life, and he lovingly guarded it amidst the dread alarms of war. It was a day of small things, but Morris was faithful in that which was least.

He was followed by John Courtney, who for thirty-six years went in and out before the church. Dr. J. L. Burrows describes Courtney as "an humble, plain man, without the advantages of early education, but a godly and laborious minister of

Christ." He came to the charge of the church just as peace and independence became the heritage of the American people. He was a faithful man, and let it be recorded to the honor of his people that they did not cast him off when he became old. They called Rev. John Bryce to aid the superannuated pastor, and for twelve years they worked pleasantly together. When Bryce retired, Andrew Broaddus, one of the most princely and captivating men that ever belonged to the Virginia ministry, became associate pastor. He tarried only a single year, when, chafed by the inevitable exactions and conventionalities of city life, he returned to his Caroline home.

In 1825 the church secured Elder John Kerr for its pastor. He was a man of noble physique, brilliant genius and imperial eloquence. Dr. Jeter said of him, that he was the most majestic orator that he ever heard. He was a thrilling pulpit attraction, but eccentric, impulsive and unsystematic. It was fortunate that upon his retirement, in 1833, the church secured Rev. Isaac Taylor Hinton as his successor. Hinton was an Englishman, and highly educated. Dr. W. D. Thomas tells us that he was "a very superior preacher—acute, able and instructive, and that the church steadily grew while in his charge." In describing Hinton as a man of sharp intellect, fair education and admirable gifts for organizing, Dr. Jeter draws the following picture of the church as he received it from Hinton's hands: "I found the church in an admirable state of organization from the labors and timely suggestions of its

late pastor. It was divided into districts; the members in every district placed under suitable supervision, plans for usefulness judiciously arranged, and the church manual containing the name and residence of every member, and much valuable information for the assistance of the pastor. The church was as systematically organized as any well-drilled military company."

Hinton resigned in 1835, and after several pastorates in the West, went to New Orleans, where, in 1847, he fell a victim to the yellow fever.

It was at this point that the choice of this church fell upon Jeremiah B. Jeter. He was then in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and it had been only a little over a dozen years since he had emerged from Bedford, a raw and untutored stripling. Those who remember his ardent temperament and ever-glowing ambition can well understand the almost exultant pleasure with which he contemplated this sudden distinction. There was much in it to gratify, and even to dazzle him. His call was a revelation. It unveiled him as a coming man. Though his lot for the previous nine years had been cast in an isolated field, and though he was yet far short of the meridian of life, the evidences of his power and the fame of his success had already begun to spread. There was in his selection for the First Church pastorate an acknowledgment of his gifts, a tribute to his fidelity and a prophecy of yet higher achievement.

His removal to Richmond was an epoch in his life. It was a sudden translation from the quietude of a rural pastorate to a post of commanding and repre-

sentative importance. From a provincialist, he was, in the Baptist sense of the term, transformed into a metropolitan. Hitherto he had been the central figure of a community, but now he was to try his fortunes in the capital city of his State. Before he had preached once a week to admiring and uncritical audiences, but now he was to preach three sermons a week, and that, too, in the presence of those who had enjoyed the ministrations of the foremost men of the times. From tasks few and light he was summoned to shoulder burdens numberless and heavy. To the duties of a great pastorate he was to add the yet more complicated and vexatious cares of denominational work.

With what emotions did he face the new situation! It is not easy to answer this question with candor without being misunderstood. All along I have admitted that Dr. Jeter was intensely ambitious. By nature he loved the pre-eminence, and even under the subduing power of grace he gloried in leadership. I must be equally frank in admitting that he was not a stranger to his own strength. He believed in himself. This was so apparent, at times, that it exposed him to the suspicion of unholy self-reliance. To the superficial he often appeared overconfident, and even reckless and vain-glorious.

But this was not true. He was a thoroughly converted man. He knew that of himself he could do nothing, and in that hopeful dash and spring which marked his movements he was animated, not by a sense of his own strength, but by a joyous and uplifting trust in the living God. He harbored no

extravagant notions of his abilities, and all his life he was painfully hampered by the consciousness that his lack of education seriously narrowed the sphere of his movements. But he knew that he had gifts, and he was devoid of that spurious humility which prompts some to deny the possession of powers of which they are conscious. He did not boast of his talents, but was thankful for them, and sought to make the most of them.

He says that in his youth he was a castle-builder, but of all men, I think he was the freest from romantic sentiment. He indulged no Utopian dreams as to his future, and erected no airy monuments in honor of himself. He looked at things in a cool and sensible way. He never posed as a favorite of Providence, nor fancied that success would follow him as an obsequious courtier. His creed was very simple. He held that if a man would faithfully use his strength, and avail himself of opportunities as they opened before him, he would succeed. He knew that he possessed some endowments and qualifications for usefulness—not so great and attractive as others had, but ample for real effectiveness. He saw that in Richmond he would have a broad and engaging field, and that by patience and industry he might reap a rich harvest. Whatever ambitious thoughts may have been awakened by the outlook, were thoroughly subordinated to the deeper sense of duty. And so he put these things together, and enshrining the promises of God in his heart, he promptly accepted the call to Richmond.

He found the church worshipping in a building



which stood at the corner of Broad and College Streets, on the same site where now stands the immense edifice erected a few years ago by the First African Church. The old structure was originally small, and never attractive, but it had undergone various additions and improvements, which at least rendered it capacious and comfortable.

At the time he began his labors the church had a membership of 1717, of which 1384 were colored and 333 white. He found the church in fine working order—harmonious, well-organized and hopeful. For this condition of things he often acknowledged his indebtedness to his youthful predecessor, Isaac Taylor Hinton.

He began his Richmond career without noise or parade. He had no cumbrous reputation to embarrass him. It never crossed his mind that he could increase his power by resorting to sensational expedients. He brought with him no startling eccentricities by which he hoped to attract public attention and draw in a curious and unthinking crowd. He advertised no high-straining topics and indulged in no buffooneries or extravagances in the pulpit. It was not the day of fashionable choirs or pompous and elaborate services, such as feed the fancy and tickle the tastes of sentimental religionists. He brought nothing except a burning soul, a dauntless courage and a living faith in the word of the Lord. He signalized his advent by no important changes, but modestly fell in line and worked with his church.

It is to be regretted that Dr. Jeter furnished such scanty reminiscences of his First Church pastorate.

The secret of his reserve is easily explained. When he wrote his Recollections he lived in Richmond, and he could not have attempted details without speaking too freely of persons then living. What he has to say of his pastorate will prove delightful reading, not only to the Richmond reader, but to all under whose eyes these pages may fall.

On the first Lord's-day morning of January I preached my introductory sermon before the church from 1 Cor. ii. 2: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." In considering the theme of the apostolic ministry, "Jesus Christ and him crucified," I noticed its extent, importance and efficacy, and closed with remarks pertinent to my entrance on the pastorate. At night appropriate services were held in the church, in which Elders J. B. Taylor, Addison Hall, Samuel Cornelius, W. F. Nelson and H. Keeling participated, all of whom have closed their labors and entered on their reward.

It is not my purpose to give a detailed account of my life while pastor of the church, but to record my recollections of some prominent events, and my views of a few distinguished persons with whom I was associated during that period. It will be necessary, however, for the better understanding of this record, that I should give a brief sketch of my pastorate. My connection with the church continued about thirteen years and a half. It was an eventful and important period of my life. I was brought into a new, responsible and difficult sphere of activity. My relations with the church throughout the whole time of my pastorate were harmonious and pleasant. It was to me a season of great anxiety and toil, as well as of hopefulness and pleasure. My labors and faithfulness were not so great as they might have been; but at the close I had little cause of self-reproach. I had endeavored, with diligence and earnestness, to perform the various and onerous duties of my office.

My success in this pastorate, while it was not commensurate with my desire for usefulness, called for devout thanksgiving to God. During this period the church enjoyed several precious

revivals, and received large and valuable accessions. I baptized about one thousand persons, white and colored, in connection with the church, many of whom became ministers of the word of God—among them I may mention Dr. Garlick, of this city, and Dr. Henson, of Philadelphia. The church, numbering about three hundred members when I took charge of it, contained more than six hundred when I resigned my pastorate. It would be invidious to compare those I left in the church with those whom I found in it; but this much may be fairly said: Many of the members introduced into it during my labors were noble specimens of piety and activity, who have continued through the long period of thirty years, and under the pastorates of Manly, Burrows and Warren to be pillars in the house of God. The most important event of my ministry was probably the organization of the First African Church, of which I purpose to furnish an account in my next article.

In a former chapter I have spoken of Dr. Jeter's extremely gentle and provident care for his mother. It is pleasant to know that that mother, whose pleasures were not very many on the earth, lingered long enough to see the son of her pride lifted to a position which, in her modest eyes, must have seemed truly lofty and glorious. If the truth was known, I suppose that it would be found that one of Dr. Jeter's chief reasons for relishing distinction so keenly was that it shed sunshine on his mother's heart. He delighted to write to her and tell her of all the fortunate and happy things which befell him. How much he missed her sweet sympathy when she went to her grave! Her death occurred during his first residence in Richmond, and in the following words he pays her his grateful tribute:

During the time I was called to taste the bitter cup of affliction. My mother, for whom I cherished the most filial and tender affection,

passed to her long home. A man may have many friends, but he can have only one mother; and he that loses a good mother sustains an irreparable loss. It has been to me a life-long grief that my mother did not live until I had some opportunity of requiting her many years of toil, care and kindness on my behalf. It is to me, in old age, a great pleasure that I have no recollection of having disobeyed her, or uttered a disrespectful word to her. In the same period I followed to the grave my second wife—Sarah Ann, *née* Gaskins—after a protracted illness, and the most triumphant death which, in a ministry of more than fifty years, it has been my privilege to witness. I really do not know how such calmness, such hope, such joy, such perfect self-possession, such courage and elevation of mind, as she displayed in the immediate and certain prospect of death, on the part of one in the meridian of life, could be accounted for, except on the supposition that she was sustained and cheered by divine grace. The hour of her death was the hour of her triumph and rapture; and she might well have been conveyed to the tomb—as I heard Spurgeon express the wish that he might be—in a white hearse, adorned with white plumes and drawn by white horses, and accompanied by a procession with songs of triumph and the sound of trumpets. Her death was a fitting end of her life of unostentatious and fervent piety.

The limits of this work forbid full details of this interesting pastorate. Jeter's characteristics as a pastor and his general usefulness during this period of his life will come under review in later chapters. I must, however, briefly mark some of the striking incidents of his career during the thirteen years of this pastorate.

Not long after he settled in Richmond he became convinced that his church needed a better house of worship. He was a man of simple tastes and conscientiously opposed to showy and extravagant church buildings. But he believed in the fitness of

things. He held that public worship ought to be rendered attractive, and that a church building ought to represent creditably the piety and taste of those who occupied it. The old building was badly located, unsightly in appearance and inadequate to the necessities of the congregation. But the rage for fine houses of worship was not so great then as now. To the slow and illiberal portion of his church a new house did not seem to be a necessity. It was indeed a grave undertaking to purchase an expensive lot and to erect a new and costly house, especially as it was foreseen that they would realize very little on the old building. But it was in the pastor's heart to build. The enterprise took possession of him, and he could not be dissuaded. It was not simply a new house for which he was pleading, but for the division of the church, which he considered as indispensable to its highest welfare. All the conviction and enthusiasm of his nature centred in this movement. He was never an obstinate man, but his earnestness was so intense and unyielding that with many it passed for obstinacy of the worst type. What he wanted he wanted tremendously, and it was impossible to control him until he got it.

Happily there was in the church a progressive and liberal element that thoroughly sympathized with his views. After several years of tormenting delays the church was warmed up to the point of action, and the result was the present stately and elegant building at the corner of Broad and Twelfth Streets, in which the church still worships. Its original cost was \$40,000, and while it has since undergone valuable improve-

ments, it was then one of the most convenient and delightful church edifices in the South. It was completed in 1841, and he preached in it for eight years.

He never claimed any credit for the building of that house, but he was really the central and animating force in the movement. A heavy debt remained upon the house for several years, and Brother A. H. Sands, an honored Baptist lawyer and minister of Richmond, says that for its liquidation the church was largely indebted to the sagacity and practical judgment of Dr. Jeter.

After years of earnest toil his hope was fulfilled. For three or four years he had grappled with grievous obstacles, and often grown sick of heart by reason of discouragements. In his entire life he never wrought with greater singleness of purpose or with more unremitting energy for any object than he did for the building of that house. And now it stood before him complete and beautiful! How surpassingly grand did it appear to his eyes! With what throbbing joy and high religious exultation did he lead his people out of the dingy old house on the hill-side and take them up to dwell in the new temple!

There is something contagious in genuine enthusiasm. A deed well done is an inspiration. It is worthy of note that the completion of that house was soon followed by the erection of two other elegant Baptist houses of worship in the city—those yet occupied by the Second and the Grace Street Baptist Churches. It is not too much to say that if the mother church had led the way with a cheap and in-

ferior building, her daughters would likely enough have followed her example.

Far be it from me to belittle the work which has been done within the last two decades for the religious elevation of the freedmen of the South. In no sphere of Christian service has philanthropy found a wider field or wrought with better results. If its methods have not always been wise, and if at times its spirit has seemed unamiable, it is just to say that it has evinced rare generosity and exhaustless patience. For all that has been done for the colored people since their emancipation every true Southern heart must rejoice.

But let the truth be told. It is an egregious mistake to suppose that the colored people were a set of heathen in the times of slavery. It is not claimed that they were educated in the technical sense of that word, but their contact with the white people was necessarily constant and intimate, and as a result very many of them were refined and intelligent. I admit that not all was done for their religious welfare that the gospel required of their masters.

There were practical difficulties in the way of their evangelization which it has always seemed impossible for an outsider to understand. There were social, political and ecclesiastical hindrances which it was hard to overcome. That any Southern Christian did his full duty for the enslaved race I do not undertake to assert. Some did nothing, and others practically antagonized all movements for their religious training, under the mistaken notion that it might render them restless and seditious. While frankly

admitting this, I can yet say in truth that when the shackles of bondage were broken and the slaves were suddenly transformed into freedmen, they were a Christianized race.

When they came to the American shores they were heathen of the lowest type—superstitious and besotted; but when by the violence of war they were suddenly emancipated, very many of them were Christians. They may have carried out with them many marks of servility, but they took with them also in their religious knowledge and faith the unmistakable evidences of the fidelity and zeal of the Christian people of the South. Many of them were church members, and not a few of them well versed in the doctrines of Christ and able to teach others. That which has been done for them since their emancipation is not to be despised. It is a good work, and let God be praised for it; but it could not have been done so soon or so well but for that other and oft-forgotten work which had already been done for them.

Nor is it immodest to say that the bulk of that Christian education which the enslaved race had received was derived from the Baptists. In later times it has become common to say that the negroes are naturally inclined to be Baptists. This Baptists themselves have fallen into the habit of saying, and I have sometimes suspected that other denominations found a sort of complacent pride in admitting that the native bent of this feeble race is toward the Baptists. In all this there is an unthinking confusion of effect with cause. The negroes incline towards



the Baptists because the Baptists have all the while inclined toward them. In the years of their bondage, when other denominations stood aloof, the Baptists were their friends.

A house of worship was rarely ever built by our people that did not include accommodations for the colored people. At every Sunday service and often during the week they were present. Our ministers sometimes directed portions of their sermons especially to them, and services were frequently held for their exclusive benefit. Their masters, for the most part, were not Baptists, but none the less faithfully on that account did our fathers work for their salvation.

As a result of this steady and courageous zeal great numbers of the slaves were converted and brought into our churches. They worshipped in the same houses, singing the same songs, uniting in the same prayers, hearing the same sermons and sitting down together at the Lord's table. In many churches they outnumbered the white membership, and if in anything they were restricted in their privileges, the restriction was due far more to the laws of the country and the social difficulties of the situation than to any lack of Christian affection on the part of their white brethren.

The days of slavery are over, but I feel constrained to say that I believe that our Baptist brethren did about the best that they could under all the circumstances for the evangelization of the negroes while they were yet slaves. They, at least, did more than all other Christian people put together, and that, too,

when they were not great in numbers, culture or wealth.

The history of the First Baptist Church furnishes an instructive illustration of the difficulties with which the Baptists had to contend in their attempts to give the gospel to the negroes. From the first they were admitted to membership, and when, in 1836, Dr. Jeter assumed charge of the church, they outnumbered the white people almost five to one. The situation must have been unsatisfactory to both races. Each greatly preferred to be alone, and the separation was a necessity. From the outset Dr. Jeter openly favored a division. He insisted that the habits, comfort and religious progress of both parties were involved, and that was one of his strongest arguments used in advocacy of the new house of worship.

But there were obstacles. Such a change necessitated a heavy expenditure of money, and it has never yet come to pass that any religious enterprise which strongly touched the financial question was brought to success without encountering the resistance of the covetous and narrow-minded. There were also racial prejudices which were quick to resent every attempt to invest the colored brethren with any unusual privileges. There were legal questions also which threatened serious complications and needed to be handled with the utmost tact and delicacy. Behind all this, and far more to be dreaded, was that combustible and dangerous thing, public sentiment, which suddenly rose in opposition to the proposal to throw the colored people into a separate church organization.

Dr. Jeter was yet a young man, and knew little of the habits and prejudices of city people. The situation was extremely delicate and called for the highest qualities of leadership. He needed discretion and courage in about equal measures. One reckless and ill-chosen step might have brought incurable disaster. It is the testimony of those who watched his course that he evinced a caution, strength and intrepidity which surprised even those who knew him best. He studied carefully the legal aspects of the question, and never ventured on uncertain ground. He conceded everything that could be yielded with safety. He did nothing to inflame public prejudice and refused to be drawn into controversies on doubtful questions. So far as he could, he identified with the movement the wise and strong men of the city.

It is agreed that his management was admirable. He was good-humored, conciliatory, and so manifestly anxious to do only what was right that his opponents found it hard to pick a quarrel with him. He was so well posted that nobody could trip or balk him. He gained an advantage here and carried a point there, and won an unexpected victory yonder, until he presently became the master of the field. His people became proud of him and rallied around him. The legal experts came out on his side; Christian brethren of other names stood at his back and encouraged him, and the business men of the city indicated a readiness to furnish money to aid his enterprise.

The result was more than a victory. He not only carried the point, but he became a popular hero.

He suddenly arose above the public horizon as a man of high intelligence, far-seeing sagacity and inflexible determination. There are aged people yet living in Richmond who, with trembling lip, delight to tell how handsomely "Brother Jeter" bore himself in those exciting times.

In the simple paper which is now presented he touches that incident in his life. It was written many years after the event had occurred. The smoke of the battle had long disappeared, and he writes of it with the serene composure of a spectator. The organization of that church was a great event in the history of the colored people in Virginia. It settled many doubtful questions and opened the way for other and similar establishments. Here is what he has to say about it:

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST AFRICAN CHURCH IN RICHMOND.

When I came to Richmond the First Church contained about two thousand colored members, and the number was considerably augmented while they were under my charge. They were a heavy burden on the white members of the church. Besides the expense of providing for their instruction, much time and labor were devoted to the exercise of discipline among them.

There were several important reasons for organizing them into a separate and independent church. The space allotted for their use in the house of worship was utterly insufficient for their accommodation. The style of preaching demanded by the white congregation was not well adapted to the instruction of the colored people. Besides, it was quite impossible for the pastor, with a large white congregation under his care, to pay much attention to the necessities of the colored portion of his flock. A pastor who should devote his whole time, or the chief part of it, to their interests, seemed to be imperatively demanded.

There were, however, very serious difficulties in the way of organizing a colored church. A house of worship, of no inconsiderable extent, would be needed for their accommodation; and the means of procuring it could not be easily obtained. There was, however, a more formidable obstacle to the enterprise than the lack of money. Public sentiment was opposed to it. The unfortunate Southampton insurrection had led to the enactment of stringent laws in regard to the assembling of negroes for religious worship or any other purpose. They were forbidden to meet in any considerable number, except in the presence and under the supervision of white persons. The Abolition excitement at the North was producing a most unpleasant counter-excitement at the South. All efforts for ameliorating the condition of the slaves were opposed by many on the ground that they favored the designs of the Abolitionists. Many pious people looked with distrust, if not with hostility, on all new measures for the religious instruction of the negroes. All classes of irreligious persons—skeptics, gamblers, bar-keepers, and the like, of whom Richmond, at that time, had her full share—were bitter and fierce in their opposition to the proposed organization. They were hostile, indeed, to all religion; but, as the white churches were too well fortified by public sentiment to be safely attacked, they concentrated their opposition against the proposed African church, and appealed to the fears excited by the recent insurrection, and to the feeling of indignation prevailing against the Abolitionists, to prevent the execution of the scheme.

The Church, after much anxious consultation, resolved to purchase a lot, build a new house, and make arrangements for the exclusive occupancy of the old house by the colored portion of the church. To this resolution we are indebted for the spacious and solid building now known as the First Baptist Church, at the corner of Broad and Twelfth Streets, and for the still more capacious edifice, called the First African Church, standing on the ground long occupied by the old and venerable Baptist Church, in which sat, for a time, the distinguished Convention of 1829–30, which remodeled the State Constitution, and on whose floor were laid the dead and dying at the time of the memorable conflagration of the theatre. The new house was built by great exertions

and great sacrifices, in which the noble sisters bore a conspicuous part. Deacons James Sizer and Archibald Thomas, by their liberality and their personal attentions, contributed largely to the completion and excellent arrangements of the building. It is proper, too, to say that to Mr. James Thomas, Jr., then just commencing his successful financial career, more than to any other man, living or dead, have the colored people been indebted for the valuable house which they long occupied, and which has been succeeded by their present edifice, undoubtedly the largest house of worship in the State. The old house and lot were valued by impartial judges; the church made a contribution of three thousand dollars to secure the property for the use of the colored people, and the owners of slaves were solicited to aid in the enterprise. The personal application to them for help was assigned to Mr. Thomas; and right nobly and most successfully did he perform his task. His acquaintance with the tobacco merchants and manufacturers gave him advantages for the work which few possessed, and which only he was willing to employ.

The African Church was organized in the year 1842. Many difficulties had to be obviated in its organization. It was deemed wise to conform the church to the State laws and the municipal regulations. Its meetings were held only in the day-time, and in the presence of white persons. The discipline of the church was lodged in their own hands; but, owing to their inexperience in ecclesiastical government, it was deemed better that an appeal should be granted to aggrieved members to a strong white committee appointed by the mother church—a privilege which was probably never exercised. The law required that the religious instructor should be a white man; but if there had been no such restriction, it would probably have been impossible to find a colored man suited for the office.

After some delay and much earnest inquiry, Rev. Robert Ryland, President of Richmond College, was elected to the office. His official duties were not onerous, and as his afternoons, Saturdays and Sundays were unoccupied, and the pastorate would make no great draft on his intellectual powers, he was unanimously selected for the important post. Of all men, he was best suited for it. Deriving his support from his college services, he

demanding but a small salary of the church, and that he devoted to the promotion of their interests. The colored people were emotional, fond of excitement, and would have been pleased with a declamatory and superficial preacher. Dr. Ryland—not then Doctor, but he soon received the title—was an eminently plain, instructive and practical preacher, dealing chiefly with the conscience rather than the passions. His aim was to make his hearers think rather than to feel, and to act rather than to speculate. His ministry was precisely adapted to correct the errors and to repress the extravagances into which his hearers were prone to run.

The pastorate of Dr. Ryland was eminently successful. The colored people soon became convinced that he was their sincere friend, seeking not theirs but them, and endeavoring by all means to promote their best interests. Great numbers were converted by his ministry and baptized by him. He stated that other pastors had difficulty in persuading their hearers to be baptized, but that his greatest trouble was to prevent his hearers from being baptized prematurely. He continued his labors among his flock until, at the close of the late war, when the negroes were freed, our social and civil institutions were overthrown, and it was supposed by those who assumed to be the leaders of the colored people, that they needed a pastor more in sympathy with the new order of things; and the doctor quietly retired from the post which he had so long and so usefully filled. Multitudes of negroes here remember the faithful and disinterested labors of their old pastor with profound gratitude, and hold his name in the highest veneration.

The labors of Dr. Ryland contributed largely to the almost unparalleled religious prosperity of the colored people in this city. They have five large houses of worship and a membership of over thirteen thousand; this number, however, is nominal rather than exact. It is not possible for the churches, in the homeless condition and with the migratory habits of their members, to keep exact registers of them. Still they approximate the number stated; and their progress in knowledge and efficiency is truly remarkable and gratifying. The organization of the First African Church marks an era in the history of the

evangelization of the colored people in this city. It may be proper to state that there were prosperous African Churches in Norfolk and Petersburg, and perhaps other places, before one was formed here.

The reader may desire to know what was the result of the opposition to the organization of the African Church. It led to no violence, but continued for years to display itself in constant watching for violations of the laws, complaints and reproaches. The high character of Dr. Ryland, and his prudent course, gradually, among all pious, and even considerate, people, quelled opposition and secured their confidence in the wisdom and usefulness of the measure. Attempts were made to have its active supporters indicted by the grand jury, but they failed.

I desire to repeat a fact in honor of Rev. William S. Plumer, which I have several times published. While the formation of the African Church was in contemplation, as I was desirous to have the sympathy and countenance of the Protestant pastors in the enterprise, I consulted some of them on the subject, and was advised to call a meeting of the clergy and ask their advice. When I mentioned the matter to Dr. Plumer, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of the city, and a very popular preacher, he said: "Don't do it. The clergy may decide against your plan; but it is right—the law is in your favor—go forward in the work, and if you have trouble, I will stand by you." When he heard that an effort was being made to secure an indictment from the grand jury against the persons who had the meetings of the church in charge, the Doctor came to me and said: "I wish you to understand that, in any difficulties you may have concerning the African Church, I am to go halves with you." It was a noble offer, and as honest and firm as it was noble. There were other ministers, I had reason to suspect, who would, from sectarian influence, have been quite pleased if the enterprise had ended in defeat and reproach.

Not long after Dr. Jeter went to Richmond the Christian ministers of the city felt constrained to make an open declaration of war against the theatre. Its exhibitions had become deadly offensive to the



refinement and the virtue of the community, and the pastors felt that it became them to lift their voices against the popular evil. To Dr. W. S. Plumer, an eminent Presbyterian minister, Dr. Jeter awards the honor of having opened the battle. He preached a sermon in which he powerfully exposed the corrupting influences of the stage, and warned his people against it. He was followed by Dr. W. A. Smith, of the Trinity Methodist Church, and Dr. Woodbridge, of the Monumental Episcopal Church, both of whom struck valiant blows for virtue and religion. Dr. Jeter joined this holy crusade with all heartiness, and I present here the account of the part which he took :

Of my own sermon on the subject, as I remember it more distinctly, I may be indulged in giving a fuller account. It was the second in the series, and delivered on a Sunday evening, in the old First Baptist Church, on the spot now occupied by the First African, crowded to its utmost capacity. My text was 1 Thess. v. 22: "Abstain from all appearance of evil." After a brief exposition of the text, I attempted to show that theatrical entertainments have been condemned by great numbers of the wisest and best men of every age—that they are an amusement utterly worthless to society—that they involve an enormous and unjustifiable expenditure of money—that they have a strong tendency to deterioration—that they are manifestly of demoralizing influence—and that they tend to the subversion of national prosperity and independence. The effect of my sermon was greatly increased by a reminiscence—whether impromptu or premeditated I cannot now say—with a reference to which I closed my discourse. At the burning of the theatre, the dead, the dying and suffering were laid upon the floor of the church in which I was speaking. Its walls had reverberated with the groans of the dying and the screams of the afflicted from the well-remembered theatrical catastrophe. The very floor occupied by

the crowded audience had been stained with the blood of the unfortunate devotees of the bewitching amusement. I made such use as I could of these startling facts to dissuade my hearers from attending theatres. It was no proof of my power as a speaker that facts so solemn and so pertinent to the occasion, brought suddenly to the attention of the hearers, produced a deep impression. Of the merits of the sermon I need not speak. In a few days after its delivery I was requested by a number of gentlemen, among whom were several prominent members of the Legislature, to furnish a copy of it for publication. It had been preached from not very copious notes; but I reduced it to writing, and a large edition of it was promptly printed and widely circulated, not a copy of which is now within my reach.

The managers of the theatre resolved to retaliate on the parsons. A play was selected or prepared as a burlesque on the sermons which had been preached against theatrical entertainments. I had often expressed my pleasure that a pun could not be made on my name; but I had no expectation of having the practical advantage of it which I experienced on this occasion. In the notice of the retaliatory play the names of the preachers—Plumer (plumber), Smith and Woodbridge, in their common acceptation—were ingeniously wrought, printed in large capitals, and posted all over the city, to the amusement of many. My name, having no meaning in English, was omitted in the burlesque. Possibly I may attribute to the lack of meaning in my name what was due to its want of importance.

Many years have passed since the war on the theatre, and it may be quite natural to inquire whether time and observation have wrought any change in my views of theatrical amusements. There were arguments and statements in my sermon which, if I were to deliver it now, I should deem it proper to modify; but as to the injurious influence of theatrical entertainments, my views have undergone no change. There is no evil in writing, reading or acting plays, provided they are of good moral tendency; but theatres, as they are commonly conducted, are of demoralizing influence. Early convinced on this point, I have never attended a theatrical exhibition. I am, therefore, entirely dependent on the testimony of others for my opinion on this subject. I know

how liable men's minds are to be warped by their tastes, training and associations. It would be easy to find witnesses of equal intelligence and candor on both sides of this question. I have, however, found the most satisfactory testimony on the subject where I least expected to obtain it.

Dr. Jeter was a strong believer in protracted meetings. It was one of his rules as a pastor to hold a series of meetings every year. He looked upon them as harvest seasons, helpful to his people and peculiarly effective in reaching the unconverted.

But he was never willing to conduct his meetings without ministerial aid. He preferred the help of some neighboring pastor, but he had great respect for evangelists, and gladly availed himself of their services whenever he could. The most fruitful meeting which he held during his First Church pastorate was that in which he was assisted by Israel Robords, a successful and noted evangelist in his day.

This meeting occurred in 1842. It was a season of unprecedented religious interest in Richmond. In speaking of it Rev. A. H. Sands says: "My earliest experience in Richmond in 1842 was the continual ringing of the church bells, calling the people to the churches almost every night in the week. I have often heard Dr. Jeter speak of the revival of 1832, when multitudes were gathered into the churches, in country and city. I was not old enough to remember them, but if they were richer than those of 1842, happy were the people who passed through them." This remark reminds me that I once heard Dr. Jeter say that the revival

spirit of 1832 was so widespread and overwhelming that many persons really believed that the millennium was at hand. During a great revival which occurred in Richmond in the autumn of 1875, in the Grace Street Church, Dr. Jeter said that it was unexcelled by anything he had ever witnessed in Richmond, except the meeting in 1842. It was during the last-named revival that he baptized Rev. A. H. Sands, to whom I owe special thanks for valuable help rendered me in this book.

Of that great awakening in 1842, Dr. Jeter furnishes the following account :

#### A GREAT REVIVAL.

The year 1842 was distinguished by a religious revival in the city of Richmond of unusual power, extent and interest. It commenced in the First Presbyterian Church, under the ministry of Rev. Wm. S. Plumer, D.D. About the first of March I visited Portsmouth, Va., where I met Rev. Israel Robords. He was a Northern evangelist, who had spent the preceding winter in the South, partly to recruit his health and partly to follow his vocation. Hearing him preach once or twice, I was pleased with his preaching, and invited him to accompany me to Richmond and aid me in a protracted meeting. He was, in some respects, among the most remarkable preachers whom I have heard. He was probably forty-five years old, tall, lean, of an unhealthy complexion, and rather ill-favored. He gained nothing from his personal appearance. His education was limited, but he had a sharp intellect, and was well-informed, especially on religious subjects. He was not an orator, but his thoughts were quite original, and were expressed in a clear, nervous style, sometimes quite ornate, and even sublime. His discourses derived little advantage either from his voice or his gestures. He had most extraordinary power in dealing with the consciences of men. He seemed to have an almost perfect knowledge of the human heart, and to be able to lay bare its motives, its propensities, and its self-deceptions.

People were afraid to hear him, lest he should expose their secret wickedness. He was terrible in his denunciations of all kinds of vice.

Elder Robords commenced his labors before a small congregation in the lecture-room of the First Baptist Church. Scarcely any preacher was ever heard with such varying views and feelings. Some were pleased, others were disgusted, many were amused, and not a few were in doubt as to the usefulness of his eccentric sermon; but all wished to hear him again. His congregations rapidly increased, until the spacious audience-room of the church was crowded. His preaching gave great offence to many; but while he displeased some classes of his hearers, he conciliated others. Against his caustic delineations of vice, he set over many handsome compliments to the better portions of society. The effects of his ministry were various and surprising. Under his fierce denunciations of sin many writhed and went away to ridicule and blaspheme. In the art of reproof I have never known him excel. I well remember one notable instance of his employing this art. He was preaching in the First Church to a crowded audience, and was making pretty severe remarks against some vice or error, when three or four men in the gallery, near the pulpit, took offence and resolved to show their indignation. They rose from their seats, and walking slowly towards the point of egress from the gallery, stamped loudly as they went. All eyes were drawn towards them. The preacher stopped, and, looking calmly at the retreating auditors, said: "Being convicted by their own conscience, they went out one by one,"—the last word falling on the ears of the offended critics as they escaped from the room. The speaker resumed his discourse as if nothing had occurred. I have never seen a Southern audience, in a religious meeting, come so near to indulging in open applause as on that occasion. By his searching appeals not a few were awakened, melted into tears and brought to sincere repentance. The members of the church were thoroughly aroused to a sense of their obligations, and stimulated to make earnest efforts for the salvation of sinners. It was really amusing to see how some of the brethren were at first disgusted, then offended, and afterwards conciliated and brought into harmony and co-operation with the evangelist.

Elder Robords continued his labors in the city, preaching twice a day, and attending an inquiry meeting in the afternoon, for about three weeks, in the First and Second Baptist Churches, and then left to fill an engagement in Baltimore. The meetings were kept up with unabated or even increasing interest in the First, Second and Third—then the only white Baptist Churches in the city. The pastors, Magoon, Taylor and myself, were aided by such ministers as we could secure from the country—among whom were Elder Jesse Witt, of Powhatan County; Elder Jos. Walker, of Hampton; and Elder Thomas W. Sydnor, of Notoway.

After some weeks Elder Robords returned to the city and resumed his labors. He did not, however, regain his power. He preached most of the time in the Second and Third (now Grace Street) Churches, and had large congregations; but it was questionable whether his second visit was of advantage to the cause. In a short while he left, carrying with him the confidence, love and best wishes of many for his welfare, and the disapprobation, if not, indeed, the downright hatred, of not a few.

The meetings, with more or less frequency, were continued in the churches until the middle of the summer. Nearly 400 members were added to the white Baptist Churches. Of this number, about 170 were admitted into the First Baptist Church—many of whom were heads of families, men of business and influence, who added greatly to its strength and efficiency. What was true of the First was doubtless true of the other Baptist Churches. The First African Church, under the ministry of Dr. Ryland, received large accessions, probably equalling in number those added to the white churches.

The revival was by no means limited to the Baptist Churches. Commencing in the First Presbyterian Church, it spread into all the evangelical churches of the city. I have no means of estimating the number of converts in the city, but it could hardly have been less than 1500, in a population of possibly 30,000. Two or three things are worthy of special notice. An unusually large number of the converts were immersed. Dr. Waller, a Methodist pastor, baptized seventeen candidates at one time in the James River, just below Haxall's Mill; and he administered the

ordinance with due solemnity, and some awkwardness arising from inexperience. A Unitarian-Universalist Church then in the city held what Mr. Robords said he had never heard of before since he had "breath and being"—a protracted meeting, and immersed a portion, at least, of their proselytes in the James River. On the whole, I have never seen in the city of Richmond a revival which, in its extent and results, equaled that of 1842.

Near the close of the special religious services there came to my study a stranger, probably thirty years old, of the ordinary size, of ruddy complexion, of genteel appearance, and with a Scotch brogue. He had just crossed the Atlantic in a sailing vessel and reached our port. He, after a brief introduction, gave this account of himself. He was a Presbyterian minister, educated and ordained in Scotland. He settled in the city of Lincoln, England, not far from the Scottish border, as pastor of an Independent church. Here he was succeeding pleasantly until an event occurred to disturb his equanimity. The Scotch Presbyterians baptize infants only when one or the other of their parents is a church member. The English Independents, on the other hand, baptize infants regardless of the moral character or relations of their parents. When infants of persons not members of a church were brought to him for baptism, he hesitated to administer the rite; but being informed that custom and church authority required it, he performed the service with painful doubts of its propriety. At length a child of parents notoriously depraved was presented to him for baptism. His conscience revolted at the act, and he resolved not to perform it. Being assured that the refusal would involve him in ecclesiastical troubles, he resigned his charge and made arrangements to emigrate to America. He secured the most satisfactory testimonials of his piety and good standing as a minister, several of which were from persons whose fame was well-known in this country, and finding a ship about to sail for Virginia, he took passage on it and safely reached our shore.

An important change took place in his views on his voyage. Having his Greek Testament and Lexicon, and other helps for learning the will of God, he determined to settle in his mind the question whether baptism should be limited to the infants of church members or extended to all infants. Having left his na-

tive land and passed beyond all ecclesiastical control, he was at liberty to study the subject with the simple desire to arrive at the knowledge of the truth. He soon became convinced that there was precisely as much Scriptural authority for the baptism of the infants of the ungodly as for those of church members: in short, that there was no warrant from Scriptural precept, example or fair inference for the baptism of either class of infants. Rejecting infant baptism, he had no difficulty in accepting immersion as the true baptism. His Greek Testament and Lexicon furnished him ample testimony on that point. When he reached the waters of Virginia he was confirmed in distinctive Baptist principles. At the earliest opportunity he appeared before the First Baptist Church as an applicant for baptism and membership. His experience and testimonials were entirely satisfactory, and he was baptized, received into the church, and at the first convenient opportunity he publicly stated, in a convincing and impressive manner, his reasons for changing his ecclesiastical relations. He was soon licensed to preach, and entered on a bright career of usefulness, which, unfortunately, proved to be short.

This man was Rev. Duncan R. Campbell, D.D., the late lamented president of Georgetown College, Kentucky.

Several years after Robords' meeting Dr. Jeter called to his assistance another evangelist, who at that time was at the high point of his career. That man was Elder Jacob Knapp. I believe that those who knew Mr. Knapp intimately never seriously questioned his piety. Some of his methods and idiosyncrasies fell under severe criticism. Magnetic and courageous he evidently was, but he lacked poise and discretion. Had he been a wiser man he would not have accepted the invitation, or having accepted it, he would not have acted as he did. This the reader will be forced to believe after studying Dr. Jeter's article, which appears below. The paper is really worthy of study, not for any special



historic interest, but for the candid and kindly spirit which it so finely illustrates in its author. I would not wantonly wound the fame of Mr. Knapp, and yet I feel constrained to observe that when brought into contrast with him, Dr. Jeter appears to great advantage.

#### KNAPP'S VISIT TO RICHMOND.

Elder Jacob Knapp was the most eminent American evangelist of his day, certainly among Baptists. He had gained a great reputation at the South by the results of meetings which he held in Baltimore some time about 1840. The Baptists of that city were few and feeble, their progress having been greatly hindered by Antinomian views, prevalent in some of the churches. The visit of Elder Knapp to the city was most opportune. Large crowds attended on his ministry, deep and wide-spread impressions were caused by it, and large accessions were made to the Baptist Churches. It was a new era for the Baptists of Baltimore. An addition of five hundred members—many of them wealthy and respectable—was made to their ranks.

A few years afterwards Knapp was invited to labor with the Baptist Churches in Washington, D. C. His success here was good, but not comparable in extent to that of his Baltimore meetings. His contiguity to Richmond, at a time when our churches needed reviving, led to the inquiry whether it would be wise to request him to hold meetings here. There were serious objections to the measure. Chief among these was the fact that he was an outspoken and, as was supposed, not very prudent, Abolitionist. At that time there was no little excitement in the country on the subject of slavery, and the public mind in Richmond was in no frame to listen even to a candid discussion of it, and was ready to break out into violence upon any indiscreet interference with it. Most of the Baptists desired that he should come, if they could be assured that he would act cautiously on the vexing subject of slavery, but many feared that he might do more harm by indiscretion than he would do good by his preaching.

Under these circumstances, Deacon A. Thomas, who was anxious that Knapp should visit Richmond, and myself were requested

to go to Washington City and have an interview with him. We called on him and assured him that the brethren desired him to visit Richmond, but told him plainly that any efforts on his part to discuss the subject of slavery while it might be endured, would certainly preclude the possibility of his usefulness. He was exceedingly chary in his conversation. He positively declined to give any assurance that he would not preach on the subject of slavery, and we as positively told him that we did not wish his services, if he would not refrain from its discussion. With this understanding of the case, without any pledge on his part, he accepted the invitation to hold meetings in Richmond.

In a short time, Elder Knapp, accompanied by Mrs. Knapp, made his appearance in this city. He was then probably fifty years old, short of stature, thick, with strong Dutch features. He commenced his labors, under some respects favorable, and under other respects unfavorable. The Baptists were united in his support, and intensely anxious for his success. The Anti-Abolition and skeptical spirit were combined against him, and ready to avail themselves of any indiscreet remark which he might utter, or any imprudent step which he might make to hinder his usefulness and cast reproach on the meetings.

Knapp began his preaching in the First Baptist Church. His success in Baltimore insured him large congregations from the beginning. The services proceeded several days in the most satisfactory and encouraging manner. At length, however, some remark on the subject of slavery, as it seemed to us, needlessly thrown into the discourse, served to fill the brethren with the apprehension of his imprudence, and give his enemies an excuse for reproaching him and his work. We cautioned him of the injurious influence on his ministry of these incidental allusions to slavery. They could enlighten and profit nobody, but they were admirably suited to dispirit his friends and to enrage his enemies. He became more cautious. For some days his preaching was plain, earnest and well adapted to do good, and the religious feeling of the congregation was evidently increasing. It was not long, however, before other remarks were made on the subject of slavery, innocent in themselves, and which Elder Taylor or myself might have made without offence, that checked the rising

interest in religion, and set all to watching his words in an anxious or in a captious spirit.

Perceiving his strong desire to make side remarks on the subject of slavery, and that they must prevent his usefulness, we proposed to him to continue his preaching without these impertinent allusions, so well suited to divert attention from the main object of the services—the conversion of sinners—and that, at the close of his labors, we would call together all the Baptists of the city, and give him an opportunity to deliver his views of slavery without restraint. To this proposal he showed no readiness to accede. We should have been right well pleased to encounter him in debate on the subject under circumstances which did not threaten to prevent the usefulness of our meetings.

After a week or two the meeting was removed to the Second Baptist Church. The preaching of Elder Knapp was continued with very little change in its character. He would make excellent impressions by his very solemn and searching appeals, and then efface them by injudicious remarks. We were tossed from hope to fear, and from fear to hope, we know not how many days. At length, these ill-timed remarks and insinuations that, under the circumstances, might have been endured, became unbearable. At the close of a service, which had been attended by a large congregation, upon brief consultation among the brethren, he was informed that his services were no longer desired. To prevent tumult or excitement, arrangements were made for his return to Washington by the early train of the next day. We do not remember what compensation was allowed the elder for his labors; but we are quite sure, from our knowledge of the generous deacons of the day, that he did not depart without his hire.

Having passed over the battle, we may now at leisure survey the field of conflict. Elder Knapp was no ordinary man. He had clear conceptions, strong common sense, a fair knowledge of theology, a pretty thorough acquaintance with human nature—Yankee, not Southern, human nature, if I may use the remark without discourtesy—and a remarkably pointed manner of expressing his thoughts. He was neither an orator nor a logician; but was gifted in the art of illustration. His preaching had more to do with the conscience than the emotions. He had a great op-

portunity of usefulness in Richmond, had he known how to employ it. As it was, the meeting was attended with considerable success. Quite a number of additions were made to the churches, and some of them were valuable. On the whole, I considered him a pious man and an able evangelist.

Elder Knapp, however, was not perfect; and, in this respect, did not differ from his race. He had more obstinacy than prudence. In his attacks on slavery he did not go far enough to entitle him to praise for his heroism; and he went quite too far to be commended for his discretion. His judgment was greatly influenced by his feelings. I may state a fact in confirmation of this remark. During the time that he was preaching at the First Church he held a service in the African Church. He was greatly delighted with his success. The congregation was large, and the religious feeling was deep and general. He declared that he had not seen so much of the presence of God since he had been in the city, and expressed the opinion that his labors would have been far more useful among the colored people than they had been among the whites. A few days afterwards, in discussing the subject of slavery with him, I told him that an incidental benefit of it was that a great number of the race had been evangelized. He instantly affirmed that the negroes were so ignorant, and so debased by slavery, that they could not be benefited by the gospel. I called his attention to his report of the result of his late service in the African Church. To me it seemed that he resorted to mere quibbling to conceal a contradiction which he must have discerned.

I must refer in self-vindication to another point. In the "Life of Elder Knapp" there are some statements which need to be corrected, or, at least, explained. I have not the book at hand, and must rely on my memory in reporting them.

It is stated that Elder Knapp "boarded" with me during his stay in Richmond. To board is to receive food and lodging for compensation. Brother Knapp and his wife shared in the hospitality of myself and family, and had the best fare that we could give them. Possibly, by the word "boarded" he meant simply entertained. He censured me on account of the manner in which a servant of mine was clothed. These are the facts. Old Uncle

Davy was a slave, almost entirely past service, who came into my possession by marriage, and for whose maintenance I was bound by the laws of the State, as well as the dictates of humanity. Whether he or I was master, it would have been difficult to decide. To me was conceded the right to control; but as a matter of fact, Uncle Davy would have his own way. He had a singular *penchant* for preserving his clothes. He had more, if not of so fine a texture, I dare say, than either myself or Elder Knapp; but he wore his good clothes only on Sundays. He had an overcoat which had probably been in use twenty-five years. It had been patched and darned, and mended again and again, until it had all the colors of the rainbow, and probably contained nothing of the stuff of which it was originally made. I repeatedly expostulated with him against wearing the relic; but he insisted that it was comfortable, and that its appearance was of no importance. I could not have prevented him from wearing that, and other apparel well suited to it, without the exercise of an authority which Elder Knapp would have considered as a bitter fruit of slavery, and to the use of which I had an instinctive repugnance. That the brother gave the impressions made on his mind by the beggarly garments of my old servant or beneficiary, I do not question; but whether, as a participant of my hospitality, it was kind of him to report these impressions, without some effort to learn whether they were founded in truth or misconception, the reader must judge for himself.

It is said that Dr. Jeter was called to the First Church on the recommendation of Rev. Jno. Kerr. That, in itself, is a significant fact. Kerr had several years before that time retired from the charge of the church. He and Jeter, outside of their common faith, were very unlike, and yet in this vigorous and devout young man, Kerr recognized one capable of the highest service. It is worthy of record that from the beginning Jeter stood well with the preachers. He was never specially brilliant, and there was much in his manner, in and out of the

pulpit, that was fairly open to criticism, but his brother ministers believed in him. He was honest, fervent and always brave. These qualities, when coupled with brains, always excite admiration. The friendship of good ministers is a precious boon for anybody. It was an unspeakable blessing to Jeter that in his early life he had the affection and counsel of such men as Broaddus, Clopton, Rice, Fife, Taylor and Kerr. While in Richmond he was intimate, also, with the leading ministers of other denominations, and greatly invigorated by his contact with them.

Nor was he less happy in the character of those in his church with whom he was brought into such intimate association. According to the testimony of Bro. A. H. Sands, the First Church was composed of very superior material. It was just such a church as any whole-hearted preacher would delight to serve. It had escaped from the infirmities and indiscretions of its youth, and was yet unstereotyped, free from inward disorders, and ready to be led to new conquests. It had really few crooked, snarly, graceless men—men of disagreeable consciences who felt that they were chosen of the Lord to cripple and balk the pastor in his work. Not that there were no men in the church who did not have decided notions of their own, and who sometimes were almost fiercely earnest in advocating them, but the brethren cordially supported him in his measures and efforts. I am told that the church-meetings were models of order, courtesy and fraternity. The church had noble men to lead in its onward march, and it would be an

agreeable task to pause here and present a description of many of them. There was James C. Crane, versatile, tactful, graceful of speech, and a sort of magazine of spiritual force; there was Archibald Thomas, rugged of form, outspoken even to severity at times, immensely resolute, not always gentle in his modes, but thoroughly true-hearted, rich in common sense and minutely faithful in the discharge of every accepted trust; there was Richard Reins, impulsive in temperament, quick in his movements, tender as a child, spotless in his life and ready for every good work; there was James Thomas, Jr., just rising then to public view, but enfolding in himself the high qualities which subsequently won for him eminent success in the world of trade. In him Dr. Jeter found an ever-ready and judicious helper. Other men there were, equally worthy and faithful, whose names I must reluctantly omit.

It cannot be invidious to say that the most valuable counsellor and co-worker that Dr. Jeter had in the First Church was a woman. To her, in his moments of solicitude and perplexity, he always went and found a deep and intelligent sympathy. When new enterprises filled his hands and he needed the best advice, he appealed to her. Among women she was pre-eminent for strength, sagacity and discretion. Noble in form, gently heroic in courage, and singularly wise in her conclusions, she exerted an almost dominating influence in the church. In no small measure was he indebted to her for the pleasantness and prosperity of his pastorate. That woman was Mrs. Archibald Thomas. In what I have said I

have uttered an unsolicited and inadequate tribute to one of the noblest women that I have ever known. I, too, have some occasion for cherishing her memory. When, an untried college graduate, I began my simple career as a pastor in Manchester, Va., that honored woman, then far advanced in life, gave me such encouragement as came from no other earthly source. It came unsought when I was a stranger to her, and even to the present moment I cannot recall it without grateful sensibility.

Dr. Jeter never attracted overflowing congregations. He was not a man to charm fickle and floating people, but I am told that his congregations were always large. He preached three times a week, and rarely failed to occupy his pulpit himself on Sunday mornings. If there were visiting ministers, he would invite them to preach either in the afternoon or at night. He was very careful in the preparation of his sermons, and made it a point to prepare as elaborately his week-night discourses as he did those that were intended for the Lord's day.

Upon his removal to Richmond he became associated at once with the denominational work of the Virginia Baptists. He was made a member of the several boards, and took a leading part in their management. While an intense and thorough Baptist, he never engrafted into his creed any extreme views which prevented a cordial co-operation with his brethren of other denominations. In Bible work and tract distribution he warmly joined and soon became a leader in the evangelical movements of the city.



In those days he was without fortune, and had only a moderate salary. He lived in respectable style, without display and within his income. For the judicious management of his affairs he owed much to his wife. She was thoroughly domestic and conscientiously economical. She was liberal, but greatly averse to foolish expenditures. She was so plain in her apparel that he found fault with her on that account. It stung his pride for her to appear in a dress out of keeping with her position.

It is told that he once observed a young lady in his congregation wearing a Leghorn hat with a handsome ostrich feather on it. He was struck with its exceeding beauty, and, upon returning home, commanded his frugal spouse to purchase one for herself just like it. The next Sunday she appeared with a bonnet of exactly the same pattern, but minus the feather. He scanned the new piece of head-gear with a curious eye, and finally said, in a tone of disappointment: "I reckon your bonnet is just like Miss W.'s, but somehow it doesn't look the same to me." The candid wife explained the difference and suggested that the feather was a needless expense. He did not see it in that light, and never rested until the new bonnet had upon it the ornamental plume.

During most of the time that he was pastor of the First Church he occupied a house on Fourth Street, between Grace and Franklin Streets. It was a popular resort for the young, and its modest little parlor often rang with music and cheery laughter. He loved company, and was always ambitious to make his home attractive. An old gentleman remarked

to me lately that whenever he reverted to those times he thought of Dr. Jeter chiefly as he appeared in his home.

In 1844 Mrs. Jeter lost her health, and upon the advice of friends he took her to Florida. Of that visit he wrote a racy account, which I must omit. I extract from it one incident which occurred while they were in Charleston, S. C. :

We put up at the Charleston Hotel. Mrs. Jeter and myself were seated in the parlor. She was pale, delicate, far from home, among strangers, and depressed in spirits. In the parlor were many ladies and gentlemen, healthful and gay, engaged in lively conversation. Mrs. Jeter and myself sat alone, and were silent. As one of the ladies was about to leave the room, she walked up to Mrs. Jeter, handed her a large and beautiful bouquet, and without uttering a word, retired before we had an opportunity of thanking her. A courtesy so considerate, kind and graceful brought tears to our eyes. We knew not her name, and she probably did not know ours; but I have never since thought of the event without the liveliest admiration of the delicate attention of the Charleston lady. How much might be done, with little cost or trouble, to cheer the sorrowing and to encourage the desponding by thoughtful and delicate attentions!

The Baptist Triennial Convention was organized in May, 1844, in Philadelphia. It was intended at first to foster Foreign Missions only, but soon after it took up the Home Mission work also. With this Convention it was hoped that the Baptists of the entire country would co-operate, and for a while the Baptists of the South sustained it with unstinted cordiality.

But the slavery question soon became a bone of contention, and the brethren in both sections saw that a division was inevitable. The formal separa-

tion took place in 1845, and as it was an event of such wide-spread and abiding interest, I will publish in full Dr. Jeter's account of it :

#### THE DIVISION OF THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION.

At the first Triennial Convention which I attended at the city of New York, in 1832, the elements of discord had begun to appear. Abolition was then in its incipiency. In the next meeting of the Convention, held in the city of Richmond, owing to its Southern location, and the decided preponderance of Southern influence, it did not show itself, though several leading Abolitionists were present. At the Convention in Baltimore, in 1841, the subject of slavery began to be a disturbing element in the deliberations of the body. Conciliatory resolutions on the subject were adopted by an overwhelming majority. They did not extinguish, but merely repressed, for a time, the smouldering fires.

When the Convention met in Philadelphia, in 1844, the Abolition party had much increased in numbers and strength. It was evident that an earnest conflict on the subject of slavery could not be avoided. The views of Brethren were widely and irreconcilably variant concerning it. At the North, many believed it to be "the sum of all villanies," the sin of all sins, and the one evil against which they should direct their heaviest moral batteries. Slaveholders they considered as utterly unfit for the kingdom of heaven, and their contributions to the cause of missions a blight and a curse. These extreme views, however, were not in the ascendancy among Northern brethren. Generally, they held that slavery was an evil, a misfortune, to be deplored ; but that slaveholders of the South, under their circumstances, might or might not sin in owning slaves. Their views amounted to this ; that bad slaveholders were not worthy of Christian fellowship, but that good slaveholders were. I remember distinctly that Dr. Wayland said : " I believe slavery to be a sin ; but consider many of the Southern slaveholders to be as free from the guilt of slavery as I am."

There were conflicting views on this subject among Southern as well as among Northern Baptists. None believed that slavery *per se* was sinful. All were of opinion that the interference of

Northern people with Southern slavery was uncalled for, unwise, and injurious both to masters and slaves. Many looked on slavery as a great blessing, to be defended and perpetuated at all hazards. Others viewed it as a misfortune to be endured and made the best of, under the circumstances in which we were placed, and for the existence of which we were in no wise responsible. Not one in a thousand believed that slavery could be abolished without serious injury to both masters and slaves, with few or no compensating advantages to either party.

The Convention, composed of these heterogeneous elements, commenced its session with a reasonable prospect of discord and trouble. It was deemed necessary that Dr. William B. Johnson, of South Carolina, a minister of fine attainments, and an excellent presiding officer, who had acceptably served the Convention several sessions, should, as a peace-offering, decline a re-election. The Abolitionists nominated Dr. B. T. Welch, of Albany, N. Y., and the conservatives Dr. F. Wayland, of Providence, R. I., for the presidency. Dr. Wayland was elected. He was an anti-slavery man, but eminently liberal in his views, conservative in his spirit, and conciliatory in his manners. He was as much opposed as any Southern man to the introduction of the subject of slavery into the Convention, or permitting it to interfere with the cooperation of Baptists, North and South, in the work of missions. The business of the Convention was conducted without serious trouble from the Abolitionists. The body, being composed of members representing a considerable pecuniary contribution, was made up largely of conservative and prudent men.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society, differing little from a mass-meeting, was, from its very origin, the battle-field of the Abolitionists and slaveholders. In this society occurred the memorable discussion, in which the sentence, "Brother Jeter has the floor!" acquired such notoriety. The facts, as I remember them, are these: Deacon Heman Lincoln, of Boston, was in the chair. He was a noble layman, a gentleman of wealth, refined manners, high social position, a good parliamentarian, trained in the Massachusetts Senate, of which he had been a member. He was neither a slaveholder nor an Abolitionist; but he valued men according to their intellectual and moral worth. The subject of

slavery was under discussion—in what aspect I do not now remember—and several speeches had been made on it. I rose to speak, and the President accorded to me the floor. Instantly there was a vociferous demand that another should have it. He had risen several times, it was said, and failed to gain the eye of the Speaker. It was insisted that his repeated attempts to gain the floor fairly entitled him to it. To all the demands and arguments, the inflexible deacon persistently cried: "Brother Jeter has the floor!" It is strange that persons having the slightest knowledge of parliamentary usage should have demanded the floor for the brother on that plea. If he had risen fifty times, and failed to obtain the recognition of the presiding officer, he would have had no ground for the claim. His frequent failures to obtain it might have been a plea for yielding to him in courtesy; but they did not constitute the shadow of a claim to it as a matter of right. The firmness of the President prevailed.

After standing for half an hour, as I suppose, through a tumult unparalleled in my experience in deliberative bodies, the floor was reluctantly yielded to me. Under ordinary circumstances, I should have been embarrassed and unable to proceed in the discussion; but several days of intense excitement had brought me to a point at which I could not be confused. I commenced my speech with deliberation, and continued it to the end with freedom and calmness. I could not repeat my arguments, if I would, and I need not, if I could. They were entirely satisfactory to those agreeing with me in opinion, and were probably not noticed by those who dissented from it. In truth, the excitement, though it was favorable to fervent speaking, was entirely adverse to candid hearing.

The meetings closed with no favorable indications of the future co-operation of the Baptists North and South, in missions, home or foreign. Resolutions, shortly afterwards adopted by the Alabama Baptist State Convention, or its Board (I do not recollect which), precipitated the division. The resolutions demanded of the Foreign Mission Board in Boston an explicit answer to the question, whether a slaveholder would be appointed a missionary? The answer was promptly returned that he would not be. This decision terminated all hope of union between the Baptists of the

two sections in missionary work. The Boston Board had been the most conservative of all our Boards. It had been the very anchor of the Convention. This decision filled the brethren of the South with amazement and sorrow. It was not that slaveholders, under some circumstances, on account of prejudices against them, would not be appointed missionaries, but that, because of their relation to slavery, they could not be appointed. Slaveholding, among the American Indians, presented no barrier to usefulness; but slaveholders, even among them, could not be employed as missionaries. Further co-operation was impossible. It reduced the Southern Baptists to the condition of mere burden-bearers. They might contribute to the funds of the Convention—to this many of the Abolitionists were opposed—but owning slaves, under whatever circumstances, precluded ministers from serving as missionaries. A meeting was immediately held by the brethren at Richmond, the action of the Board carefully considered, and a Convention invited to assemble in Augusta, Ga., to decide what, under this new aspect of affairs, should be done.

Meanwhile, a called meeting of the General Board of the Triennial Convention was held in Providence, R. I., to confer on the proper action of the body in the exigency. Rev. James B. Taylor and myself, at the request of the brethren here, attended the meeting. We were most cordially and pleasantly entertained in the family of Dr. Wayland. I never saw so much of him as on this occasion, and I was deeply impressed by his large-hearted liberality and his sound wisdom. After free and full consultation with the brethren, especially Dr. Wayland, a separation of the Baptists, North and South, was deemed best for all parties. Division was inevitable. If the Baptists of the South did not withdraw, it was foreseen that the Abolitionists and Conservatives of the North would be rent asunder in their Churches, Associations and Mission Societies. Much as a sectional division was to be deplored, it was deemed far less injurious to our cause than a separation on the principle, styled by the Presbyterians "elective affinity," and on which they had then recently divided. Taylor and myself returned to the South with the assurance of the wisest and most conservative of the Northern brethren, that the formation of a Southern Convention would meet their approbation and secure their earnest prayers for its success.

I cannot dwell upon the events which followed. Upon the return of Taylor and Jeter from the meeting in Providence, they reported the result to the Virginia Foreign Mission Society. That body determined to call a meeting of Southern brethren for conference as to the propriety of organizing a new Convention.

They named May 8th, 1845, as the time, and Augusta, Ga., as the place. The paper which was sent abroad inviting this conference was prepared by Dr. Jeter, and was a marvel of good judgment and prudence. That it was kindly received is sufficiently attested by the fact that 310 delegates from various States of the South appeared in Augusta at the appointed time and proceeded with great harmony to organize the Southern Baptist Convention.

In that movement Dr. Jeter took a foremost and enthusiastic part. The Convention organized the Foreign and Home Mission Boards, locating the former at Richmond, Va., and making Jeter its president and James B. Taylor its corresponding secretary. In Dr. H. A. Tupper's admirable history of the Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention he furnishes a full account of those stirring times.

In happy contrast with the strife which led to the dismemberment of the old Triennial Convention was an event which occurred in Richmond on the 8th of February, 1846. I refer to the reception tendered to Dr. Adoniram Judson, which was held in the First Baptist Church, and at which Dr. Jeter made the address. It showed that in his heart there was no

sectional rancor. Dr. Jeter's address was one of the best of his life, and was received everywhere with favor. I believe it has been published in every life of Dr. Judson that has been written. I am sorry to omit it. I give at least its closing paragraphs :

But I must close my remarks. Brother Judson, we are acquainted with your history. We have marked your labors—have sympathized in your various sufferings—have shed many a tear at the foot of the “Hopia-tree,”—have gone, in fancy, on mournful pilgrimage to the rocky island of St. Helena—have rejoiced in your successes and the successes of your devoted associates—and have long and fervently wished to see your face in the flesh. This privilege we now enjoy. Welcome, thrice welcome, are you, my brother, to our city—our churches—our bosoms. I speak as the representative of Southern Baptists. We love you for the truth's sake, and for your labors in the cause of Christ. We honor you as the father of American missions.

One thought pains us. To-morrow morning you leave us. We shall see your face no more. You will soon return to Burmah, the land of your adoption. There you will continue your toils, and there, probably, be buried. But this separation is not without its solace. Thank God! it is as near from Burmah to heaven as from Richmond or any other point on the globe. Angels, oft commissioned to convey to heaven the departing spirits of pious Burmans and Karens, have learned the way to that dark land. When dismissed from your toils and sufferings, they will be in readiness to perform the same service for you. God grant that we may all meet in that bright world. There sin shall no more annoy us, separations no more pain us, and every power find full and sweet employ in the service of Christ!

And now, my brother, I give my hand in token of affection to you, and of your cordial reception among us.

Mrs. Sarah Ann Jeter died October 29th, 1847. As she had been an invalid for several years, her departure was no surprise. During the days of her feeble-



ness her husband watched over her with a tenderness and fidelity worthy of all praise. For nearly twenty years they walked together, and she was, perhaps, of all women, best suited to be his companion during that peculiar period of his life. She was a deeply pious woman—free from worldly ambition, calm in her views of things, and not spoiled by earthly distinctions. He respected her thoroughly, and while she did not seek to control him or weary him with excessive advice, she exerted a safe and helpful influence over him.

In January, 1849, he was married again. His third wife was formerly Miss Charlotte E. Wharton, of Bedford County, Virginia. This lady I knew well when I was a child. She belonged to one of the most prominent families in Northern Bedford, and was, by general consent, the most queenly and attractive young woman in the community at the time of her marriage. Her family were Episcopalians, but she was never a member of that church, and soon after her marriage became a Baptist.

As her mother's home was only a mile or two from my father's, Dr. Jeter made our house his headquarters during the days of his wooing. I was a boy then, and I recall many incidents of that sentimental period in his life which must be omitted. Of Mrs. Jeter more will be said hereafter.

In 1849 Dr. Jeter received a call to St. Louis, Mo. For years he had been inoculated more or less with the "Western Fever," and without seeking to ascertain the wishes of his church, he accepted the call. His action caused great surprise and overwhelmed

his people with distress. The demonstrations of grief deeply affected him and led him to question seriously the wisdom of his decision. Here is what he said about it in after-years :

Had I formed the slightest conception of the pain of separating from a people among whom I had so long and pleasantly labored and who had for me, as I had for them, so tender an affection, I should not for a moment have thought of breaking the ties which united us. I took leave of them at the close of an afternoon communion service. I may be permitted to say that I, at least, have never passed through such a trial. There were the aged brethren and sisters with whom I had taken sweet counsel—there were the younger members, converted under my ministry, baptized by my hands and edified by my instructions—there were many whom I had united in the bonds of matrimony, and more still whose loved ones I had followed with tearful eyes to the tomb; and to all these, at the close of a solemn communion season, I was to extend the parting hand. It was too much to endure. Tears, and sighs, and sobs, made a scene such as I have rarely, perhaps never on any other occasion, witnessed. I lamented my determination to leave the church, but I had gone too far to think of retracing my steps. I had promised to go to St. Louis, and to St. Louis I must go. In a future article I may give some account of the events which I remember there.

## CHAPTER X.

### ST. LOUIS PASTORATE.

**I**NTO every minister's life changes must come. They are often unforeseen, and sometimes fill him with perplexity. It is not easy always even for the wisest men to find the path of duty. The shallow and selfish are always quick in discovering that the leadings of Providence are along the line of their preferences. Dr. Jeter once said to me that preachers ought not to expect anything like miraculous guidance in dealing with pastoral calls. He thought that they ought to exercise their common sense in settling such questions. They were not required to know absolutely or in any extraordinary way what their duty was. It was right, he said, for ministers, under such circumstances, to seek for Divine direction, and then, after carefully weighing with sober and conscientious deliberation all the questions involved, to do what seemed to be best. He admitted that one might err even then; but if honest in his decision, God would bless him. I suppose that he settled the question of his removal to Missouri in this way. He never had any pungent and sustaining conviction that he ought to accept the St. Louis call. Beforehand he was in great

doubt, and even after he had formally committed himself, he was harassed with misgivings as to the wisdom of his action. But he had followed what seemed to be the suggestion of duty, and he was always satisfied with the result. He went through a whirl of confusion and excitement at the time; but it is soothing to note the serene way in which he looked back upon his action through the thickening mist of intervening years. Here is the modest paragraph in which he records his action:

In the early part of the year 1849 I was invited to take charge of the Second Baptist Church in St. Louis, as a successor to Dr. S. Lynd. To me, few events could have been more unexpected than this request. I knew nothing of the church, and the church knew little of me. For several reasons the call impressed me favorably. I had been long in Richmond, and had but little prospect of doing more than maintaining the church in the measure of prosperity to which it had reached. I had visited St. Louis in the year 1844, and was profoundly impressed with its importance as a field of evangelical labor. I then thought, as I still think, that no place on the continent offered, or could offer, greater prospects for permanent success in ministerial labor. After considerable delay, great anxiety, and much doubt as to my duty, I accepted the call.

That Dr. Jeter's removal to the West was a mistake, I do not undertake to say. He did not think so. It will be noticed that he touches only in general terms the motives which caused him to sunder the bonds which linked him to the First Church and to accept the charge of a church of which, according to his own confession, he knew nothing.

It implies no reflection upon his character to say that possibly he never exactly knew why he went

to St. Louis. It is a curious fact that men are not the most discriminating judges of the influences which shape their conduct. They never can analyze the intricate net-work of their environment. They are imbedded in influences which, while potent and over-mastering, they do not recognize. They are apt to ascribe their conduct to one or more motives, of which they are distinctly conscious and whose force they are ready to confess. If there are unpleasant or humiliating facts connected with their changes, they are willing to forget them.

I have hinted already that Dr. Jeter had become infected with what in those days was commonly called the "Western Fever." As to the possibilities of the trans-Mississippi States and Territories, he was an enthusiast. It was through his persuasion that his father's family emigrated to Missouri. He was often in Bedford in those times, and he talked much of the West as an inviting field for those who had their fortunes to make. He set the simple folk of Bedford on fire, and some of them, under the contagion of his eloquence, broke up in hot haste and struck out for the West. It is due to history to say that not a few of those who went forth singing came back in sadness.

In 1844 Dr. Jeter paid his first visit to the West. He went not on a tour of inspection, but to see his kindred. He spent only a few weeks in Missouri, where they resided, and had but limited opportunities for forming his judgment of the country. But he was carried away. He came back in raptures, and from that time forth he dealt in superlatives in

portraying the attractions of the "western country." As that visit evidently had much to do with his decision five years afterwards, I will insert here his description of it, saying in advance that many of its most charming items are in no way connected with Missouri. Still, the paper bristles with such bright and taking points that I have no heart to mutilate it:

#### A TRIP TO THE WEST.

At the close of the Triennial Convention in Philadelphia, in 1844, my friend, Rev. Daniel Witt, and myself set off on a Western excursion,—he with the purpose of deciding whether he would remove to the West, and I to see my relatives who had settled in Missouri. I kept a journal of our tour, which was published in the *Religious Herald* shortly after my return; and I may remark, in passing, that this is the first record of the kind to which I have referred for reviving my recollections. It was, in many respects, a remarkable journey, of which I will give a brief account.

Our trip was from Philadelphia to Chambersburg by railway, and from thence by coach, across the Alleghany Mountain to Pittsburgh. The coach was crowded within and without, the weather was rainy, the roads were muddy, our progress was slow, and our condition was far from being enviable. On this part of the journey occurred the extraordinary display of selfishness mentioned, some time since, in the *Herald*, by Dr. J. M. Pendleton, one of our fellow-passengers.

Rev. Mr. ——— was among the travelers. He was a member of the Convention from the Buckeye State, had taken quite an active part in its proceedings, and was a man of no mean gifts. His name was the eleventh on the list of passengers, and, of course, he was not entitled to an inside seat. When the coach was brought out at Chambersburg, he was the first to enter it, and without ceremony or apology, took a choice hind seat. During the journey many changes of seats were made for the accommodation of the wet and weary passengers; but the Buckeye trav-

eler firmly maintained his position. After journeying all night, and until late in the afternoon of the next day, through frequent and heavy showers, the coach broke down beneath its heavy human freight. The driver was compelled to leave the coach and horses and go forward to a tavern to obtain help. He was followed by the deck passengers, anxious to find a shelter from the threatening rain. Among the travelers there was a Bostonian, of genial and most unselfish spirit. He had endeavored throughout the trip to make himself agreeable, and diminish the discomforts of the travel. He was left by the driver in charge of his team. The rain beginning to fall more heavily, the generous Yankee came to the door of the coach and inquired whether any of the passengers could lend him an umbrella. The umbrellas of the inside tourists, with a single exception, had been lent to their outside friends, and carried by them to the tavern. All answered, except the Buckeye, that their umbrellas were in use. It was soon perceived that he had one carefully covered and laid at his side; and he was requested to lend it to the exposed Bostonian. He replied: "It is new—it has never been used—it has a cover on it." "Take my parasol," said a kind lady. "No," replied the generous Yankee, "I won't remain; the gentleman may take care of the horses himself." "He is right!" exclaimed the lady; and all the passengers assented to the remark. "I guess," said the Buckeye, with imperturbable composure, "he is offended because I would not lend him my umbrella."

From Pittsburgh we traveled by steamer down the Ohio and up the Mississippi River to St. Louis, occupying, including stoppages and changes, quite a week. The trip to me was exceedingly interesting. I was a green traveler, and to me everything was new. The shores, the towns, the passengers, the customs, and the ever-shifting scenes, furnished opportunities for observations and yielded increasing delight.

Bro. Witt and myself spent a month in the State of Missouri, visiting our friends, traversing its broad and beautiful prairies, navigating its noble rivers, trying our unpracticed hands at unsuccessful deer-hunting, and preaching occasionally, to deeply interested audiences, the same gospel which in our youth we had proclaimed, with so much pleasure, in the rural districts of Vir-

ginia. We seemed to live over again our early years. It was to us a season of great enjoyment, and, I trust, of no little profit. During all the month the rains, with slight intermissions, had been falling, and sometimes heavily. The rivers were swelled above their banks, the prairies were covered with water, and the whole country was converted into mud.

On the 19th of June we left St. Louis on our return home. We took passage in a steamer to ascend the Illinois River. We doubt whether, in all the history of Western steamboat navigation, such a trip has been recorded. Since the settlement of the country by Europeans, no such rise in the Western streams has been known. A pillar on the levee in St. Louis, erected to perpetuate the memory of the flood, shows that the Mississippi was three or four feet higher than it has been at any other time within the period of authentic information. The levee, quite wide and elevated, was covered with water, and the houses on Water Street were deluged by it. The river overspread the bottom on the Illinois side to the bluff, a distance of eight or ten miles. On the topmost wave of this unparalleled flood we commenced our homeward voyage. Whoever makes such a trip will remember it. In our progress, the steamer passed along stage roads, over prairies and cultivated farms, and through the streets of towns, finding it necessary to change its course continually to avoid the descending drift-wood, with which the current, in many places, was literally covered. Houses might be seen submerged in every degree, from the door-sill to the roof. Many signs were visible of the escape of families from the devouring flood through the roofs of their houses, and by boats kept in readiness for use in the last extremity. The fresh in the Illinois was proportionately greater than in any other river. Its banks are so high that passengers on the upper decks of steamers cannot, at low water, see the bottoms on either side. At this time the banks were overflowed to the depth of ten feet, and the voyagers could gaze on a boundless waste of water. At Naples, a small town on the river, the stream was forty feet perpendicular above low water mark.

After two days' run, amid the wonders of the rushing, desolating flood, we landed at Ottawa, and took a coach for Chicago, then a town of 7,000 inhabitants. From this place, we came in



a steamer by Mackinaw and Detroit to Buffalo, and thence by rail to the Falls of Niagara, our point of destination.

Of all the persons who have ever seen this thundering cataract, we, who had just traveled on the Father of Waters, in his most turbid and turbulent mood, saw it at the greatest disadvantage. Things are great or small by comparison. The Niagara is a great river, and the cataract is one of the wonders of the world. I took much pains to get a favorable view of it. I was conducted to a commanding position, and opened my eyes suddenly on the scene that I might be strongly impressed by its grandeur. I was disappointed. It was impossible for me to conceive that the Falls were great. I thought of the Mississippi as I had just seen it, ten miles wide, covered with drift-wood, and flowing at the rate of five or six miles an hour. My imagination could supply all the rest. I fancied that I could see the Mississippi, with its enormous masses of drift-wood, dashing over a precipice, deep in proportion to the width of the stream, and roaring above seven thunders in the fearful chasm below. That was a cataract worth looking at. The Falls before me, in spite of myself, seemed to be little more than the mimic waterfalls that I sported with in my childhood. I did not make the attempt to jump across the Falls, but I felt as if I could do it.

After surveying the Falls from different points, and forming a just estimate of its proportions, I was deeply impressed with its magnitude and grandeur. It does not equal in extent and sublimity the Falls of the Mississippi River, created by my excited imagination; but it is certainly among the most interesting of the earthly wonders on which I have been permitted to gaze. It is worthy to be classed with the stupendous Rock Bridge of this State; the Saguenay River, in Canada, with its wild and diversified scenery; Mont Blanc, in Switzerland, arrayed in the golden hues of an evening sunset; but neither pen nor pencil can give the reader any adequate conception of it. The seeming insignificance of the cataract was the only delusion into which I fell on this visit. Elder Witt and myself employed a hackman to carry us to Lundy's Lane, a memorable battle-field of the War of 1812. He was very civil and kind, and to save us from expense, he volunteered to act as our cicerone. He had heard the popular

guide so often describe the scene that it was quite familiar to him. Very fluently he pointed out where the British troops were posted, where Scott, with his valiant forces, advanced, and how the battle raged, with varying success, until finally, victory perched on the American banner. We were profoundly interested in the scene, and in imagination fought over the battle of Lundy's Lane.

On returning home, I wrote out and published an account of my visit to Lundy's Lane, with the impressions of the battle, which I had received from our courteous guide. Some years afterwards I was in conversation with a gentleman who had visited Lundy's Lane. He referred to Brock's monument. I told him there was no monument on the field when I was there. He said there must have been,—that it stood at the head of the village. I replied that I saw no village at the place. "Why," said he, "you have never been to Lundy's Lane." He was right. The artful but dishonest hackman carried us a mile or so from the Falls, and finding that he could practice on our credulity, made us believe that we were at Lundy's Lane.

We were not the first nor the last travelers deceived by guides. Not long since we read an account, in a highly respectable journal, of Mount Vesuvius by a tourist, who had either never seen it, or had been grievously cheated by his cicerone. The reports of travelers in unexplored regions are, in many cases, no more worthy of credit than dreams. Their uncertainty and their exaggerations give force and interest to the admirable burlesque stories of Baron Munchausen.

There has always been a sort of dumb suspicion that there was, at the time Dr. Jeter was called to St. Louis, some friction in his relations with the First Church. It is really surprising that the matter was always so successfully concealed from the general public. Dr. Jeter had nothing to say on the subject. In all my intimate association with him, he never referred to it, even in the most indirect terms. His "Recollections" do not touch it.

It seems best to let the facts be known, as they

are not discreditable either to the pastor or the church. Dr. Robert Ryland furnishes what, I doubt not, is the real explanation of the slight unpleasantness which arose between Dr. Jeter and his people, and which led to his resignation :

During the latter years of his first Richmond pastorate, a few of the wealthier members of the church desired to have an organ put in the house of worship, and to make the proposal easy, they offered to advance the requisite means until the church should feel able and willing to indemnify them. To this measure the pastor was conscientiously opposed. He delivered a strong sermon against instrumental and operatic music in public worship, as wholly alien to the spirit of the New Testament. To the great comfort of the more conservative element of the body, he silenced the agitation of the organ question. That action, however, was the latent cause of his resignation. About this time he received an unexpected call to a church in St. Louis, and though ardently loving, and loved by, his people, he offered his resignation, intending to govern his course by the conduct of the church on that subject. About nineteen-twentieths of his charge were anxious to retain his services, but they were told that if they would vote to accept his resignation, they could then, at an early day, recall him to his pulpit, and thus accomplish their wishes. A majority was thus induced to accept his resignation, and the next morning he wrote to St. Louis and accepted the invitation of the church. Arriving on his new field, he found the church already furnished with a loud-sounding organ, and all the members satisfied and perhaps pleased with the arrangement. The question of consistency was thus raised in his mind. Was he to adhere to his principles, and stir up the subject of instrumental music among those who had quietly agreed to use it in their worship? Or was he, still holding his convictions, to acquiesce silently in the views of others for which he was not responsible, and thus preserve harmony of feeling and action between himself and his new charge? After seeking divine guidance, and consulting some of his old friends in Virginia, he concluded not to disturb the custom of mechanical music among those who had

already adopted it, but to urge them to "sing praises unto God" and to "make melody in their hearts unto the Lord." This was a wise and prudent course, but it is a delicate question to what extent compromise and expediency should be allowed to modify our practices in religion.

And so it was the music demon. How many pastors have been uprooted, and how many churches shattered and wrecked by the same cause! It was melancholy, indeed, that a pastorate, so remarkable for harmony and usefulness, should have been disturbed by anything. But it never amounted to an open rupture, and left no permanent scars upon any human heart.

Perhaps the advocates of the organ were unduly persistent. They had made haste at a time when delay would have been a virtue. It is due to them to say, however, that they were thoroughly honorable in the measures adopted to accomplish what they really thought would be for the good of the church. It was no attempt on their part to mortify or dislodge the pastor. They loved him, while they desired the organ. It is likely that they came to love him less because he stood in their way. Some people can love anything about a pastor better than his opposition to their favorite measures. From Dr. Ryland's hint as to the expedients employed to secure the acceptance of Dr. Jeter's resignation, we imagine that the feeling against him had become quite decided and even aggressive.

I think that Dr. Jeter went astray on two points. We can hardly be surprised at his opposition to mechanical music, as Dr. Ryland calls it (though I

think it must be admitted that the worst types of mechanical music are sometimes furnished by vocalists); but he made a mistake in assuming an attitude so hostile and imperious on a mere question of policy. He mistook a prejudice for a principle, and he lived long enough to find it out. Indeed, he found it out quite soon. It was a singular providence which wrenched him out of Richmond and took him away to St. Louis, where he might learn a needed lesson in pastoral discretion. The "loud-sounding organ" in his new church became his teacher. It revealed to him his error, and henceforth he was quiet.

He was wrong on another point. He ought not to have presented his resignation, in order to test his strength at the only point in which he was even partially weak with his church. A pastor's resignation ought not to hang on any merely incidental question. When reviewing his relation with his people, he ought to consider it in all of its varied aspects, and then incline to the stronger side. This Dr. Jeter failed to do.

But we need not criticise him now. In opposing the organ, he acted with a fearless, though misguided conscience, and in offering his resignation he acted for the best, and the end is known.

It has been impossible to collect many details of the doctor's pastorate in St. Louis. It lasted only three years, and it has now been thirty-five years since it closed. Meanwhile the city has had a phenomenal growth, and little of what it then was, now remains. The quiet and stately old house in which

he preached has given place to the most expensive and magnificent Baptist church edifice in the South, and the church itself has grown greatly in numbers, wealth and power. It would be foolish to claim for Dr. Jeter any exclusive honor for the extraordinary advancement which the church has made since he was its pastor. It has since had other pastors as true and faithful as he was, and they and he together must share the public respect and distinction which always wait upon faithful service. There, as everywhere, Dr. Jeter wrought with burning and indomitable zeal, and won success in the face of the gravest obstacles. He always loved St. Louis, and to the present moment he is held in grateful remembrance by the Baptists of that city. In the following paper he gives a cheerful and inspiring history of his Western pastorate:

#### REMOVAL TO ST. LOUIS.

In the year 1849 I went to this city and took charge of the Second, then the only white Baptist Church in the place. Its pulpit had been rendered vacant by the removal of Rev. S. W. Lynd to the Theological Seminary, then recently established at Covington, Ky. St. Louis had just been fearfully scourged by the prevalence of cholera. The epidemic caused a general panic, drove most of the people from their homes, and sent several thousands of them to untimely graves. I was prevented for some time from entering upon my pastoral labors by the scourge; and when I commenced them the disease was still lingering in the city. The church, reduced in number, contained about two hundred and seventy-five members. Among these were many brethren of intelligence, piety, great devotion to the interests of the church, and prosperous in business, if not rich. It was, in some respects, one of the best churches that I have known. It had recently completed a house of worship—then one of the finest

in the city—and its members evinced a praiseworthy liberality in the cause of Christ. My first sermon was preached to a good congregation in October, 1849, from Col. i. 29: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." I endeavored to present the *theme*, the *manner* and the *end* of the apostolic ministry as an example for my imitation while I should labor among them.

There were peculiar difficulties to be encountered in my new field of labor—difficulties which, I presume, all pastors in that and similar spheres of activity have experienced. The church was composed of heterogeneous materials. Few of them had been converted and baptized in the city. They were immigrants from England, Scotland and Wales, and from almost every State of the Union. They had their peculiar views of preaching, music, the manner of conducting public worship, church discipline, &c.; and these were as various as were the tastes and training of the people in the several regions from which the members came. It was almost impossible to say, do, or propose anything which would secure universal approbation. This diversity, however, led to great liberality and forbearance among the brethren. There was a commendable readiness to yield to the decision of the majority; but, unfortunately, this submission did not include a hearty assent to that judgment. Had the members of the church been of harmonious views and aims it would have been of almost unequalled efficiency.

A greater diversity of views on religious subjects prevailed without than within the church. A large portion of the population was European, fully imbued with the spirit of skepticism. In preaching to them nothing could be taken for granted. The inspiration of the Scriptures, moral responsibility, the existence of God and of a future state, and even the depravity of human nature, were by many boldly denied, or artfully called in question.

As there were unusual obstacles to overcome, so there were extraordinary incitements to activity in this new sphere of toil. The rapid increase of the population, the spirit of inquiry and self-reliance engendered by freedom from ancient opinions and customs, the constant conflict of discordant views, and the cer-

tainty that the people of St. Louis must eventually exert a moulding influence over the religious faith and character of millions of inhabitants in the great Mississippi Valley, were well suited to impress on the heart of a minister the transcendent importance of his work. He seemed to be sowing seed that would increase, not merely a hundred, but more than a thousand-fold. It was impossible to live in such a city without imbibing its spirit of enterprise, hopefulness and perseverance; and this spirit was as fruitful in religious as in secular pursuits.

My aim, from the beginning of my labors in St. Louis, was, not chiefly to gather a large church, but to multiply throughout the city agencies for its evangelization. In this aim many members of the church heartily sympathized with me. Arrangements were soon made for the support of two ministers for a period of three years. One-half of this amount was subscribed by the members of the church, and the other half by the Boards of the Baptist General Association of Missouri and of the Southern Baptist Convention. To co-operate with these ministers it was proposed to organize two churches from members dismissed from the Second Church and such unassociated Baptists as could be found in the city. Two noble bands of brethren and sisters went out from the Second Church—one formed the Third Baptist Church, in the western part of the city, and the other Zion (now the Fourth) Baptist Church, in North St. Louis. The next step was to secure pastors for these infant churches. Rev. Joseph Walker, of Virginia, became the pastor of the Third, and I. E. Owen, from the Theological Seminary at Covington, the pastor of Zion or the Fourth Church. I need not attempt to give the history of these churches. They lived, grew, and are now strong and flourishing.

The plan of sending out colonies from the church under my charge produced a result which I had not anticipated. The members who went out to organize the new churches were those most in harmony with my views, and most readily influenced by my counsels. My position in the Second Church was weakened by the measure. The restless, discordant members remained, and rendered my situation for a time unpleasant. I received no discourtesy worth noticing from any member of the church, but some of them were dissatisfied with my ministry. They were not



nourished by it. They had been used to a different kind of food. I did not blame them for their taste. I was deeply conscious of the imperfection of my ministry, and would gladly have made it more instructive and profitable. In a short time a way of deliverance from this embarrassment was suggested. It was proposed to erect a new house of worship in an inviting and growing part of the city; that the church should be divided; and that I might choose whether I would go to the new or remain in the old house, with the members who wished to continue under my ministry. The scheme was not fully matured, but awakened great interest, met with general approbation, and certainly opened an encouraging prospect for the Baptists of St. Louis.

The Lord, however, had another purpose concerning my labors. The health of my wife declined. The climate was supposed to be unfavorable to it. She was intensely anxious to return to her native State. I did not myself believe that the climate was unpropitious to her health; but I was unwilling to assume the responsibility of retaining her where she and some of her medical advisers thought her life was imperiled. I seemed shut up by Divine Providence to the necessity of changing my climate. On my visiting Richmond, the pulpit of the Grace Street Baptist Church being vacant by the resignation of Dr. Kingsford, I was called to occupy it. Attending the session of the General Association, held in Norfolk about this time, I was welcomed with such cordiality, and received such proofs of the general desire of the Baptists for my return to the State, that I yielded a reluctant compliance with the call of the Grace Street Church.

In the summer of 1852 I returned to St. Louis to dissolve my relation with the church, and make arrangements for my return to Virginia. In some respects the change was pleasant. I had not been long enough absent from Richmond to weaken the bonds which bound me to the brethren there. Among them I knew I should find more congenial society, and a less difficult field of labor. Still the change was a painful one. I had formed many dear friendships in St. Louis. It was, indeed, a difficult field of labor, but one of surpassing interest and promise. My prospect for usefulness was never more cheering than in the hour I was called to leave it. With a great struggle and a heavy heart I

left the growing emporium of what was then the West to return to the quiet city of Richmond.

In reviewing my life in the West, after the lapse of nearly thirty years, I may be indulged in a few remarks. I seriously question whether any portion of it, of equal length, has been so useful as that which I spent in St. Louis. While there I baptized probably one hundred and fifty persons, many of whom became valuable church members. The Second Church was about as strong when I resigned as it was when I assumed its pastorate. The organization of the Third and Fourth Churches marked an era in the progress of the St. Louis Baptists. The First Church had been merged into the Second; and this stood alone until the organization of the Third and Fourth.

In one respect I was greatly disappointed in my settlement in St. Louis. Judging from its size and commercial prosperity, I supposed that it wielded a religious influence in Missouri like that which Richmond exerted in Virginia. In this I was quite mistaken. The influence of the St. Louis Baptists in the State, when I resided there, was very inconsiderable. It was not the seat of any of the denominational Boards. The *Western Watchman*, a Baptist paper, was published there, but its circulation was limited and its influence feeble. Besides, there was, if I did not misinterpret the signs, a prejudice among the country brethren against metropolitan influence—a prejudice which has by no means been restricted to Missouri Baptists.

On the whole, I deem it a fortunate event in my life that I lived in St. Louis. It gave me a knowledge of mankind, which otherwise I should not have acquired. It taught me the necessity of self-reliance—a virtue for the cultivation of which my circumstances had been previously unfavorable. My intimate intercourse with brethren of widely different views corrected many of the stereotyped notions derived from my early training. I was especially favored in returning to my native State before there had been any material change of my tastes, habits and opinions, rendering me uncongenial with my early companions, and diminishing my power to do them good, I have known several instances of ministers returning to their old fields of labor, after many years of absence, to find that their influence was gone, and

their prospects of usefulness sadly beclouded. By the good providence of God, I was restored to my early field of labor in time to retain the influence which I had secured by nearly thirty years' labor in it.

Dr. Ryland says that Dr. Jeter was never "at home" in the West. While not a man of strong local attachments, he was greatly dependent on his surroundings. He never worked well, except in the lead, and not then, if hitched with a balky team. There was much, at that time, in the social condition of St. Louis which must have chafed and worried him. In his own church, there were restless and contentious elements which refused to bend to his kindly sway. His moderation was a frail barrier when set against the dictatorial spirit of extreme men. He was never an expert in dealing with cranky and factious people. Broad and progressive, he was, in his views; but he was cautious and not quick to take up with odd and new-fangled projects. He had men in his church whose notions he could not adopt, and who could not forgive him for disagreeing with them.

This made his situation awkward, and put a strain upon his nerves not easy to bear. His former lot had been cast with the staid and easy-going Virginians, and they had generally treated him with the utmost forbearance and kindness. It jostled him out of his equanimity to be confronted by the sharp and unyielding spirit of the new West. It made him restive and put him on the defensive.

One jarring experience he had, which I once heard him mention with gentle and unresentful sorrow, but

which, with his usual delicacy, he omitted from his "Recollections." I can now refer to it, I suppose, without offence, and even without the danger of identifying the party involved. There was one brother, then a conspicuous figure among the St. Louis Baptists, who gave him serious trouble. It was largely through his efforts that Dr. Jeter was induced to consider favorably the invitation to St. Louis. He was profuse in his protestations of friendship, and was unstinted in his pledges of co-operation and support. In going to that untried and difficult field, the Doctor felt quite sure that there was at least one man who would encircle him with his sympathy and cheer him in his toils.

But, alas! that brother's friendship was as the morning cloud. Soon after he reached St. Louis, the Doctor found that his ardor was beginning to cool, and in a short while he became openly hostile. He was soon as anxious to drive the pastor out, as he had been eager to bring him in. It was a bitter ordeal; and yet what pastor has not known the stings of such fickle and faithless men?

Dr. Jeter was never a man of affairs. He always said that he did not have time to make money, and for the details of business he had neither taste nor skill. It happened in some way, however, that during his residence in St. Louis, he bought a few unoccupied lots, in the suburbs of the city. These he held, until they became quite valuable, and by their sale, he realized an amount which, added to his regular income, enabled him in his later years to live in comfort, and even in modest luxury.

In 1852 he paid a visit to his friends in Richmond. He preached at the First Church on Sunday morning, and a great congregation assembled to hear him; but it proved to be one of his unlucky days. It was expected that he would do his best, but he fell a victim to his mental caprices and went utterly to wreck. After announcing his text and dragging heavily forward for a while, he came to an inglorious halt. He struggled desperately to recover, but at length, blind with confusion and chagrin, he asked the choir to sing a hymn and took his seat. Who the chorister of that memorable occasion was, history has forgotten to record, but it is amply authenticated that the brother responded to the unexpected call for his services by singing—

“ I love to steal awhile away.”

The hit, while unintended, was so crushingly apt that a wave of surprised laughter rippled over the entire audience. As he walked away from the church the Doctor remarked that he would be sorry to think that the Richmond people would judge his preaching abilities by that performance.

They did not. They knew him, and they knew also that he would sometimes fail in his sermons. He received soon after a gratifying proof that he was still held in unabated respect by the Richmond Baptists, in the call which was extended to him to become the pastor of the Grace Street Church. It was an unusual tribute that he was chosen to be pastor in a city where he had already served so long.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SEVENTEEN YEARS AT GRACE STREET CHURCH.

**I**N the early autumn of 1852 Dr. Jeter bade farewell to St. Louis, and turned his face towards Virginia. That the change was inexpressibly grateful to him, we can easily believe. Not that he loved Missouri less, but Virginia more. The three years which he spent in the West, were too full of earnest activity and usefulness, to allow him to be miserable. He never consumed, I suppose, one hour in empty lamentations or in anxious scheming to get back to his native State. He always looked upon his removal to St. Louis, as a manifest allotment of Providence, and accepted it in a spirit of quiet cheerfulness.

But his heart was in the Old Dominion. There he had made for himself a place which fitted him exactly, and, when out of it, he was unsphered. It is not often wise for a minister, after passing the meridian of life, to break up old ties and enter a new country. He is like a root out of dry ground. That peculiar environment of friendship, reputation and influence, which is the growth of years, never goes with him, and without it, he is never fully himself. It is a sad day, when an old man undertakes new business without capital. Dr.

Jeter was more than ordinarily independent of outward supports, and was never unhappy so long as he was closely occupied. And yet he yearned for that matured and discriminating sympathy which he could not find among new friends. He needed contact with old hearts. I doubt not that the happiest parts of the three years given to St. Louis, were those spent in visiting his friends in Virginia, or in anticipating or recalling those visits. I have reserved for this place, one of his letters written to his dear friend, Mrs. Archibald Thomas, in 1850, in which he unveils his heart, in its isolation and home-sickness.

*St. Louis, Mar. 6th, 1850.*

DEAR SISTER THOMAS:

I have been intending for some time to address you a letter, for the purpose of assuring you that your kindness to me made an impression on my heart which neither distance, nor change of circumstances, can efface. I should, on some accounts, have been pleased to see you on my last visit to Richmond, but the interview would have added to the pain of a separation, which, as it was, was quite enough for me to bear. I have not, even yet, gained fortitude sufficient to enable me to recur to that event with composure. I am very sure that could I have anticipated the scene which occurred in the First Baptist Church when I took leave of the members, I should have remained in Richmond. But an unseen hand guides our movements. I did not wish to leave Richmond; I preferred it to any abode on earth; and yet influences beyond my control impelled me onward to my decision. Eternity will, I trust, show that that decision was right. I had been long in Richmond; I did not know much desire was felt to retain me there; it was known that I had been invited to St. Louis; I should have rejoiced had there been a strong, earnest and general demonstration of desire for me to remain; but there was, to say the least, an indifference which I interpreted to be a

clear indication of my duty to remove, and my mind once made up, the thing was done.

You will very naturally wish to learn how I am progressing here. My situation is as pleasant as, in the absence of long-tryed and much-valued friends, it could be. We are keeping house, and paying a rent of \$360 per annum for a house about equal to mine in Richmond. We have a white servant—a German girl—who is quite equal to two colored servants. Mrs. Jeter is delighted with housekeeping, and her health is pretty good. A niece of hers came with us from Bedford, and a niece of mine has also spent the winter with us. Our church is in a very encouraging state. We have had a protracted meeting (it is just now suspended by bad weather), during which 21 have been baptized, many added by letter and confession, and the prospect of success is still fair. The church, so far as I can judge of it, is intelligent, harmonious, efficient and affectionate. I have a magnificent congregation, and have had during the winter, notwithstanding the extreme inclemency of the weather; but how much I am indebted to the curiosity to hear a strange preacher I cannot determine. The prospect of a large and uniform congregation is good. O, for grace!

I am expecting Mr. Page here shortly, on his way to California. Dr. J. H. Temple is relinquishing a splendid homœopathic practice to go to that region of gold and illusions. His family will all be broken up and scattered. Rebecca's father is also going, with dreams of a golden harvest. Indeed, Missouri is about to employ half her male population in the gold mines of California.

St. Louis is a place of great enterprise and rapidly-increasing wealth, but not so pleasant a residence as Richmond. The population is a mixture of French, Germans, Irish and Americans, collected from every State in the Union. The Americans, however, decidedly preponderate over all foreigners. The principal merchants and leading men are Anglo-Americans, and they have greatly the lead in social influence. Romanism is strong, but not destined, so far as I can observe, to increase much except by immigration. Thousands of persons who come to this country Romanists become first irreligious, and are afterwards converted to Protestantism. But there is a great work to be done in this



Western Valley—a mighty conflict to take place between error and truth—nor need we fear the result.

Tell the Doctor that Homœopathy is gaining ground here, and that its triumphs are among the most intelligent classes of the community. I do not believe, but desire that its lofty pretensions may be well founded. Poor Ward! I fear, from what I have seen, that he has been a sacrifice on the altar of party proscription. I am sorry, not for the Whigs, but for him.

St. Louis has been, since my arrival here, the healthiest place I have ever seen. I have preached but one funeral in our congregation since my arrival, and in all only two. We have, at present, no indications of the approach of cholera. Mrs. Jeter expects to pass through Richmond in May or June *en route* to Bedford, but is somewhat uncertain. My love to all your family as also those of J. Thomas and Bro. Wortham. How gladly would I pass a Sabbath in Richmond!

I am, with the highest regard,

Your greatly obliged friend and brother,

J. B. JETER.

*P. S.*—I had well-nigh forgotten, though specially requested, and most sincerely, I have no doubt, to send Mrs. J.'s love. J.

His object in returning to Virginia was to become the pastor of the Grace Street Baptist Church of Richmond.

That church was a child of the Second Baptist Church. It was the offspring of a cottage prayer-meeting, and had its birth in a private house on Duval Street, in the northwestern part of the city. When first organized, it assumed the name of the Third Baptist Church. Although it was then small and feeble, it had some choice men in its original constituency. Among these it is pleasant to record the names of Lewis L. Montague, Geo. Woodfin, Jno. B. Valentine, John Jacob and Bro. J. Weisiger, in

whose parlor the church was organized. In a little while, it outgrew its narrow quarters, and, largely with borrowed money, erected a plain brick house of worship at the corner of Marshall and Second Streets, and in that building had its habitation for thirteen years.

Its first pastor was Rev. Henry Keeling, for many years a prominent figure among the Richmond Baptists. He was a man of decided literary and theological culture, and was best known, perhaps, as editor of the *Baptist Preacher*, a sort of homiletical magazine which he published. From all I can learn, Mr. Keeling, though pastor from 1833 to 1837, never became very intimately identified with the church. He owned and occupied a handsome brick residence in the lower part of the city, and becoming convinced that his people were careless as to his support, because of the imposing domicile in which he dwelt, he addressed them a caustic letter, in which he reminded them that "he could not live on bricks and mortar." It was an intimation that for bread they had given him a stone. Possibly the church felt willing, after that letter, for him to try the experiment of subsisting on those innutritious substances, for it was not long before their connection was dissolved.

Upon his retirement, Rev. Lewis A. Alderson became pastor, who, after one year's service, went West, where he had a long and honorable career as a minister. During the vacancy, Rev. R. Ryland and a Mr. Barker, of the Virginia Baptist Seminary, alternately supplied the pulpit.

In July, 1836, Rev. James B. Taylor, just then retiring from the chaplaincy of the University of Virginia, accepted the charge of the church. This was, indeed, a fortunate arrangement. It was under his excellent training that the Second Church had been equipped for that high career of usefulness which it has since run, and now, with his ripened experience, systematic habits, and almost incomparable pastoral tact, he came to perform a similar service for the Third Church.

Dr. Taylor was cautious and undemonstrative, but he was a great leader. He reigned supreme, but he was careful not to throw out the ensigns of his authority. He gloved his iron hand in velvet. Through his persuasion, and not without decided opposition, on the part of some brethren, the church abandoned its house on Marshall Street, crossed Broad, and erected another and better edifice at the corner of Grace and Foushee Streets. That house is an abiding monument to the energy, sagacity and foresight of James B. Taylor. He marked with a prophet's eye the coming progress of the city, and seized the most strategic and central point in the line of that progress, for the location of the new house. Much of the money for that building was secured through his personal efforts, and was contributed by persons who were not members of his church, and, in many cases, not Baptists at all. When, in 1845, the church took possession of its new quarters, its former name was discarded, and it became the Grace Street Baptist Church. But Dr. Taylor was not destined to remain with the church. He became the

Corresponding Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1846, and Rev. David Shaver was chosen as his successor. Mr. Shaver was a brilliant and scholarly man, but his pastorate was cut short by ill health. Ever since he has been debarred from the pulpit by throat troubles, but he has won distinction in the sphere of Christian journalism. He still lives, and is at this writing connected with the *Christian Index* of Atlanta, Ga.

He was followed in the pastorate of the church by Dr. Edward Kingsford. He was an Englishman, of generous culture and high Christian character. He was also an able preacher and, unlike Dr. Taylor, rigid and severe in his methods. He had the eye of a critic, and against that which seemed wrong in his sight he was never slow to utter his censure. With his exacting and imperious spirit, it was not easy to maintain harmony with an institution so intensely democratic as an American Baptist Church. After a useful and, in the main, harmonious pastorate of several years, he resigned in the spring of 1852.

I may pause here to say that I never saw Dr. Kingsford but once. That was in the chapel at Richmond College, probably in 1857, when he delivered an address to the ministerial students. His picture, as he stood on the little platform, is printed distinctly on my memory. To my boyish eye, he was the perfection of ministerial dignity—in dress faultless, in manner solemn and lofty, and with a face betokening immense conviction and unbending will. He was thick-set, well-rounded, cleanly shaven, with

a tinge of British floridity in his complexion, a neatly-fitting wig and a snowy cravat, and was then probably sixty years of age. From his address, a half-hour in length, I learned more as to the ambitious conceits, crooked devices and ugly jealousies of preachers than I had learned in all my previous life. It was a strong address, but too severely critical and sarcastic, to be well suited to a lot of simple-hearted college boys.

It was a noteworthy coincidence that in each of his Richmond pastorates Dr. Jeter had an Englishman for his predecessor.

He received his call to the Grace Street Church while on a visit to Virginia in 1852. It has been hinted that the church was influenced, in part, at least, in selecting him for its pastor, by the hope that many members of the First Church, resident in the western part of the city, would cast their lots with him in his new field. He, too, may have cherished this hope, and if he did, he ought not to be blamed, for at that time the church was not strong, either in wealth or numbers.

If he and his people had flattered themselves with this hope, they were doomed to disappointment. The ecclesiastical tie is usually stronger than that which exists between the pastor and the people. And it ought to be. It is said that at the time of his installation, Dr. Ryland, with that bluntness of speech which is a part of himself, curtly announced that it need not be expected that the First Church would furnish any recruits for the re-enforcement of Grace Street. He said they were not coming, and

they did not. Mr. Sands has said facetiously that Dr. Ryland must have been a prophet, inasmuch as only one member of the First Church ever followed Dr. Jeter, and that was an accomplished and lovely Christian woman, who, in after-years, became, first the mistress of his heart, and then a member of his flock. The record shows that there were occasional transfers of membership from the First to Grace Street, but they were made for convenience, and not through his solicitations. But Dr. Jeter had no reason for discouragement. While his new charge was not so conspicuous or wealthy as the old, there was much in it to enlist his heart and inspire his hopes.

He found himself sustained by an excellent corps of Christian workers. John B. Valentine, one of his oldest members, was a brother of unique character. Dr. Jeter said of him, at his funeral, that he was cast in a rugged mould, and, but for the grace of God, would have been a dangerous man. He possessed a blunt, but kindly sort of piety, a wonderful memory, and was looked upon as an animated Biblical encyclopædia. He was an eagle-eyed listener, and would not hesitate to rise to his feet in the midst of a sermon and say: "Bro. Jeter, you did not quote that Scripture correctly." But he did it pleasantly.

John Jacob and his son, Caleb, were then prominent in the councils of the church—both deacons, and men of earnest devotion.

Wellington Goddin, another deacon, was in his prime. Rich, spotless in his life, trustful and trusted, an ardent lover of his church, he knew no higher

honor than to uphold Dr. Jeter in every enterprise. Prof. Geo. E. Dabney, of Richmond College, was a gentleman of classic tastes and deep piety—never notably active, but always on hand and true. Dr. A. J. Coons, who followed Dr. Jeter from St. Louis, was a courtly man, a confidential friend and ready helper of his pastor. John E. Henderson, while irascible in his temper, was so evidently sincere, conscientious and attentive, that he was of great value in the church. It was, as I can gratefully testify, his peculiar joy to help his pastor.

A. H. Sands, then a gifted young lawyer, was chosen a deacon soon after Dr. Jeter came, and was, perhaps, the most intellectual and progressive leader in the church. To this list ought to be added many others—the Rylands, Crutchfields, Evanses, Minors, Manlys, Starkes, etc., who accorded to the pastor the highest and most affectionate support. They revered his character, admired his preaching and delighted to honor him. They esteemed it a rare fortune to have him for their pastor.

The joy of his pastorate was vastly enhanced by having in his church Dr. J. B. Taylor and his devout and exemplary family. This household accorded to him thorough and affectionate sympathy. Soon after he came to the church he was gladdened by the accession of Dr. A. M. Poindexter to its membership. Dr. Poindexter was one of his most beloved friends, a man so intensely intellectual and metaphysical in his order of mind, that his presence was a perpetual inspiration to Dr. Jeter.

These fragmentary statements, while they give an

inadequate description of the church, will at least indicate the high and stimulating quality of the congregation. In preaching to such people, Dr. Jeter felt that his best efforts were appreciated.

It is creditable to Dr. Kingsford that, when he ascertained that Dr. Jeter was to be his successor, he worked with great diligence to cleanse the church of certain disorders which then existed. In this unselfish undertaking he was eminently successful.

When Dr. Jeter came he found the church in excellent condition. Dr. Kingsford was a man of peculiar mould—rigid and censorious in his very nature, and on some questions he and Dr. Jeter differed very widely, but he was a man of lofty Christian principle, and not really capable of an ignoble act. It is one of the tests of a true pastor, that he is ready, in good faith, to pave the way for the success of the man who is to come after him. That Dr. Kingsford did.

In entering on his work Dr. Jeter found quite a debt upon the church, but in a little while it was removed. With this burden off, he addressed himself to the task of enlarging the capacity and improving the appearance of the church building. A handsome portico was built in front, side galleries were added, and other changes made which greatly increased the comfort and attractiveness of the house.

In calling him, the church offered a salary of \$1000. This, he said in his letter of acceptance, was inadequate for his support, and for purposes of beneficence or hospitality; but as it was as much as the church could safely promise, he would try to live on it.



It seems to be agreed generally that the time spent at the Grace Street Church was in many respects the most useful portion of Dr. Jeter's life. He was just fifty years of age when he returned from the West. His health was well-nigh perfect, his mind was at the zenith of its power, and his field was fresh and inviting. The older people say that he did the best preaching of his life at Grace Street. He sometimes undertook serial sermons, and while they were thoroughly prepared and full of instruction, they were not generally popular. He always had full congregations in the morning, but it often came to pass that his evening services were thinly attended. This did not seem to discourage him. He was a sober, real man, who was not much affected by appearances. The main point with him was to do his part well.

It frequently happens that men do their best work in a quiet and unnoticed way. Dr. Jeter's career at Grace Street was not brilliant. He had then passed the more ambitious and popular point in his course. He enjoyed a national fame, and was greatly beloved by the denomination to which he belonged. He had been successful so long, that it was assumed that he would succeed in all that he undertook. It is not easy, therefore, to make the reader understand the value of his achievements in his last pastorate.

It is simple justice to say, however, that the church was uniformly prosperous under his administration. It was his custom to hold annually a protracted meeting, and for those special services he always made it a point to secure ministerial help. He never

seemed willing to undertake a meeting alone. In 1824 I entered Richmond College, and, while there, attended two of his meetings. They were both excellent in their methods and results. In one he was aided by Dr. Cornelius Tyree, a noble preacher, whose evangelical labors have won thousands of souls to Christ; in the other he had Rev. J. A. Broaddus, then the brilliant young pastor of the Charlottesville Baptist Church. He attracted vast congregations, and his simple and eloquent sermons moved the people wonderfully. But it is no disparagement to those brethren to say that nothing seemed to stir sinners so mightily as Dr. Jeter's after-talks. His exhortations, when he was thoroughly aroused, were simply overwhelming. In his several other meetings he had the help of J. L. Reynoldson, T. W. Greer, Daniel Witt, A. M. Poindexter and others.

During his pastorate a colony went out from the Grace Street Church and established itself near the corner of Clay and Fourth Streets. It occupied a neat frame building, and was known as the Fourth Street Baptist Church. It elected Rev. E. J. Willis as its pastor, and began its course as a "Test Church." It ran well until the war, and then it passed out of existence.

That organization had a peculiar history, and inasmuch as Dr. Jeter was closely connected with it, some of the principal and related facts must be given here.

Dr. Kingsford was an ultra-temperance man. He maintained that no church member should be allowed to engage in the liquor traffic, and for the habitual

or moderate drinker he had no toleration. So strong were his convictions, and so stern and pertinacious was he in the advocacy of his views, that he succeeded, in a large measure, in making his church a total abstinence body. At least the temperance sentiment, if not predominant, was intense, outspoken and aggressive. The church was not a "test church" by any formal legislation, but practically it fell not far short of it.

It may be well to explain here what was meant by a "test church." At that time the temperance conflict had taken on a peculiar aspect in some portions of Virginia. The popular agitation on the question had, naturally enough, gone into the churches, and not a few of them had adopted a rule denying membership to all persons who would not abstain from the sale or use of strong drink. It became a pivotal issue, and was made a test of fellowship. It was called the "test question," and those churches adopting it were known as "test churches."

Dr. Jeter had a singular experience in connection with the Temperance Reformation in Virginia. It is due to him to say that he was, from the beginning of his public career, a temperance man. As a matter of history, he and Daniel Witt, in that simple agreement into which they entered in the days of their youth to abstain from all intoxicating drinks, formed what was the first temperance society ever known in the State of Virginia. That compact was not intended as a reformatory measure, but as a covenant between themselves, and designed only for their own benefit.

Abner W. Clopton, who was really the founder and leader of the Temperance Reformation in Virginia, admitted that he received his first suggestion as to the propriety of total abstinence from Daniel Witt. Under Clopton's bold and contagious championship, a splendid crusade against alcohol and all its attendant evils was waged in the State. That movement was only a formal attempt, to apply the principle which had prompted the two Bedford boys to make their mutual pledge.

Jeter and Witt entered the contest with ardent enthusiasm. They fought side by side with Clopton and other good men, for the rescue of the people from the bondage of drunkenness. In those days this odious and destructive vice infested the churches and found sanction in almost every home. It was a terrible evil, and was rendered all the more deadly by the fact that it was supported by the religious sentiment of the times. Men and women, and even Christian ministers, freely indulged in this insidious and debasing habit, without losing their positions, either in society or in the churches. Even Clopton himself, the apostle of temperance in Virginia, drank habitually, though not excessively, at the time he began his movement in favor of reformation. When, in 1825, he first met Daniel Witt, he was astonished to find that he was totally abstinent; but while he approved his course, he did not at once follow his example.

But Clopton was a bold and decided man. When once he broke his chains, he became an uncompromising enemy of intemperance in every form. He

organized the "Virginia Society for the Promotion of Temperance," and opened the campaign in dead earnest. He was at once confronted by the most formidable and even malignant opposition. Churches, ministers, politicians, distillers, drunkards, and even many gentle women, joined battle against him. The excitement was wide-spread and bitter. In that memorable conflict Dr. Jeter bore an active and eminent part.

He was looked upon as a leader in the temperance "craze," and was often branded as an extremist and fanatic.

The result was a revolution. The reformers won the battle. A temperance revival swept the country, and public sentiment was re-cast. Various organizations intended to aid the good cause sprang into existence. Lodges, mass-meetings, regalia, banners, picnics and celebrations became the fashion of the times. The temperance orator was the reigning sensation.

In a little while, extreme and violent men crowded the ranks of the reformers and clamored for the mastery. Temperance itself went mad, and was put to shame in the house of its friends. Dissension arose among the leaders. Jeter, alarmed by the extravagance and fanaticism of certain prominent advocates of the cause, came to a pause. He could not sanction some of the methods then in vogue for the overthrow of alcohol. He never modified his convictions, but he became so moderate and conservative in his modes of warfare that the extremists fell out with him. He was practically ruled out as an apostate by the

more advanced friends of the reformation. His name was not accounted worthy of mention in connection with a revolution of which he was really one of the chief authors.

I do not mean to defend all of Dr. Jeter's positions on the liquor question. It is possible that in his contest with the extreme wing of the reformers he became a little extreme in his conservatism, and was driven into positions untenable and dangerous. It may have been that his attitude was unconsciously modified by the fact that, when he came to the pastorate of the First Church, he found some of the most prominent, devout and useful men engaged in the liquor traffic. For these men he had sincere respect, and possibly looked too forbearingly upon their business because he loved them.

On a question like this the best men often part. Find an evidently good man with a marked sin or a wrong business, put him on trial, and it will always happen that a Christian jury will disagree. Some will look at the man's fault, and be willing to destroy the man in order to get rid of his sin; others will love the man, and be ready to condone his sin because of that love; while yet others abhor the sin and faithfully strive to save the man.

It has always seemed to me that Dr. Jeter allowed his love of men and his hopeful nature to render him too lenient and tolerant in his views of certain amusements and certain forms of business. At any rate, he convinced himself that it was not sinful or even improper for Christian men to make or sell ardent spirits, and while he urged men not to drink,

he was utterly opposed to their exclusion from the church so long as they drank in moderation.

He and Dr. Kingsford had a sharp newspaper controversy on the ecclesiastical aspects of the temperance question. I need hardly say that it ended where it began, so far as the disputants were concerned, except, possibly, that Jeter was made more conservative, and Kingsford more emphatic and extreme.

When Dr. Jeter came to his Grace Street charge, he, of course, brought with him his peculiar views on this vexatious question. But he found the church in quite a different mood. The impress of Dr. Kingsford was upon it. It was not long before he and his brethren were brought face to face on the question as to whether a liquor-seller ought to be received into the church. A certain Baptist brother, in that unfortunate business, indicated a desire to join the church. Dr. Jeter openly favored his reception, maintaining that he was a good man, a true Baptist, and ought not to be denied fellowship.

But some of his people were against him. The brother was not allowed to come in. The Doctor took it to heart, and did not acquiesce in the wishes of his brethren. He argued, agitated and persevered until a majority came into sympathy with his views.

It was a costly triumph. It gave deep distress to some of his people, and produced, temporarily, grievous estrangements. The offended element, no longer happy under his reign, determined to withdraw, and the result was the organization of the "test church" already mentioned.

Upon the dismemberment of this church, a few years afterwards, its leading spirits quietly returned to the mother church, and became earnest and loving supporters of the old pastor. It is bad enough that these collisions between pastors and people sometimes come, but let us thank the Lord that they do not last forever.

In dismissing this subject, I must repeat that, in my humble judgment, some of Dr. Jeter's positions were illogical and dangerous in their influence. If all men had been as pure and self-mastered as he was, his teachings would have been exactly suited to their wants. In basing his arguments upon what he was, he drew conclusions which did not meet the exigencies of weak and tempted men. His temperance creed was ample for him, but when feebler men undertook to live by it they sometimes fell. It often happened that unscrupulous whiskey-traders and besotted wine-bibbers seized his premises, and worked out conclusions which bolstered them in wrong-doing. We may not help a good cause by harsh and extreme methods, but we may easily injure it by a too amiable and incautious conservatism.

Dr. Jeter's pastorate at Grace Street included the four years of the civil war. In a brief historical sketch which the church put forth in 1867, grateful mention is made of the fact that the pastor stood faithfully at his post during all those days of alarm, privation and danger.

His young men, of course, joined the Southern Army, and his church was sadly crippled in its enterprises and resources. He had, at the time, an in-



adequate income, but he bore his ills and necessities with cheerfulness. He did little more than to hold the church together, cheer his people in their fears and sorrows, and encourage them to wait for brighter times. He did not lack a congregation during the war. While his own people were scattered, the city was thronged with soldiers, government operatives and refugees.

He was kept busy by the constant demands upon his services. He was flooded with letters from every part of the country, bespeaking his attentions to the sick, the wounded and the strangers in the city. He was never connected in any way with the army. He occasionally went out and preached to the soldiers in their encampments. He was also very considerate in his attentions to those who were confined in the hospitals and prisons. I remember that I accompanied him on one occasion in a visit to Libby Prison. A son of Dr. Barnas Sears was an inmate of that oft-maligned institution, and his father wrote to the Doctor, asking him to visit him. It was a pleasant interview. Dr. Jeter spoke to the young man of his father in the most cordial terms, and offered to render him any relief or aid that was proper or practicable.

As an original question, he was opposed to secession. He deplored the necessity for war, and sought in his way to prevent it. If all men had possessed his pacific and Christly temper, the country would never have been torn by strife or stained with blood. But he went with his people. He was emphatically a war man. Espousing the Southern cause, he ar-

dently prayed for the success of the Confederate arms. He watched the course of events with profound solicitude, rejoicing over victories, mourning over defeats and cherishing hopes, even in the midst of thickening disasters. But he was not bitter; this he could not be. For those against him he had no enmity, and never uttered malignant prayers. He loved his chosen cause, but he had no curses for his enemies.

The Richmond people will never forget one laughable incident in the Doctor's war record. For several weeks after the secession of Virginia the city of Richmond was filled with wild and alarming rumors. Everything was involved in chaos. No one knew what was to be, and in the excited state of the popular mind even the wildest and most incredible stories were readily believed. One Sunday afternoon the report spread through the city that the "Pawnee," a United States war vessel, was coming up the James River, with a view of bombarding the city. The people were filled with consternation. There were really no arrangements for defence against this sudden visit of the wicked "Pawnee."

Two or three military companies were sent down the river to occupy the heights with their flying artillery, and do what they could to drive back the invader. Every man's conduct on the occasion was the dictate of his own feelings. Some fled, some gave way to helpless fear, some climbed the hills to see what was coming and some armed for the fray. Of this valiant and heroic class Dr. Jeter was a shining representative. He secured an old shot-gun, which, some said, was without lock or load, and set

forth for the scene of war. It must have been a curious sight, indeed, to behold him on a Sunday afternoon, double-quicking down Broad Street with an empty shot-gun, going alone to engage a United States man-of-war.

This story enjoyed a wide circulation, and took on various additions as it went. He was often rallied on the subject, but took it in the brightest humor. He said that he did not know that he could render any valuable aid in repelling the threatened attack, but that in such an emergency it became every citizen to do his part, and that he hoped at least that his example might quicken the courage of others.

On the 19th of August, 1861, his home was once more rendered desolate by the ruthless invasion of death. Mrs. Charlotte E. Jeter, his third wife, died after a lingering illness, at the home of her mother in Bedford. For more than twelve years—among the most eventful and happy of his life—she had shared his burdens and honors. She was a charming woman, not highly cultivated, but gently reared, lovely in person, full of quiet self-respect, ardent in her attachments, almost unduly candid in her manner, devoted to her home, not given to extravagance, modestly proud of her husband and ever ambitious of his success. In his saintly companionship she grew steadily in spirituality and usefulness. The Doctor was greatly devoted to her, and her death was a grievous blow to him.

In the summer of 1862 I was with him in Powhatan County, and one evening, at the supper table, some members of the company ventured to banter

him on the subject of matrimony. The untimely jest transfixed his heart, and, dropping his knife and fork, he said, as if in a reverie,—“ Ah, my noble, faithful wife! how gladly I would walk around this world, barefoot and alone, to see her again!” The outburst of emotion was so sudden and real in its excitement, that it hushed the playful company into silence.

By her death his home was shattered, and during much of the time that he was a widower, he found a congenial retreat in the family of Deacon Wellington Goddin. In her dying moment, his second wife had tenderly commended him to the care of Mrs. Archibald Thomas, in whose sympathy he found the sweetest solace. It was a providence, equally gracious, which, in the sorrow that fell upon him in 1861, threw him into the household of the Goddin's,—a gentle, beautiful family it was, bound to him by strongest ties, and ever happy in ministering to his wants.

It is painful to reflect that, in the eyes of coarse and suspicious people, Dr. Jeter's domestic character was often misunderstood. From his frequent marriages, they were quick to judge that he was a man of shallow sensibilities, and not capable of ardent attachments or deep sorrows. Such a thought was injustice to him. His conjugal relations were always happy, and in the loss of his several wives, he suffered an anguish which only a true and real man can know. When bereft of wifely fellowship and sympathy, his isolation was simply intolerable. He was obliged by the very necessities of being, to appeal for support and cheer to those whose love he could safely trust.

After his bereavement he quietly resumed his pastoral tasks, and did what he could for his Master under all the excitements of the times. The war was raging, and the beleaguered city was a scene of perpetual alarm and uproar.

Many of his friends had fled from the city, and he felt keenly the loneliness of his situation. Mrs. Archibald Thomas and her family had sought a refuge at Pittsylvania Court-House, and had left their beautiful mansion, at the corner of Marshall and Second Streets, in charge of Mrs. Mary C. Dabbs. This accomplished Christian woman was destined to exert a marked influence over the events of his later life. I introduce here several letters written about this time to Mrs. Thomas, or her son-in-law, Dr. Wortham. These, written in the freedom of friendship, and with no thought of publication, will indicate his character as a letter-writer, while they will also attest the strength of his devotion to Mrs. Thomas and her household. They furnish also a vivid picture of the grim times of war, and show with what feelings he watched the conflict when at its worst. They will also enable the reader to see how gradually his heart went out again in search of one who would gladden him with the smile of her love, and how, in God's kind providence, he found her.

*Richmond, June 15, 1862.*

DEAR BROTHER WORTHAM:

I assure you that the kind regards of yourself and your family, and of Sister Thomas, are cordially reciprocated by me. I was delighted to receive a letter from you, but the pleasure was somewhat marred by the information that none of you were quite well.

But, however, as your sickness was slight, and perhaps more low spirits than sickness, I will not deprive myself of the gratification of supposing that you are all fully restored to health and spirits by this time. Please accept my congratulations on your recovery, and the very marked improvement in your appearances. The girls are florid, Sister Thomas has picked up considerably, you are as active as a boy and Sister Wortham is right fleshy. Well, if you are not all just as I have imagined, it is because the all-wise Father has seen that it is better to exercise you with trials suited to make you holier, and to promote your eternal interests. So, still I congratulate you. See Rom. 5 : 3, 4.

I have been slightly sick since I saw you, and sick on the days of the great battle in the neighborhood—the last time that I should have chosen for the purpose. But sickness does not consult our taste or convenience. I am now quite well, but considerably emaciated. I am really afraid that I am about to fall back to my former skeleton condition. It seems to be a pity that there cannot be a more equal distribution of flesh among animals of the human species. Have you not observed that this species of mammalia are subject to greater extremes in this respect, especially in the direction of obesity, than any other? If, in proportion as my body is attenuated, my mind could be subliterated—this word is used in its secondary, not its primary sense—I might well endure the combined process. But, alas! whether the body expands or contracts, the mind remains the same feeble, shrivelled, inert thing.

I called for a few minutes on Sister Dabbs in the old, familiar, hospitable mansion. Things looked pretty much as usual, but the well-known faces by which I have been so frequently greeted in that abode were not there. And it is, I think, good that they are not there. I have no question of your wisdom in leaving the city. I wish all the women, children, non-combatants and cowards (I don't include any of you in this last class), except such as are employed in the hospitals or shops, were comfortably situated in secure places remote from Richmond. Provisions here are very scarce, and have reached famine prices: butter is selling at \$1.25 per pound, bacon at from 50 to 75 cents, eggs \$1.00 per dozen, chickens \$1.00 a piece, and small and lean at that, and other

things in the same proportion. Some efforts are being made to increase the supplies for the city. I hope they may succeed; if they do not, we shall not, I trust, starve, but we shall be pinched. Now, the fewer that are here, the more they will have in proportion for their support. Beside, the city is in danger of being shelled, and in that event, it will be necessary for all not engaged in service, and willing to bear the perils of a bombardment, to leave the city, and very difficult for them to do it. I think you should feel more than satisfied that you are away from danger, and, in a measure, free from the excitement prevailing here.

I can give you very little information about the war which you do not obtain through the papers. There is much less apprehension that McClellan will get here (except he should come as a prisoner) than there was a few weeks ago. The battle at Dreury's Bluff put an end to the danger that the gun-boats will reach Richmond. The battle of the 31st May and the 1st June has damped the ardor of the Federal army in its march to this city. Jackson's victories in the Valley have spoiled the programme of the young Napoleon. The city is rife with rumors to-day. I hardly need to name them; they are all favorable, and if true, you will hear them in due time. The probability of foreign intervention is certainly increasing. There is extreme suffering in the manufacturing districts of England; multitudes are demanding labor; to get labor, they must have cotton; to get cotton, there must be peace; and to secure peace, there must be intervention. I am expecting it. Meanwhile, success attends our arms. The country is invaded, oppressed, suffering, but not subjugated. Let us take courage. The Lord reigns; He can still the tumult of the people, calm the angry passions of men, and turn the darkness of night into the brightness of the morning.

This is Sunday; the afternoon has been rainy, and the leisure secured by the rain has given birth to this letter. I am lonely here. My friends are almost all gone; the Goddin's are staying in the country near the city. Walker and myself are keeping Widower's Hall. Your friends here are well.

My best regards to your family and Sister Thomas. Shall be pleased to hear from you again. Yours truly,

J. B. JETER.

*Richmond, Sept. 10, 1862.*

MRS. DR. WORTHAM :

*Dear Sister.*—I promised the Doctor to write to you, and though the promise was expected to be fulfilled during his stay in Richmond, its fulfillment will not, I presume, be less acceptable now. It is hardly worth my while to write you the news, as you, no doubt, see the daily papers. The city yesterday was full of most exciting and agreeable rumors. I need not state them—if true, you will hear them; if false, you would better not hear them. The news of the last few weeks, confirmed beyond dispute, is sufficient to fill our hearts with joy and gratitude, and inspire us with confidence in the ultimate success of our Confederate cause. The triumph of our arms has been wonderful, almost miraculous. The best informed and most reliable witnesses testify that on the late battle-fields of Manassas the loss of the Federals exceeded by ten times that of the Confederates. The passage of our army into Maryland and approach of the army of Smith to Cincinnati, are exciting intense interest in the South, and great consternation in the North. The next thirty days are probably pregnant with events deeply affecting the destiny of this continent.

Dr. W. F. Broaddus was here last week from Washington on parole. His object was to secure a release for many prisoners, himself among the rest, held as hostages for certain Union men held as prisoners by the Confederate government. He succeeded in his purpose, and left for Washington last Sunday. He is well, in fine spirits, and will lay in a fund of anecdotes that will furnish him illustrations, in and out of the pulpit, for the balance of his life. He is hopeful that a political crisis is approaching at the North.

I called at the corner of Marshall and Second Streets a few evenings since. I called partly from old associations, and partly from new, and had a pleasant visit. Things were looking as usual, except that the familiar old faces—I do not mean exactly *old* faces, for some of them are quite young, but simply those to which I had become well accustomed—were absent. Well, I have something bad to tell. Let Miss Callie prepare for tears. It was stated that cat and kitten had been absent for a fortnight, and serious doubts were entertained whether their departure was



not final. Alas! how uncertain are all our terrestrial delights! By the way, there is a supposed connection between cats and old maids; but what it is, for the life of me, I cannot recollect. Whether the relation is one of attraction or repulsion, and whether it is indicative of good or evil, I cannot say. I have the impression that it is portentous. It may, therefore, be more a matter of congratulation than grief that cat and kitten have *vamosed*. Now, don't understand me as insinuating that Miss C. is an old maid, or approaching the venerable condition indicated by that phrase,—far from it. I insist that a maid should not be called "old" at a period of life when that appalling attribute would not be applied to any other human being. She is not old at sixty, but merely approaching the period of life at which that honored but dreaded state begins. In writing of cats and Miss C., old maids just happened to come into my mind, and as I thought I wrote, and I have had a deal of trouble to set myself right in the premises.

My age and gravity demand that I should write with more seriousness; but please bear in mind that letters carry the impress of those to whom, rather than by whom, they are written; for the obvious reason that as they are intended to please, they are adapted, as best the writer can adapt them, to the tastes of those who are to receive them. And yet, really, I would not have you to form an opinion of the estimation in which I hold your taste by this letter. Wishing to fulfill a promise, and without anything special to communicate, I have written just such a letter as might have been expected.

In the middle of the last sentence I was called to see a messenger from one of Brother Tyree's churches in Powhatan, urging me to go up and aid in a protracted meeting. I came down last week from Peterville, where we had a prosperous meeting—ten or twelve converts, several inquirers—and the meeting last Sunday was transferred to Fine Creek Church, and the meeting is said to be encouraging. I must decide by five o'clock whether I will take the boat. Shall probably go.

You are kept advised, I presume, of all local news by your sprightly correspondent at the corner. Dover Association meets on Church Hill next week. Week after the Rappahannock

Association meets at Upper King and Queen, which I purpose to attend. Hope you are growing fleshy. My kindest regards to your mother, whose many favors have left an ineffaceable impression on my heart. My compliments to the girls, loved for their parents' sake. Callie will see that she is not forgotten. My regards to your old man.

Affectionately,

J. B. J.

P. S.—Bettie, to me the dearest of children, was well when I heard from her.

J.

In the letter which follows, he confesses that he has fallen a victim to the witchery of the fair occupant of the Thomas mansion. It is written in a strain so sportive and facetious, that every reader will peruse it with unwonted zest and pleasure.

*Richmond, April 15, 1863.*

DEAR SISTER THOMAS:

I have been for some time intending to write to you, and I embrace the opportunity afforded by this inclement morning to put in execution my purpose. I congratulate you on your settlement in the quiet and, I trust, plentiful village at Pittsylvania Court-House. I should think it would add very much to your comfort if the Doctor would open a tavern. It would remind you pleasantly of the hospitality so long and generously dispensed to your friends, at the well-known stand at the corner of Marshall and Second Streets. Thousands shared in that ever-flowing hospitality, and none more gratefully than your humble servant. Your removal has, no doubt, proved a serious loss to a wide circle of obliged friends; and your own heart, so thoroughly practiced in the rites of hospitality, must have been under painful restraints in a boarding-house. The disastrous times on which we are fallen not justifying, or even admitting, the munificent hospitality of your spacious city home, in past years, it would seem that the nearest approach that can now be made to it is for the Doctor to open a hotel, and permit you to preside, as you know so well how to do, at its board. You might fancy yourself at your city home

dispensing your bounteous hospitality to your delighted and obliged guests. You would bring patronage to the inn, but certainly no profit to its proprietor, unless the style of your living should be greatly contracted from its former sumptuousness. I can assure you, I would go quite out of my way to spend a night at such a hotel as you would preside over.

The mention of the mansion at the corner of Second and Marshall Streets has awakened thoughts not entirely free from emotion. Your removal from the city, with your highly-esteemed family, at a time when so many of my friends were being scattered as chaff before the wind, was to me, as it was to many, a sad event. But how little I was aware of the consequences that were to flow from it. Guilelessly I visited the spot, so familiar to me, and where I had enjoyed so many pleasures in years departed. It so happened, or rather, it was so ordered, that you had employed a witch to reside in your house, and take care of your furniture. Thus was I brought within the influence of her charm. I listened to the voice of the Syren, and was captivated. From the love of the place, or its occupant, or from both these influences, my visit was repeated. The oftener I frequented the place, the more I delighted to be there. The remainder of the story may be easily conjectured. I was soon brought under the spell of the witch. I was charmed, won, captured, spell-bound, and, at length, not reluctantly, yielded myself to the mystic influence. I have loved to visit that corner for years; but if I take even a greater pleasure in visiting it now than friendship could inspire, in former times, though that was of no ordinary measure, you must ascribe it to the witch—nay, to yourself, who placed the witch directly in my path, and, by so doing, rendered inevitable the consequences which have followed. As you are, in some sense, responsible for these results, I must beg of you a favor, by which, as the case may be, their mischiefs may be diminished, or their advantages augmented; and I charge you, by all the claims of friendship, and on pain of incurring my displeasure (which, by the way, is no very serious matter), that you promptly grant it. It is, that the witch, or widow (which is the same thing in my vocabulary), may be permitted to receive me as a boarder in your princely mansion, until such time as it may suit your convenience—at no distant day, I

hope—to re-occupy it. She approves of the application. I cannot be happy elsewhere, while she is there. I promise to take the best possible care of her, and I am persuaded that she will be no less careful of your interests than she has heretofore been. Your early compliance with this request by letter will add to the many obligations which your kindness has already imposed on me, and which it will ever be my pleasure to acknowledge.

Having finished the introduction to my letter, and disposed of the trivial matters, I now come to grave matters—war, battles, and, lastly, the price of turnip salad. But really, I presume, you have heard so much on these subjects that it would be quite refreshing to you to receive a letter having no reference to them. I am sorry I mentioned them. I have nothing new to say about them—nothing but what you can learn from the papers. The war rages, battles are impending, and market prices are enormous. Peace is in the future—how far, none can tell. Meanwhile there is no ground for discouragement in the Confederacy. Our armies are brave, our generals are skillful, the enemy is defeated or faltering at every point, and good crops in the approaching season (which the Lord in mercy grant) will free us from the danger of want. I look hopefully to the end. A Christian should be discouraged by nothing. Even starvation would but accelerate his progress to heaven. But how much more easy is it to preach in this strain than it is to live in harmony with the doctrine! If we only had full confidence in God, in His wisdom, power and goodness, we should not be greatly troubled if the world were on fire, and the elements were melting with fervent heat, or if, what might be still harder to bear, Lincoln should succeed in subjugating the South, and reducing it to the rule of the Abolitionists.

I have not seen Mrs. Ryland and Bertie for several days, though they are doubtless well and happy. I have visited the Corner occasionally since they came to the city, and have had the pleasure of seeing them. I congratulate you on Carrie's marriage, especially as it meets, as I suppose it must, your entire approbation. I am so earnest an advocate for matrimony that I think a bad match is better than celibacy, provided it is not too bad. For my own part, I would positively rather marry a witch than not to be married at all. At the same time, I can truly say

that I look upon it as the sorest calamity of my life that I have been under the necessity of marrying so frequently.

Present my very best regards to the Doctor and his lady, and the gay birds of their nest, now putting forth their brightest plumage. And now permit me to subscribe myself, if not among your oldest, at least, among your most sincere, and your most obliged friends,

J. B. JETER.

*Richmond, July 13, 1863.*

DEAR DOCTOR WORTHAM:

I received not long since your congratulatory letter, for which accept my thanks. I cannot be sufficiently grateful to the Giver of all my mercies that he has bestowed on me a companion so eminently fitted to promote my enjoyment and usefulness.

For the last few weeks there has been greater excitement in the city than I have ever before seen. The advance of Lee's army into Pennsylvania, the fate of Vicksburg, the hourly expectation, for several days, of an attack on Richmond, with a thousand rumors, stirred the public anxiety to the utmost intensity. The highest exhilaration produced by exaggerated reports of Lee's success in Pennsylvania was succeeded by a dense gloom at the fall of Vicksburg, and the *quasi* defeat of Lee. The public mind is a little quieted now; but the situation of Lee's army in Maryland, the reported presence of the enemy's ironclads in the James River, the critical condition of our cause in the Southwest, and the struggle at Charleston, cause no little uneasiness. When will these national troubles have an end? Nothing short of the Spirit of inspiration can answer this question. All human calculation on this subject is utterly baffled. The South is fully, solemnly, firmly resolved to secure its independence—the North, with all its evil passions stirred and intensified, seems to be equally resolved that the South shall not have its independence; and, if God interpose not to arrest the conflict, I see no end of it short of the utter exhaustion of one or both of the parties. "The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice."

Sister Thomas, I presume, wishes to hear something from the "Corner." Things are pretty much as they were. The garden is becoming more luxuriant and tangled. It needs pruning; but

only the hand that planted can trim to suit the taste of the planter. The trees, shrubs and plants are, therefore, allowed to flourish in the wildest luxuriance, lest an unskillful hand should mar them in the eyes that view them with the deepest interest. Some time since Mr. John B. Crenshaw, who owns the house at the corner of the garden on Marshall Street, applied to Mrs. Jeter for permission to cut down a mulberry tree, which, he said, was injuring his lot. Of course she declined granting it; and directed him to seek permission from the owner of the property. A few days since the tree was cut down, without our knowledge, and whether with or without proper authority, I know not. The enclosure was removed to fell the tree, and it has been replaced in a bungling manner. I addressed a note to Mr. Crenshaw calling his attention to the condition of the fence; but as yet it remains as it was. His tenant states that the enclosure was temporarily set up, and will be properly repaired. From the cow and calf nothing has been heard. A man signing himself "John James," on the plank-road in Sydney, advertised an astray cow at his house, resembling Sister T.'s; but by the most diligent search I was unable to hear of any such man.

Mrs. Jeter, who joins in sincere regards to all the family, wishes me to assure Mrs. Ryland of her thanks for the handsome goblets received from her generous hands. Affectionately,

J. B. JETER.

The foregoing letter has already apprised the reader of the near approach of an event which may be well accounted as the most auspicious and fortunate in all of his varied and happy life.

On the 5th of May, 1863, he and Mrs. Mary C. Dabbs were married. The ceremony took place at the Thomas mansion, and was performed by Dr. J. L. Burrows. It was his intention to start immediately on a bridal tour, not to the North, in those days, but to the South. It happened, however, that the train, as was then often the case, proved false

to its schedule and refused to go. The disappointment fell lightly upon him, for he returned to the "Corner" with his bride, and gathering a little group of congenial friends, he gave the evening to innocent merriment. Mr. Josiah Ryland, who was one of the company, testifies that he was brimming with sparkling reminiscences and laugh-provoking jests.

From the time of his marriage he "boarded," to adopt his word, in the Thomas mansion, to the close of the war. I can not deny him the privilege of bearing his grateful testimony to the worth of the lady with whom, in the good Providence of God, he had linked his fortunes. As this lady still survives, I hesitate to speak of her in such terms of praise as she deserves. It is not enough to say, that their marriage was to him, the source of unmeasured and ever-deepening happiness. His last days were his best. It was universally conceded that his contact with this brilliant and inspiring woman quickened him into new activity, and stimulated him to the noblest achievements of his life. It was a happy fortune, indeed, which gave him such a companion in his old age. In the following letter the reader will find his tribute to her :

*Richmond, Aug. 31, 1863.*

DR. A. G. WORTHAM:

*Dear Brother*—I write to give a brief account of my stewardship. The premises are safe and in good condition. Miss E., some time since, trimmed up the garden walks, and it has a more civilized appearance than formerly it had. It has some fruit, but it rots and falls badly, very little of it promising to reach perfection. In the house and furniture no visible change has occurred. Our white family will take their departure to-day—

Miss Emily for Petersburg, and the rest of us for Bedford—to remain a few weeks. We shall carefully lock up most of the rooms, and have procured a very steady, upright and careful young man—Sam. McClintock, nephew of my late wife—to come early in the evening and spend the nights in the chamber which we occupy. All will be quite as safe as if we were present.

We had quite a flurry last Friday morning. The bells sounded a military alarm, and the Yankees in strong force, it was reported, were this side of Bottom's Bridge. How much truth there was in the story I have not yet learned. The panic has just passed away, and nothing remains of it, except the remembrance the militia have of a short and wearisome campaign.

Lieut. Ryland, I learned yesterday afternoon, is much better, and will soon, no relapse occurring, be on his feet again. Sister J. C. Crane was buried last Friday. Her mind became a miserable, hopeless wreck, and her death was a timely relief.

When will Sister Thomas come home? We will do all that in us lies to make her stay agreeable, though as it regards table fare, we can promise nothing very inviting. Still, I think that between seeing company, inspecting and improving her garden and taking her rest, she might pass some weeks here pleasantly; and she would, at least, be better prepared to enjoy the delights of her new village home on her return.

Your friends here, so far as I know, are all well. Mrs. Jeter joins me in best regards to yourself and all the family. For myself, I shall, I trust, never cease to be thankful that you all removed from Richmond. That removal was fraught with good to me, and has changed the whole current of my life. Howbeit, I shall rejoice when the time comes for you all, except such of the girls as may have the fortune to marry good husbands in Pittsylvania, to return in quiet safety and gladness to your loved and delightful home. Yours with sincere affection,

J. B. JETER.

Of his editorial career I will speak in a later chapter; but it is necessary to mention now, that soon after the war he became associated with the *Religious Herald*, as one of its proprietors and editors.



For several years he combined his editorial and pastoral labors. He speedily found that at his advanced age, his duties were too onerous, and in 1866 he secured Rev. Harvey Hatcher as his assistant in the pastorate. This relation was mutually agreeable, and was crowned with extraordinary success. During their joint labors, the church enjoyed a very precious revival, and had large accessions. Mr. Hatcher withdrew in March, 1867, to accept service in another State.

During this time Dr. M. L. James, now a distinguished medical professor and practitioner, became temporarily an inmate of Dr. Jeter's family. In observing his habits, Dr. James became convinced that he was overtaxing his strength. He found that he arose early, and worked continuously through the day, and late into the night, without allowing himself time for rest or recreation. He warned him of his danger, and sought to alarm him by a well-grounded intimation that if he did not relax, he would inevitably break down. The Doctor was incredulous, and insisted that there was no danger. But he was mistaken, and Dr. James was right.

In the spring of 1867 he suffered from frequent attacks of vertigo, and his symptoms became so alarming, that he was peremptorily ordered by his physician to seek relief in rest. He realized the necessity of accepting advice, so manifestly wise and proper. His symptoms had become serious: his brain grew sluggish; he failed utterly in one or two attempts to preach: his pen lost its vigor, and he felt apprehensive of paralysis.

Accompanied by his wife, he went to Canada, where he remained several months, and upon his return, he was not only relieved of his vertiginous troubles, but he seemed to be thoroughly rejuvenated. Soon after coming back to Richmond, he met his physician, and informed him that he suffered some inconvenience in walking. Upon being asked to state the nature of his difficulties, he said that he found it hard to "keep his feet on the ground." He was so exuberant and elastic he felt as if he could fly. He was then sixty-five years old. During his absence his pulpit was ably supplied by Dr. T. G. Jones, then president of Richmond College.

On March 25th, 1870, Dr. Jeter tendered his resignation as pastor of the Grace Street Church. To this step he was impelled, as he stated in his letter, by a regard for his health, a belief that he could be more useful as an editor, and a conviction that the church would be more prosperous under the care of a younger pastor. He said also that he rejoiced that he would leave the church united and hopeful, and that if there was one member who did not reciprocate the sincere affection which he cherished for every person in the church, he did not know it. He added that the sadness of his retirement from a position which he had held for more than seventeen years was softened by the fact that he would remain a member of the church.

His resignation, so gracefully offered, was tenderly and regretfully accepted. His retirement was a mournful event to his people, but they saw that it would lighten his burdens and be for the Master's

honor. The church signalized the occasion by such action as fitly voiced its sorrow and affection. The resolutions passed were appropriate and beautiful, but they must be omitted. Indeed, it would be easy to fill chapters with eulogistic resolutions and addresses which were put forth in honor of Dr. Jeter, during his life and after his death, but let me say that such papers must meet the seemingly cruel fate which now befalls the resolutions passed by his last pastoral charge. They must be left out. Not that I would disparage the approval of good men; but there is a dullness in formulated praise. For obscure and unestablished men it may serve a practical purpose, and for the weak and vain, in every voice of praise, there is music. In his early days Dr. Jeter was very ambitious; he loved notoriety and was thrilled by the plaudits of men. But as he advanced in years he grew in humility. He saw the end of human glory, and his soul, disenchanted of earth, turned to the invisible and eternal. The fires of ambition, which at first glowed within him, gradually paled and expired. Little cared he for the praise or censure of men, and in my humble effort to trace his life I feel strongly, that I would belittle him by encumbering these pages with formal and elaborate eulogies. The story of his service must be the only song of his praise.

At the time he left Grace Street, he had already been for a half-century a herald of salvation, and during most of the time he had borne the burdens of the pastoral office. It was, with meekness and solemnity, that he took off his robes and laid them

aside. Long-worn they were, but spotless, and he went out, with the grateful benedictions of his people thick upon his head. His retirement occurred just as he was approaching the dead-line of life, but he sought his release not to rest nor to die. In his step there was no tremor, and his hand had not lost its cunning. He ceased to be a pastor only that he might be a teacher in a larger sphere.

## CHAPTER XII.

### IN THE PULPIT.

**D**ANIEL WITT said of himself, that he was "nothing but a preacher." In saying this, he did not claim for himself any pre-eminent ability as a minister, but simply intended to indicate that he lacked, in a marked degree, adaptation to other forms of Christian work. Those who knew the delicate grace of his pen and the rare charm of his social character, could never endorse this modest estimate of himself. And yet it is probably true that the ardor with which he gave himself to the specific work of preaching may have lessened, in some degree, his effectiveness in other branches of ministerial activity. Happy in the pulpit, he was content to be forgotten elsewhere.

Not so with Dr. Jeter. It was not possible for him to condense his strength into any single form of activity. Endowed with immense physical vigor, versatile in his gifts, quenchless in his thirst for knowledge, aggressive in his nature, keenly interested in living questions and capable of vast endurance, he instinctively thrust himself into every movement which gave promise of usefulness. His eagle eye swept the entire line of the Christian host, and he always rushed to the point where he seemed

to be most needed. It mattered little with him whether it was a convention, a revival, a board meeting, a religious controversy, a book to be written, a journey to be made, a college to be established, a minister to be ordained, a church to be built, a dying man to be visited; he was ready for that which most urgently called for his help. That the diversity of his labors impaired his power in the pulpit is a matter of opinion.

Possibly if he had thrown all his resources upon the single point of preparing and delivering his sermons, he might have attained higher distinction as a preacher. This, however, is by no means certain, and I think that it is beyond doubt, that the sum of his usefulness was far greater, as the outcome of his varied labors, than it would have been if he had set before himself the purpose of being "nothing but a preacher."

In undertaking to portray him as a preacher, I shall speak candidly. I have no wish to invest him with a glory that is unreal. I may not be able to paint him as he was; but I will at least sketch him as he impressed himself upon me.

It is due to him to say in the outset that he never had a fair chance. He began his career under heavy disadvantages, from which he was never able fully to extricate himself. It is not easy to put into words those subtle influences which play upon one who grows up in an atmosphere of culture and of Christian refinement. If he be responsive to the touch of these sacred things, he will take on a finish which otherwise he can never hope to possess. We

have already seen, under what adverse and cruel fortunes, Dr. Jeter made his way into public life. It was by no means the saddest hardship of his youth that he was compelled to enter the ministry without theological training. I account it as among his supreme misfortunes that, up to the point of his majority, he never saw a preacher whose pulpit manners or homiletical methods were really worthy of his imitation. In a large measure, young men learn to speak like those whom they are accustomed to hear, and when they have once contracted platform habits, it is hard indeed to break them, especially if they are not good.

In studying the character of Dr. Jeter, therefore, as a preacher, we ought to put into the account the fact, that he had very little general education, knew next to nothing of systematic theology, had never heard of such a thing as homiletics, had never taken a lesson in elocution, and had been listening to preachers who misused their voices and were careless in their speech and action. From that low estate he started, and what he afterwards attained was so much clear gain. What he would have become, if he had been more favored in his early environments is not a question for the historian. Not a few shortsighted people would be quick to say, that he would never have attained to such eminence, if he had gone through the schools. I have only to express surprise that any could hold an opinion, so unreasonable and foolish.

Dr. Jeter's most serious drawback as a preacher was his voice. It was an ever-present infirmity,

chiefly conspicuous, at the point where it most needed to be concealed. I have never been able to sympathize in the least with that class of his admirers who not only undertook to defend his voice, but to exalt it into one of his highest attractions. I must say in plainness that I always looked upon it as the most grievous blemish in his ministerial manners. For the benefit of those who never heard him, it may be necessary to explain that he always spoke at an elevated pitch, which gave to his voice a shrill and almost whining intonation.

I believe that it was generally supposed that this was a natural peculiarity. From this view I strongly dissent. In my judgment it was a habit and not a natural defect. He evidently learned in his childhood to talk in that raised and whining tone. It could have been easily corrected, if he had been taken in hand in time.

It is understood that the proper range for the human voice, either in public or private speech, is what the vocalists call the natural octave. That octave contains eight different tones, and affords ample scope for bringing out the voice in its richest and loftiest power. The lowest note of the octave, which is C of the natural scale, is the simplest and most natural expression of the voice. It is the keynote of the speaking voice. At that point, if exercised in an easy and unexcited way, the voice will produce a sound which, in its first audible moment, will resemble a *grunt*. If a public speaker, even of ordinary vocal vigor, will learn to begin at that pitch, he can speak for hours without peril or fatigue.



What disables so many public speakers, is not the frequent use, but the misuse or overstraining of their voices. A well-known minister, yet living, complained some years ago, in my presence, that it pained his throat to speak. I suggested that he would lower the key at which he began to speak, bringing it down to the simple and easy *grunt*. He tried it, but found it a tough work to break up a habit which had become a part of himself. But he persevered and conquered. Before entering the pulpit, he would coax his voice down to the right pitch, and by a continuous grunt, audible to himself only, he would hold it there until he put it out in the reading of his first hymn.

A speaker's voice always ranges above his starting point, and if it has variety and flexibility, will run up an octave. If he begins on C, he will have full range for his voice in its strongest and most thrilling modulations. Dr. Jeter always commenced on G of the natural octave,—that is, five points too high,—and his voice, marvelous in its elasticity and reach, would soar upward from that pitch into an elevation almost as far as the best tenor voice can go.

This, of course, was unnatural. It was a terrible strain on him, and but for the wonderful strength of his constitution, and the extraordinary elasticity of his vocal chords, it must have produced throat disease, and ended, either in permanent disability, or death. As it was, his voice accepted the inevitable, and served faithfully for sixty years. But it worked under constant protest. In every note it uttered,

it proclaimed its grievances and mournfully lamented its hardships.

It always gave Dr. Jeter trouble. He said of himself that he was a "constitutional cougher." He declared that he had spent at least three years in the actual operation of coughing. Whether he thought so or not I never knew, but I never doubted that this arose from the irritation of his vocal organs, brought on by his speaking on a too elevated key.

While on this subject, I must mention what was always an interesting fact to me. I noticed on several occasions when Dr. Jeter spoke—privately, I mean—in a sort of unconscious way, his voice would drop to C of the natural octave, and while his lower tones were seriously enfeebled by disuse, they were yet sonorous and rich. I confess that it touched me whenever I heard those deep and mellow notes. They were sad reminders of what his voice might have been, if properly trained in his youth. Few men ever possessed such a rare musical apparatus as did Dr. Jeter. It had strength, versatility, depth and penetration. It did its work under many disadvantages; but glorious, indeed, was the work which it did.

After speaking with such plainness about this peculiarity in Dr. Jeter's manner, I ought to suggest to those who never heard him, that they must not form an exaggerated opinion as to its effect upon his preaching. It was, indeed, a singular and objectionable blemish. To strangers, it was startling and unpleasant. It sometimes provoked adverse criticisms, and even rendered him the butt of merriment and jest.

Dr. Ryland relates an incident that shows how that, occasionally, Dr. Jeter was so careless in the use of his voice as to excite the laughter of his hearers. The Doctor was once at the University of Virginia, and attended religious services, during which a very solemn sermon was preached by an Episcopal minister. At the end of the discourse, he was invited to lead in prayer. He began his petition by saying "O, Lord," in a tone so sharp, queer and undevout that the whole audience was amused. One of the professors, an humble and devout Christian, said afterwards that when he heard that singular ejaculation, his first thought was that some one had pierced Dr. Jeter with a needle, and that it was an outcry of pain. When he found that this was not so, it became difficult for him to restrain himself from audible laughter.

Many ludicrous and even offensive anecdotes were circulated at the expense of Dr. Jeter which, manifestly, had no foundation in fact. Some persons were foolish enough to suppose that they could tell anything about Dr. Jeter without giving offence. A popular lecturer once ventured to relate before a Richmond audience the hideous joke of the tearful woman who said that Dr. Jeter's voice reminded her of a favorite mule which she had lately lost. It was one of those shocking and impossible things that ought never to have been repeated. Dr. Jeter was present, and heard it for the first time. He did not relish it, and the audience, composed largely of his friends, saw no fun in the story. His voice was his weakest point; but it never deserved the remorse-

less criticisms which thoughtless people sometimes felt justified in indulging at its expense.

Dr. Jeter knew that his voice sometimes struck people unpleasantly. It produced effects which, at times, amused him as well as others. There was one story which he loved to tell on himself, and he put it in his "Recollections." Here it is :

Certain it is, many plain people value sermons more on account of the intonations in their delivery than the thoughts they convey. In confirmation of this remark, I had a striking instance in my own experience. Many years ago, an artless stranger, whom I casually met, said to me: "I hear you preach every Sunday. You are the greatest preacher I ever did hear." "Ah!" said I, "you have not, I suppose, heard Mr. M. preach." At that time Mr. M. was attracting great attention by his sermons. "Yes," he replied, "I have heard Mr. M. several times. He is a great preacher; but he is not so great a preacher as you are. You have *the most mournfullest voice* of any man I ever did hear." It was evident that not my thoughts or style, but the modulation of my voice, though I had not attained to the holy art of "intoning," had won the admiration of my strange hearer.

It occurred to me at times that Dr. Jeter was hampered by a consciousness of this vocal infirmity. He often appeared constrained and uneasy, when brought before strange and critical audiences. He was a great believer in what he called conversational preaching. He said preachers ought to talk in the pulpit. He expressed regret that he had not cultivated the colloquial style, but said that, with his voice, he could never have done so with any high degree of success. For Rev. J. E. Hutson, a well-known and useful evangelist, he expressed the highest admiration, because he was so simple and natural

in his public speech. It was just like him to admire in others that which he felt, he did not himself possess.

After all, Dr. Jeter's voice did not seriously interfere with his popularity or usefulness. As he was called to the pastorate of many leading churches, it may be inferred that it was not considered, even by the most fastidious, as seriously objectionable. While it was out of harmony with his dignified and magnificent presence, it had the air of perfect naturalness. It was altogether different from the sing-song tone of the old-time preachers, though it must be admitted that sometimes, in his moments of high spiritual excitement, there were easily discoverable traces of the "holy tone" which he so often heard in the days of his youth. Nor could his voice, in any fairness, be compared with that whine, so artificial and intolerable, which is now in high fashion among those who intone their services. Those who heard him regularly soon forgot the singular intonation of his voice, and relished the message which it brought as heartily as if it had been spoken by the rich and silvery voice of Chrysostom. In some there is a disposition to fall in love with what is odd and strikingly personal in others, and so there were persons who thought that Dr. Jeter had a very excellent voice.

It ought to be added that when Dr. Jeter was thoroughly himself and his voice rolled out from his lips, freighted with rich and burning thought, it was pleasant indeed to hear. It ceased to be thin and cutting, and became musical and even majestic. I

have heard him preach many times when he so completely subdued and thrilled me, that I absolutely forgot that he had a voice.

His voice was singularly penetrating and capable of being heard at great distances. He went once to Culpeper County to labor with Dr. W. F. Broaddus and Barnett Grimsley in a camp-meeting. As the meeting was held in a grove, it was feared that he could not be heard. This fear proved utterly groundless, for it was soon discovered that the great multitude could hear him, much more distinctly than the other brethren, both of whom had deep and strong voices.

Dr. Jeter had a great ambition to preach well. He loved to be criticised when it was done in a fraternal spirit. He was quick to see his faults when reminded of them, and he never rested until he corrected them. In Dr. Robert Ryland he had a sharp and faithful critic, under whose keen blade he was relieved from many excrescences. In the notes below Dr. Ryland tells how he cured him of two bad habits:

During the early part of his Richmond pastorate he was the subject of two especially inelegant habits. The one was the utterance, in preaching, of an unmeaning sound at the close of a phrase or sentence. It was not the adjunct "ah," which many speakers use after a word, when they are at a loss for the next word. I am told that this is often heard in the British Parliament, though it is not the less vulgar on that account. It was a sound that issued, not from the front region of the mouth, but from the throat,—a noise that I can designate only by the word *grunt*. I told him of this habit; but he stoutly denied the fact, and expressed great surprise at my criticism. "Well," said I,

"if you will allow me, I will prove it to you." "How?" "I will sit behind you next Sunday, and when you grunt, I will clear my throat distinctly and make you aware of it." To this he readily assented, and the next Sunday I was on hand, and sat immediately in his rear. During the first few sentences he was very guarded. But when he got well on his way and became somewhat absorbed in his subject, he made a slight guttural suffix to a sentence, which I allowed to pass unrebuked. Presently, becoming still more inspired with his theme and more forgetful of self, he uttered his loud *grunt*, and I subjoined a loud *ahem*. He flinched as though a spoonful of cold water were poured down his back, and after floundering through a few paragraphs, he sat down. I had certainly ruined a sermon, but had given a death-blow to a vulgarity of which he had been seemingly unconscious.

The other fault alleged against him, was the wearing on his face at certain points of his sermons an unnatural smile. It was not the sweet expression of a loving nature, but a strange mixture of irony and levity,—in fact, a sort of sardonic grin that was very distasteful. To this charge also he pleaded not guilty, and appealed to his wife for defence. But she meekly, though firmly, attested the fact. Of this habit he freed himself with his characteristic promptness; but I never heard by what special means.

It was often urged against Dr. Jeter that he was too slow in the opening part of his sermon. He was very deliberate, but several things ought to be taken into the account. His sermons were structures, and in the beginning he was always critical in his expositions. This required a calm and slow manner. He could not speak rapidly, except under a glow of feeling, and his heart did not warm up very rapidly. His sensibilities were deep, and not speedily stirred, but when once aroused his emotions rolled like waves of the sea. He was not one of

those superficial natures that could be whipped into a tempest in a moment.

It ought to be added that he always entered the pulpit with some misgivings. The dread of failure pursued him like a phantom, and when he commenced his sermon, he walked like a giant who was uncertain of his footing. He did not often break down absolutely in his sermons, though he did sometimes, but he often fell below himself. Some of his regular hearers estimated that he preached well every other time. If his sermon went well in the morning, and used up his nervous vitality, they did not expect much of him at night. But if he was flat and juiceless in the morning, they confidently anticipated that he would come forth in his full strength at night. He once said to me that he had never learned how to preach. He remarked that the most elaborate preparation never gave him an adequate guarantee that he would be successful in the delivery of his sermon, and that, on the other hand, the most hurried and imperfect preparation was no sure sign of failure.

He had some sermons that were the growth of a life-time, made in his loftiest moments, familiarized by frequent repetitions and enriched by fruits which he had plucked from the loftiest heights to which he ever rose in preaching. These he delighted to preach. When once in a meeting with him, I requested him to repeat a sermon which he had delivered a week before with transcendent power, at another place. He declined with a sad shake of his head, and observed that the fact that he had preached



it well so recently, was rather prophetic of a failure, if he tried it again.

He was easily upset and thrown out of kelter, especially at the opening of his sermons. Not that he was ever nervous or irritable in the pulpit, but he was easily diverted from his line of thought. Sometimes the most trivial causes would throw him from his track, and when once he went awry, it was hard for him to recover.

It may be safely put forth as a general proposition that Dr. Jeter was never commonplace on extraordinary occasions. He always managed to avoid mediocrity either by rising far above it, or falling below it. If everything was propitious, and he became fully inspired, his sermons were thrillingly eloquent and overpowering in their effects, but if he became oppressed with self-consciousness, or if there was aught in his surroundings, to distract his mind, he would sorely disappoint the expectations of his hearers. It would be easy to multiply examples alike of his triumphs and his downfalls.

In the following extract from "Reminiscences of J. B. Jeter," written for the *Religious Herald* in 1885, by Dr. T. S. Dunnaway, we have an account of one of his notable successes :

At a meeting of the Rappahannock Association, held with Morattico Church in the year 1878, the body on the second day adjourned to the stand to hear a sermon from Dr. Jeter. His text was John iii. 17: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Circumstances favored success. The theme was inspiring; the vast audience was sympathetic; the place was the scene of his first pastoral labors. I have never witnessed a

happier or more electrifying effect produced by a sermon. Many in the great congregation were melted into tears, and the many preachers in the stand with him were so overwhelmed with emotion at the close of the sermon, that not one of them could, for a time, announce a hymn or lead in prayer.

It may be well to add here an instance on the other side. A few years before his death, he attended the Strawberry Association which met near the spot at which he was converted. His presence was noised abroad, and there was a great and expectant crowd. His old friends and kindred hailed the occasion with deep delight. He was appointed to preach at the stand in the grove. As he appeared upon the platform, his solemn dignity, lofty form and snow-white locks marked him at once as a prince among men. He introduced the services with appropriate solemnity, and after announcing his text, ventured to digress from his appointed track, by a reference to his conversion. Lifting his long right arm, and slowly pointing to a mountain hollow, plainly in view, he said, "Right over there, my friends, more than a half-century ago, I gave myself to Christ and found him precious to my soul. Since then, I have sought to serve him, and while I know that I have been unworthy and often unfaithful I can testify that he has ever been faithful to me." It was a beautiful testimony, fittingly and tenderly borne, and the great audience was profoundly touched. He, too, was moved and all the signs seemed favorable for a great sermon. He then undertook to descend from his elevated plane, and to adjust himself to the track of his discourse—but his capricious memory turned

against him. His sermon had faded from his mind, and, after standing for a while, vacant and helpless, he took his seat. It was a surprising result to his friends, and he, of course, was mortified. But he had been through that ordeal too often to yield to any undue despondency. He appeared in the Association later, and spoke with an ardor and eloquence which redeemed him.

Even his failures were interesting. They never cost him the respect of his audience. A stranger, in witnessing one of his break-downs, could not fail to see, even in his weakness, the unmistakable signs of his strength. Sometimes his dullest sermons and even his downright failures were crowned with tokens of Divine power. Dr. Dunnaway furnishes a case in point :

While pastor in the Northern Neck he attempted to preach at a night meeting, conducted at the house of my grandfather. Soon after announcing his text, finding it quite impossible to proceed with his discourse, and so saying to the congregation, he called on a brother present to lead in prayer. Moved with sympathy for his pastor, and feeling the need of Divine help, the deacon prayed with unwonted fervor; the congregation was moved to tears; the power and presence of the Spirit was manifest, and several persons professed faith in Christ—among the number my sainted mother, and the beloved and lamented Wm. H. Kirk, who became a useful and devoted minister. Thus was verified the Divine declaration, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." This liability to failure is quite common with the class of persons who, at other times, have the nerve and genius to rise very high. The quail which just skims the earth's surface in its flight never falls low, for the reason it never rises high. It is the majestic eagle, proud denizen of the air, soaring above cloud and tempest, basking in the sunlight of the aerial regions,

or balancing itself with motionless wings in the high vault of heaven, that is capable of the greatest descent. And so it is with the preacher. He who at times soars highest, and sways audiences with his burning eloquence and melting pathos, is liable to fall much below himself, and even at times to make signal failures. It is the mediocre, dead-level man who neither rises high nor falls low.

He came in time to regard his pulpit failures, if they deserved to be called by a term so sweeping, with a quiet and unruffled temper. While he feared for their effect on others, he did not seem to feel any anxiety, as to their influence on his reputation. Indeed, he appeared to see the ludicrous aspect of his unlucky performances, and to find a grim enjoyment in it.

Soon after leaving college I was with him in a protracted meeting in Amelia County. Almost every morning, when looking over his manuscripts, and selecting his sermon for the day, he would refer rather complacently to his sermon on "the Brazen Serpent." It was evidently one of his favorites. It had done valuable execution in his Master's service elsewhere, and he was fond of preaching it. He spoke of it so often, that I said to him more than once—"Bring him out; give us your Brazen Serpent to-day." But he did not do so. He saved that for his last, and as I had never heard it I supposed it would be his best. But it proved an unlucky day for the Brazen Serpent. The Doctor did not break down, but his manner was painfully stilted and his delivery frigid and feeble. Apparently the sermon produced no effect. I was a little slow in getting

out to the dinner table in the yard, and when I reached there, I found him already on hand, and devouring his dinner with a gusto in no degree abated by the disaster of the morning. He met me, as I walked up, and with a grim and comical twinkle in his eye, said, "Well, after all, my Brazen Serpent proved a flash in the pan." As I was booked for a sermon that afternoon, and was very anxious to put him in, as a substitute, I was bold enough to tell him that the Brazen Serpent had not gone well, and suggested that he ought to preach again, before leaving the community. He replied that if he did, he might go from bad to worse; but that he would "Take a turn in the bushes and see if he could beat up another sermon." He preached that afternoon on the "Woman that was a Sinner," and it was a sermon of irresistible power.

It was his custom to write his sermons, either in full or in part, and for many years, he usually had his manuscript before him. That it was wise for him to write his sermons can hardly be questioned, but I think that it was a great mistake that he ever became accustomed to the use of notes in the pulpit. This remark is not born of prejudice, on my part against sermon-reading, or other mechanical aids to the memory, though I must say in simple truth that my enthusiasm has never gone wild in favor of manuscript-preachers. Some men can handle a manuscript with tact, and can use it without losing that glowing passion which is the highest charm of an orator.

But this was not the case with Dr. Jeter. When

he used the manuscript, he used it, and made no attempt to disguise the fact from his audience. And when he used notes, he spread them out before the public eye, referring to them in a sober and self-respecting way. He did not imitate those preachers who attempt to use their manuscripts clandestinely, as if they were doing a dastardly thing and were afraid they would be taken in the act.

His way was far better, and yet it did not suit him to use a manuscript. It put a weight upon him. Being very tall and not quick-eyed, he often had to bend and scan the paper, in order to find the place. He could not rattle smoothly along, in the discussion of one part of his subject while searching among his notes for his next point.

He usually paused, in the strain of his remarks, and gave himself to the one point of finding what was next to be said. When confined to his manuscript, he was always enfeebled in his delivery. Elocutionists may read, but orators speak. Dr. Jeter was too much of an orator to prosper in the *rôle* of a declaimer. He never did his best, except when untrammelled by notes.

I have said that the use of mechanical helps in the pulpit was a mistake in his case. It was worse than a mistake; it was a positive injury. His memory, in point of vigor and retentiveness, was extraordinary, and his mind moved upon a logical track. For men who are florid in style, fond of making poetic quotations, and without methodical arrangement, in their sermons, a manuscript is a necessity. But Dr. Jeter's sermons were structures. They were

closely concatenated lines of thought. They grew out of the text, and were put together, with the skill of a master. His divisions were simple and orderly, each suggesting that which was to follow. Such sermons can be committed, and recalled without difficulty. Almost any attentive and sympathetic auditor, after listening to Dr. Jeter, could easily reproduce the points of his sermon in their order. My conviction is very decided, therefore, that he ought never to have entangled himself with manuscripts or notes. This he came finally to realize, and in his later life he made a desperate effort to break from the bondage of his habit.

But it was, then, too late. He refused to trust his memory in the days of its strength and it never forgave him for the wrong. It grew fitful, coquettish and cranky. Spoiled by being unduly helped in its task, it became capricious and balky. At times, it would perform its duty with admirable fidelity, and then again it would refuse to budge. Such was the penalty which he had to pay for sinning against his memory. It is worth while for young preachers to bear in mind, that a memory generously cultivated and firmly trusted, is capable of almost indefinite improvement and service.

I believe that this is the explanation of those painful hitches which sometimes befell him, in his attempts to preach. He may have had other mental crotchets, but his tricky memory was his weakest point. It rendered him uneasy, timid and self-conscious. He was like a king, going into battle under the dread suspicion, that his chief general was a

traitor and might turn against him at the critical moment.

There were times when his memory got sulky in advance, so that it was impossible for him to call up an old sermon when he wished to use it. Here is a case in point :

Dr. Jeter had a sermon he called his "Eel-Sermon." It was quite famous in its day. He was often solicited to repeat it. On some public occasion, at one of the large gatherings in the country, he was solicited to preach this sermon. He went out into the woods and walked to and fro for nearly an hour, attempting to recall the discussion and prepare himself properly to preach it. All his efforts were without avail. After wrestling with his topic for some time, he finally gave it up as hopeless that day. On his return, he was asked if he would preach that sermon. "No! no!" he replied, "*the slippery thing* gets away from me. I must try something else." He did try something else and preached with his usual power.

The slipperiness with which he charges his sermon ought to be put to the account of his memory. That was famous for its slips.

It was sometimes pitiable, to look at him when he fell a victim to the trickiness of his memory. It gave to him a cowed and helpless mien which was distressing to behold. He was once preaching at Peterville Church, Powhatan County, Virginia, on "Moses' Invitation to Hobab." After giving the context, he approached the discussion, but he was evidently out of sorts. He moved heavily, and presently came to a dead halt. Slowly reaching his hand around into his coat pocket behind him, he drew out a little black book and said in a deeply lugubrious tone, "I find my memory is treacherous this morning and



I will have to use my notes." He spread them before him, but the bad behavior of his memory had thrown a pall over the entire household of his faculties. They would not work. He was utterly devoid of enlarging power. He crept timidly along the line of his notes, and, as they were brief, he speedily reached the end. When he took his seat, he looked as gloomy and crest-fallen as if he had just been condemned to be shot. At his request I followed in an exhortation, and closed the meeting, feeling unusually solemn and tender. As I did not know what to say to him, I concluded to slip out of the pulpit in silence. As I was leaving he caught me, and, drawing me back, said, "My heart feels like a vacuum and my head like a pumpkin."

It sometimes happened that his memory would trip him at the moment of his highest exhilaration, and when he was in the midst of his boldest flights. He was preaching at the Grace Street Baptist Church one Sunday morning on "The Dignity of the Christian Life." At one point he compared the glory of the christian with the distinctions of earth, and showed its superiority.

He was in the preaching humor and was towering in his passionate eloquence. Rising to the climax, and with his voice at the highest pitch, he exclaimed: "I would rather be a christian than to have the wealth of the Rothschilds; I would rather be a christian than to be the President of these United States; I would rather be a christian than to wear the crown of England; I would rather be a christian (here he was very high) than to—than to be (here he

began to shake and fall) rather be a christian, I say,—than—than to be—than, I say, to be—*Julius Cæsar!*” Why he lugged in the tyrannical Julius at this point I never knew. He may have thought that he would meet the exigencies of the case, inasmuch as the imperial Cæsar is reputed to be useful in “stopping a crack to keep the wind away.” I suspected that he brought in the blood-thirsty old Roman in a spirit of vexation and as a curt way of expressing contempt for himself.

He was always in peril of shipwreck when he undertook to recall names. He forgot his wife’s name once while at the post-office, and went home to see about it. He was giving notice from the pulpit that a certain brother would deliver a lecture on “Religion in the Army of Northern Virginia.” By an odd dislocation of terms he announced that the subject of the lecture would be “Religion in the Northern Army of Virginia.” An instant flutter in the audience told him plainly enough that he had made a mistake, and so he went over it again, putting it, however, exactly in the the same way. This provoked audible laughter, and so with vast particularity he went over it again, but seeing that he was only making matters worse, he said, “The lecture will be on ‘Religion in General Lee’s Army,’ and if that is not plain enough, read the newspapers and see for yourselves.”

A while before his death he preached at the First Church one Sunday morning, and administered the Lord’s Supper. As he was breaking the bread, he remarked: “When I stand here, I always feel like in-

dulging in reminiscences. The forms and faces of loved ones now gone to their reward come back to view. I remember a dear brother who used to sit right over there, (pointing in a certain direction.) He was a large, portly man and a very godly man. I knew him well. He was a miller by trade." At this point he wished to give the brother's name, but it was not forthcoming. After a pause, he continued. "He was a large, portly man and a very godly man—a miller by trade and I knew him well." Still, the name would not come. He went over it all again, and finally, out of all heart, he turned and asked, "Brother D., what *was* his name?" "Franklin," said the brother, and Dr. Jeter, completely unhinged for the moment, forgot the Supper and took his seat.

I must not multiply illustrations of the treachery of his memory. I may be pardoned, however, for adding, at least, one more, since it fell under my own eyes and was so characteristic.

In the winter of 1859 I went to Grace Street Church one Sunday night to hear him preach. His audience was not large, but he seemed to be in excellent trim for preaching. His text was, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." When he came to that part of the text about not being able to enter in, he showed that our entering in at the gate depended, among other things, upon the time we sought to enter. He said there was a time for entering, and if we allowed that to pass, we ought not to hope that we could afterwards enter. Then he began to illus-

trate. "If you are sick," said he, "and the physician prescribes a remedy to be taken at a certain time, and you fail to take it until the time is past, you ought not to complain, if it does not cure you. If you do not sow in seed-time, you must not expect to reap in harvest. Much less, if in seed-time you sow your ground in weeds, ought you to hope to reap wheat when the harvest-day comes.

"When I was a boy I read a story of Goodman Hodge, an unbalanced and shiftless swain. Goodman fallowed his fields and made them ready for the seed. When the day for sowing came, he went forth and sowed his fields broadcast with—(here he was swinging his long arm around in imitation of the sower)—sowed his fields broadcast—(another pause, and still swinging his arm)—sowed his fields, I say, broadcast with—(here he took in his arm, came to a dead halt, drew his hand over his face, and then with a downcast look, slowly scratched his head). Well really, brethren, I have forgotten what it was—I know it well, for it grows very extensively here in Virginia, and has a large bloom, but after all, it does not matter; it was a noxious weed. He sowed his ground with the seed of a noxious weed. (This seemed to right him up, and he started out anew.) When the time for harvest came, Goodman Hodge called in his servants, put his reapers in order, and went forth expecting to reap a harvest. But when he came in sight of his fields, instead of waving with the ripened wheat, they were all abloom with *thistles*—*ah, that's the vegetable; that's the vegetable!* He

found his fields filled with thistles. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'"

One would imagine that after such a bewildering experience, he would have been hopelessly upset. But it was not so. The congregation exhibited many signs of amusement, and here and there could be heard suppressed laughter. There were several things in his favor. He was thoroughly aroused, and full of his subject, and did not manifest the least embarrassment. His sermon had already produced a decided effect and his hearers were too deeply impressed to be excited into great merriment by even so ludicrous a blunder. The interruption awakened new attention, and in a little while he recovered his self-possession and fervor, and closed his sermon in the midst of profound solemnity and even tenderness on the part of the congregation.

Dr. C. Tyree once said that there was more sense in Dr. Jeter's nonsense than there was in an ordinary man's best sense. I have sometimes thought there was more force in his failures, than is usually found in the artificial and polished sermons of some who are never known to fail. Now and then he fell—fell far below himself—but he could do that and yet stop a long way above the zenith of men who found pleasure in parading his mistakes. He had his nadir, but it was a proof of the majestic heights to which he sometimes rose and from which he sometimes fell.

I have felt compelled, in candor, to present thus fully Dr. Jeter's infirmities as a preacher. As I have not spared him in this respect I will seek to be

equally careful and honest in setting forth the chief points of his strength in the pulpit. If what I have said, should lead any to suppose that he was not a man of might—a preacher of rare and surpassing power and an Elijah in the family of prophets, then I have shown myself to be an unfaithful historian. He was not the equal of some of the great preachers of the world, but he towered very far above the general average, and made an impress upon his age which will never be effaced.

Wherein was he great? This question I will answer, so far as I am able.

First of all, his form was greatly in his favor. Not that a fine physique is essential to an orator's power. Several of the most captivating preachers in the American pulpit of the present day are of diminutive form. I may add to this that the most senatorial and imposing figure that I ever saw in the pulpit, was the property of a man whose preaching was emptiness and bluster. And yet a noble presence is not to be despised. It is said that in his youth, Dr. Jeter was gaunt and unshapely, and had great difficulty in deciding what to do with his notoriously long arms. But he grew away from all that. He became erect, symmetrical and commanding. In height he was six feet, two inches, and he bore himself, in and out of the pulpit, with imperial dignity. His brow was high and broad; his face fair, beardless always and to the last unwrinkled; his eye was brilliant enough to light his whole countenance with its softened beauty; his thin white hair was a crown of glory and his lips seemed in-

stinct with strength, courage and sympathy. When aglow with spiritual animation his form expanded into grandeur and his face gleamed with ineffable light.

He abounded in gesture. He learned in time to hold himself in the best postures and to use his arms with extreme grace and force. In moments of freedom on the platform, he moved about from point to point, and his kingly bearing enhanced the power of his speech. When thoroughly aroused, he would rush to the very edge of the platform, and, bending forward, would point with an almost crushing personality, as if he would probe the soul which he was trying to save. He had one memorably fine gesture. When he became excited—and he was capable of the most intense and contagious excitement—he would sometimes stand on tiptoe, and stretching upright his right arm, he would point his forefinger, circling it as it went up, toward heaven. At such a moment he showed to great advantage. His appearance was deeply impressive. An honored brother who was one of the doctor's admiring hearers said once, in speaking of this gesture, that it sometimes seemed to him when he started that right forefinger on its heavenward journey, it never paused, until it touched the gateway of glory.

He was also remarkably solemn and interesting in his manner of conducting the opening exercise of worship. His simple appearance in the pulpit was impressive. There was no prim and consequential air about him, no affectation of earnestness, and not one trace of vain-glory. Sometimes he appeared

constrained and anxious, but he always wore the look of a man whose soul was burdened with a great business. When he arose, there was a nameless attraction, a spiritual charm which did much to still the people and to prepare them for the services of the sanctuary.

He never struck me as a notably good reader, and I never heard him praised for his reading, and yet I think no man's reading ever impressed me as his did. He was a devout believer in singing, and though his voice was never good, he always sang with an earnestness and quiet rapture that was positively inspiring. He excelled greatly in reading the hymns. I can never forget the thrilling effect produced upon my heart, when, a boy in Bedford, I heard him read at Mt. Hermon "All hail the power of Jesus' name." It was done wonderfully well and I can fancy, even now, that I hear the triumphant notes of his voice as he came to the closing line of each stanza, "And crown him Lord of all." Each time, his emphasis became stronger and more exultant until when he ended I felt as if the moment for the coronation of the Son of Man had come. He took great pains in selecting his hymns, so as to have them in harmony with his sermon.

There was also a delightful fascination in his public reading of the Scriptures. He did not select the Scripture lesson, at haphazard or simply read the chapter in which his text occurred, but made it a point to read something that would bear directly upon the discussion which he had in hand. He rarely interlarded his reading with words of com-



ment, though now and, then, he would light up an obscure passage by an explanatory remark. His peculiar strength appeared in his ability to read the Word of God, so as to bring out its meaning. Sometimes he would pause, and read a striking passage the second time, and occasionally he would misread a passage intentionally, so as to excite attention and would then give the correct reading. It was always a solemn thing to hear him read the Bible. One could not fail to see that he felt that he was handling the Word of the living God.

But most of all, his public prayers were helpful to worship. They were never long, nor elaborate, nor in the least stately. They were models of simplicity, directness and fervor. He was mighty in praise. Blessed with a cheerful and grateful spirit, he was always peculiarly happy in thanksgiving and adoration. Sometimes he seemed to be so thoroughly satisfied with what the Lord had done for him, that he did not multiply petitions. He often rose to the loftiest raptures in praising the Lord.

And then how humble he was! It was melting to hear, him pour out his soul in confession and his pleas for mercy were most beseeching. He rarely made a public prayer without praying for the conversion of the world. His prayers were not always uniform. He sometimes lacked liberty and was dull, but he never broke down in praying as he sometimes did in preaching. It was not often, that he did not seem to be importunate and prevalent in prayer. His voice would frequently quiver with emotion, and his face get wet with tears. I have heard him many times

when he plead as a suppliant before his king, and when he seemed to be face to face with God. Such prayers I have never heard from any other man.

In his old age I was his pastor. He always sat just in front of me. He was my resort in the moment of trouble. If, for any reason, I felt peculiar trepidation about my sermon, I would ask him to pray for me. Even from the human side, his prayers were greatly helpful. They were pervaded with a sympathy which was full of comfort, and they went far toward putting the people in a listening mood.

But, after all, it was as a preacher that he excelled. His sermon was the product and the instrument of his strength. I distrust my ability to set forth adequately Dr. Jeter's chief characteristics as a sermonizer and a preacher. Some things can be said without the least question as to their truth.

He was a remarkable Bible student. Of all the men that I have ever known, he had the most comprehensive, varied and critical knowledge of the Bible. While not a classical scholar, it is an interesting fact that he studied Greek privately that he might be able to examine Greek terms in the Lexicons and critical commentaries. Some of the most significant conversations that I ever had with him were with reference to the different shades of meaning in Greek words which seemed to be synonymous. He collected an ample library, and that of the best quality for his purposes. He studied the Bible all his life and according to the most approved methods. He read it regularly and often read it through. He read it with the aid of the best commentaries, con-

sulting different authorities as to the same texts. He read it comparatively, using his Concordance and studying each passage in the light of others.

He read it historically, acquainting himself with its chronology and its geography, and, indeed, investigating every outside question which promised to throw the least light on the inspired text. He read it doctrinally—taking each fundamental doctrine and examining it, under all, converging scriptural lights. He committed great portions of it to memory, and it is an odd fact that while his memory played all manner of pranks upon him, it rarely failed him in his attempts to quote Scripture.

His acquaintance with the Bible was remarkable. While thoroughly reverential in his spirit, he was a fearless student. He knew the passages that were of doubtful authority, and brought them to the test of the highest scholarship he could consult, and had well-matured opinions as to their genuineness.

He was not a voracious reader of other books. He rarely read anything except on the line of his studies. Above all theological writings he valued those of Andrew Fuller. "Father Harris" called him into the ministry; Andrew Fuller was his teacher in theology. He told me that his doctrinal views took their shape more from Fuller's writings than from any other man's. He read history to help him in illustrations, but he never seemed to be at home on any illustrations, except such as he took from the Bible. He tried his hand on reading poetry, but his memory usually behaved disgracefully when he undertook to use it in the pulpit.

When we look at him as a preacher, we must understand the source from which he drew his material. That was the Bible. It was his magazine. He had its resources at his command, and he could use them with great facility.

I suppose that critics would have pronounced him a textual preacher. He always took a text, and usually it was short and he confined himself to its discussion. And yet not in any narrow way. He never took an isolated point of Scripture, as a mere peg to hang a sermon on. It was his rule to present his text in its scriptural setting, always illustrating it with every ray of light which could be converged upon it, from neighboring passages. In the most accurate sense, I think, he was an expository preacher. He literally pulled his text to pieces, exposing each fragment to his hearers, explaining what the parts meant separately, and what they meant when put together, and what its meaning had to do with men.

He had great facility in the production of sermon outlines. He said, before he was fifty years of age, that he had twelve hundred sermons. Many of them were written in full, but the bulk of them were in notes. These notes were put in small blank books, which could be easily carried in his breast-pocket. Of these he had a formidable pile, and at his death they were bequeathed, with his library, to Richmond College. They were written with such accuracy and completeness, that they were ready for the publisher without revision or correction. Soon after the war, he published in the *Religious Herald* many of these sermon outlines, and they were greatly

admired, if not, indeed, appropriated, on account of their homiletical excellences.

His power of analyzing a text was exceptional. He generally apprehended its meaning, with great clearness and got it all out. When he finished with a text, there was nothing more to be said. It was embarrassing to a preacher to hear or read one of his sermons. He felt that he would have to avoid the text ever afterwards, or do something else, and right often he did something else.

It often occurs that men who are skillful in mapping out sermons are sloven and indolent as to their finish. Into this snare, Dr. Jeter never fell. He said that he always thought his sermons through so minutely that he knew every word that he intended to utter, before he went into the pulpit. Of course, after he commenced and his soul took fire, he often leaped the track of his preparation and made excursions of which he had not thought in advance, and when that vicious memory of his fell into the sulks, his patient preparation proved of little worth.

I have spoken of his illustrations. I do not think that he had any extraordinary gift for illustrations. He believed in them and often used them to advantage. His imagination was almost brilliant, but it was timid and his voice was not well suited for pictorial preaching. The outlines of his pictures were excellent, but they often lacked color. He could draw, but he could not paint. There was, however, a distinctness in the draughts of his pictures which made an indelible impression. One thing often struck me, and that was the exceeding purity of his imagi-

nation. It may be truly said of him that he had a deeply pious and holy imagination. It never produced anything that had the least taint upon it. It was thoroughly loyal to the truth, and when dealing with Scripture incidents, it always kept within the line. He ought to have cultivated his imagination more thoroughly; it would have enhanced his popular power. A few times I saw him when his imagination broke from its fears and became intensely excited. It threw a glow over his discourses which no words can describe and which inflamed his audience into the wildest passion.

He was a great teacher. One could not hear him without learning something about the Bible. Those who enjoyed his constant ministrations grew rapidly in knowledge. He enkindled men's love of the truth and turned them into students. Persons were accustomed to say that his sermons "staid with them." Some could preach more charmingly than he, but what he said, was not forgotten.

There was great variety in his preaching. He roamed the entire domain of gospel truth, and one could not sit very long under his ministry without being escorted over the whole range of theology.

It ought to be added that his preaching was rich in spiritual consolation. He knew well how to apply the balm of the gospel to wounded hearts. He preached best when dealing with eternal things. His sermons on immortality, the resurrection, the heavenly glory, the happiness of the redeemed and other kindred topics brought out his highest strength

as a preacher and fell like divine benedictions upon the people.

I agree with Bro. A. H. Sands that Dr. Jeter was pre-eminent in hortatory preaching. He loved to preach to the unconverted and rarely preached a sermon without an appeal to them. But his exhortations made after others had preached, or in revival meetings, were simply irresistible.

In 1860 he held a meeting in Liberty, Va. One night, after another brother had preached, without any marked effect upon the congregation, Dr. Jeter arose and began to speak. In a few moments his whole nature seemed to be pervaded by the power of God. His face was flushed with tender and passionate warmth, and his voice grew strangely mellow and pathetic. He seemed to wrap the great crowd in a resistless spell and to hold them by the very strings of their hearts. I never heard such a wonderful burst of eloquence and never saw an audience so completely overcome. Christians cried aloud and sinners fell down, and begged for mercy. It was a signal demonstration of his power when fully equipped and at his best.

Judged by their immediate effects, the sermons of Dr. Jeter, on some occasions, would be entitled to the highest rank. They were not of the popular or sensational type, but they were strong in thought, convincing in argument, stirring in their appeals and subduing in their pathos. The emotions awakened by his more electric sermons were healthy and permanent. He did not deal exclusively or chiefly with the hearts of men. He always began quietly,

and the body of his discourses consisted in instruction and argument. He sought first to convince the understanding and stir the heart with the probe of his reason. If he could win attention in the outset, lodge his message in the minds of his hearers and bring them to accept his conclusions, he never had much difficulty in storming their hearts. It often happened that sermons which seemed slow and dull in their earlier stages, would close with tremendous power. He had some sermons which he preached in protracted meetings, and when in a happy humor he delivered them with surpassing effect. His sermon on "Paul's Prayer for Onesiphorus" was, perhaps, his greatest.

He was a thorough Baptist, and, while he did not give the peculiar doctrines of his denomination any offensive prominence, he often preached them.

This he did generally, in an incidental way, when his text demanded it, but sometimes he would deliver serial sermons in which he would discuss Baptist peculiarities in full. Always careful in his scriptural quotations, he was critically so, when presenting his own views or combating the tenets of others. He was a master in pulpit courtesy, and had the tact to preach "doctrinal sermons" without wounding those who differed from him. He never had a public discussion with any minister of another denomination. This was not for lack of opportunity or courage, but from a conviction that such debates were rarely productive of good.

He was often called to preach or make addresses at ordinations, mass-meetings and conventions.



These he prepared himself with scrupulous care and almost invariably undertook to present the scriptural aspect of the topic which he was invited to discuss. He was great on funeral sermons, which, in his earlier life, were held in high esteem. He was sent for, far and wide, to deliver memorial addresses, in honor of distinguished ministers. Many of these were published. I had hoped to introduce his sermon preached on the occasion of the death of Rev. Andrew Broaddus, of Caroline County. It was not one of his greatest efforts, but it was delivered while he was comparatively a young man, and is of real merit. It would serve as a fair sample of his sermons at that time, and its publication would go a little way, at least, in preserving the remembrance of one of the most brilliant orators of the Virginia pulpit.

But I regret that the plan of this volume necessarily forbids the publication of any of his sermons. It was the wish of his life, earnestly repeated at his death, that some of his works, at least, might be republished. This, for many reasons, seems most desirable, and will be done hereafter, provided the present sketch of his life shall seem to create a demand for it.

His voice is now hushed and his hands are clasped over his silent heart, but his sermons still abide. They may never appear in book-form, but they are republished in the lives of those who were saved by his instrumentality, or strengthened for their conflicts by his ministrations. He is dead, but the truth which he uttered shall endure forever.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PASTORAL CHARACTER.

IT has become quite common to distinguish sharply between the preacher and the pastor. We often hear it said of a man, that he is an admirable preacher, but weak as a pastor, or that he is a capital pastor but not much of a preacher, as if the two offices were entirely distinct. They cannot really be separated. Preaching is only one phase of pastoral work. One may be a preacher, without being a pastor, but he cannot be of much value in the pastoral office, except in a subordinate way, unless he is a strong and effective preacher. In the preceding chapter, I have discussed Dr. Jeter's characteristics as a preacher, and nothing remains to be said on that subject, except what will bear upon the pastoral quality of his ministrations.

I need not say that the multiform character of pastoral service has led to a diversity of sentiment, as to what constitutes the body of a pastor's duty. We see, on every side, a disposition to exalt one aspect of his duty at the expense of others. This is done alike by the preachers and the people.

Some stake everything on the sermon. They claim that the pulpit is the preacher's throne, from which he should never descend. If he preaches

profound and quickening sermons, he has done his full duty. Time given to other things is time lost. Of this class there are some who magnify the popular feature of the sermon. They gauge a preacher's success by his ability to attract and entertain. If his sermons are glowing and brilliant, and his pews packed with people, he is a satisfactory pastor. There are others who estimate a pastor by his social qualities. They care little for the sermon, and much for the visit. With them a pastor's worth is measured by his manners. If he has grace in his bow, warmth in his grasp, sympathy in his voice and is much abroad among his people, he is esteemed the model pastor. I ought to add that others yet clamor for the practical element in their pastor. He must be apt at figures, skilled in the matter of organizing, sharp in affairs of finance and a sort of chief in all the aggressive movements of the church.

Dr. Jeter was not a model pastor. In some respects he was singularly weak—a fact which no one realized or deplored so deeply as he did. One thing, however, can be truthfully said in his favor, and when that is said, we have gone far in his praise.

He believed in the various aspects of pastoral work, and sought to be faithful in all. He did not run on one line to the neglect of others, though he did not enjoy equally the different departments of his office. So far as he could, he held the several phases of his work in their due proportions. That he was, in the same measure, effective at every point is not claimed. Indeed, it would be hard to find a minister so versatile, fertile and evenly balanced that

he could take a large city church, and discharge all of the arduous and conflicting duties of his position, with satisfaction to himself or to others. Such churches often attempt and require impossible things. They lay upon one man the duties which would fill the hearts and hands of a half-dozen. They point to Spurgeon, with his great Tabernacle, his thousands of members, his college and his orphanage, and seem to think it utterly inexplicable that other preachers cannot manage so wisely as does the celebrated London preacher.

They forget, if they ever knew, that Spurgeon has a large corps of skilled assistants, and has little to do with the details and drudgeries of his position. The Baptists will have better city churches when their pastoral forces are multiplied. If Dr. Jeter did not do all that pertained to his office, it can, at least, be said that he was sensitively conscientious as to the varied requirements which were upon him, and did the best that he could on every line.

So far as I have learned, his relations with his churches were uniformly agreeable. He never knew the bitterness of a serious disturbance, and lived largely on the sunny side of ministerial life. This may have been owing, in part, to the noble character of his churches, and it may have been due, in part, to his own discretion and fidelity. But largely, I think, the happiness of his lot may be traced to the sound scriptural views of the pastoral office which he held. He believed in its divine authority, and had a lofty conception of its dignity, responsibility and usefulness. He was also a simple-hearted

believer in the independence of the churches and in their right to select their own guides and teachers. These convictions, coupled with his life-long persuasion that he was called of God to the ministry, and that the pastor was made for the church and not the church for the pastor, made him a good pastor. While always allowed broad liberty as to the methods of his service, he esteemed himself the servant of his church. The tie which bound him to his people he regarded as peculiarly sacred, and never wantonly strained it.

Now and then, in his extended career, he was reminded how intensely independent a Baptist Church can be with its pastor when the humor strikes it. During his pastorate at the First Church, he had an experience which must have tested his amiability. At a certain church-meeting, he announced modestly to his brethren, that it was the wish of his heart to visit his former charge in the Northern Neck, and requested a leave of absence for that purpose. His plea was strengthened by the fact that his wife was from that section and desired, to visit her kindred. As he made a formal request for permission to go, and as so many circumstances seemed to conspire in his favor, he was confident that the church would yield a prompt and cheerful consent.

But the tide did not set that way. An honored brother minister, then a member of that church, was present, and, while an ardent friend of Dr. Jeter, had a conscience that was remorselessly strict in its notions of a pastor's duty. He arose, and in a crisp and sharply punctuated style, said: "Brethren, we

all love Brother Jeter,—love him very much and like to gratify him; but I do not think we ought to let him go at this time. The church needs his attention, and will suffer by his absence. I move that we refuse to grant his request.”

This cold and matter-of-fact motion swept out every kindly sentiment in favor of his going and put a chill upon the meeting. As no one ventured to champion the pastor's cause, the motion was finally submitted and carried.

It was now Dr. Jeter's time to speak. He arose slowly, and, with a grim, half-playful smile, said: “Very well, brethren; I very much desired to visit my friends in the Northern Neck. I spent nine happy years among them, and am ardently devoted to them. I did think you would let me go; but as your verdict is against me, I submit without a murmur. I will not only stay, but I will try to be more faithful than ever.”

There was no timorous or cringing tone in his submissiveness to the authority of his church. That authority he honestly recognized, and had no wish to evade. It was not possible for a man of his character to play the humble *rôle* as a device for keeping his people in a good humor. Sacrifices of personal comfort for the good of the church, he was always ready to make. His domestic and social engagements he held subordinate to the claims of his people. He would even concede much to their infirmities and caprices. He fought no futile battles with them, and was ever ready to surrender, on de-

mand, when there was nothing to be given up, except his own preferences.

But I need not tell those who knew him that he had no unmanly or servile fear of his churches. He did not fear anybody. If any important question of policy or doctrine was involved, it was easy to find where he stood. His views were public property. He would antagonize the church on any great issue, if he believed that an important principle was involved. While always outspoken, he was usually deliberate and amiable in debate. But he had an imperial will and a fiery, impetuous nature, and when he fought, he put out his strength. His forbearance, especially in his early life, had its limits. He could get mad, and sometimes did.

There was something pleasing in the moral tone of his anger. He was rarely excited without a strong provocation; but if he felt aggrieved, he did not hide it. He came out with it on the spot. Dr. Witt told me, that in one of Dr. Jeter's church meetings, there sprang up, suddenly, a sharp and wrathful debate. It ran on for an hour or two, and grew in acrimony as it advanced. Dr. Jeter felt constrained to take part in the discussion, and found himself confronted by one of his deacons, not eminent for his courtesy, who treated him with marked severity. Dr. Jeter replied with dignity, and by his arguments ruthlessly battered down the deacon's strongholds. This infuriated the brother, and he came back upon the Doctor in a manner that exasperated him almost beyond control. He sprang to his feet, flushed and indignant and eager to reply.

Just then, a gentle and pacific old brother took the floor, and, tearfully bewailing the turn that matters had taken, proposed that some brother should lead in prayer. It may have been a heaven-born proposition; it was at least one which nobody ventured to oppose. It did not, however, chime in with the feeling which at that moment was uppermost in the breast of the excited pastor. He wished to talk. Against the call to prayer he said nothing; but his face was a volume of argument against it. Everybody knelt except him, and then he reluctantly bent his hinges, as if it was a torture to him. As he came down, he touched a brother at his side, and said in an audible whisper: "I don't feel like praying." How like him that was! He might be mad; but he could not be insincere.

In his conception of the pastoral office there was no room for servility. He was no foot-ball to be kicked about by the whims and cruelties of coarse and ill-bred people. He always bore himself with courtly, dignity and gentle courtesy toward others, and he exacted the same, at their hands. He had his share of crotchety and ill-tempered men, and hysterical and captious women in his churches. They sometimes gave him serious annoyance. But he well understood how to let such people alone. Sometimes he would squelch them remorselessly; but ordinarily he left them to their unreasonableness and waited for better times.

He was always forward and courageous in advocating measures that promised good to the church. If he encountered opposition, he met it in a frank



and open manner; but he did not yield to it. It seemed to be a part of his nature to contend earnestly for what he believed, regardless of consequences. If he believed that a given measure would promote the efficiency of the church, he would say so, though he might not have a single sympathizer. Not that he was headstrong or obstinate enough to undertake to force upon his people things, for which they were not ready and which would disturb their peace. But he was essentially broad in his views and always eager for progress. He went in the lead of his people, and at times was far to the front. When new enterprises were suggested to him, that seemed feasible and necessary, he would advocate them. If his church would not adopt them, he took it in good part and bided his time. By degrees he would press the agitation, until at length his brethren came around to his views. In this way he secured the adoption of plans and methods which, at the first blush, his people were loth to accept.

He was a master in this line of pastoral work. Always generous and public-spirited in his motives, and manifestly exempt from partisan rancor, he rarely alienated his people, by advocating what they would not adopt. They might question his judgment, but they could never doubt his honesty nor fail to respect his purity. He never showed to a better advantage than when in a contest, unless it was, when the contest was ended. He bore defeat with extraordinary cheerfulness. Not that he was indifferent to success. He loved to have his own way remarkably well, yet he never exhibited much

chagrin when vanquished. He presented his case, made his argument, pressed it with ardent and disinterested valor, and if his people could not see the matter as he did, he bowed gracefully to the inevitable.

It was not often that his measures went to wreck. He usually carried his point, and the modesty with which he usually behaved, in the moment of victory was beautiful indeed. He would, now and then, perhaps unwisely, indulge a quiet strain of exultation at the expense of a stubborn opponent. He was once engaged in a debate with some of his brethren. This time he clearly saw that the popular current was in his favor, as was evinced by one or two preliminary votes. A brother on the other side, seeing inevitable defeat before him, grew dismally prophetic. "Ah, brethren," said he, "you may carry this thing now—you may carry it now—but think not, I beg you, that the question will be settled. It will come back again and will not down at your bidding." There was something so ludicrously portentous in the brother's manner, that it amused Dr. Jeter, and springing up, he said, "Oh, think not so, brother! We propose to thrash you so handsomely this time that you will never have the hardihood to bring it back again." The playful hit provoked great laughter, and sure enough the brother never brought it back again.

Dr. Jeter could hardly be called a popular pastor. In the pulpit he was strong rather than pleasing and too richly instructive to be generally entertaining. He was so analytical, discriminating and critical that it was not easy to follow him. Folks that did not

have the capacity to walk a straight line of reasoning to a distant conclusion, were apt to break down and miss the point of his sermon. To dull people he was a dull preacher.

Not that plain people could not appreciate him. Many of his best hearers were simple, and even illiterate, but they had brains in their heads and a desire for the truth in their hearts. To them his sermons were full of light.

I ought also to say, that the spiritual element in his sermons was predominant. He preached the gospel and nothing else. His manner lacked those taking points which compel attention, and there was not sufficient vividness in his illustrations to keep the popular fancy aglow. Those who did not have a spiritual relish could not enjoy his sermons. Some intelligent people habitually slept under his preaching, but that was not the fault of his preaching.

He did not attract great congregations. Indeed, he sometimes suffered in the estimation of his friends by reason of the smallness of his audiences. Empty benches, on Sunday nights at least, were no unusual spectacles to him. It happened, more than once, that some flaring sky-rocket of a preacher in a neighboring pulpit, would start a sensation, which for a time would draw away the lighter portions of Jeter's congregation. This did not seem to disconcert him in the least. His intelligent and devout people always stood by him. He was also much sought after by strangers. Distinguished visitors to the city, particularly ministers, generally made it a point to hear him.

As a pastor he was notably candid. He resorted to no roundabout expedients. He worked in an honest, old-fashioned way. He was no sleek and oily Jesuit, trading in craft and flattery, to help his fame. He was none of your bustling, noisy pastors, whipping wildly around as if ever on a race, bobbing in and out of every house, affecting familiarity with all sorts of people, fond of tainted jests, recounting vast achievements, parading catalogues of visits made and charities dispensed, feeding and trying to feed others on sensation and excitement. Not such was he. A calm, steady, conscientious man, watching as one who must give account, he toiled along day by day in his Master's vineyard.

It could not be said that he was a great visitor. I believe it was one of his rules as a pastor to make an annual call upon every member of his church, but I doubt not, that in the long run he often fell short in this matter. He would not spend his time in visiting merely to help his reputation, or to keep his people in a good humor. If he went, it was for a purpose. His visits were often largely social, designed to cultivate pleasant acquaintanceship with the members of his charge. He was very careful in his attentions to the sick, and on such occasions his company was inexpressibly delightful. While not demonstrative, he was so sincerely kind and so fervent in his sympathies that he gave great comfort to the afflicted. His prayers beside the sick-bed were peculiarly unctuous, beseeching and prevalent. Some are living to-day who were recovered from their sicknesses in answer to his prayers. There was

in him a quaint humor and a rippling, contagious sort of merriment which made him a welcome companion in the sick-chamber.

Not long before he died, he called to see a gentleman who was ill. The physician had given an order that no visitors were to be admitted, and of course he was turned away. At the next call of the physician, he learned that Dr. Jeter had been to see his patient, but was denied entrance. "Oh," said the physician, "I am sorry that you did not let him in. His presence could never hurt anybody: so far from it, I feel that he can do a great deal more for the sick man than I can." A beautiful compliment to the dear old man of God and true as well. He called again upon the sick man, at the very crisis of his disease, and was admitted. He talked cheerfully with the sufferer and then knelt down and prayed for him. From that hour, the man began to recover.

It need not be said that Dr. Jeter never satisfied the popular clamor for pastoral visiting. No man can ever do that, unless he makes his visits so intensely spiritual, that they become distasteful to those who are usually so unreasonable in demanding them.

He had one grievous infirmity which stood in the way of his usefulness as a pastor. He could not remember people—either their names or their faces. This gave him trouble everywhere, but most of all as a pastor. He would pass his church members, and even his best friends, on the street without speaking to them. He not only did not recognize them, but he did not look at them. This did not of course arise from a haughty pride, as some foolishly imag-

ined, but because he was so fully entertained with his own thoughts. It sometimes gave great offence to the more sensitive members of his charge. A somewhat familiar incident will fit at this point.

He had, at one of his prayer-meetings, said publicly that it was perhaps possible often to give offense when none was intended, and he warned the brethren who were present not to harbor resentment against a fellow-member for any fancied wrong, but to go and speak to the offending brother and have an explanation at once, and not permit the matter to grow. As for himself, he said: "If any brother has aught against me, I wish he would now and here tell me of it, that I may make proper reparation." He was not prepared for what followed. Immediately on his taking his seat, a brother arose and said: "Brother Jeter, I have something against you. You often pass me in the street without speaking to me, and I am hurt by it. My pastor certainly should speak to me whenever he sees me." Brother Jeter remembered the rebuke. The next morning, quite early, he repaired to the building his brother was engaged in work upon. It happened to be some church building in the city, and the brother was quite high up from the ground. Brother Jeter came to the place, and lifting up his shrill voice to its highest pitch, he called upon Brother Myers to come down. When he reached the ground, Dr. Jeter shook his hand heartily, and, in his kindest manner, bade him "Good-morning, Brother Myers. How are you, Brother Myers?" Having accomplished his purpose, and shown Brother Myers that he was not too proud to speak to him, he bade the brother "Good-bye," and left. It is said that the visit was repeated two or three times the same day. But the latter part of the story is doubtless apocryphal. It is not recorded in the annals of the church that, at any future time, Brother Myers ever again spoke of the want of cordial greeting from his pastor.

It is often forgotten that a man's natural peculiarities must inevitably cling to him when he becomes

a pastor. He does not cease to be himself, but only assumes the burdens of a new office. His native weaknesses must break out on him, and get in the way of his usefulness. Dr. Jeter was not a great lover of people. He had a kind heart, wished everybody well, and was ready to render a friendly service whenever he could. But when brought to deal with humanity in detail, he was often put at a disadvantage. He was reserved, and at times severe, in his manners. He was often so absorbed in his studies that he was impatient of interruption. He failed to recognize persons who fancied that they were special favorites of his, and sometimes gave great offence by mistaking one individual for another. He was, however, very amiable, and when he made blunders of this kind he was always ready to make apologies, and when upbraided for his neglects he was as meek as a martyr. He knew that he was not strong on this line, and strove faithfully to improve; but age joined with nature, to prevent his ever becoming an expert in the social tactics of a pastor.

But it is just to him to say that he made great advancement in pastoral efficiency. This will appear if we will read the following paper from Dr. Ryland, in which he describes him as he appeared to him in 1836, at the beginning of his first Richmond pastorate:

When he was chosen pastor of the First Church in Richmond, of which I was a member, my acquaintance with him became more intimate and my relations more endearing. Sitting under his ministry—when not engaged in similar work—and often thrown into his private company, I found that he was intensely

desirous of improvement. Indeed, he invited the most severe criticisms on his social life and on his public performances. Allow me to say just here that at the Columbian College, where I had studied for more than three years, students were assembled from nearly all the States, and bringing with them the manners and provincialisms peculiar to their respective homes, they had learned to discuss among themselves their various points of difference with mutual freedom and good-will. Add to this that Dr. Stoughton, the president, was a nice critic in grammar, pronunciation, style and gesture in our rhetorical exercises. All this experience tended to make me a close observer of the mental and social habits of those who came before me. When the subject of the criticism was anxious to receive it and was likely to profit by it, I took great pleasure in exercising the privilege. It happened that my pastor had a singular coldness of manner in saluting his friends, and that it was circumscribing his influence for good among his people. I must give some instances. I was spending some days with my loving friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hollins, in Lynchburg. Her niece, Miss Thomas, of Richmond, was also on a visit to the family. Brother Jeter, then her pastor, was to dine with us. We walked up through the lawn towards the gate to meet him. The dear girl was in an ecstasy of delight at the idea of seeing her pastor; but when they met, he gave her the most forbidding salutation I ever witnessed, and she was really mortified. I was once at his house when he reached home after several days' absence, and he met his wife, who could not conceal her pleasure at his return, without a kiss and with a studied indifference which surprised me and distressed her. Still, he was doubtless an affectionate husband and a faithful friend. This frigid repulsiveness of manner often chilled the members of his church, who nevertheless were drawn towards him by his solid worth. Having seen this defect and heard complaints from his friends, I gave him, in private, a plain and candid talk on the subject. Taking him by the hand, grasping it firmly and shaking it heartily, I said: "*This is the way, my brother, to shake hands.*" After all, he was a kind-hearted man, but had fallen into an odd way of showing his affection. His sympathy was practical, but not sentimental. I have occasion to know that, he



often *relieved* suffering by substantial aid, while the man of mere feeling would have shed the useless tears, and spoken the words of pity, and passed on. Still, cordiality is very pleasant. There was also an absent-mindedness in Dr. Jeter that sometimes set him off to great disadvantage. At a meeting of the Foreign Mission Board we were all sitting round the room waiting to begin our deliberations, when he came in with a distinguished stranger. Beginning at one point in the circle, he introduced him to each member till he came to me. Then turning around abruptly, he began at the same point, and again introduced him to each one, till he reached me, when he took the moderator's chair. I immediately rose, gave my hand to the visitor, told him my name and resumed my seat. He seemed not to notice the omission, and made no apology. I was reduced to the necessity of charging him either with great rudeness or with a studied insult, though reluctant to adopt either alternative. After some delay and reflection, I called on him and kindly rehearsed my grievance. He burst into a laugh, and declared it was a case of pure inadvertency. I would not mention so trifling an incident, but for the purpose of showing that good brethren may sometimes take umbrage and cherish alienation when no discourtesy is intended.

This weakness showed itself sometimes in the pulpit. After reading a well-known chapter from one of the epistles, he would say in a squeaking voice: "So reads the twelfth chapter of *Matthew*," and a smile would pass over the countenances of his audience. More serious is the effect when a pastor cannot recall the names of brethren and sisters whose faces are familiar and who are disposed to ascribe the failure of memory to pride. They forget that the *name* and the *person bearing* it are two different entities, and that we may often recognize the person and not the name. They should bear in mind, too, that it is far easier for five hundred to retain the name of one than for that one promptly to recall the names of five hundred. So far from its being due to pride that ministers do not generally retain and recall the names of their friends, it is with them universally a source of regret and humiliation. In this respect Mr. Jeter was not peculiar.

Those who knew him in his old age must be surprised by some statements in Dr. Ryland's paper. How changed he was by the experiences of forty years! He believed in changes when they were on the side of improvement. He studied his own weak points that he might strengthen them. He never became perfect, but he got better and better to the last. He steadily grew Christ-ward. While never exactly popular as a pastor, Dr. Jeter was always revered and honored. The young people were not very easy and free with him, but they did not complain of that. It was no more than they could expect. They realized that the distance between them was all in his favor. His holiness and wisdom put him beyond the reach of familiarity. He had a hold upon them—not such as comes from that romping and rollicking freedom which some pastors encourage on the part of their young people, but from their deep veneration for his character. Their love for Dr. Jeter was, in itself, a devout and godly thing, essentially a religious sentiment, awakened, not by his captivating manners, but by his solid christian worth. The old people drew nearer to him. They passed the outer gate of his reserve, and came in sight of his heart. They knew him, not only in his massive strength and exalted piety, but in his kindly and loving spirit. They looked upon him as simply peerless,—the greatest of men,—and when he stepped out of his pastorate, they did not find it easy to open their embrace for those who came to succeed him.

It was my fortune to succeed him, though not immediately, in the pastorate of a church of which

he continued to be a member. I had an ample opportunity of observing the place which he retained in the hearts of his people. Their love for him was tender and strong, and grew to the last.

I often find myself agreeing with my honored friend, A. H. Sands, in his estimates of Dr. Jeter. He measured him critically, but with justness and candor. In what he has to say of him, he exhibits a singular freedom from extravagance and prejudice. It is a pleasant picture of his old pastor, which he presents in the paper below. Dr. Jeter was evidently too forbearing in matters of discipline. A pastor ought to lean to mercy's side; but he must not lean too far. His compassion for the weak must not cause him to forget the honor of his church. He must not seem to connive at wrong-doing. Dr. Jeter was not discriminating in his judgment of men. Indeed, he did not study human character very closely, and often, on questions of discipline, his views were unsafe. He understood the principles admirably, but he was in danger of going astray, when called to apply them. In the case of a brother arraigned for disorder, he was often willing, on the score of charity, to give him another chance. He was hopeful of humanity, and thought generally that the brother who had stumbled in the past would almost certainly recover his uprightness in the future.

This is always a puzzling matter to a pastor. It is hard for him to find the golden mean between leniency and severity. Dr. Fuller once said of a brother pastor, that his chief mission in the world seemed to be to turn people out of the church. If

Dr. Jeter erred at all, it was in the direction of forbearance. Here is what Brother Sands says :

Dr. Jeter was not a rigid, but a moderate church disciplinarian. When it became necessary to discipline, even to exclude, one of his members, he did not shrink from the performance of his duty. But his aim ever was, as it ever should be the aim of church members, to impress upon the person dealt with that it was not in anger, but in love, that the disciplinary power of the church was exercised.

For nine years I was a deacon in his church, and can tell you of his methods during that time. Our deacons' meetings were conducted very simply. A reading of a brief passage of the Scriptures and a prayer opened the meeting. After that, there came before us the several matters of church finance, the wants of the poor members, the needs of the sick, and then such cases as might demand the attention of the church, either for neglect of church duty or for some unchristian conduct. These meetings were held once a month in the pastor's study, and were attended by all the deacons and the pastor with unflinching regularity.

As chairman of his church meetings, he was always courteous, Christian and gentlemanly. He never became angry. When provocations occurred he would aim to be gentle, and to keep in check, the church members as well as himself. He had firm convictions of duty, and sought to carry them out, but neither in the more public convocations of the Baptists nor in his own church have I ever seen him do anything unkind and unfraternal. His judgments were usually sanctioned by the approval of his brethren. He was always open in his advocacy, and as open and pronounced in his opposition. He had no *finesse*. He was without artifice. He never aimed to circumvent. He was content to let reason do her own work, without any help from so-called religious tact. I doubt whether long training and diligent study, under most adroit and skillful teachers, could ever have made a decent wire-puller of him. There was one thing he could not be—he could not be dishonest. All these traits were marked as distinctly in his connection with his individual church as in the great annual gatherings of the Baptists.

From his early life he became a sort of authority among his brother pastors, on those doctrinal and practical questions which so often cause trouble in the churches. They frequently plied him with queries, and these he always answered with brotherly courtesy, and after mature thought. Here is a letter in which, as far back as 1849, he gave his views of "alien immersions":

*Richmond, Jan. 27, 1849.*

REV. L. W. MOORE:

*Dear Bro.*—I have not had an earlier opportunity to reply to your letter. The question as to the validity of baptism performed by a Pedo-baptist minister on a properly qualified subject does not seem to me to be of great practical importance. It cannot be decided by the direct teaching of the Scriptures, for no such question could have arisen in apostolic times. Its decision must depend on remote and not very certain inferences. Many of our Associations have decided the question, some one way, and some the other; and a few, as the Dover, for instance, both ways. Our wisest ministers have differed on the subject; and have agreed to differ. I deem it, therefore, ill-judged to lay any stress on the subject. Let pastors and churches, and persons immersed by Pedo-baptists, or others not in fellowship with our churches, settle the question for themselves. While the world stands, plausible arguments may be offered on both sides of it. Whoever enters into the discussion, I shall not. Still, I have my view, and I will briefly indicate the ground of it.

I think that baptism (immersion) performed on a believer, in a solemn and becoming manner, by a Pedo-baptist minister, or other unbaptized person supposed by the candidate to be a qualified administrator, is valid for the following reasons:

1. The opposite opinion proceeds on the supposition that the baptism of the administrator is essential to the validity of the ordinance. If this is true, it is probable, indeed, almost certain, that there is no valid baptism in the world. For who can believe that Baptists, outlawed, persecuted, and hunted as they have been,

have maintained an unbroken line of baptisms from the time of the apostles?

2. The opposite view exalts baptism above piety. I admit that none are duly authorized to administer baptism but such as believe in Christ, are immersed, members of a visible church, called of God to the ministry, and properly ordained by the church to the work. But are all these qualifications essential to the validity of the ordinance? Not according to Baptist usage. The baptism of hypocrites or of impostors is held to be valid. Why should the lack of baptism, any more than of piety, invalidate the ordinance?

3. Baptism is an act of obedience on the part of a believer, and may be sincere, the answer of a good conscience, acceptable to God, though there may be some unknown defect in the qualifications of the administrator. God will hold him responsible for the unauthorized act, but not the right-meaning subject of it.

4. On the score of expediency, I see nothing to be gained, but much to be lost, by repudiating Pedo-baptist immersions. Many who have been immersed by Pedo-baptists, finding their position in Pedo-baptist churches inconsistent, would readily unite with Baptist churches and become valuable members, but they cannot generally be easily persuaded to repeat their baptism. Again, it is, in my view, sound policy to encourage the immersion of believers among Pedo-baptists, for in this way our views of the ordinance are indirectly spread, and, in the end, the whole fabric of infant baptism would be overthrown.

Having devoted more time to the subject than the good likely to flow from my labor justifies, I am, yours truly,

J. B. JETER.

As it is worth while to uncover Dr. Jeter to the view of the reader at every possible turn in his life, I put here a droll and laughable incident which occurred in one of his church meetings. I will allow an eye-witness to tell the story in his own words:

I saw him once completely *nonplussed*. We had a church member, a Brother S., who had given us much trouble. He was

negligent of his church duty, he rarely attended the Sabbath exercises of the church and was never present at any other meetings of the church, whether for business or for devotion. It was said, too, and believed, that his walk in daily life was irregular. The church was greatly tried. After repeated notices to be present, he was finally gotten to one of the business meetings of the church, and his case was taken up and considered. The church was unwilling to exclude him, hoping that milder discipline might effect a reformation. The resolution was taken to administer to him a public reproof, and the pastor was called upon to discharge that office at once. Brother S. was requested to take his seat on the front pew, and Brother Jeter proceeded to obey the order of the church in administering the reproof. The pastor began by telling item by item the almost numberless delinquencies of the brother. He told him of his neglect of duty, of his absence from the church, of the anxiety his absence produced, of the great care and circumspection demanded of the Christian in his daily walk. In brief, he administered both a thorough and stinging rebuke for his neglects, and urged upon him the need for amendment. All was put in most appropriate style. At its conclusion, with emphasis, and to re-awaken the dormant Christian feeling of the recusant member, if he had any, he asked him, "In view of all this, of what I have said to you, and this present admonition, Brother S., how do you feel?" Of course, something of penitence was looked for; something of regret for the delinquencies of so many months and years. But neither appeared in the countenance or in the speech of the imperturbable brother. With a *nonchalance* almost incredible, he replied: "I am feeling pretty well, I thank you." This was the last admonition Brother S. ever received from the lips of the kind pastor. A few months after, he was cut off from the church, and was as happy and *felt as well* outside the church as he had ever felt in it.

The opinion is expressed in a former chapter that Dr. Jeter was not eminent for success in revival meetings. The remark may be misleading. His labors among other churches were sometimes attended

with wonderful success, and occasionally he conducted the meetings in his own churches, with the happiest results. When he had the aid of other pastors, he retained charge of his meetings, delivered exhortations, instructed inquirers, examined candidates for baptism and visited the unconverted.

One of his methods of reaching the more intelligent and thoughtful members of his congregation was by writing them letters. This he often did, and not unfrequently with the most pleasing consequences. Below will be found a letter written to a young man in 1846, and it is made public now for the first time. It was a nail in a sure place, and the brother to whom it was addressed is now an honored member of the First Baptist Church of Richmond.

*Richmond, Sept. 28, 1846.*

WILSON THOMAS :

*Dear Sir*—Let the earnest solicitude which I feel for your welfare, and the difficulty of having a private interview with you, be my apology for addressing you by letter. The late severe affliction in your father's family cannot have failed to impress on your mind the importance of an early preparation to meet God. I am anxious, and your parents are far more deeply anxious, that this impression should not prove evanescent and unprofitable. God has been gracious to you. From your childhood you have been taught the nature and necessity of religion; and, no doubt, your heart has often prompted you to embrace it. God has now sent a painful affliction on you for the purpose of calling your attention more strongly to the religious lessons which you have learned. And shall this solemn warning be in vain? I trust not.

Consider, my young friend, you owe it to your own soul to be religious. God has given you a soul of inestimable worth. Whether that soul shall be happy or miserable, an inhabitant of heaven or hell, depends on your conduct in this short life. And



will you, can you, be so cruel to your soul as to neglect its salvation—to risk its eternal well-being, even for a single day?

You owe it to your family to become religious without delay. You well know how deep and painful is the anxiety which your parents feel for your conversion. They have long prayed, and hoped and waited for it. No event could give them so great joy. You have seen their anguish caused by the death of your dear brother; but if that calamity should be the means of leading you to Christ, and securing your salvation, their sorrow would be greatly soothed. If there were no higher motive, and it were possible to be pious from this motive alone, you should become religious for the pleasure it would yield your venerated parents. But there is a higher and stronger motive still.

You owe it to God to obey the gospel. He is your Creator and rightful Sovereign. And, though you have rebelled against Him, He has been long-suffering and kind to you. He gave His Son to be the propitiation for your sins. His servants have instructed, warned and exhorted you. His Spirit has, doubtless, moved you to repentance. And now, let me seriously ask you, my young friend, can you slight so much goodness, and disregard such strong claims to your love and obedience? Who is so lovely as Jesus Christ? Who has performed or endured so much to win your love? Who can so richly reward your poor services? Oh! surely if anything is right, it is right to serve and honor God.

Let me now, in view of all these considerations, solemnly and earnestly beseech you to give instant, constant and serious attention to the subject of religion. Permit not this favorable opportunity to pass unimproved. Your heart is tender, your conscience is, in some measure, awakened, and in this hour of trouble you should call on the Lord. I would not advise you to postpone attention to the gospel until our protracted meeting shall commence; but I hope you may find it convenient, and may be disposed, to attend the meetings with regularity, and a resolution, by God's help, to be profited by them.

With sincere wishes and fervent prayers for your salvation, I am, with true affection,

J. B. JETER.

During the war he wrote a tract with the title, "A Mother's Parting Words to her Soldier Boy," for distribution in the Southern army. It had a very extensive circulation, and he learned that it was the instrument of leading many soldiers to Christ. It was a production of rare merit. It was a strong Scriptural appeal in favor of the gospel, and breathed a yearning tenderness which really seemed to have been born of a mother's heart.

It can hardly be claimed that he had any great tact in approaching the unconverted. He did not seem to feel that he was well adapted to that work, and it is likely that his solemn dignity of manner caused the timid and the careless to dread him. But he was by no means backward in pleading with sinners. He was instant in season and out of season. His zeal burned with a steady flame, even down to old age, and he ceased not to warn men as he had opportunity. An almost thrilling illustration of this fact is found in the subjoined extract from an article written for the *Baltimore Baptist*, in 1886, by Rev. G. W. Beale on "A Day with Dr. J. B. Jeter":

It was my privilege in the autumn of 1886, in Westmoreland County, Va., to meet the late Dr. J. B. Jeter for the first time and to share his companionship during a day's ride, the object of which was to gratify his expressed wish to visit Stratford and Wakefield, the birth-places of General Lee and Washington. I was at the time just entering upon the Christian ministry, and he was about retiring from the pastoral office which he had so long and successfully filled. I was, accordingly, ready to embrace and improve the opportunity of sharing his company and counsel for a day with all the interest and ardor that youth is gene-

rally so ready to accord to one whose ripened experience and wisdom have won eminent distinction and honor in life.

Some of the incidents of this ride, as they relate to certain characteristics and habits of Dr. Jeter, made a lasting impression upon my mind, and the publication of them may prove of interest and profit to others.

A drive of a few miles on the morning of the day in question brought us to Nomini Creek, which had to be crossed in an open ferry-boat. During the passage, as Mr. Frederick, the well-known ferry-man, pulled away at his chain, Dr. Jeter engaged him in conversation on the constant perils of his vocation, his need of a saving interest in Christ and a preparation for death. The promptness with which he seized the opportunity and the seasonableness of the Doctor's godly admonition in this case impressed me at the time, and more so shortly afterwards, when the ferry-man's son was suddenly drawn overboard by the same chain and drowned.

After leaving the ferry and ascending the hill beyond, we overtook a young man walking, whom we invited to occupy a vacant seat in our vehicle. He accepted the offer and shared our ride for an hour or more, and during much of the time he was with us Dr. Jeter engaged him also in religious conversation, urging upon him the need of a personal interest in the Saviour. And when our roads diverged, and he alighted to resume his walk, the Doctor's parting words with him were a kind entreaty to seek to plant his feet "in the highway of holiness." These words of gracious admonition, as I heard them fall from Dr. Jeter's lips, became riveted on my feelings and memory when, just one week later, I was called to minister at the burial of the young man whom he had so kindly and faithfully entreated.

Nothing seemed to call forth his sympathy so fully as an exhibition of religious concern on the part of the unconverted.

If he heard of one who was inquiring the way of life, he would go in search of him, and do his utmost to save him. His faithfulness in instructing inquirers

was worthy of all imitation. He took them from the beginning, unfolding to them their true condition as sinners, explaining the nature and value of Christ's sacrifice, and presenting, in simple phrase, the terms of salvation.

He was never in a hurry in rushing people into the church. He was as careful in rejecting the unworthy as he was zealous in receiving those who brought forth the fruits of repentance. His greatest anxiety as a pastor was to promote the spirituality of his own people. It cut him deeply when he discovered signs of apathy, inconsistency or worldliness among his members.

I was with him in the Pastors' Conference in Richmond, Va., one Monday morning in 1860. He seemed to be sorely cast down by the spiritual condition of his church. One of the pastors remarked that he was much encouraged by the look of things in his church the day before, adding that his brethren seemed to be greatly "stirred up." Dr. Jeter said very sorrowfully, and yet, in a tone that provoked a smile, "My church seems to be greatly stirred *down*."

While not an expert in managing his prayer-meetings, he always redeemed them from dullness by the sprightliness and vigor of his talks. He never made singing a prominent or specially inspiring part of the service, and never could learn how to induce his brethren to take public part in the exercises. It was one of his faults as a pastor that he did too much of the talking himself, but then he did it so well that others preferred to be silent.

I believe that it was his usual custom to preach on funeral occasions. He said that he looked upon them as intended for the living and not for the dead. He rarely indulged in eulogies of deceased persons, unless they were justly distinguished for the excellence of their character and work. While in St. Louis he was called to attend a funeral. He preached as usual, and had very little to say of the deceased. This gave the family mortal offence, and they never forgave him for it.

His memory was deplorably weak as to individuals, and sometimes brought him into awkward and trying situations. Soon after I came to the pastorate of the Grace Street Church, a former member of that church, who years before had left Richmond, died, and her remains were brought back for interment. The body was deposited in the church, and Dr. Jeter, as her old pastor, was engaged to attend the funeral. Though, not invited to take any part in the services, I was in my study adjoining the pulpit. At the appointed time the friends assembled, but the Doctor did not appear. A gentleman came into the study to inquire after him, but I could give no information. After waiting a few moments, it was decided to send a messenger for him, and it was found that he had entirely forgotten his engagement. Soon after, he came racing up the stairway, groaning and talking to himself, and without stopping to knock, burst into the study.

“Dear me!” he exclaimed in tones of self-reproach and despair. “What a wretch I am. It is just like me. Who was she? What was her name? Did I

ever know her? Was she a member of the church? Do tell me something about her."

I had to confess that I could give him no light, but mildly suggested to him that, as he was already a half-hour behind time, he had better go in and begin the service. I could not restrain my laughter, as I observed the caution and uneasiness with which he selected his Scriptures and made his prayers. Finally he took his text, and opening with the remark that funerals were for the living and not for the dead, he preached a sermon, full of unction and comfort.

Dr. Jeter did not consider that his pastoral obligations forbade his activity in other departments of Christian work. I have spoken already of his valuable leadership in missionary and educational enterprises, and also of his readiness to assist his brother pastors in their protracted meetings. Perhaps no Baptist minister who ever lived in Richmond gave so much of his time to Board meetings, Conventions and Committee work as he did while yet a pastor. It ought to be mentioned that his heaviest literary work was performed during the time that he was diligently engaged in the pastorate.

In the more personal and practical aspects of his ministerial labors he was not the equal of Dr. James B. Taylor. This can be said without reflecting upon his efficiency, for Dr. Taylor had very few equals in these respects. He was indefatigable in his visitations and almost peerless in the skill with which he managed his churches.

But taken all in all, Dr. Jeter was an excellent

pastor. As a teacher, he was pre-eminent; as a counsellor, he was prudent, conservative and faithful; as a comforter, he was not demonstrative, but considerate and hopeful; and in his private life he set before his people an example which they could not follow without becoming wiser and better.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### ACHIEVEMENTS IN AUTHORSHIP.

**I**N contemplating Dr. Jeter in his literary sphere we must remember that he was not a professional author. Book-making was not his business. From his entrance into the ministry he had upon him a constant burden of evangelical, pastoral and denominational work. His appointed tasks filled his hands, absorbed his time and consumed his energies. He was an utter stranger to that grateful sense of independence and literary ease which is the happiest fortune of an author. He could never devote his freshest moments and his well-rested powers to literature. It requires genius and happy surroundings to enable a man to attain the highest results. We need not wonder that men like Washington Irving and Ruskin, who, to brilliant gifts and ripened learning, added the best outward condition, should achieve abiding distinction in the realm of literature. They had freedom from care, time for research, access to libraries and ample opportunities for travel. There was nothing to hinder, and much to help them.

It is not too much to claim that if Dr. Jeter, with his strong gifts and patient devotion to study, had been reared in a literary atmosphere and favored with leisure and means for travel and research, he



would have attained the highest celebrity as an author.

As it was, the production of books was entirely incidental with him. What he gave to the public was written at the odds and ends of time—in moments snatched from routine cares, and always in the midst of trying interruptions. The bulk of his labor in the literary line was performed at night, and at the end of days which had been crowded with toil and worry. For the man who has three sermons a week to produce, various religious services to conduct, pastoral calls to make, funerals and marriages to attend, company, congenial and sometimes very otherwise, to entertain, daily tides of letters to read and to answer, with Board meetings, ecclesiastical councils, committees, ordinations and numberless outside engagements ever pressing upon him, some allowance ought, in common fairness, to be made when he undertakes to write a book.

Praises, many and well-merited, have been accorded to Lord Macaulay, who turned from London society, of which he was a central light, and from the House of Commons, at the crowning point of his popularity, that he might give himself wholly to his literary labors. A richer meed of commendation is due to him who, while unable to escape from his daily duties or to retire from social life, yet, with his fragments of time, could perform honorable service in the field of literature. Dr. Jeter's books are the productions of an overworked man.

At the present day many devices have been invented for lightening the drudgeries of literary men.

The type-writer, the stenographer and the amanuensis often play their valuable but unrecognized parts in the author's life. A popular American preacher of the present day thrills his audiences every Sunday with illustrations which are selected for him by his literary drudge. A famous preacher beyond the sea, has surprised the world by the number and varied learning of his books, and yet it is an open secret that the most learned portions of his works are the gatherings of other men. Dr. Jeter never caught the art of utilizing other men in his literary labors. He did his own work. All of his books were the products of his own pen, and largely the outcome of unaided research.

Another fact ought to be put into the account. Dr. Jeter was not animated by the hope either of fame or fortune in his authorial efforts. For some of his books he never received one dollar of compensation, and his "Memoir of Witt" was published at his own expense, and as a tribute of affection to the most beloved friend of his life. His biographical works were undertaken either at the solicitation of others or as grateful attempts to embalm the memory of those who had won distinction in the service of his Master. His two books on Campbellism were written in response to a public call, and while they cost him vast and painstaking investigation, added nothing to his fortune.

It is proposed in this chapter to make a survey of his literary career. It will contain a brief sketch of his more extended publications. This does not promise any great entertainment to the reader; in-

deed, it hints at something decidedly dry. But I hope that the barrenness of the account may be partially relieved by specimen extracts from the several works that will be brought under review.

“MEMOIR OF ABNER W. CLOPTON.”

This was Dr. Jeter's first attempt at authorship. It appeared in 1837, and was published by Yale & Wyatt, of Richmond, Va. It was a small book, neatly printed, cheaply gotten up and contained 283 pages. Much of the material is taken from the journal, letters and addresses of Mr. Clopton. Perhaps one-third of the matter is original. It was written when Dr. Jeter was yet under thirty-five years of age, and yet the style of its composition is admirable. In the beauty of its diction, the structure of its sentences, the fervor of its spirit and the grasp of its thought it compares favorably with his subsequent productions.

Why he wrote this memoir is not known. As it contains no preface, we are left without any clue to the reasons which led to its preparation. It is known that he was an ardent admirer of Mr. Clopton, and often said that he was the most godly man that he ever knew. By birth Mr. Clopton was a Virginian, and while he spent his life in a rural pastorate, he distinguished himself greatly as a temperance reformer, a controversialist, a champion of higher education, an advocate of missions and an evangelist. He died in the prime of life, and his departure was lamented as a sad calamity to the denomination.

The book did not succeed. This may have been

due in part to the youthfulness of the author, the limited reputation of the subject, or to that indifference to biographical works which seems to be so wide-spread and incurable.

Mr. Sands suggests quite a different explanation of the failure of this really thrilling little book to secure the favor of the public. He says that it was "due to the fact, that its publishers were on the verge of insolvency when they undertook the publication, and the Memoir had scarcely been published before the crash came. Notwithstanding this serious blow, the book had some circulation." We close this comment with this extract :

We are naturally led to inquire by what habits did Mr. Clifton attain to such distinction and usefulness? He was not less remarkable for the peculiarity and steadiness of his habits than for the excellence of his moral character. He always, when in health, rose early, generally before day. He retired immediately to read, meditate and pray. He read three chapters in the Bible—two in the Old Testament and one in the New; generally a sermon in Dwight's Theology, or some other approved author, or an equal amount in Scott's Commentary. He would then employ half an hour, or an hour, in meditation and prayer. As he resided in the country, he usually retired to some unfrequented and retired grove, where he might hold uninterrupted communion with his God. Here, in imitation of his Master, he would "offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Sometimes he would become so deeply affected by divine things, and his mind would be so entirely absorbed in the exercise of prayer, that his voice might be heard a distance of four hundred paces when he was unconscious of speaking above his breath. A very deep impression was made on the minds of many by the solemn and earnest tones of his suppliant voice, in the distant and solitary woodland. It seemed as if, indeed, a worm of earth was in audience with the majesty of the universe. After the

close of his secret devotion he would return to his room to make preparation for family worship and breakfast. He was plain, but remarkably neat and particular in his dress and personal appearance. In the family in which he resided, and in the numerous families which he visited, he usually led in the stated devotions. He would read a chapter in the Bible, offer a brief comment or make a pointed exhortation to saints and sinners, sing a few verses, and offer a short, comprehensive, appropriate and most fervent prayer. So soon as he had eaten a temperate meal he would commence the labors of the day. Every moment was usefully employed. No man understood better than he did the art of redeeming time. If he remained at home he was employed in reading, writing, and arranging with great exactness his numerous concerns. If he had an appointment to preach, he would ride sometimes twenty miles to reach it, deliver a sermon of an hour's length, form, if necessary and practicable, a tract, temperance or missionary society, ride again several miles to dinner, present a subscription for some benevolent object to the family, discuss the merits of the temperance reform, have a conversation with every accessible person on the subject of religion, engage in social prayer, and then ride many miles to attend a night meeting, or be near his next appointment. Nor did he forget to retire for evening devotion. I have not detailed the extraordinary efforts of a single day, but the common course of his life. Every day, when he enjoyed health, he was employed in labors not less diligent and useful. His habits were almost immovably fixed. The inclemency of the weather, the pleasures of society, which he greatly relished, fatigue, languor, and the seductions to relaxation and rest, rarely, if ever, prevented his withdrawal for secret prayer. How highly he prized these seasons of devotion we may learn from the following brief extract from his journal: "I never neglect my secret devotion (without absolute necessity) but I certainly experience great loss. My bosom seems more exposed to the incursions of the enemy, my resolutions and purposes fail, and I suffer my soul to be stained by evil thoughts—perhaps by evil desires. Oh, how much need I have of the injunction of my blessed Lord: 'Watch and pray. that ye enter not into temptation!'"

Mr. Clopton was remarkably abstemious in his diet, rarely eating a hearty meal, and when slightly indisposed, restricting himself to a very small allowance. He fasted religiously, during the latter part of his life, on every Monday, and often through the whole day. In March, 1831, he entered the following on his journal: "I have come to the resolution, humbly and in the fear of the Lord, that I will fast more frequently and pray more frequently. I have lost much by neglecting to fast." It was from this period, I presume, that he adopted the practice of fasting weekly.

#### "LIFE OF HENRIETTA HALL SHUCK."

By far the most thrilling and fascinating biography that Dr. Jeter ever wrote was his "Life of Mrs. Henrietta Shuck." As a wise critic has aptly said, "the theme and the author exactly suited." Mrs. Shuck was the daughter of Rev. Addison Hall, one of the noblest friends that Dr. Jeter ever had. He baptized her in her girlhood and when she went out as a missionary to China, he watched her career with a fond paternal pride. On the foreign field, she exhibited the highest Christian heroism and her name became a household word among the American Baptists. She died at her post in the meridian of her life and in the midst of her usefulness. A halo of peculiar sanctity and glory encircled her name, and it was with a full heart, and a high hope of usefulness that Dr. Jeter undertook to trace the story of her life.

The book was published in 1845. It was Dr. Jeter's masterpiece—a gem of personal history, radiant with the beauty of its subject and polished to the last point of brilliancy by the touch of his graceful and cunning hand. It is a book, too noble in its

theme and too complete in its workmanship to be allowed to pass out of existence. Here is the portrait of this heroine :

In person, Mrs. Shuck was below the ordinary stature, in the highest health weighing but little more than one hundred pounds, and frequently much less. Her frame was delicate, and her constitution fragile. With dark complexion, dark and piercing eyes and symmetrical features, she was somewhat handsome. Her temperament was ardent, and her spirits naturally elastic, cheerful and gay. For nothing, perhaps, was she so much distinguished as the affectionateness of her disposition. She was a lady of large heart. Never have we known a more devoted daughter, a more faithful sister or a more sympathizing friend. She always won the hearts of her associates. Her teachers, classmates and acquaintances all loved her. She cheerfully paid the price of friendship ; gained friends by showing herself friendly.

Mrs. Shuck possessed not a brilliant, but good intellect. She was not endowed with genius, but with a well-balanced mind. Among her mental qualities, quickness of apprehension was the most remarkable. Her intellectual efforts seem never to have cost her any labor. When her mind was set in motion, her thoughts and words flowed spontaneously, and as long as she had use for them. Her letters were evidently penned with rapidity and without one moment's premeditation. As illustrative of the quickness of her mental operations, we may mention the following case. On one occasion her husband complained of weariness and an incapacity to prepare for a pulpit service which he was engaged to perform. She playfully proposed to compose a sermon for him. Without a minute's delay, she took a sheet of paper and her pencil, and having selected for the text these words: "I pray thee have me excused," began the sermon as follows: "Numerous as are the excuses which sinners make, when urged to embrace the gospel, they may all be reduced to three. The first is that they have no time to attend to religion, the second is that they do not know how to become religious, and the third is that they are not able to become so. Want of time, want of knowledge or want of power is pleaded by all.

Foreseeing that they would make these excuses, God determined that they should have no reason to make them. By giving them the Sabbath, He has allowed them time for religion; by giving them His word and messengers to explain it, he has taken away their excuse of ignorance, and by offering them the assistance of His Holy Spirit, He has deprived them of the pretence of inability; and thus He has obviated all their excuses, and at the last day every mouth will be stopped, and the whole world stand guilty before God."

The above is a literal extract from Mrs. Shuck's notes in pencil-mark. She continued her remarks through several pages, but in such a style as to show clearly that she did not excel in writing sermons. We know not how much, or whether at all, she was aided by her memory in preparing the above synopsis of her sermon; but we are quite sure that we have heard sermons from preachers of reputation whose notes could not lay claim to originality, simplicity and adaptation to usefulness, as those of Mrs. Shuck.

Mrs. Shuck's literary attainments were highly respectable. It should be remembered that she died at an age at which most writers do not begin to distinguish themselves. In her letters published in the memoir, the compiler felt at liberty to correct only such errors as were obviously the result of haste or negligence. They are mostly published just as they came from her swift-moving pen.

Mrs. Shuck was eminently a religious woman. All her letters, her journals and her most familiar and ordinary notes breathe a pious spirit. Religion exercised a controlling influence over her life. In all events, whether prosperous or adverse, she saw and acknowledged the hand of Jehovah. Whether she ate or drank, or whatsoever she did, all was done for the glory of God. One who had witnessed in the beginning of her Christian life the fervency of her zeal and the predominance always accorded by her to religious duties and interests, would have been ready, even in the absence of consciousness, to pronounce her enthusiastic and to anticipate a great change in her spirit and deportment after the effervescence of youth and the short-lived ardor of her novitiate had passed away. But he would have been utterly mis-



taken. The flame of her zeal was fed by oil which an invisible hand had furnished. Let the candid reader contemplate her through years of exhausting and uncomplaining toil, in sufferings various and acute, without murmuring or despondency, several times in the near prospect of death, not only without terror, but buoyant with hope and full of joy, always cheerful, devout and seeking to glorify God and decide whether her religion was not more than form and ceremony, the romance of youth and the impulse of a transient excitement. Her religion was one of principle. It subordinated all her powers, time and influence to the divine will and glory.

There was in the religious character of Mrs. Shuck a striking and beautiful symmetry. In her character there was a happy combination of knowledge, feeling and activity. Her knowledge did not degenerate into fruitless speculation, her feeling into wild enthusiasm, nor her activity into misdirected adventures. She was zealous; but her zeal was tempered with discretion. She was devout; but her devotion was the offspring of knowledge. She was useful; but her usefulness was coupled with humility. Whether we contemplate her as a lady gracing the social circle, as a mother sedulously training her children for heaven, as a Christian meekly and faithfully copying the bright example of her Saviour, or as a missionary, laboriously fulfilling the duties of her important station, we cannot but approve and admire her character. But her career was brief and bright, her end peaceful, and her reward, we doubt not, glorious. The Lord took her before the noon-tide of her influence and usefulness, and we humbly submit. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

“WRITINGS OF ANDREW BROADDUS, WITH A MEMOIR  
BY J. B. JETER, D.D.”

This was published by Lewis Colby, of New York, and had upon it the imprint of the Virginia Baptist Sunday-School and Publishing Society. It appeared in 1850 and contained five hundred and fifty-seven pages. It seems that Dr. Jeter really had nothing

to do in the production of this book except the preparation of the memoir. The bulk of the material consists in selections from the waitings of Mr. Broadus and these were collected and edited by his son, Rev. Andrew Broaddus, Jr.

The editor did his work remarkably well, though it is not forgotten that he incurred severe, though unmerited, criticism for what was then regarded as undue liberty in eulogizing his distinguished father.

Candor forbids my speaking in terms of undivided commendation of Dr. Jeter's part in this work. It is not well done—not so well as he could do and did do in his other biographical works. He had truly an imperial subject. Andrew Broaddus stands to-day as he stood then, peerless and unapproachable in the lists of Virginia Baptist preachers. He was a man of kingly form, surpassingly brilliant genius and of the very loftiest type of oratory. With only nine months of school life and with other serious drawbacks, he rose to the highest distinction and his name is indissolubly associated with Baptist history. I agree fully with Mr. Sands that with such a topic Dr. Jeter, then at the high tide of his power, ought to have produced a nobler memoir, and Mr. Broaddus, as Mr. Sands suggests, deserves a biographer who will present him to the world in all the splendor of his powers and the glory of his fame.

Several things must be said on Dr. Jeter's side. This book was published in 1850, just after his removal to St. Louis, and it is probable that his sketch was prepared in the midst of the confusion incident to that trying change in his life. His work was done

upon short notice, and without an opportunity for collecting material, and maturely finishing the story. Besides it must be said that the limits of the work gave him but narrow scope. His sketch covers only sixty-five pages, and is all condensed into a single chapter. It attempts nothing, except a simple recital of the leading facts, in a not very eventful life and an outline of the character of Mr. Broaddus. His picture of the great preacher is drawn with a strong and faithful pen.

“Such, imperfectly sketched, it is true, were the sermons of Andrew Broaddus; but how can we give any conception of his manner of preaching? We can no more give an adequate idea of eloquence by description, than of lightning by painting. We first enjoyed the pleasure of hearing him in 1823. He was then in the meridian of his glory. We had heard his fame, and were anxious to have an opportunity of judging whether rumor had done him justice. We were prepared to hear an eloquent and mighty preacher; but all our anticipations were more than realized. We had formed no adequate conception of his power to interest and instruct his hearers. We could but exclaim with the astonished Queen of Sheba, when she saw the wisdom and glory of Solomon: “It is a true report that I heard in mine own land, and, behold, the half was not told me.” This early impression of his abilities was sustained by an intimate and long-continued acquaintance with him, at a period when our judgment, being more matured, was less likely to mislead us.

His fine person increased the effect of his discourses; it was formed to command respect. His countenance was radiant with intelligence, and his clear, speaking eyes seemed to penetrate the souls of his hearers. His sermons were generally delivered with great pathos—with a holy unction. His heart was in his subject; its truth, importance and solemnity were deeply impressed upon it. His manner of speaking, however, was far enough from declamation. He commenced his sermons in the

most easy, artless and unpretending way, inspiring no high-wrought expectation; but suddenly some brilliant thought, or some melting touch, would make the hearer feel that he was in the presence of a master. His voice, before it was shattered by age, was clear, flexible, euphonious, under perfect control, but never strong and commanding. His eloquence resembled not the mountain torrent, bold, resistless and majestic; but the champaign stream, gentle, beautiful and refreshing. His gestures were easy, natural and graceful, giving impression to all his utterances. His chief excellence as a public speaker lay in his action. In some of his gestures there was a significance and power which were inimitable.

Were we required to describe the power of his oratory by a single term, that term should be *fascination*. There was, in his happy efforts, a most captivating charm. An incident may best illustrate this remark: More than twenty years ago, while in the zenith of his power and popularity, he attended a session of the Baptist General Association, held in the town of L—. Monday morning he preached in the Methodist Church, to a crowded audience. Mr. D., a lawyer of distinction, on his way to the court-house, where the court was in session, stopped in the street, beneath the fierce rays of a summer sun, to listen for a moment to the sermon. Business urged his departure, but having heard the commencement of a paragraph, he was intensely anxious to hear its close. Intending every moment to break away, he became more and more chained to the spot. Presently he heard his name called by the sheriff at the court-house door, and he soon heard the call repeated; but it was to no purpose—he was riveted to the spot. Neither the fatigue of standing, the melting rays of the sun, the urgency of business nor the repeated calls of the officer of the court could disenchant him. He heard the whole of the sermon, and paid unwittingly the highest compliment to the eloquence of the preacher. We remember a similar incident: A minister, whose thoughts were absorbed in a subject deeply affecting his happiness, heard him preach, and at the close of the sermon was aroused from the spell in which he had been bound, amazed that his thoughts had been so long and so perfectly diverted.

Great as he undoubtedly was, he had some rather striking *defects* in his preaching. He was fastidious. He rarely lost himself in his subject. He did not forget to pay attention to precision, and all the graces of composition. He frequently wasted time on subordinate points, and in preparatory remarks. An incident will best illustrate our meaning: In his neighborhood resided an old and pious, but somewhat eccentric brother, known as "Father Schools"—a man remarkable for the bluntness of his remarks. He was a great admirer of Mr. Broaddus' preaching. On one occasion, after listening to his sermon, he said to him, "You were so long to-day setting the table, and *fixing* the plates and knives and forks, that we got tired waiting for the dinner." Elder Broaddus was very easily disconcerted in preaching. If the weather was too hot or too cold; the pulpit too high or too low; or if the congregation was not arranged to his taste, he was greatly embarrassed. On a certain occasion he had an appointment to preach at a private house. The congregation was seated; a table, with books, had been set for him; the hour for preaching had arrived. He stepped to the table, and, carefully measuring its height, said: "Brother B., this table is too low; can't you lay something on it?" It was not easy at the moment to find something suited to the purpose; but, after some delay, a box was brought and placed on the table. Its height was again nicely measured, and the preacher said: "Brother B., this box is too high; can't you find something of a medium height?" By this time the congregation was in a titter, and Brother B. greatly confused. It was, however, of no small importance that the table should be of the proper height, for it was vain to expect a good sermon if it was too high or too low.

Owing to his nervous sensibility, he was peculiarly liable, especially on great occasions, or before intelligent strangers, to fail in preaching. His failures, however, were generally well worth hearing. They were wanting in vivacity, illustration and coloring, but they exhibited the outlines of well-arranged and valuable sermons. We remember one of his failures. He was appointed, with two other ministers, to preach at the Dover Association, in Matthews County, on Lord's Day. The congregation was large; and, as usual on such occasions, seated under an arbor; but the

weather was extremely unpropitious. Mr. Broaddus positively refused to preach. The first sermon was delivered early, and was not well heard. The second sermon was an almost entire failure, and soon over. Aroused by an unwillingness to permit so large and respectful a congregation to disperse without instruction, Mr. Broaddus suddenly resolved to preach. He commenced with a long apology—a practice for which, in violation of good taste, he was quite remarkable. He read his text—it was a theme just suited to his talents. His exordium was fine, and his arrangement was natural and striking. Never did a commencement promise a richer sermon. The congregation was all eyes and ears. The speaker gave us some of his finest flights, but soon his pinions began to fail. He stopped suddenly, saying: “Brethren, I find I am not in such good preaching case as I thought I was.” After a few ineffectual struggles, he quietly resumed his seat. Of that vast congregation, there was but one person who enjoyed the failure—it was the unfortunate preacher who had preceded Mr. Broaddus, and who, painfully mortified by his own failure, found some consolation in having so distinguished a companion in misery.

In order that our readers may have a still clearer conception of the preaching of the subject of this memoir, we will compare it with that of Semple, Rice and Staughton. Semple was a sound, practical preacher; anxious mainly for the results of his ministry, he was careless in his manner, bungling in his style and frequently loose in his arrangements. Rice possessed a masculine intellect, and sometimes preached with great power and sublimity; but his migratory manner of living precluded the possibility of a careful preparation for the pulpit, and, consequently, his sermons were, for the most part, dry, tame, and greatly wanting in variety. He possessed the unimproved, or, perhaps, more properly, the unemployed elements of a mighty preacher. Staughton, judging from his reputation, for we never enjoyed the pleasure of hearing him, was fervent, rapid in delivery, abounding in excellent matter, not well digested nor well arranged. Now, Broaddus was, as a preacher, less practical than Semple, less sublime than Rice, and less impassioned than Staughton; but he was more methodical, more accurate, more elegant,

more attractive, and far more safe as an expositor of Scripture, than any one of them. They all excelled in certain strongly developed qualities, which rendered them eminent and acceptable preachers; but Broaddus possessed a combination of noble qualities, a well-balanced and richly furnished intellect, with all the personal endowments requisite for the most pleasing delivery of his sermons. We have enjoyed frequent opportunities of hearing many of the best preachers of most of the evangelical denominations of this country, and occasionally some of the distinguished ministers of Great Britain, and we can confidently say, that in his happiest efforts, none of them equaled him in the exposition of the Scriptures. Excelled he might have been, and perhaps was, in sublimity of thought, strength of language and studied accuracy of method; but in clearness, aptness of illustration, spontaneous beauty, touching pathos and Scriptural instruction, he had no superior.

Many years ago, in a sermon at the Dover Association, he produced a thrilling effect, by comparing the departed ministers of the Association to a band of musicians. Ford, Noell, Lunsford, Staughton, Toler, Courtney and others were skillfully arranged in the band, according to their various gifts: one sounded the silver trumpet, another played on the viol, a third on the bassoon and so on. They made fine music. Their enrapturing notes were all in harmony, and Jesus was the subject of their song; but now their instruments were untuned and thrown aside. Such is an imperfect sketch of the vision which Mr. Broaddus caused to pass vividly before the minds of his hearers. The reminiscences awoke the sympathies of the old brethren. They had listened to the stirring strains of these venerated musicians of a past age, and derived an impulse and an inspiration from them which they could never cease to feel. Their eyes brightened, and then their faces were suffused in tears; and all the congregation felt in unison with them. Had Mr. Broaddus himself been assigned a place in the band, his appropriate instrument would have been the flute. Others might sound the shrill notes of the clarion, or draw with skillful hand from the violin's rich and varied notes; but he, with more than mortal inspiration, from his favorite instrument, would have poured forth tones of softest,

sweetest melody. But now *his* instrument is laid aside, and none is found, with equal skill, to call forth its celestial notes! But these worthies are furnished in Heaven with better instruments:

“Strung and tuned for endless years,  
And formed by power Divine.”

With these they celebrate in “sweeter, nobler strains,” the glories of that Redeemer whom on earth they loved, adored and praised, and by whose grace they triumphed over sin, death and hell.

### “CAMPBELLISM EXAMINED.”

This book was given to the public in 1855. It ranks all his publications in size, ability and influence. The time at which it appeared, the popular interest in the subject of which it treated, the labored attempts made to break its force and the furious attacks made upon its author by his opponents, combined to enhance its circulation. While I cannot give the number of volumes actually sold, it is well known that it was extensively read by representative men, and was also popular with the masses.

It may be well to explain to the younger readers how it came to pass that Dr. Jeter, so averse to religious controversy and so conciliatory in his temper, joined battle with Alexander Campbell. Mr. Campbell was a Scotchman, and belonged originally to one of the strictest sects of Presbyterians. He was educated at the University of Glasgow, and was a man of varied gifts and of a peculiar type of magnetism. He was remarkable, more for the activity than for the clearness of his mind, and far more for the diversity, than for the accuracy of his knowledge. Reared among the Scotch Seceders, he seemed



to have the essence of discontent and revolt in his constitution. In early life he broke from the Presbyterian ranks and became a Baptist—in name at least. He gained a pleasing notoriety by his controversy on Baptism with a Mr. McCalla, a Presbyterian minister, and his advent into the Baptist fold was hailed with pleasure. He won brief distinction among his newly-found brethren by his showy oratory, his adroitness as a debater and his slashing and denunciatory style as a writer. It was soon found, however, that he was reckless in his statements, contradictory in his arguments, uncertain in his theology and happy only when seeking to uproot the existing order of things. His gift for destroying far exceeded his ability to construct. Insidiously and persistently he sowed the seeds of discord among the Baptists until many ministers were disaffected, and not a few of the churches were racked with dissension. Noisy and unsettled people were crying for reformation. The Baptist camp was thrown into disorder. Efforts to eliminate the restless and jarring elements were only partially successful.

In this crisis of affairs it was generally felt that some more formal and elaborate measures ought to be adopted for counteracting the baleful and disintegrating influence of Mr. Campbell. In 1852 a number of well-known men in various portions of the country, becoming deeply impressed with the importance of a succinct and popular treatise upon the distinctive phases of Campbellism, requested Dr. Jeter to prepare a work of the character described. Among the signers of the petition appear the names

of M. B. Anderson, Heman Lincoln, S. S. Cutting, Edward Lathrop, Geo. W. Samson, A. D. Gillette, S. F. Smith and others. The appeal made mention of the clearness of thought, justice of view and candor of spirit which had marked the Doctor's discussion of Campbellism in his "Memoir of Broaddus." It might have been added that he had known Mr. Campbell intimately for a quarter of a century, and was conversant with his temper, tactics, mental peculiarities and doctrines, so far as he had any. Dr. Jeter, after due consideration, undertook the work in a spirit which is sufficiently indicated by the following extract from the preface to his book :

The term "Campbellism" is used in this treatise, not as a term of reproach, but of distinction. No other word denotes the system which it is proposed to examine. Mr. Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Virginia, and the party embracing his views, have assumed several appellations. They have styled themselves "Reformers," "Christians" and "Disciples." Without discussing their exclusive claim to these titles, it is clear that from neither of them can any term be derived which will fairly distinguish their system of doctrine. The word "Reformation" has been appropriated, by common consent to denote that great moral revolution, of which Luther and Calvin were the prime agents. The term "Christianity" can never be wrested from its universally established import, to express the views of any sect or party, however good, wise or great. From the word "Disciple," indefinite as an appellative, no term can be derived to signify the views of those who adopt the name. Mr. Campbell claims to have discovered the "Ancient Gospel." Without at this time conceding or denying the equity of his claim, it may be observed that the inquiries now to be made have reference not to the "Ancient Gospel," recorded in the writings of the evangelists and apostles, but to the speculations of Mr. Campbell, contained in his voluminous works concerning this gospel, and which have been received as true by the friends of the "Current Reforma-

tion." To call these speculations the "Ancient Gospel" would be a manifest misnomer. I am then under the necessity of employing some indefinite term, a tedious circumlocution, or the word "Campbellism" to denote the system under discussion, and the last course seems preferable.

This system is with great propriety termed "Campbellism." Systems of philosophy, science and religion have usually been designated after their discoverers, first promulgators, or most distinguished advocates. Mr. Campbell is the author, and most eminent proclaimer of the peculiar doctrines, which, within the last thirty years, have spread in the Southern and Western States, under the title of "The Reformation." No other man has added an article to the system, subtracted one from it, or materially modified it. Many truths are taught by Mr. Campbell in common with other Christians; very few of the principles for which he pleads are strictly new; but having revived, modified, and placed in new combinations some antiquated sentiments, and added to them a few original speculations, he is fairly entitled to all the honor, and obnoxious to all the censure which his system merits.

My purpose is to furnish a faithful delineation of the system—its principles, spirit and influence—to censure the evil, and commend the good.

Of my fitness for the task the reader will judge by the manner of its execution. I have enjoyed very fair opportunities of forming correct opinions of Mr. Campbell's system. I first saw him in the year 1825. Since that time I have been a careful observer of his course. I have watched the gradual development of his principles, and marked their influence on the churches. I have read most that has been published by him and his opponents on the various points in debate. I have conversed much with persons embracing and zealously supporting the "Reformation."

It is my purpose to conduct this investigation in the spirit of candor and fairness, knowing that nothing can be gained to the cause of truth and righteousness by sophistry, misrepresentation and detraction. No sentence incompatible with the claims of justice and Christian courtesy shall intentionally escape my pen; nor shall I withhold a frank and faithful expression of my opinions on all points which I deem important.

This work gave great offence to Mr. Campbell and his friends, and they attacked it with an almost vindictive fury. Through the columns of the *Millennial Harbinger*, Mr. Campbell undertook to make a reply, promising in the outset that he would speedily and utterly refute its arguments. After publishing a number of papers intended to upset the statements and belittle the author of "Campbellism Examined," he announced that he would make a more stately reply in the shape of a book. That book never appeared, though, curiously enough, an *Introduction* to it appeared in the *Harbinger*.

After some delay, Dr. Jeter reviewed Mr. Campbell's review of his book, in an extensive pamphlet, entitled "Campbellism Re-examined." To this, Mr. Campbell never deigned to make a reply; but a review of Dr. Jeter's two works was written by Mr. Moses E. Lard, of Missouri, who came forth as Mr. Campbell's substitute. Dr. Jeter said of Mr. Lard, that he was more discriminating, more methodical, more straightforward, more vigorous and more undisguised in his statements, but less adroit than Mr. Campbell. Incomprehensibility was Mr. Campbell's strong point; but Mr. Lard wrote with a plainness which it was hard to misunderstand. He set forth Campbellism in its baldest and most offensive shapes, and enabled the public to see clearly the points of divergence between the Baptists and the followers of Mr. Campbell.

Dr. Jeter declined to make any reply to Mr. Lard. Having joined issue with the head of the Reformation, he did not care to deal with one of its youthful

adherents. Mr. Lard's book was so bitter in its personalities, and so harsh in its epithets, that Dr. Jeter confessed that he could not cope with him in the use of such weapons.

In 1860, Rev. A. P. Williams, of Missouri, a Baptist minister of the most superior abilities, published a book in answer to Mr. Lard. It was a masterly production, and Dr. Jeter pronounced it, as beyond all question, the strongest contribution ever made to the great controversy. For this book of Mr. Williams, Dr. Jeter wrote an *Introduction*, which was one of the brightest emanations of his pen, and which I much regret a lack of space constrains me to omit from these pages.

Dr. Jeter always took the kindest views of the so-called Reformation of Mr. Campbell. He admitted that the Baptists had derived some benefit from the agitation which Mr. Campbell had introduced, and he was always ready to recognize whatever was scriptural and wise in the system of the Reformers. He felt, however, that what was true in Campbellism was not new, and what was new was not true, and, therefore, he held that Mr. Campbell's claims as a Reformer were not well founded. He hoped that in time his followers would lay aside their prejudices and return to the Baptist fold.

Soon after the war a conference was held in Richmond by leading representatives of the Baptists and Reformers to see whether or not a reunion could be effected. With this movement Dr. Jeter warmly sympathized, and took a kindly part in the council. It proved to be a failure. The points of disagree-

ment were found to be too numerous and sharp to admit of a peaceful and profitable coalescence.

I now present the following extract from his "Recollections," in which he gives his estimate of him and of his last interview with him :

Mr. Campbell was a man of learning, of much miscellaneous information, and of great readiness and fecundity of mind. His learning, as already stated, was various rather than profound; and his imaginative far exceeded his ratiocinative power. There was, in my humble judgment, a screw loose in his mental machinery, which became more obvious as he grew older, and terminated in downright monomania. No writer, within my knowledge, ever repeated his thoughts so frequently, wrote so much that needed explanation, or so glaringly and often contradicted himself, as he did. This is all explicable on the supposition that he labored under an idiosyncrasy which was gradually developed into mental derangement. This supposition, too, vindicates him in making statements which could hardly have been made by a sound and well-balanced mind, without guilt. With this ground of defence, I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that he was a good man. His life was devoted to an earnest and fearless advocacy of principles which, in the main, were right. The supreme and exclusive authority of the Scriptures in religion, immersion the only baptism, and believers the only subjects of the ordinance, and church independence, are important doctrines which he held in common with Baptists, and most solemnly defended. He wrote, too, many valuable articles on matters of faith and practice, along, we must think, with much that was visionary and erratic. With the exception of statements easily traced to a disordered imagination, his life was pure, and in perfect harmony with the principles he espoused and spent his long life in defending.

The "Disciples" held a meeting in Richmond some twenty years ago, and Mr. Campbell was present. I expressed to some of his friends my readiness to call on him as a matter of courtesy, if the call would be agreeable to him. Receiving the assurance

that the courtesy would be accepted with pleasure, I visited him at his lodgings, in company with Dr. J. L. Burrows. We were received with civility, but with evident restraint. He was greatly changed in appearance since I first saw him. He was increased in flesh, but bore the unmistakable marks of old age and growing infirmities. I had resolved that I would not refer to our past controversies, or to points concerning which we differed; but that, if he should introduce them, I would not plead on the defensive. He very soon alluded to these matters. His views, he said, had been misunderstood and misrepresented. He had been treated with great injustice. To these complaints I made no reply; but proceeded at once to say that he had propagated one doctrine which he owed it to himself, to his friends, and to the Christian world to correct—it is that baptism and regeneration in the Scriptures mean the same thing. On this subject our conversation turned. He did not retract the statement, but offered such explanation of it as may be found in his voluminous writings. It is, in substance, that baptism is not the whole, but the finishing act of regeneration—that there can be no regeneration without baptism. His explanation was as unsatisfactory to me as my criticisms were to him. With this discussion we closed our interview, with due courtesy without cordiality.

The influence of “Campbellism Examined” in Virginia was profound and abiding. It struck the Reformation a blow from which it has never recovered. The Disciples have not multiplied in Virginia since that day, and those that survive are of the conservative rather than the controversial type. They are good people, but not numerous and not likely to be.

That Campbellism has not fulfilled the expectation of its friends may be safely inferred if the testimony of Mr. Moses E. Lard, one of its most partisan adherents, may be relied on. Here is what he said on that subject not long before he died :

“ We, as a religious body, have been before the public, with our plea of union, for nearly half a century. We have offered Christ and Him only as a personal ground of union; we have offered the Bible and it only as the book basis; we have pithily said, when it speaks we must speak, and when it is silent we must be silent; and what have we achieved in the way of union?

Without replying specially to the question, we have certainly achieved no large, and consequently no very satisfactory, results. I will not say that our plea is a failure, but, up to the present, it has resulted as most other pleas have—it has failed to effect union. Have we united even the great family of immersionists? We have not.”

#### “LIFE OF DANIEL WITT, D.D.”

This was his last book, and he once said of it that it really was his best, though he could not make the people believe it. It was published in 1876, but never enjoyed any extensive circulation, though this was probably due in part to the fact that there were no arrangements for pushing its sale. It contained two hundred and seventy-six pages, and was largely a compilation. The autobiography of Dr. Witt, one of the most exquisitely beautiful stories ever written, covers ninety pages, and extracts from his diary and private letters occupy much of the space.

I do not agree with Dr. Jeter that this is his best book. As a tribute to a life-long friend, it is very charming; but I suspect that the Doctor's desire to avoid anything like gushing demonstrations gave a tameness to his style which was unnatural and robbed the story of a warmth which would have colored it with a higher beauty.

But, after all, one cannot read the book without a deepened reverence for Christian friendships or



without feeling instinctively drawn to the venerable author and his sainted subject.

I can spare space for only one paragraph clipped from the chapter in which he paints the character of his beloved :

Of all the active men whom I have known, Dr. Witt was the most *faultless*. It is not difficult to find persons comparatively blameless. Their character is negative. Their nature is inert; their dispositions are flexible, and their convictions are shallow. They give no offence, because they neither do nor attempt to do anything in opposition to the views or wishes of their associates. They create no ripple on the surface of society, because they float with the current. Dr. Witt did not belong to this class of men. He was an earnest and diligent worker. His love of truth and righteousness was decided; his hatred of sin and error was deep and influential, and all his utterances and all his works were controlled by these feelings. Proof on this point was furnished by one of his dying remarks: "My life," he said, "has given no uncertain sound. I have testified for Jesus. I have loved all that is good, and I have tried to do good." He made no compromises with evil, and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God; and yet so kind was his heart, so bland was his manner and so unselfish was his aim that he rarely gave offence, and when he did, the offended carried in their consciences the evidence that he was right. His discretion was almost perfect. Who ever saw him do an unrighteous or undignified deed, or heard him utter an unkind, discourteous or impure word? He could have confidently said with Paul: "I have wronged no man; I have corrupted no man; I have defrauded no man." (1 Cor. 7: 2.) For fifty years I knew him as intimately as ever one man knew another, and I have no recollection that he ever did or said aught, or displayed any feelings, for which the most rigid moralist could have reproved him.

## "THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR."

This work appeared in 1858, and was published by Sheldon, Lamport & Blakeman, of New York. It contains about two hundred and fifty pages, has an *Introduction* by Dr. A. M. Poindexter, and is dedicated, in terms of great tenderness, to Dr. Daniel Witt.

The plan of this volume is unique. It is a series of lectures on the virtues and frailties of Christian people, and each lecture is illustrated with a picture. For example, one of the lectures is devoted to Doubting Christians, and Brother Thomas Little-Faith is vividly drawn as a fair specimen of this class. These lectures were first delivered in his own pulpit, then published in a periodical, and afterwards brought out in book-form.

Each chapter contains a topical discussion and a delineated character. The discussions are simple, orderly and instructive. They are of an intensely practical type,—so scriptural and devout that they cannot be read without benefit. His portraits are the work of his memory as well as of his imagination. The names of his characters are, of course, fictitious, and he has shown decided vigor and taste in grouping his incidents. But most of his characters are, in the main, historical. He throws into print men whom he had seen playing their part in real life. His pictures are drawn with a fidelity which is tempered with a loving and charitable spirit. Nothing written by Dr. Jeter more forcibly illustrates his own character than these lectures.

They show him as he was in his candor, discrimination and kindness of soul, blended with a manly and earnest loyalty to the truth. This is a delightful book. It is a pleasant and refreshing plea for holiness. It is distinct in its defence of virtue and right, and equally emphatic in condemning vices and faults. For home reading and Sunday-school libraries, this book is admirably adapted. It merits a republication, and ought to have a permanent place in Christian literature. Here is one of the pictures,—not the best, but selected because of its brevity, and taken from his lecture on timid Christians :

A Christian of this class, with whom I am well acquainted and whom I sincerely love, I will introduce to the congregation,—Brother Faint-heart. He is naturally amiable, and grace has made him pious. It would be strange if he had many enemies, for he is surely one of the most inoffensive of men. If he had suspected that he had wounded the feelings of a brother in the most innocent manner, it would cost him a sleepless night. So guarded is he against inflicting pain that he would carefully turn out of his path to avoid crushing a worm. Few men are more esteemed and loved than he, and less likely to bring reproach on the cause of Christ.

Brother Faint-heart feels a deep interest in the prosperity of the church of which he is a member, earnestly prays for it and sincerely rejoices in all the good which others do, but makes very little effort to be useful himself. The reason is this: he sees insuperable difficulties and appalling dangers in every good enterprise. He saith with the slothful man: "There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets." Propose to him any scheme for promoting the welfare of the Church, extending the knowledge of Christ or mitigating human misery, and he is almost sure to be pleased with it. The object is good, the plan to secure it is good, the agents to be employed are good; but the scheme he perceives or fancies is, from some cause, impractica-

ble. Its friends will be few and lukewarm; somebody's feelings may be wounded by the enterprise or at least he is not satisfied that everybody will approve it, and he would at present prefer to have nothing to do with it. He is slow to engage in any good work, tardy in executing it, and quickly faints at discouragement.

Brother Faint-heart is proverbial for having no mind of his own. Not that he is incapable of judging, for he possesses an intellect of rather more than ordinary clearness; but he is afraid to trust his own judgment. If he errs, he would greatly prefer to lay the blame on the shoulders of another, than to bear it himself. It might be reasonably supposed that he would look around him for some leader on whose judgment he would repose confidence, and whose authority might release him from the painful necessity of forming opinions for himself. Such a leader it was not difficult for him to find. Deacon Obstinate is a prominent member of the church to which Faint-heart belongs. In character they differ widely. Obstinate is self-confident, bold, unyielding and overbearing; has frequently points which he is anxious to carry in the Church, and which he would carry at any sacrifice, and is constantly seeking to attach to himself and his plans such members of the Church as he can influence. Brother Faint-heart was a suitable man for his purpose. He visited him, talked much with him, and soon enjoyed the pleasure of numbering him among his adherents. Faint-heart is a man of more discernment and information than the Deacon; but what the latter lacks in judgment, he makes up in strength of will. In order to know how Faint-heart will vote in any case, it is necessary to watch the movements of Deacon Obstinate. However unreasonable and perverse the course advocated by the Deacon, he is sure to support it; or if his conscience—he has a tender conscience—will not allow him to do so, he frames some excuse for staying away from the church-meeting, that he may give no offence to his friend. This subserviency of the brother to the views of the headstrong Deacon would render him unpopular, did the brethren not know his weakness and did he not possess so many amiable and redeeming traits of character.

I have already intimated that Brother Faint-heart has few

enemies. On one occasion, however, his want of courage involved him in serious difficulties. In private conversation he had been led into some severe but just remarks concerning a profession not very reputable. A member of the profession, hearing of the remarks, called on him in an angry tone, and, with menacing looks, demanded to know whether he had uttered such remarks. He remembered and approved them, and the public would have sustained him in proclaiming them; but the poor man was frightened out of his senses, equivocated and made concessions derogatory to his character. This unmanly course involved him in fresh difficulties with those who would have firmly sustained him in a frank, bold and honorable course. Throughout his painful embarrassments it was apparent that his difficulties arose from lack of courage to speak and act according to the dictates of his own conscience.

#### “THE SEAL OF HEAVEN.”

This appeared in 1871. It was published by the American Tract Society, and in a style by no means attractive. It contains 200 pages, and, while well printed, is of uncouth shape, and of a binding so dull as to be a weariness to the eyes.

Dr. Jeter enjoyed peculiarly the preparation of this work, and it bears upon itself the imprint of his trained and devout mind. It is intended to show the adaptation of the gospel to human wants, and the sufficiency of Christian evidences. It is written in his clearest and most fascinating style. It is filled with the marrow of the gospel, rich in experimental truth, and well-suited to edify and comfort the saints of God.

Perhaps two remarks in the way of adverse criticism ought to be made respecting this book. It was unluckily named. He requested several friends, my-

self among the number, to aid him in selecting a name; but, while acquainted with the contents of the book, we were not able to hit upon a title which seemed satisfactory. The name was of his own choosing, and yet he did not like it. Besides this, the discussion was not exhaustive. It touched great questions without answering them. It ought to have been either simpler in its line of thought, or more elaborate and profound in its discussions. His genius, culture and deep religious experience fitted him well for producing a great work on Christian evidences. The world is a loser by his failure to write it.

We have now finished the list of his more extended publications. Nothing that I can say will give the reader an adequate idea of the amount of literary work which he performed during his public life. For more than a half-century he was tugging away with his pen, writing sermons, reviews, controversial articles, literary addresses, magazine articles, circulars, open letters, tracts and indeed everything except poetry. Poetry he could not write. He tried it often, but always without success. He said that he could write one line of poetry admirably well, but that he never could make any headway on the second line.

In company with Dr. Richard Fuller, he compiled the Psalmist, which, it is hardly invidious to say, was one of the choicest collections of hymns that was ever given to the American Baptist public. How much Dr. Jeter had to do with the planning of the book, or in the selection of the hymns, I have not

been able to ascertain. Whatever he undertook was quite sure to receive his most careful attention.

Rev. H. A. Tupper, Jr., of Kentucky, has kindly furnished me with the following list which Dr. Jeter made of his works, and which he desired to have collected, revised and preserved. I insert the paper just as it came from his own hands :

WORKS OF J. B. JETER, TO BE COLLECTED,  
REVISED AND PRESERVED.

SERMONS.

“Education of the Ministry” (1 Tim. iii. 3). First published Sermon. *Pamphlet*.

“Theatrical Amusements” (1 Thess. v. 22). *Pamphlet*.

“Beneficence” (Acts xx. 35). Preached before the General Association. *Baptist Preacher*.

“The Faithful Ministry” (2 Tim. iv. 5). Preached before the Dover Association. *Religious Herald*.

“Christian Circumspection” (Eph. v. 15). *Pamphlet*.

“Gambling” (Rom. xii. 9). *Baptist Preacher*.

“Funeral of Jno. Kerr” (Dan. xii. 3). *Baptist Preacher*.

“Funeral of Rev. Wm. Leftwich” (Heb. xi. 4). *Baptist Preacher*.

“Funeral of Jas. Leftwich” (Rev. ii. 10). *Baptist Preacher*.

“Funeral of A. Broaddus” (Acts xiii. 36). *Baptist Preacher*.

“Brazen Serpent a type of Christ” (John iii. 14, 15). *In a Northern Periodical*.

“Defence of the Truth” (Jude 3). Preached before General Association. *Religious Herald*.

“Heedfulness of the Ministry” (Col. iv. 17). Preached before S. B. Theo. Sem. *Religious Herald*.

“Lotteries” (text not remembered). *A Manuscript*.

“Historical Sermon of the First Baptist Church, Richmond” (Deut. viii. 2). *Manuscript*.

“Historical Sermon of the General Association” (Deut. viii. 2). *Manuscript*.

“Funeral of Luther Rice” (Matt. x. 28-30). *Manuscript*.

## TRACTS.

"Justification." S. B. Pub. Society.

"Vindication of Baptists." S. B. P. Society.

"A Mother's Parting Words to her Soldier Boy." Published during the war. Very useful.

"Profane Swearing." Do. Do.

"Communion." By the Am. Bap. Publication Society.

## BOOKS.

"Memoir of Rev. A. W. Clopton."

"Life of Mrs. Hen. Shuck."

"Life of Rev. A. Broaddus."

"Campbellism Examined."

"Campbellism Re-examined."

"The (Christian) Mirror."

"The Seal (of Heaven)."

"Distinctive Baptist Principles." *Scrap-Book.*

"Recollections of a Long Life." *Scrap-Book.*

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Defence of Southern Baptists in withdrawing from the Triennial Convention. *Christian Review.*

About forty-five editorials selected from the *Herald* on various topics, including many biographical notices.

Defences of Baptist Principles, etc.



## CHAPTER XV.

### IN THE EDITORIAL CHAIR.

THE *Religious Herald* was established in February, 1828. It was called into existence by the spirit of organization, which had then just taken possession of the Virginia Baptists, and, in turn, became a grand factor in promoting denominational unity. Its founder was William Sands, by birth an Englishman, a decided Baptist, and a quiet, modest Christian gentleman. He was small of stature, quaint in manner, and, while skilled as a practical printer, had no editorial experience, and was utterly lacking in popular magnetism. At first, the paper was diminutive in size, inferior in material, and limited in patronage. But for the economy of its proprietor, and the gratuitous aid of his brethren, it could hardly have maintained its existence.\* In its interest

\*The honor of founding the *Religious Herald* really belongs to William Crane. He was a wise and influential Baptist in Richmond, and an earnest advocate of denominational unity. To secure this he felt that a vehicle of communication was indispensable. With this view, he persuaded Mr. Sands, then a resident of Baltimore, to come to Richmond and start a paper. He not only furnished the money to purchase its outfit, but contributed, with unstinted liberality, to its continued support. Mr. Crane was really the founder of the *Religious Herald*. A leading Baptist once said that our denomination in Virginia, owed more to William Sands and Dr. Robert Ryland than to any other two men. Dr. Jeter said that he could not undertake to deny the truth of the encomiastic remark, but that justice required that, in honoring these brethren, we should not deprive William Crane of the honor of having given to the Virginia Baptists, a religious journal.

James B. Taylor made several expeditions through Virginia, and secured hundreds of subscribers. Bro. Sands retained the proprietorship of the paper, until the end of the war, though he had associated with him, at different times, Henry Keeling, Eli Ball, David Shaver and others. As an editor, Mr. Sands was painstaking, accurate and diligent, but not in the least brilliant.

He had, however, several things in his favor. In Mr. Crane he had a generous and judicious adviser. He was also himself a singularly prudent man. He made very few mistakes.

The leading Baptist men of the State stood by him. They regarded his paper, as well-nigh invaluable, as an organ of communication. They worked for its circulation, and contributed to its columns most cordially and without charge. In Semple, Broaddus, Rice, Clopton, Taylor, Howell, Jeter, Poindexter and others, the *Herald* had a truly royal corps of contributors. They were men of might, and wrote with a leisurely care and a ripened precision which gave immense vigor to their articles.

It is also due to Mr. Sands to say that he was expert in the use of his scissors. He had a simple desire to dispense to his readers, the best and choicest matter, and did not hesitate to clip from contemporary journals. Abating the fact, that he would load his paper, sometimes with Gubernatorial and Presidential messages, and many-columned articles of the controversial or exegetical sort, the *Herald* attained, under Mr. Sands' management, a high standard. In variety, piquancy and brilliancy, it fell short of the distinction which it has since won.

A few years before the beginning of the Civil War, Dr. Shaver, pronounced by some one the Robert Hall of America, became the leading editor of the paper. He was a fertile and racy writer, and very popular with the more cultivated portion of his readers.

In the memorable conflagration which, in April, 1865, reduced one-third of Richmond to ashes, the office of the *Religious Herald*, with its fixtures and records, was totally destroyed. The wreck was complete, and Sands and Shaver were unable to resuscitate it.

In the autumn of 1865, Dr. Jeter and Rev. A. E. Dickinson formed a partnership, and purchased the paper. There was really nothing to purchase, except the name, subscription-list and good-will. They began regularly its publication in November, 1865. Dr. Dickinson speedily proved himself, a superior canvasser, a brilliant paragraphist, and an expert in attracting to the paper, popular and entertaining contributors. He was strong in some points, in which Dr. Jeter was weak, and they well complemented each other, in their associated work. Their connection continued to the end of Dr. Jeter's life, and the paper has been published, ever since, under the firm-name, then adopted.

In the first issue of the paper, Dr. Jeter wrote a brief salutatory, as senior editor, in which he gave in detail, some of the reasons which prompted him, at so late a time in life, to enter a new and untried sphere of labor. He stated that it had been a cherished purpose with him to devote his later years to

authorship. As that wish was denied, he adopted editorial life, as the next best thing.

In some respects, Dr. Jeter was not suited for journalistic life. He lacked practical skill. He was not a business man, and had no experience as a journalist. This he knew, and from the first insisted upon having a business manager whom he could implicitly trust. He sometimes said that he was constrained to trust his manager so blindly, that he could easily mismanage the affairs of the office, if he chose to do so. But, after all, he was not indifferent to the business department of the paper. He watched it with honest scrutiny, and, if aught went awry, he was quick to detect it. His rectitude of purpose and fine common sense helped him everywhere.

He never knew how to push the circulation of the paper. It was impossible for him to explore the country in quest of subscribers. His main idea was to make the paper so good, that the people could not afford, not to take it. A good idea truly, and yet in these harsh, commercial times, not sufficient of itself, to insure the largest circulation of a religious newspaper. It was amusing to observe him, at a district association, in his clumsy attempts to represent the *Herald*. On the value of a religious newspaper, he could speak admirably, but when he came down to the matter of soliciting or receiving subscriptions, he was lamentably awkward and helpless. By the fame of his pen, he added many names to his list, but by personal appeals, he won very few.

He was also of little worth in the news depart-

ment of the paper. He did not know how to report a meeting, or how to gather up the odds and ends of things and mould them into bright and taking paragraphs. If he made a journey, he could write an interesting account of it; or if he went to a convention, he could cast, into readable shape, his impressions. If a good man died, he could indite a graceful tribute to his memory. He lacked, however, that taste for the piquant, sensational and pleasing which is so valuable in adding zest and freshness to a newspaper. He was not a reporter.

But he was an editor. It must be remembered that he was nearly sixty-four, when he entered the field of journalism. He suffered inconvenience from lack of that sharpened skill which is the product of long experience. It is possible, too, that he had lost that freshness of fancy and exuberant sympathy with the times, which would have enhanced his attractiveness to the young. But it is not too much to say, that he became eminent in the profession of his old age. No man, perhaps, of the present generation, in the Baptist ranks at least, has attained more commanding influence in the newspaper world. This is said, not in empty extravagance and in no invidious spirit. The statement is amply justified by his editorial history. Only a brief mention can be made of his characteristics as a journalist.

His discretion was masterly. He knew what ought not to go into a religious newspaper. He had, to use a journalist's homely phrase, "the genuine editorial gumption." He was a forbearing critic and

had an amiable desire to gratify his contributors, but his convictions of right would not allow him to publish articles that were irreverent, wantonly heretical or uncharitable. He did not allow the commercial aspects of the paper to override his christian sense of propriety. He edited his paper for the glory of God. He often gave offense by rejecting offensive communications. Not that he excluded all articles with whose views he did not agree. On one point he was always generous—that is, in opening his columns to those who wished to combat his peculiar opinions. He believed in discussion, when kept within proper limits. But he recognized his responsibility for what was said, in his paper by other men. He did not hesitate to exclude the productions of his best friends, if he believed that they were false to good taste, or hurtful to the truth. When he published articles, involving statements at variance with his own convictions, he usually appended a note, disavowing his sympathy with them. He once said, that if his readers could know how much he kept out of his paper, they would forgive him, for sometimes admitting matter of doubtful propriety. It is due to him to say that, under his administration, the *Religious Herald* was remarkable for its cleanness, dignity and devoutness of tone.

He exercised a paternal discrimination over the matter which went into his paper. He edited it, with the best literary and critical taste. He would sometimes so amend, recast and burnish the intellectual offsprings of his brethren that when they

appeared in their new garb, not even their doting parents could easily recognize them.

Dr. Jeter knew what a religious paper ought to be. He estimated its scope and purpose with surpassing discrimination. He possessed the grace and tact of holding the *Herald*, strictly to its appropriate line. The truth of this statement could be amply illustrated, if we had space for that purpose. He struck the happy mean between the heavy and the trivial. He did not load his paper with dull and learned lumber, which belonged more appropriately to reviews, nor did he crowd into it the chaffy, sensational stuff which some editors fancy to be essential to the success of their journals. He despised claptrap in everything, and always avoided high-sounding captions or exciting introductions to the matter which went into the paper under his direction. He imparted his own quiet and self-respecting dignity to the *Herald*, until the public came to feel, that they saw him, week by week, in its columns. The highest charm of the paper, under his administration was his serene and saintly personality, which so thoroughly pervaded it.

His skill was equally manifest in preserving the proper religious tone of the paper. Its religious character stood out in happy relief. Not that he restricted it to a gushing pietism—a conglomeration of sacred rhyme Bible stories or revival items; but he never allowed the paper to drift away into secularism. He would admit the discussion of philosophical, historical, scientific or political questions, so far as they had to do with the gospel.

He also provided itemized secular news, for the benefit of those readers who did not see other papers. But he made his paper emphatically *religious*.

An interesting chapter might be written on the scope of his personal contributions to the paper. He dealt with a great variety of topics—rarely touching one of doubtful propriety, and yet often selecting those which it was exceedingly difficult to handle with delicacy. That the reader may appreciate the force of this remark, I will mention that in a random glance through the *Herald's* file for the year of 1878. I found the following topics of his leading editorials—A Call to the Ministry; Religious Controversy; Ministerial Courtesy; “A Miracle in Stone, or the Great Pyramid of Egypt;” Agrarianism; Relative Duties of the Rich and Poor, and Pastoral Benevolence.

He was peculiarly felicitous in discussing the religious aspects of what seemed to be purely secular questions. He saw everything in its relations to Christ, and I think his highest function as an editor was, in so clearing misty and obscure questions, as to make them intelligible to the common mind.

I introduce here a part of his editorial on the State debt. It appeared in 1878, at the time that Virginia was sorely agitated by the threat of certain leading politicians to precipitate the repudiation of Virginia's debt. The Legislature was in session at the time, and the article attracted great attention. It is a fine specimen of his skill, vigor and candor as a writer.



## THE STATE DEBT—SHALL IT BE PAID OR REPUDIATED?

This subject falls fairly within the scope of religious journalism. With its political, or party aspects, we have no concern; but in its moral bearing we have, in common with our fellow-citizens, a profound interest. Public and private morality cannot be dissociated. Public is only the aggregate of individual morality. There can be but little private, where there is no public virtue. The payment of just debts is required, not only by sound ethics, but by divine revelation. "Owe no man anything" is an inspired precept, which does not forbid the contracting of debts, but does most solemnly enjoin the payment of them. We shall, therefore, with all candor and freedom, discuss the subject of our State debt, but simply in its moral aspects.

Had the State been free to act at the close of the war, we readily concede that a strong, at least a plausible, argument in favor of the reduction of her debt might have been presented. Her territory had been largely desolated, one-third of it wrested from her possession, and a great portion of her taxable property, on the basis of which her debt was contracted, had been destroyed by the fortune of war. The State, however, overthrown and prostrated, could make no arrangement for the settlement of her debt. When she was rehabilitated her representatives, acting under the Constitution and the sanction of their oath, assumed such portion of the public debt as they deemed it just and proper to pay. Whether their course was wise or unwise it is needless to discuss. If it was not obligatory, then no act of the present or of any future Legislature can be binding, for they must act under the same Constitution and with the same authority as the Legislature that assumed the debt. We have not, indeed, seen the *justice* of the debt called in question. If it were, our canal and our railroads, penetrating every part of the State, and contributing greatly to the comfort and prosperity of our people, and our humane and literary institutions, the result of the money for which the State is indebted, should forever silence the doubt.

The best way to get rid of private debts is to pay them. It may require time, toil, self-denial and sacrifice to do it, but this is the course prescribed by equity and honor, and, indeed, enforced by the laws of the State. The man who pays his debts in full, with interest, is far more respected and far more worthy of confidence than most persons who settle their dues by bankrupt notices and enforced compromises. Some of our political financiers, however, think that the State debt may be paid, at least in part, by what they term "readjustment." Let us examine this method of liquidating. To a free, full and mutual adjustment of debt between the debtor and the creditor there can be no objection. If the debtor, from love to the creditor or pity for his poverty, abates his claim, surely nobody can complain. We fear that the hope of such a settlement of the State debt is Utopian.

The principal plea that we have heard urged for the readjustment of the State debt is her inability to pay it. This is surely a mistake. The State debt, subject to interest, is \$29,350,826.38; the amount of interest due and in arrears is \$4,188,141.33; making the total amount due a little more than thirty-three millions and a half. The real

estate in the Commonwealth is estimated at \$242,756,548.75, and the personal property, far below its value, at \$74,954,304—making a total of \$317,710,852. According to this estimate, taken from the auditors' accounts, the taxable property of the State is more than nine and a half times as great as her public debt, and about eleven times as great as her interest-paying debt. Now, what should we think of a man who, owing a debt amounting to one-tenth part of estimated value of his estate, should make piteous lamentation over his poverty, plead his inability to pay the interest on his debt, and resort to artifices to evade its payment, in whole or in part? We are unwilling to use offensive epithets, and must trust our readers to form their own judgment on the subject. Our late Governor thought that the present rate of taxation, with due economy and proper retrenchments, would pay the current expenses and interest on the debt of the State. He may have been sanguine in his estimate, but certainly a moderate increase of the taxes will enable the State to pay all her just debts.

It should be borne in mind that the State is only required, for many years to come, to pay the interest on her debt. We are assured, too, by the best authority, that there are but two States in the Union whose tax is lighter than that of Virginia. She now pays 50 cents on the hundred dollars, and an additional tax of 10 or 15 cents on that amount would certainly meet all her liabilities. It surely cannot be impracticable to advance the tax \$1.00 or \$1.50 on every \$1000 worth of property to save the State from bankruptcy and disgrace.

It is asserted by the friends of readjustment that the State cannot pay her debt without an increased rate of taxation, and the people will not bear it. This is a grave and dishonoring charge against the citizens of Virginia, and ought not to be believed without clear and decisive evidence. The indictment is simply this: The agents of the State, acting under her authority and according to her will, borrowed money that was usefully expended in the improvement of her territory, and now her citizens refuse to be taxed to pay the interest on the loan. That there are many persons opposed to paying the State debt, as they are to paying their own debts, we sorrowfully admit. A large portion of her people pay no tax, or only a poll-tax, and the payment of the State debt is no burden to them. Citizens possessing but little property have but light taxes to pay, and cannot reasonably complain of their burden. Men of means, who really pay the taxes of the State, are, with few exceptions, so far as our information extends, in favor of paying our debt. We do not believe, we cannot believe, that the people of Virginia, with her noble historic record, the birth-place of Washington, Madison and Jefferson are unwilling to be taxed to pay a just debt, contracted to prosecute public improvements that are now the convenience and comfort of the land.

That the State, in her embarrassment, should desire a reduction of her debt is not surprising. All her loyal citizens would rejoice if it could be secured by fair and honorable means. We fear it cannot be. Let us look the subject in the face.

The creditors of the State are scattered over this country and Europe, and it is impossible for the agents of the State to have a free and full interchange of views with them in order to adjust the terms of settling the public debt, and if such an interview could be secured, it is scarcely within the compass of possibility that the creditors

would agree on adjustment. A few of them, generous and large-hearted, might be inclined to abate a portion of their claims, in view of the loudly-asserted poverty of the State, as they would favor any other pauper debtor, but it is contrary to all the laws that govern humanity to suppose that the bulk of the creditors, without constraint, would yield a portion of their just claims to a State whose taxable property exceeds by ten-fold the amount of all her indebtedness. Nor is this all. A considerable portion of the State bonds is held by widows and other poor and dependent persons, whose meagre means were vested in State securities, with undoubting faith in her integrity, and they ought not to reduce their claims. The State could not honorably accept the reduction, if they were willing to make it. More than this, a portion of the State bonds is held by guardians for dependent orphans, and by trustees for educational and benevolent institutions, and they could not, if they would, and ought not, if they could, abate any portion of their claims.

Twist and turn the matter as we may, readjustment must either be forcible or a failure. Forcible readjustment is simply a refusal to pay the State debt, in whole or in part, and is but another name for repudiation. Let us look beyond the word for its meaning. It is the refusal of the State to pay a debt, in whole or in part, not because she is unable to pay it, or it is not justly due, but because she does not find it convenient, or has no inclination, or cannot be compelled to pay it. Let us calmly examine the act. We will not indulge in opprobrious epithets, but we request gentlemen whose "eyes, turned on emptiness, beam keen with honor" to survey it, and form their own judgment of it. Christians especially we would address in the language of the apostle: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are *honest*, whatsoever things are *just*, \* \* \* think on these things."

It is due to the friends of forcible readjustment, or repudiation—a small minority we trust—to suppose that they have not carefully considered the character and consequences of the measure they propose. It is not only in violation of the law of God, but is condemned by every ethical code, and is against the enlightened sentiment of all Christendom. It brings dishonor and a burning shame upon every community that resorts to it. Hitherto, Virginians, when they have gone abroad, and have heard reproaches and denunciations against repudiators,—the robbers of unfortunate creditors,—have stood at full height, with open face, and proclaimed that they resided in a State in which honor is an inheritance and repudiation an impossibility. We trust the Legislature will not deprive us of this cherished possession, mantle our cheeks with shame, and make us a by-word and a hissing among civilized nations.

"Honesty is the best policy," for States as well as for individuals. Who will immigrate to a repudiating State? Only the debased, with whom honor is at a discount, and who, like birds that feast on carrion, scenting the distant body politic, haste to partake of the decaying carcass. Who can trust a repudiating State? If it dishonors one claim, will it not dishonor another? The principle laid down by the Saviour is applicable to a State as well as to an individual: "He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much;" and certainly he that is unjust in much will not be just in little. Who will be surety for a

State that has broken her promise, defrauded her creditors and quenched her honor?

Repudiation, should it spring from demoralization of society consequent on the war, the bankrupt law and the unfortunate stay laws of the State, will react upon society. Who can refuse to follow the example of a State illustrious for her patriotism, her generous sacrifices and her heroic deeds? We fear that repudiation will be classed among the virtues, and that debtors will deem it commendable to resort to artifices and threats for the adjustment or repudiation of their debts. How can the State, having set the example, restrain her citizens from following it? What is deemed right in the mother can hardly be considered infamous in her children.

The most outspoken readjusters, we suppose, have a regard to consistency. If the State, in repudiating its State debt, or a portion of it, despoils herself of the jewel of consistency, she casts away the only remaining ornament that adorned her once noble and august person. If she is unable or unwilling to pay her debts, then all her creditors and the recipients of her bounty should fare alike. If she cannot or will not pay her old creditors, except in part, then, for the same reason and to the same extent, her officers, the members of her Legislature and the receivers of her appropriations should be unpaid. Let us illustrate this principle by a case at hand. The friends of Richmond College, with great self-denial and liberality, contributed funds for its endowment, to be used especially for the education of young men of the State. The trustees, knowing the ability of Virginia to pay her debts in full, and confiding in her honesty, preferred her securities to all others that were offered for their acceptance, and made a large investment in her bonds. Now is it right, in the sight of God or of men, that she should rob the college of the whole or a part of the investment, for the payment of which she is solemnly bound by all the laws and all the honor that bind a commonwealth?

In our opinion, and we speak as a tax-payer, the State debt should be paid, in full, without needless delay, just as the debt of an honorable gentleman, bearing the same proportion to his property as does that of the State to her available means, would certainly be. The Legislature should retrench the public expenditures, use economically the means in hand, seek out all suitable subjects of taxation, and then impose such taxes as are actually needed to meet the public liabilities. This course would please not only "the bloated bondholders," as the generous creditors of the State are sometimes contemptuously called, but every high-minded and patriotic citizen. \* \* \*

We have written earnestly, but not unkindly. We have given free utterance to our own solemn and profound convictions; but we have assailed no man's motives, and concede to all perfect freedom of opinion. The readjusters have reasons which satisfy their own minds as to the necessity, at least, of their policy. We know but imperfectly what they are. They may be right; we do not claim infallibility for our own views. We have no personal interest in the subject discussed, and have written simply from the desire to promote public and private integrity, and to save, if possible, our beloved commonwealth from what, we apprehend, would be a lasting disgrace.

He usually wrote from two to four columns a week. His leader rarely fell short of a column, and quite often went beyond it. He would select a theme—one suited to his taste and information—and discuss it tersely, but exhaustively. What he said usually embraced everything that needed to be said, and was so well said, that it could not be gainsaid. He measured his ground carefully before he took his position, and very rarely made a mistake, and when once intrenched, it was hard to dislodge him. Many an ambitious tyro charged upon him, and not a few redoubtable heroes of the quill assailed him, with confident courage, only to find that his positions were impregnable. It was positively provoking to observe the unruffled calmness, with which he received these attacks. They were, sometimes, made upon him, not with the weapons of a lawful warfare, but in terms of vituperation and scurrility. But he did not mind it. He said that he was conscious of only one qualification as an editor, and that was the power to bear abuse without any feeling of resentment. Once or twice, I quarreled with him outright, for submitting so tamely to the indignities of men infinitely inferior to him in worth and standing. He replied, that he could afford to be abused and maligned, but that he could not on any account afford to retaliate. If others hated him, that was their business; but, if he hated them, that would be a sin of his own.

One of his exchanges treated him with unmeasured barbarity. It impugned his motives, and vilified him so remorselessly, that he modestly suggested

that it would be better for both parties, that they cease to exchange official courtesies. From that time to the day of his death, the two papers kept on their respective sides of the road, neither ever entering the office of the other. This was accomplished in a quiet, even-tempered way, so far as he was involved, and was little known to the public. He knew, as well, as any other man, when an act was mean and spiteful, and he was too honest not to despise it; but he knew how to bridle his tongue, and to avoid hard and hasty speech. He never dipped his pen in gall, nor thickened his ink with boiling blood.

If his editorial brethren took offence, at any utterances of his, he was prompt to explain, and if convinced that he had spoken unadvisedly, he was ready to retract, or modify his statements. He maintained the most fraternal relations, with his professional brotherhood, so far as it could consistently be done. This was true not only of Baptist editors, but of those of other denominations, and of the secular press. He was always hailed, as a chief among his brethren, and they delighted to accord to him the seat of honor. Some editors got mad with him. He was too strong for them. They joined battle with him, and were worsted, and even when he died, though the most conspicuous Baptist editor of the South, if not of the country, his death did not soothe their resentments. They did not have grace, to speak fittingly of the old man, even when his pen had been laid aside, and his soul had gone to heaven. This is really too sad to be mentioned. It is due to many of the editors

who had grappled him in high debate, while he lived, to say that when his end came they were prompt to wreath his name with chaplets of honor.

Dr. Jeter was a controversialist, not by taste, but from conviction. His convictions were sharp, his zeal outspoken, and his spirit valorous and aggressive. He could not be silent, when, in his judgment, truth was imperilled or error was rampant. He was a warrior all his life. He was prompt to contend for the faith, once delivered to the saints. He had the heart of a lion, and without knowing it, was a man of transcendent courage. But he was not bitter. He was uniformly courteous toward his adversaries. It was impossible to dragoon him into harsh personalities.

In speaking of him as a controversialist, I beg to let him give his own views as to the spirit in which religious controversy should be conducted. This is taken from the *Religious Herald* of February 14th, 1878:

“To be useful, religious controversy must be conducted with candor. This is an honest desire to know and maintain truth. It resorts to no artifices or evasions in discussions. It admits all that is true in the arguments of an opponent. It scorns to misrepresent his statements, take advantage of his mistakes or damage his cause by any effort to awaken prejudices against it. In short, it aims to reach or defend truth only by clear statements, sound reasoning and kind appeals. Observation has led us to the conclusion that candor is the rarest of all human virtues, and so uncommon in nothing as in religious controversy. Yet, without this spirit religious controversy is a mere attempted display of dialectic skill, unprofitable, if not pernicious, to men and offensive in the sight of God.

Another needed element of religious controversy is courtesy.

It avoids all that is rude or offensive in manner, and seeks by gentleness and urbanity to conciliate and win an opponent. Most controversialists pursue an opposite course. By self-confident airs, opprobrious remarks and ungenerous insinuations they defeat the end of their discussion and injure their own cause. . . .

Humility is a most becoming disposition in religious controversy. It is not haughty, intolerant and overbearing; but self-distrustful, modest and cautious. It is not incompatible with strong convictions and earnest purpose, but it lays no claim to infallibility and supreme authority. It is not difficult to find polemics, who, with meagre knowledge and limited experience, have no question of their inerrability, especially on points concerning which the evidence is dim, and the wisest men are most in doubt. It should be understood, too, that undue self-confidence adds nothing to the strength of an argument, and that a modest statement of it detracts nothing from its force. Few persons will patiently receive instructions from a self-conceited dogmatic teacher, but most are inclined to pay respectful attention to the utterances of a modest, unassuming defender of his opinions.

All religious controversy should be conducted in a spirit of prayer. Without the divine blessing we may acquire the reputation of skilful disputants, and enjoy the pleasure of real or imaginary triumphs, but we will contribute nothing to the progress and glory of the word of the Lord. To war in the defence of religious truth in a godly spirit, and with only divinely-appointed armor, demands a measure of faith and piety that few Christians possess, but without which they should be cautious not to enter into the conflict."

These are the Christian principles which Dr. Jeter believed ought to underlie all religious controversy. He and Dr. Gambrell, of Mississippi, had an extended controversy on what is known among Southwestern Baptists as "Landmarkism." The discussion was earnest, vigorous and prolonged, and yet, it would not be too much to say that from beginning to end, neither of the disputants used a single



disparaging epithet, or resorted to the least indirection, to gain the advantage. It was a model religious controversy. It demonstrated the fact, that thoroughly good men may be as considerate and courteous in matters of disagreement, as when their views are in exact harmony.

One fact added immensely to Dr. Jeter's influence and celebrity as an editor. He entered the field of journalism at a critical period in the history of our republic. The war had just ended. The South was crushed, despondent and bitter. The North, flushed with sudden victory, had not learned to be magnanimous. The tone of its religious press was intemperate, and often contemptuous towards the South. Spiteful flings were made at their vanquished brethren. On the Southern side, the people were chafed and resentful, and found grim comfort in bitterly denouncing those who had conquered them. Political problems, new and perplexing, sprang up out of the ruins of the war, exciting acrimonious debate and widening the bloody chasm.

At this crisis, Dr. Jeter entered the editorial field. He was then in the later prime of a vigorous and well-preserved manhood. His reputation was national. He had played a most memorable part in the old Triennial Convention, and while of all Southern men, he had been most active in promoting the division of that body, his conservative spirit and courteous dignity had secured for him, the highest respect of the representative Baptists of the North.

By his wisdom and consecrated energy, he had become the most influential leader among the Bap-

tists of the South. He wrote the paper which called together the meeting that resulted in forming the Southern Baptist Convention. He was the first President of the Foreign Mission Board, and was looked upon, by his Southern brethren, as a safe and trustworthy counsellor. He was all the more acceptable to them, because of his cordial identification with the fortunes of the Southern Confederacy. They knew that, in the war sense of the term, he was a Southern man.

His bold and decided attitude during the war, of course, provoked the prejudices of the more extreme men of the North. But the best people in both sections soon learned to respect earnest men on either side, while they looked with suspicious eye upon those who sought to be on both sides.

It was fortunate for Dr. Jeter that his home was in Richmond. As the capital of the Southern Confederacy, that city had become the most commanding point in the South, and situated on the middle line, it gave to the *Herald* easy access to both sections. He enjoyed the additional advantage of starting his enterprise in advance of many other Southern Baptist papers, and thus speedily secured a circulation in the South which led the Northern exchanges to recognize it as, in a large measure, the organ of Southern Baptist sentiment.

From the outset, he took strong ground in favor of fraternity and good-will between the Baptists of the South and those of the North. With many, his views did not command prompt approval. Among the fanatical and revengeful of the North, his calm

plea for forbearance was mistaken for ignoble cringing, and if, on the other hand, he repelled their unjust assaults upon the South, he was, at once branded as an unreconstructed rebel. Many Southern men, too, of bitter memories, were quick to resent his conciliatory bearing toward the Northern people. They stigmatized it, as mean truckling to the conqueror. They were yet standing by the grave of the Lost Cause, and were ready in petulant grief to smite those who spoke a kindly word of those who caused its downfall.

As an example of the cruel injustice which he met in the house of his friends, I may mention that Dr. Jeter was an ardent friend of the American Baptist Publication Society. He did not hesitate to commend it to the support of Southern Baptists. For this he was openly charged with corruption. It was said that the *Herald* had been purchased by that society, and Dr. Jeter was a mere agent for bringing to it the patronage of the South,—a deadly slander unrelieved by a grain of truth, and aimed against a man who was above all price.

But he won his crown at last. In standing forth as the champion of peace and brotherhood, he was far ahead of the bulk of his brethren, on both sides of the line. He stood between the contending sections, and though raked by a double fire, he worked and waited. By degrees, a sense of justice and the prevailing love of Christ drew about him, good men from both directions. Unable to maintain their extreme positions, they gradually drew nearer together, and thus found themselves in his company. His at-

titude of conservatism and conciliation, became the rallying-ground for all parties, and he was at length recognized as a chief among the apostles of peace and good-will.

It is not claiming too much for him to say that he wielded a national influence in reviving a kindly spirit between the North and South. The Baptists led the van in the march to reconciliation, and with that he had much to do. Other denominations came on later, having been greatly stimulated in their desire for harmony by the example of the Baptists. Dr. Jeter led the Baptists, and the Baptists led the others.

Let me not claim too much for him. He needs no unmerited honor. Justice requires me to say that there were Baptist editors, in both sections of the country who, like him, were magnanimous, courageous and brotherly. They share with him the honor of having exorcised the sectional demon and of ushering in the era of good feeling. In doing justice to him, I would not wrong them.

It is generally known that Dr. Jeter openly favored an organic reunion among the American Baptists. He expressed more than once the hope that he might live to see all lines of separation blotted out, and the entire brotherhood merged into one body. He said that as Providence had removed slavery, which was the original cause of the division, there was no longer any sufficient reason for their remaining apart. He died without realizing his hopes; but he lived to see the end of alienation and strife. He believed that the two sections would have re-united but for the

conviction that they could more effectively serve the Redeemer, by preserving intact their several organizations.

His conservative spirit was infused into the Baptist journalism of the country. It is true that he had some rough tilts with his editorial brethren on sectional questions. They often eclipsed him in brilliant sarcasm and scathing epithet; but they could not spoil his temper nor overthrow his pacific policy. Smite him as they would, he moved serenely forward upon his chosen path, and paused not till the Angel of Peace had returned to the land. In his last years he towered among his brethren, victorious in his heavenly work, revered by good men everywhere, and wore a crown which, without the asking, had been placed upon his head by the friends of God.

What has been said in former chapters, together with the large amount of his own writing contained in this volume, relieves me of the necessity of discussing at length Dr. Jeter's chief points as a writer.

It is worthy of mention that he was famous for his beautiful chirography. His handwriting was characteristic—smooth, round, open and easy to read. It contained no flourishes, was stained by few blots, and even its corrections were distinct and legible. If he wrote a wrong word, and had to mark it out, he marked it out utterly. It was well-nigh impossible to decipher his blotted words. He did not write rapidly,—indeed, he was not nervously rapid in any of his movements,—but he moved his pen with a steady, vigorous hand, and could accomplish,

in his deliberate way, as much as more rapid scribes. His manuscripts were things of beauty, a feast to a printer's eye. He rarely abbreviated, and knew nothing of the arbitrary symbols with which many composers distress the printers. His handwriting was as steady, and graceful to the very last of his working life, as it was in the days of his youth.

He composed with extraordinary facility. He had the habit of thinking out his editorials, before leaving his bed, in the morning. He was not an early riser, though he slept so soundly during the night, that he always awoke early, and before the house was astir, he gave his morning thoughts to his work. He had, in an eminent degree, the power of thinking through a subject, and framing it mentally, before committing it to paper. He could do it so finely, that often when he took up his pen he knew every sentence, and almost every word that he intended to write. He could think with his pen, but his best thinking was done without it. At the end of his mental processes he simply summoned his pen, as an ever-obedient servant, to marshal into orderly form the soldiery of his brain. As a consequence, he did not often rewrite; some of his longest articles were finished at a sitting.

His editorial leaders, as a rule, were masterpieces. They dealt with living problems, and their discussion was methodical, logical and comprehensive. Of one of his editorials, a celebrated teacher said that it illustrated almost every logical form of argument. His traits, as a writer, rendered him attractive to the cultivated and intelligible to the simple-minded.

It is nonsense to claim that a man cannot understand English without an acquaintance with its kindred tongues. Dr. Jeter was not a classical scholar, but he was one of the finest English scholars that our country has produced. As for his acquaintance with words, it would hardly be too much to say that he had the dictionary at his tongue's end. He knew the uses, the shades of meaning and the peculiar forces of words. He rarely failed to use the exact word that would express most forcibly his meaning. The result was a lucid, perspicuous and almost radiant style. He set his thought out in such perfect diction, that it glittered like a diamond. He could say what he wished to say,—say it just as it ought to be said, and in terms that could not be misunderstood. There may have been a possible lack of fancy in his style,—that delicate weird charm which some writers possess; but there was an aptness and simplicity which always relieved him of tameness.

To his transparency of statement he added a peculiar grace. There was a smoothness, an easy rippling flow in the current of his thought, a warmth and freshness, which enkindled attention and enchained interest. One could not read thoughtfully what he said without experiencing a pleasant mental exaltation. He lifted, while he charmed his readers. Not that he produced that dreamy, delicious impression, pleasing for the moment, and then speedily fading. His style possessed a certain delicate vigor which drove his thought deep into the mind of the reader. What he said or wrote never

produced the highest excitement, but it had a singular penetration. It went into the mind, and became riveted into the memory. He cut to the core of his subject and to the heart of his reader. He stormed the strongholds and planted his standards in the citadel of the soul.

There was a dignity in his utterances which, while not easy to describe, was universally confessed. He moved on an elevated plane, spoke in calm and lofty words, and always brought a message worthy of respect. He never indulged in trivial and unseemly thoughts. At times his articles were touched with sarcasm, glinted with humor, or aglow with passion. But speak as he might, it was the voice of a master.

His princeliest charm as a writer was earnestness. He was a man with a message—which burned in his bones, and the heat of the flame went out in his words. It seemed impossible for him to meddle with a matter which did not grapple his deeper nature and call forth his strong feeling. His editorials were fragrant with religious unction. They were sermons in print. In other places I have had occasion to mention his boldness. His valiant spirit gave courage to his style. Defiant and overbearing he could not be, but in every word he wrote there appeared a man who believed something, and who was not afraid to say it.

In a word, Dr. Jeter was a Christian editor. He wrote on Christian themes in a Christian spirit, and with a dominant desire to honor Christ. This opinion expressed, in fullest confidence finds, a pleasant echo in the following words from Dr. John A. Broadus :



“I remember saying when he was gone, that after reading probably every article that he had published as editor, I recalled no line which, as to the spirit of it, he need have regretted in his dying hour. He was often assailed, sometimes harshly; he defended himself most manfully; he stood up squarely for truth, and squarely against what he regarded as error; but the tone and spirit were always such as became a Christian. May all of us who write in religious journals be specially helped by Divine grace as we strive to imitate this example.”

In closing the review of the Doctor's editorial record, I must express regret that I cannot add to its interest by more numerous extracts from his editorials. I append two fragments, the taste of which will revive in many the happy recollection of weekly feasts which he used to spread for them in his columns.

#### THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

“Man knows but little. With all his genius, learning, studies, experience and reputation he is but a sciolist. He cannot comprehend himself. He is curiously and wonderfully made. His body is a machine of the most intricate and delicate structure. No anatomist or physiologist can fully understand the complex organism or its mysterious functions. Who can explain life or growth or any of the bodily senses? The mind is more incomprehensible than the body. Is it a product of matter—a mere function of the brain—or has it a higher and nobler origin? Where is the link that binds it to the body? Whence its lofty aspirations after happiness? its longings for immortality? its reachings after the infinite?”

If man cannot comprehend himself, much less can he comprehend the universe of which he is but an atom. Whether it be examined through the microscope, the telescope or the spectroscope, its wonders are countless and overwhelming. How was matter created out of nothing. Whence are the laws, so silent, pervasive, powerful and uniform, that bind and move the planets in their orbits, and keep the myriad stars in their proper spheres. No scientist can fathom the mysteries of a single atom; how, then, can he comprehend the infinite variety, the boundless extent, and the surpassing splendors of a universe, only the suburbs of which can be explored by the mightiest telescope?

The Creator is greater than the Universe. We infer the skill of an artist from the beauty and perfection of his work—the genius and taste of an architect from the grandeur and completeness of the building which he rears.

This reasoning cannot deceive us. Its soundness is confirmed by the experience of all mankind. How incomprehensible, then, must be the perfections of that Being, whose wisdom planned, whose power created, sustains and governs, and whose goodness bountifully supplied with comforts the illimitable universe!

We firmly believe that God exists. Everything within us and around us proclaims the being of a Creator. Man is the wisest creature with whom we are acquainted; and there is a wisdom displayed in every animal, in every plant, and in every ray of the sun, entirely above his comprehension. We cannot ascribe this wisdom to unconscious matter without stultifying ourselves. We are constrained by the very constitution of our nature to attribute this wisdom to a Being of infinitely higher intelligence than man; and this Being is God.

How little do we know or can we know of God? The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. Whence came God? He exists of necessity we are told; and to that conclusion reason conducts us. Whence this necessity? Necessity implies causation; but God is uncaused. Necessity is a law; and a law implies a law-giver; but what law-giver antedated the existence of God? Was being a necessity? Might there not have been eternal nothingness? God existed from eternity; but was matter eternal? If it is, then it was not created. Like the self-existent mind that governs the universe, it was from everlasting. If it was created, then it had a beginning. If it had a beginning, then God existed before the universe. If He existed before matter, then, however far back in the mysterious depths of eternity we may date the beginning. He dwelt in solitude an infinite period, anterior to creation. Why this delay of creation? Why any creation, if God from eternity existed alone in infinite bliss? Had there been no matter, no spirit, no God, would there not have been space and duration? Had there been no intelligence, would it not still have been true that if matter were still in existence, the whole would be greater than a part?

Charnock, speaking of the incomprehensibility of God, says: He that fills heaven and earth cannot be contained in anything; fills the understandings of men, the understandings of angels, but is comprehended by neither; there is no measuring of an infinite being; if it were to be measured, it were not infinite; but because it is infinite, it is not measured.

God sits above the cherubims (Ex. 10: 1), above the fullness, above the brightness, not only of a human, but of a created understanding. Nothing is more present than God, yet nothing more hid; He is light and yet obscurity; His perfections are visible, yet unsearchable; we know there is an infinite God, but it surpasses the compass of our minds. These speculations are in perfect harmony with the teachings of the Scriptures. Job says: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as Heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell:" what canst thou know? the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. The Psalmist says: "Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite." Paul says: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

We have indulged in these speculations, we trust, in no irreverent spirit. They are adapted to teach us our ignorance. A conscious sense of ignorance lies at the foundation of all true wisdom. "If any man think that he knoweth anything," is wise in his own conceit, self-confident, "he knoweth nothing as he ought to know," his knowledge is superficial and inefficacious, puffing him up rather than humbling him. Surely, meditation on the incomprehensibility of ourselves, all things around us, and the infinite Being, of whom, and though whom and to whom, are all things, will make us modest and self-distrustful if any means can. The more we know God and His ways, the more profoundly shall we be convinced of our ignorance and fallibility.

These speculations should teach us the narrow boundary of human knowledge. A child may ask questions which no philosopher can answer. The knowledge of the most learned men is as an atom compared with infinity. Fortunately it is not essential to our piety, our happiness or our usefulness, that we should understand the mysteries of nature and of Providence. The knowledge necessary to guide us concerning our interests and our duties lies within a narrow compass.

All knowledge is good, if rightly used; but only the knowledge of the things that make for our peace is indispensable. To gain this, not genius and high culture, but an humble teachable spirit is demanded.

All true wisdom is from above. "If any of you lack wisdom," says James, "let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." He is the great Teacher, in whose school the dullest may be taught, and the brightest genius may feel his ignorance. They are wise whom God instructs, and all are fools besides.

Knowledge is progressive. What Jesus said to Simon Peter, with reference to a particular subject, admits of a general application: "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." In the present life, many things which are dark at one time, become, by observation, experience and the teaching of Divine Providence, clear. It is, however, in the future state, that our knowledge shall be perfected. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect shall come; then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." A thousand subjects, dim and mysterious in the present life, will be plain in the light of eternity. But even in Heaven our knowledge, perfect as compared with our present ignorance, will be far from perfect as compared with omniscience. The finite cannot grasp the infinite. The saints in glory will probably have a profounder sense of the meagreness of their knowledge than they can possibly have on earth, and will ascribe all "wisdom," as well as "honor and power and might," unto "God forever and ever."

Some things, however, we certainly know on earth. "The living know that they must die." To this solemn, momentous truth they cannot shut their eye. It stares them in the face in every graveyard, every funeral procession, and in every undertaker's shop. Every man knows, if he is not steeped in depravity, that he is a sinner. The evidence of this truth is ineffaceably inscribed on his heart. His own conscience proves his guilt. Whatsoever else he may need,

he needs salvation. It is his supreme want. Happy are they who can say with Paul: I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. They may be ignorant of science, philosophy, literature, and have but a small measure of worldly wisdom; but they are wise unto salvation, understand the science of redemption, and have learned the art of living to the glory of God.

As Dr. Jeter's connection with the Italian Mission fell within the period of his editorial life, I insert here a brief account of it.

#### SPECIAL COMMISSIONERS TO ROME.

On the 21st of June, 1872, Dr. Jeter was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, as a special Commissioner to Rome, to supervise their Baptist Mission. It was remarkable, indeed, that he, then seventy years of age, should have been summoned to duty, as a foreign missionary. I regret that an event, so deeply interesting in European missions, and so full of honor to him, cannot receive a full notice in these pages.

It must suffice to say, that in 1870, the Baptists of the South established a mission in Southern Europe. They appointed Dr. W. N. Cote as a missionary to Italy. He established his headquarters in Rome, being the first Protestant evangelist to enter that city, after its occupation by the army of King Emanuel. He selected several assistants and promptly began his work. So brilliant was his success in the outset, and so glowing his reports, that the American Baptists were led to believe, that the gospel of Christ was to win an easy and speedy triumph, in the stronghold of Papacy. Churches were established in several Italian cities, colporteurs and missionaries were appointed, accessions were numerous and the outlook most cheering.

In March, 1872, Giovanni B. Gioja was baptized. He was a man of varied gifts and accomplishments—a famous linguist and already of good repute as a Christian worker. It was confidently anticipated, that with him and Cote as yoke-fellows, the work would grow, with even increased rapidity. Baptists of the North joined heartily with their Southern brethren in raising money to build a Baptist chapel in Rome.

It soon appeared, however, that the affairs of the Italian Mission were suffering through the indiscretion of its leaders. In this exigency, the Foreign Mission Board decided that it was indispensably necessary to place in Rome, an American missionary whose piety, wisdom and business qualifications could be fully trusted. Under this action, Dr. Jeter received his appointment.

This summons fell upon him as a great surprise, and filled him with embarrassment. He was then an old man, unable to speak the Italian language, and never set his foot on European soil, burdened with editorial duties, and not specially adapted to the type of work which the position required. He expressed grave misgivings as to his suitability to the work. But he did not know how to deny the wishes of his brethren. He said that he seriously doubted the wisdom of his appointment, but then modestly added that while he could not do anything well, he had never utterly failed in anything which he undertook, except poetry-making.

His commission imposed several duties. First of all, he was requested to visit Great Britain and seek to enlist the English Baptists in the European Mission. He sailed from his native shore in 1872, accompanied by his wife. The departure of this white-haired old servant of God, upon so solemn an errand, touched many hearts, and awakened for him a gentle and prayerful sympathy. He spent several months in traversing England, Scotland and Wales, making addresses and appealing for help. He was received everywhere with fraternal consideration, and realized substantial help for the Italian field.

In London he met startling rumors of disorders in the Italian Mission. He was told that the Baptist cause in Rome had become a reproach to Protestantism. This alarmed him seriously, and chilled the ardor of his attempts to arouse the sympathy of the English Baptists. But he hoped for the best, and prosecuted his agency in England, until November, when he went to Rome.

Upon his arrival, his worst fears were fully justified. He found Dr. Cote and Gioja involved in disastrous strife. It was not a mere rupture of kindly relations between conscientious and godly men. It went deeper, and so seriously involved the influence of

these two men, as to make it necessary, that they should retire from the service of the Board.

Gioja was a man of immense cunning and malignity. When he ascertained that Dr. Jeter had recommended his dismissal, he was furious, and undertook, by appeals to popular prejudice, to destroy him. He preferred against him, the charge of ecclesiastical tyranny, and instituted proceedings against him in the court. In this work, it is said that he was abetted by some ostensible friends of the mission.

Dr. Jeter became satisfied that plans were on foot for his arrest, and saw that he was likely to be put at great disadvantage. After consideration, and with the advice of friends, he quietly withdrew from Rome and went to Geneva. This was evidently the dictate of discretion. He was not afraid to do his duty, and a Roman prison had no terrors for him, if it stood on the path of his duty. But he was a cool-headed old gentleman, and had not a trace of that fool-hardy courage which courts persecution for the sake of notoriety.

The chief object of his appointment to Rome was to arrange for the building of the Baptist chapel. That end he was not able to accomplish. The whole amount, then in hand, for the building did not much exceed twenty thousand dollars, and he soon found that the purchase of an eligible lot would consume the bulk of that sum. As he was not authorized to contract debt, he sought to purchase a building suitable, as a habitation for the little church. In this attempt he encountered great obstacles. Questions of location, price and title sorely perplexed him, and he finally retired from Rome without accomplishing the chief end contemplated in his appointment. In two respects, however, his wisdom proved most serviceable. He did not recklessly spend the money of the Board, and he did preserve, intact, the Baptist organization in Rome, which was put in, supreme peril, by its discordant leaders. The Board was more than satisfied with the manner in which he discharged his commission.

Dr. Jeter had long desired to visit the Old World. Just after the war, he planned a trip, but abandoned it, on account of an "abnormal contraction of the sinews." Beyond doubt, he was influenced in part to accept his appointment to Rome, by his

desire to travel. That his sojourn in Europe had its pleasures, and advantages is not to be doubted. But it was not a pleasure trip by any means. He had little time for sight-seeing. He was too busy to patronize ruins, art-galleries, or historic scenes. His hands were full of work, and his brain was vexed by ceaseless and blinding perplexities. In a single sentence he condenses the history of his painful trials in Rome :

“In the whole course of my experience I have never found myself more painfully perplexed, than I have been in regard to the matters of the Rome Church.”

In the later spring of 1873, the Board released him from his engagement, and he returned to America. By a happy coincidence he reached Richmond on the day, for the assembling of the great Baptist Memorial meeting, held June, 1873. His first appearance before his brethren, was on the stand in the mammoth Tabernacle, on the college campus, in which the memorial services were held. He stepped forward during the collection to pledge his second thousand dollars for Richmond College. When the great throng caught sight of his happy, beaming face, they broke into grateful and tumultuous applause. He gave his pledge and then said : “Surely of all this crowd, I am the happiest man to-day.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

### PERSONAL TRAITS.

IT is a long journey which we have taken in company with Dr. Jeter. Joining him, while yet a child, in his Bedford home, we have attended him along his course, watching his growth, and surveying the scenes of his labors. Thus far, we have dealt more with his conduct than with his character, and have had more to do with his movements, than with his motives.

We secure the fullest view of men when we observe them from the double standpoint of what they are, and what they do. We will turn, therefore, from his history, to study *him*, as nature had made him, and as art and grace had ennobled him. This chapter will bring under review his endowments, his habits and his social relations. While it is not designed here, to touch particularly his christian virtues, it will be found that, in him, the natural had passed under the reign of the spiritual.

Dr. Jeter's physique was absolutely superb. It combined, in itself, almost every advantage that a mere body could have. He was lofty and stately—so much so that he towered like a giant among his fellows. The old barbaric worship for bodily strength and prowess has not entirely disappeared.



The world can never cease to admire majestic forms. It is said that, when Dr. Jeter was in Paris, he and another eminent American, also of magnificent proportions, appeared one morning, on the street, in company. They created a sensation. The curious Parisians paused in groups, to observe them, and some of them pursued them under the fancy that they were the twin giants.

To a noble height he added erectness. His well-braced shoulders, roundness of limb and easy movement gave a pleasing grandeur to his bearing. Toward the last, there was a slight droop—a leaning forward, as he walked—but when he began to speak, he instantly became erect. His face and neck were long—too long to appear well—and this, with a too sharp slanting of his shoulders, diminished the grace of his outline when on the platform. His upper lip was so excessively long that it was a theme of mirthful jest. After meeting one of his sisters, I remarked to him that she resembled him. He knew that the likeness was in their lips, and tacitly confessed it, by saying: “My sister is a fine woman, but over-endowed in the matter of an upper lip.” His character was in his lips. When he compressed them together, they were very eloquent, though silent, witnesses of his intense thought and prodigious will.

During most of his life, he enjoyed superior health. Now and then, he had local and temporary disorders, and often suffered annoyance, from that “constitutional cough” which, for a long time, he believed would end in consumption. But these things rarely laid

him aside from his work or depressed his spirits. As a piece of machinery, his body was well-nigh perfect. It ran smoothly for nearly eighty years, and had immense force, for self-correction and recuperation.

He descended from long-lived families, and evidently inherited the vigor of his maternal ancestry and the buoyant spirit of his father. He grew up in the Piedmont, and was inured to the work of the plantation. His youth was happily free from all enfeebling vices. He had an innate respect for his body. He studied the laws of hygiene, and sought to apply them to his own case. He rarely fell sick, and had an intense repugnance to strong medicines. He never embraced the theory of the homœopaths, but he believed in their medicinal pellets, and often used them. He said they were sure to cure him when he was not much sick.

He was a model sleeper. He had his hours for rest, and when his time came for going to bed, he went, and when he went, he slept. It was a rule with him, not to make bed-fellows of his troubles. Before retiring, he spent a season in prayer, and cast his cares upon the Lord. Unless out of health, he speedily fell asleep, and rarely awoke until he had slept enough. It was one of his sayings, that sleep and prayer would solve the gravest problems. His wife relates that, several years before his death, he returned home, one evening in a state of painful agitation. He had suddenly found himself involved in a business embarrassment, so unexpected and grievous, that he seemed to be quite unstrung. He

knew not what to do, and his anxiety imparted itself to his wife. At the hour for retiring, he cut short the conversation, took his burden to the Lord, lay down upon his bed, and was soon sleeping as sweetly as a child. His wife tossed upon her pillow, until, far in the night, she sank into unquiet slumber. A little after daybreak, he aroused her, and in a cheery voice said: "It is all right. I see my course and will take it." That was the end of the trouble. His pillow and the mercy seat had brought relief.

Dr. Jeter was a wise eater. He ate with a relish, and energy which betokened a keen appetite. He was not a bit fastidious, and said that he liked almost every species of food, except sturgeon. His digestive organs once had a tilt with that sea monster, which proved to be a life-long discomfiture. He could not afterwards taste or smell sturgeon, without the utmost revulsion. He rarely ate anything except at his meals, and then he partook sumptuously and with marked enjoyment. He seemed to have no temptation to eat to excess.

In his later life he set high value upon recreation, as an indispensable feature in the economy of life. He was about as devout in resting, as he was in praying.

One of his modes of exercise was walking. He was fond of it, and being long-limbed and quick-jointed, he walked with great rapidity. He had a pedestrian pride, which made him anxious to out-walk those who indicated a pity for him, on account of the supposed infirmities of age. He retained his alertness, as a walker to the last, and was never slow to exhibit his speed when occasion offered.

A well-known citizen of Richmond relates, that in going down into the city, one morning, he met the old Doctor, and they walked along in company. Finding that he was moving at a rapid pace, the gentleman checked himself and apologized. He remarked that he had such a reputation among his friends for fast walking, that they avoided him, lest they should wear themselves out to keep up with him. He slackened his speed, and proposed to walk slowly for the Doctor's benefit. That put the old man on his mettle. He said, that he was not aware, that they were walking fast at all, and added, in a bantering tone, that as the gentleman was light of foot, they would move more briskly. He quickened his step, and with long and swinging strides, bore speedily away, leaving his overmatched companion to bring up the rear. The gentleman says, that they had not gone far, before he found himself afflicted with such a pain in his ankles, that he forged an excuse for taking another street.

Dr. Jeter was devoted to horseback exercise. It could hardly be expected, that one of his build would attain any grace as an equestrian, but he sat his horse with handsome ease, and cut a fine figure, as in the morning, on his well-groomed gray, he dashed down into the city, or went, cantering out on the avenues, in the afternoon. He was proud of his gray steed, almost as well-known in the city as his master, but Pearl, as he called him, served him a sorry trick, one day, by not only falling with him, but upon him. That event came near turning his recreation into a catastrophe.

But his favorite amusement was croquet. For indulging in that game he was much criticised, and some of his brethren regarded it, as a sad breach of christian propriety. They grievously misjudged him. He often suffered with headache and brain torpor, and found that some exercise was a necessity. Croquet suited him exactly. It threw him into the open air, required quick and incessant motion, gave him pleasant company, and aroused his passion for contest. Primarily he played for exercise, and he said, it mattered not who got the game, provided he got his recreation.

But he played to beat. He entered the struggle with the ardor of a boy, and relished a triumph as keenly as any man I ever saw, and when absorbed in a game, was oblivious of all besides. He was once in a game with several gentlemen, and had everything working in his favor. He was intensely interested, and while playing, he caught another ball, and roqueted it, sending both balls whirling across the yard, and setting out in a double-quick after them. Unluckily, his foot hung in a wicket, and he stumbled, and fell to the ground. It was a jarring, racking fall. He groaned, and rubbed his limbs with such evident pain, that the company gathered in anxious sympathy around him. It was feared, that he was seriously hurt, but he brought matters to a sudden and ludicrous end, by excitedly asking "Where is my ball?"

He was an honest player. He would have robbed a bank as soon as he would have taken the slightest advantage in a game of croquet. He would not con-

tend over doubtful questions, and, though sometimes, pitted against fretful and discourteous antagonists, he never lost his temper. He was once playing a game with a cross and ill-natured woman, who charged his side with dishonesty. He bore it with serene dignity, until the game ended, and then quietly withdrew, without a word of comment.

His character came out admirably on the croquet-ground. The game finely illustrated his mental peculiarities. He struck with singular accuracy, and few surpassed him in making the wickets. Those were simple, straightforward things. He worked steadily to gain the post, and failed to take into account, the difficulties which his enemies might throw in his way. He never evinced much skill, in planning the game, and if left to himself, often fell a victim to the superior adroitness of his adversaries. But I was often struck with the fact, that his plodding, direct playing, while sometimes interrupted by the tricks of the other side, bore him along, and not seldom, to victory. He gained about as much, from the miscarriages of his more scheming antagonists, as he lost by his own lack of strategic skill. And this, indeed, was the way in which he won his highest successes in the more solemn contests of life. His simplicity overmatched the shrewdness of his opponents. After all, though many glory in the arts of indirection, it remains morally, as well as mathematically, true that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. He played croquet on christian principles, and so conscientious was he, that he once said that he could go, without dread, from the croquet-ground to the judgment bar of God.

In the matter of dress, Dr. Jeter was an example. He had an ambition to appear well, and insisted that ministers ought to dress attractively. He enjoyed good clothes, and seemed a little conscious, when well arrayed. He always clung to broadcloth, and I cannot recall that I ever saw him wear any kind of hat, except a beaver. He wore upright collars and the old-time stock—probably in compassion for his elongated neck. He did his best dressing in his last days—partly, because he could better afford it, but chiefly, I suppose, because stimulated by the superior taste and loving authority of his wife.

In temperament, Dr. Jeter was mercurial. He had French blood in his veins, which may have given that volatility to his nature, which so strongly marked him. There was something strangely unique in his varying moods. His exultation was real, and often amounted to rapture. He was capable of the highest exhilaration. And then he could drop very low. He could groan with an unction that was positively refreshing. There was, however, a glimmer of sunlight over his sadness. The only half-hearted thing about him was his misery. He could not produce a strong case of melancholy. His lamp of hope burned dimly, at times, but never went out. If he began to grow gloomy, he soon came in sight of the ludicrous. His ordinary trials seemed to have a sportive side. During the war, he was with several ministers who were deploring the apathy, and dearth among the churches. They spoke dismally of their own religious states, and seemed on the verge of despair. Dr. Jeter sat silent, his face cast down, his

eyes half-closed, a picture of despair. A brother said: "Dr. Jeter, what have you to say about these things?" His face took on a deeper shade as he said: "I feel as if I had fallen from grace." It was an odd speech, and surprised us, but it, at least, made us all feel better.

Here is an incident decidedly characteristic:

This disposition to expose the laughable side of a serious thing was very strong. It sometimes served him in rebuking the bad tempers and exploding the prejudices of people. I was once with him in a protracted meeting in the country. One day several dogs got into the church and seriously disturbed the services. The pastor was quite outraged. He fired a furious volley, at the dogs and their owners, and seemed so disgusted, that he could not be restored to composure. After we returned to his home in the evening, he resumed the subject, evidently to the annoyance of Dr. Jeter, who suddenly proposed to deliver a lecture in behalf of dogs. He gave some capital stories about church-going dogs, and made such a kindly plea for the canine race, that the irate pastor was squelched.

Dr. Jeter was not a wit,—a fact which he well knew; but he possessed a brimming, infectious and kindly humor. He was fond of telling stories, especially those of the jocose and laughable type. He excelled most in relating a grave incident which contained a funny episode.

In his early days, he told many stories in which others played the ludicrous part; but he said that he met his punishment, for thus parading human frailties, in the fact, that his favorite anecdotes were afterwards repeated far and wide with himself always put in as the ludicrous actor.

During a familiar association with him for more



than a quarter of a century, I never heard him utter a word which savored of irreverence, indelicacy or uncharitableness.

Many coarse anecdotes and sayings were attributed to him, which were utterly foreign to his nature, and which, indeed, it would have been morally impossible for him to utter. Nothing mortified him more than to be reminded, that such tainted stories were circulated with his spurious imprint upon them.

The Doctor was not much given to laughing, and I must candidly admit, that his vocal infirmities went far to deprive his laughter of its contagious charm. His smile was magnificent,—so luminous and expressive, that it not only clothed his countenance with spiritual beauty, but spread a mellow light on all about him.

He had one weakness which, while not peculiar to him, was excessive in his case. When his risibles were once shaken, he had no power to control them.

He was not easily provoked to laughter; but when the humor struck him, laugh he would, regardless of propriety or consequences. Of this he gives the following example :

“On my first visit to Richmond, an event occurred in which it is hard to say whether the sad or comical predominated. I had in Lynchburg formed the acquaintance of a Brother H. and his good wife, who had removed to Richmond. They were poor, pious and respectable. We were glad to meet after a year or two of separation so far from the place where our intimacy commenced. I was invited to dine with them, and readily accepted the invitation. They occupied an upper story, the front room being a few feet higher than the rear. The table was set in the front room, near the door opening into the back one. The dinner was, no doubt,

the best that the amiable family could provide. We had partaken of it heartily and were sitting at the board, engaged in pleasant, social converse. By some chance, Sister H. lost her balance and fell backwards through the door, and, in her fall, grasping the table-cloth, carried all the table ware, with a crash, on the depressed floor of the rear room. It was a sad accident. The lady was painfully bruised, the crockery was broken and the remnants of meats, pies and preserves were mingled in sorrowful confusion. To add to the trouble, Brother H. was in feeble and declining health and little able to repair the damage that had been done. The good man lamented his loss, and his excellent wife, forgetful of all else, mourned over her pains and bruises. I sympathized with them and could have wept over their distress; but the scene had a ludicrous as well as a sorrowful aspect. I knew that laughing, under the circumstances, would be unseemly and offensive. I resolved that I would not indulge in it. I have, however, under strong temptation, never been able to control my risible faculties. On this occasion I had a severe struggle. I restrained my laughter as long as possible, put my head under the side of the table to conceal it, and finally burst into a vociferous laugh. I was ashamed, mortified, humbled, but had not the self-control to apologize for my rude and unseemly behavior. Had I possessed the means, I would gladly have restored the table-furniture, but the contents of my purse were almost exhausted. I sympathized not the less with my friends because I laughed at their ludicrous misfortune."

I insert here several stories illustrative of his mirthful and mirth-provoking nature :

"During one of his later summers, he was at the Buffalo Lithia Springs, a quiet, health resort in Southern Virginia. It was one of the devout customs of the place, to have prayers in the public parlors, every morning. On a certain occasion the Doctor was requested to conduct the exercises. He selected for the Scripture lesson the last chapter of Romans, which has much to say about saluting the brethren and sisters. He paused to remark at the end of the reading that the holy kiss was common in

apostolic days, but that it soon fell out of use. 'It was found, he said: 'That the less devout of the brethren were disposed to salute only the comely sisters and then the men would not salute each other. A man kissed me when I was in Europe, but I confess, I did not relish it.'"

"Dr. Jeter sometimes upset the gravity of the meeting by his remarks when he had no thought of doing so. In 1879 the General Association met in Danville, Va. When, on the first evening the organization was completed, it was proposed to have a season of prayer. A brother suggested that we pray especially for our brethren who were kept away by affliction. He spoke of the sickness of Dr. C. and Dr. W., and then said: 'It may not be known that our honored brother, Dr. B., passed through Danville to-day from the South, bringing the remains of his mother to be buried at the old homestead in Virginia.' It was a hushed and tender moment—too much so for Dr. Jeter. He arose and sought to soothe the sorrow of the brethren. 'It is very proper,' he said, 'to sympathize with the afflicted, but it is well to know the facts, so *as not to sorrow over much*. As for Dr. C., he is not sick much; I saw him yesterday. And as for Dr. W., I think he will be here to-morrow, and as for Dr. B., it is *not* his mother who is dead but his *mother-in-law*.' The effect of his speech was an explosion. It quite mortified him, and knocked the solemnity out of the meeting. He never saw the joke."

"He sometimes did a serious thing in a comical way. I recall an instance. There was a meeting held one evening, not long before his death, at the Grace Street Church, in the interest of temperance. He was not one of the appointed speakers, but was present, and, just before the close of the exercises, was invited to offer some remarks. The call was quite unexpected, and he walked slowly upon the lower platform, holding his hat in one hand and his cane in the other. He began to talk in a slow, informal style, resting his hand upon his cane, but soon he became animated. It was impossible for him to speak without gesture. As he warmed to his subject he gradually lifted his hand and with it, of course, his cane. To his long arm was added the length of the cane, and when he got fully under way he used his cane in the wildest and most vigorous gesticulation. At one mo-

ment he would point it into the audience, as if he had a man before him that he proposed to castigate on the spot, and then lifting it he would whirl it in the air as if he had discovered a new victim for his vengeance in the gallery. I doubt whether human gesture ever swept so large a circle before or since as his did that night. It was very laughable, and yet decidedly impressive."

"Dr. Jeter's greatness was most strikingly exhibited in his idiosyncrasies and mistakes. He never committed a commonplace blunder. In doing what he ought not to have done, he did it so as to leave upon the act, the impress of his character. His weaknesses were the signs of his strength. It was easy to smile at his slips, but not at him. At times his blunders upset him, leaving him vacuous and silent. This was not always so; often he would recover speedily and turn the laugh in another direction. He once arose to speak in the Southern Baptist Convention. It was his first appearance on the floor at that meeting, and every eye was on him. In attempting to call a brother's name he made a mistake so odd and surprising that the house roared with laughter. He stood sober and serene until the noise ceased, and then smilingly remarked: 'If mistakes were hay-stacks some of us might start a feed-store.'"

"At a church-meeting, two brethren were nominated for a place on a committee. He put the vote on the nominee thus: 'Those in favor of brother B. say 'Aye,' those in favor of brother P. say 'No.' This, of course, created amusement, and it was finally decided to add both men to the committee. As this made it an even number some brother objected, and nominated brother R., so as to have an odd number. Dr. Jeter at once, and with feigned gravity said: "Those in favor of making the committee *odd* by putting brother R. on it will please say 'Aye.'"

"The story seems to be authentic that he once solemnly proposed to close a meeting by singing the benediction and pronouncing the Doxology."

I cannot speak at any great length of the intellectual endowments of Dr. Jeter. As his productions have passed into the hands of the public, they must stand as the exponents of his mental forces.

A few paragraphs only can be devoted to the discussion of these qualities.

Dr. Jeter was not a genius, if, by this term, we understand some extraordinary talent for a particular line of work. He had really no salient, overshadowing faculty which made him, exceptionally strong, in any one direction. His strength lay not in one gift nor in several, but in the variety, vigor and balance of his powers. He was not phenomenally strong at any point; but then he was not weak at any point. He was strong everywhere, and in the combination of so many mental forces, he was very strong.

It was commonly said that he was feeblest in his imagination. This I never believed, and those who read his "Christian Mirror" and kindred writings would be slow to embrace such a view. In his old age, he was afraid to trust his imagination. He suffered so many disasters, in his vivid and pictorial sermons, that he gradually became afraid to indulge in that style of preaching. He drew his pictures with admirable distinctness and delicacy, and had them clear in his own mind; but he often failed in presenting them. His imagination was cowed, by public miscarriages, and in his maturer life, was not kept on active duty.

But he had a really strong and active imagination. It was vigorous in its power to conceive, combine and construct. His conceptions were clear; his combinations were simple and harmonious, and his structures were symmetrical and complete. In his youth, before he had become so deeply chastened by his failures, his imagination had intense grip and glow.

Mr. Sands relates that Dr. Jeter once preached a sermon at the First Church, in which he described the Grecian races. He says that his pictures were so graphic and brilliant, that they brought the whole scene before the audience, in a manner, that was absolutely thrilling. In 1862 I heard him preach his famous sermon on Onesiphorus. It was in a country church, and to a small and plain-minded congregation. His description of the judgment day was wonderful in its vividness, and impressed the people almost as deeply, as if the real scene had been before them.

Dr. Jeter failed to cultivate faithfully his imagination. His tastes took him in other directions. He would have been a better preacher, if he had given freer rein to his fancy. He was an advocate of descriptive sermons, but he was afraid to try them. His imagination worked better at his desk, than on the platform. It occurred to me that his thin, and, at times, inflexible voice was unfriendly to the noblest performances of which his imagination was capable.

His mind was of the logical rather than of the metaphysical order. For abstruse speculations he had neither taste nor capacity, but for truth in the concrete, and in its relations to other things, he possessed a rare power of apprehension. Dr. A. B. Brown said, very finely, of him that he had no great gift for splitting a hair, but that he knew as well as any living man when there was a hair to split, and how it ought to be done. He always studied truth in its roundness and in its most delicate shadings. He could tell a thing exactly as it was.

He thought very widely. Problems in almost

every branch of human thought interested him. He was often exercised about questions, in jurisprudence, and he would ransack law-books, or invade the offices of jurists in quest of light. There formerly lived in Richmond, a lawyer who had a great name for erudition, and was supposed to be encyclopedian in forensic lore. Dr. Jeter went to him with several knotty questions, connected with the science of law, and never in a single case, gained the desired information. He had great reverence for experts and loved to consult them, but the sequel often proved that he was better posted than they were.

In a former chapter, much was said as to the freakishness of his memory. In point of fact his memory was wonderful. It laid hold upon facts readily, and clung to them with a dogged tenacity. What he once learned he rarely forgot. In reading his "Recollections" one is made to feel that to him, the past of his life was an open book. His recollections of men were distinct, varied and vivid. The year before his death I had him in company with Doctors J. L. M. Curry, T. H. Pritchard, E. W. Warren and others to a dinner-party at my house. That day we succeeded in turning the old man's thoughts backward to the great men whom he had known in the earlier prime of his manhood. He summoned them forth, as with a magician's wand, painted them with such distinctness that they seemed to stand before our eyes, and poured forth a torrent of incidents which charmingly illustrated, what manner of men they were. I recall now his portraiture of John Kerr—with his grand form, his deep sonorous voice,

his flaming fancy, preaching in a grove, in the face of a stiff wind, on a raw, shivering day, and yet, so intoxicating the people with his eloquence, that they quit their seats, and packed in solid mass around the platform.

His memory was not perfect, and he often lamented his forgetfulness. This is the misfortune of all thoughtful men. Dr. Jeter was a constant learner, and he retained unusually well his acquisitions. His power to recall was excellent, except when on the platform. When he sat down to write, the storehouse of the past seemed to be unlocked before him. His pen was the wand, with which he called back just such things as at that moment he happened to need.

He possessed in marvellous measure the power of concentration. He could throw all of his mental forces on a single point, and hold them there. When deeply engaged in the study of some important question, it was hard to call him away. He could never treat an intruder with rudeness, but in many nameless ways, he could satisfy him that he would enjoy nothing, so much as his departure. Of course he had to endure the reproach of absent-mindedness. Persons who had very little mind, either present or absent, were fond of expatiating on the old doctor's absent-mindedness. His mind was often absent *from those people*, but it was happily present with other and more congenial things. If some favorite theme possessed him, he took it with him into the street, or upon the train and tugged at it in the midst of his journeys. Now and then, he talked to himself in tones easily audible to others, but it was



always on deep and valuable topics. While in those moods, he would walk by his dearest friends, without speaking, or even seeing them, and, sometimes without speaking, even when he saw them.

His intellectual enthusiasm, intense in youth, knew no abatement in age: He never grew weary of investigation. He was always on the trail of thought. He studied to the last, and with a zeal as fresh and thirsty as that which distinguished him as a boy. In the current events of the times he took the liveliest interest. If there was a war in Asia, he could not rest until he had acquainted himself with the causes of the strife, the parties involved, and the fortunes of the struggle. If a new discovery, or invention was announced, he went to work to find out its author, and its merits. He kept posted as to public affairs. He was acquainted with the history and constitution of our country—watched the movements of political parties, and felt the deepest concern as to the welfare of the State. When he died, his body was placed in the Grace Street Church that those who desired, might take a last look. Among those who came was Mr. Holliday, then Governor of Virginia, who, when he stood by his coffin, said; “Here lies the man, by whose counsel and sympathy, I have been more strongly sustained, in my official duties, than by any other man in Virginia.” What he thought ought to be done, he fearlessly advocated, and looked upon public officers, as the servants of the people, through whom he might promote the public good.

Dr. Jeter had a will of his own—not of steel but

of iron. If he had been a man without reverence and humility, he would have made a superb tyrant. Truth had enlightened him, grace had softened him, and reason swayed him. And yet he was not easy to conquer. He would bend, but it was hard to break him. When he took a stand, his tracks were deep, and he was hard to move. His will was gradually brought under the dominion of his conscience and affections, and in his ripened days he was firm, without stubbornness, determined without obstinacy, and persistent, without intolerance. He was too conscientious to be defiant, and too gentle to be overbearing.

In closing this description of his traits I add an extract from a fine article written concerning him, by Dr. J. C. Long of Crozer Theological Seminary :

It would not be difficult to give an analysis of his powers and character. His mind was clear and comprehensive. He could see all around a subject as well as into and through it. It was, perhaps, owing to his penetration and grasp of thought that he was so bold and independent in thinking. With little imagination or fancy he had a sound and vigorous judgment. In a word, he was a man whose great powers were under the control of invincible common sense. He had no sinuosities of character. He took the simplest, most direct means to accomplish his ends. His candor was rare and beautiful. In coming days he will be mentioned with Hall, and Fuller, and Foster, and Carey, and Judson, and Wayland. He fell, indeed, far below Hall in eloquence and learning ; he did not, like Foster, touch the deeper and more subtle springs of moral action, and he did not, like Fuller, exert a moulding influence on the theology of his age. But in personal influence, in developing the spirit of our denomination, and in creating and controlling denominational agencies, he did not fall behind the greatest of his English brethren. He and Dr. Wayland did not move in the same plane ; in many things they were

very unlike each other ; but, friends during life, they stand together as the two Baptists who have exerted the widest and most wholesome influence on the religious history of our country.

#### HIS PRACTICAL TALENT.

Shrewd men often shed their flippant sneers at the expense of ministers, on account of their supposed lack of common sense. They forget that the proof that a man has common sense, is found in the fact that he does well the business, which he takes in hand. The best evidence that a preacher can give of his common sense, is that he is successful in his ministerial work. Judged by this standard, Dr. Jeter was eminently a practical man.

For what is popularly called business, he had no taste. He never set before him, money-making as one of the ends of his life. He never touched business, except as a necessity. He said that it would suit him exactly, to have only what was needful for his comfort, and for benevolent, uses without the care of ownership. He lived for noble pursuits. The affections of his heart, and the energies of his life were devoted to his Redeemer's cause.

And yet it was, of course, necessary that he should give his attention to the temporalities. He had a few business maxims which guided him in affairs of business. He was thoroughly scrupulous in the matter of keeping out of debt. It was a fixed rule with him, to live within his income. It was a point of conscience with him to buy nothing, he could not pay for. He had a natural, as well as a moral, horror of debt. He loathed it as a bondage, and recoiled from it, as from a plague. He mentioned it, as a

ground of thanksgiving, in his last sickness, that he was out of debt.

He was a fair buyer. He never higgled or wrangled over the price of an article. He was willing to pay the market value, and spurned to trade on his cloth. While connected with the *Religious Herald*, he insisted that the employees should be paid full wages, and that they must have their money, though nothing was left for the proprietors.

He was a pleasant man to work for. Those who touched him in a business way, were captivated by his evident honesty and charming urbanity of manner. He was free from contention, slow to complain, and easy to please. It is possible that he was sometimes deceived by the superior smartness of others; but not to his serious detriment. His fairness often shamed bad men into honesty, when trading with him. He was quick-sighted and usually saw things at their real value. If men attempted to cheat, or circumvent him, he was apt to find it out, and while he said nothing about it, he did not expose himself to their wiles a second time.

He often said that he could not spare the time to attend to his business. If he could save a half hour, by paying a higher price for an article, or, even by taking an article of inferior quality, he would do so.

It was only when he could not avoid it, that he ventured into the marts of trade.

If the gentle power behind the throne ordained that he must have a new suit of clothes, he went to his tailor, carefully selected the goods, inquired the price, had his measure taken, escaped as soon as

possible, and probably never thought of the matter again, until the bundle was handed in at his door. If he was compelled to go to market, he went, provided he didn't forget it.

And if he went, he probably bought, either double the amount that was needed, or something that was not needed. Dr. Ryland relates the homely story, that, during the life of his second wife, he went one morning to the market, and invested in a venerable goose, which Mrs. Jeter declared, required three distinct cookings to render edible. After that experience the gentle lady issued a decree permanently depriving him of the right or privilege of trading in the public market.

It is worthy of record, that while Dr. Jeter never gave himself to the pursuit of wealth, he began life in poverty, lived in comfort, gave with conspicuous generosity, had his share of misfortunes and losses, and yet succeeded in acquiring a modest fortune.

#### HOME LIFE.

It is little to say of a good man, that he is wedded to his home. It is only another way of saying, that he is true to the profoundest wants of his being. If unhappy in his domestic relations, his public character cannot be satisfactory. But men differ greatly in this respect. Some are dependent, and to them home is a refuge; some are sensitive, and easily wounded by the slings and whips of life, and to them home is an asylum; and some are restless, ambitious and over-worked, and home for them means rest. Dr. Jeter was large-hearted, trustful and strong, and

to him home meant love, confidence and fellowship. It helped him to be loved, and it was his life to love. Home filled a place in his heart which, otherwise, must have remained locked and empty.

It seems surprising that his domestic affections were so ardent. In his youth he knew little of the beauty and joy of home, except that which he found in the proud and ever-inspiring love of his mother. After he entered the ministry, he was immersed in public duties, loaded with official labor, and wedded to the seclusion of his study. His habits did not favor the cultivation of the homely virtues.

Then, too, his domestic career was sadly chequered. Three times, his home was wrecked by the hand of death, and often he was called upon to change the place of his abode. He never knew that ripened sanctity which, through the passing years, gathers around a single spot, investing it with holy memories and hallowing sorrows.

He said that he looked upon it, as the direst affliction of earth, that his marriage relations were so often broken. The sword that pierced him, left wounds which, never fully, healed. From the grave of his dead, he turned tremblingly to the task of rebuilding his shattered homestead. He entered into marriage always with sobriety and prayerful caution.

His several wives were excellent women. His reverence for womanhood was deep, and he was notably susceptible to the charms of the fair. But he never lost his senses in the days of his wooing. He was never enslaved by a silly woman. His marriages were prudent, and each wife, in her turn,

seemed to be, providentially, suited to him at the different stages of his life. Indeed, it was easy for him to be happy. His genuineness, his simplicity and flexibility enabled him to accept his lot with cheerful grace.

He was a good husband—a statement not always true of men formed for public life. Dr. Ryland says that in middle life, Dr. Jeter was not so gallant and courtly as he ought to have been, but he was always forbearing, and sincerely anxious to please. I knew him well in his later days, and was impressed with his fine bearing toward his wife. He allowed her a broad margin, and was never exacting. If not very fond, he was, at least, kind, genial and considerate. I could not quite put into words the impression that he made upon me as a husband, but, in some way, I came to think, that he was just the husband that would fill the heart of a good woman, and that all men might safely copy his example.

There was something matchlessly charming in his bearing towards the wife of his old age. She was the tower of his strength, his pride, his counsellor, and to her, he confided the secrets of his heart. They were rarely separated, and, if he could have his way, she always accompanied him in his travels. When I applied to her, for letters to be used in the preparation of this volume, she had to confess that there were none—simply because they were separated only on brief occasions.

Busy men are often boorish and stupid in their homes. They give their vitality and energy to the world, and then curse their households, with their

sighs and sulks. Dr. Jeter was not always in flowing spirits. He worked, too closely, to be much with his family, and now and then he lounged into the sitting-room in abstracted and taciturn moods. But he was never surly or impatient. The clatter and romp of children did not upset him. He would often frolic with the little ones, or tell them merry stories. He had the elements of a tease, and enjoyed a practical joke. He sometimes perpetrated jests on his wife, which were not always agreeable, but if he ever gave offence, he was quick to make amends. I drop here two homely stories :

“Once his wife was taken suddenly ill in the night. He was much alarmed, and gave her, the most considerate care. She was relieved, and appeared at the breakfast-table the next morning. He returned thanks for her recovery, and seemed unusually jubilant. But when he grew excited, his feelings inevitably drifted him into the vicinity of the comical. Assuming a sombre mien he asked his wife if she knew what he was thinking about while she was so sick. She replied that she supposed he was duly occupied in devising means for her recovery. ‘Well, yes,’ he said, ‘I was anxious, indeed, for you to get well, and am glad that you did, but I could not help from thinking that, if you died, what a worry it would be to me to have to branch out and look for another wife.’

“This reminds me of another trustworthy tradition. He was once sent for by an hysterical woman who was supposed to be dying. When he entered the room, she said to him, ‘I have sent for you, Dr. Jeter for an important purpose. I feel that I am near my end, and I have been trying to induce my husband to promise me not to marry again—and I want you to help me.’

“‘Don’t do it brother ; don’t do it,’ Dr. Jeter said, addressing the husband. ‘I would not make that promise to any woman.’ She had evidently sent for the wrong man. His remark made her so mad that she got well.”



In the post-bellum times, his home was elegantly furnished, and his board was luxurious and hospitable. During a certain Baptist convention, his house was filled with guests, and they were charmingly entertained. On the last day as the company gathered at the dinner table, the Doctor grew suddenly sober. "Brethren," he said, "I am sad to-day. It grieves me that you are going away. How I will miss you! I hardly know how I will get along, when you are gone."

The brethren were moved. They began to say what a fine time they had had, how grateful they were, how they would miss him, etc.

With a yet sadder face, he said, "Excuse me brethren; you misunderstand me. It is about myself I am thinking. We don't live this way all the time. My wife will make me suffer for all these grand dinners we have been having."

It was a jest in which he could afford to indulge. It little mattered with him what he ate, and his table never lacked for palatable supplies.

Dr. Jeter actually revelled in hospitality. He hailed it as a privilege. He had nothing too good for his brethren. His home was, rarely, without company. With not a few persons, it was understood that when they came to Richmond, they were to be his guests. His kindred always found it pleasant to cross his threshold, and in his fellowship, had a feast of fat things. But it was his crowning joy to entertain the preachers. He never hesitated to pick up the visiting brother, and bring him to meals, or to spend the night. The only limit upon his hospi-

tality was found in the exigencies of his work. His mornings he reserved for his studies, and on that point, he was inexorable.

His type of hospitality was distinctively social. It is true that the poor, often, sat at his table, and he was ready to divide his last loaf with the needy. But his social nature yearned for sympathy. He was ever ready to accept the hospitality of others, and was often out to dinners and suppers, though he seemed happiest when he could gather into his own parlors, those whose intelligence and piety made them responsive and congenial. To his guests he was courtly and obliging. He would take them in his carriage in the afternoon, and show them the sights of the city, and his evenings were cordially spent in their entertainment.

Dr. Jeter, in his social habits, had an upward look. He struck for the best. He revered successful men, and paid willing court to those who had won eminence in their special line. He had an open respect for those who had official rank, and yet more for those who had filled high places, with acknowledged faithfulness. He said office was not always worthily bestowed, but that, usually, it indicated merit. He was apt to call on distinguished men when they came to Richmond, and this he, sometimes, did as an act of respect for their position. When in 1865 Mr. Pierpont came to Richmond, as governor of a people, who had not chosen him and did not desire him, he called on him. On the occasion of Mr. Hayes' visit to Richmond, he called on him in token of his consideration for the presidential office.

He did not love money, but he had decided respect for men who had won distinction in money-making. He liked rich people, provided they were reputable and decent. Even for fashionable people, he evinced a respectful attention. He was not above or below any class of society. He touched the social fabric at every point. He said that he never met but one rebuff, in approaching persons of aristocratic pretensions. During a summer at the White Sulphur Springs, he sat at the same table with a woman quite high in the social circles of Richmond. Though not acquainted with her, he knew of her, and after exchanging table courtesies for several days, he ventured to give her his name, and speak in kind terms of her husband whom he knew. Upon learning that he was a Baptist minister, she repelled, almost scornfully, his approaches. Her curtness clipped his plumes for a season, but he related the incident afterwards with a smile, which had in it no cynical suggestion. He did not hold society responsible for the brainless pride of one of its members.

In his rich and joyous life, there was one sad void. God never blessed him with living children. This was a sore deprivation. He was a child-lover, and longed for children of his own. He said of his third marriage, that he hoped it would bless him with a dozen children. That wish, cherished with true patriarchal longing, was denied, and so hungry was his heart, for child-company that he adopted an orphan girl, named, Bessie Bradley. He took her to his heart, gave her his name and invested her with the privileges of a daughter. A lovely, grateful

child she was, and she clung to him with an affection as deep and true, as that which he gave to her. Under his roof, she grew to womanhood, and just before his death, he gave her in marriage to Mr. J. B. Woodard. She bore a son, and called him Jeter, and, then dying, was buried in Hollywood, near the spot where he sleeps.

When he married Mrs. Dabbs, she also had an adopted child,—a little boy, named, Philip Stratton. Him, also, Dr. Jeter adopted, and after exercising over him faithful care, educated him for the medical profession. He is now a practitioner in North Carolina, and worthily wears the name of his adopted father.

He also received into his family, two little nieces of Mrs. Jeter, and while not adopted, they shared fully his fatherly kindness, until their marriage. The elder is now Mrs. Merrie Sugg, of Virginia, an accomplished and useful Christian lady; the latter is the beautiful and brilliant wife of H. A. Tupper, Jr., of Kentucky.

It would hardly seem possible, that a household thus constructed, at a late point in his life, and out of fragments taken from three other families, would ever become homogeneous. But it did. It was a compact, genial and delightful household.

He was too busy to be often with his children, but he evinced the sweetest affection and the most generous concern for them. His discretion, kindness and patience were more than matched by the admirable discipline and fidelity of his wife.

For some years before his death, he had in his fam-

ily a maiden lady, Miss Emily Brown. She was a true, faithful woman and a valuable auxiliary of Mrs. Jeter in the management of her home. Indeed she assumed the bulk of domestic care, and did much to promote the order, taste and beauty of the house. She knew his ways and delighted to minister to his wishes. In his last sickness, she assisted in nursing him, and no tears dropped upon his bier, were more lovingly sorrowful than her's. When he died, she declared that he had never wounded her by a sharp word or an angry frown. In grateful remembrance of her services, he made provision for her in his will.

Many whose eyes trace these pages, will recall Dr. Jeter's home at the corner of First and Grace Streets, in old Richmond. A quiet, unpretending brick-house, without park or fountain; with passages too narrow for convenience, and with rooms too small for comfort. But what a home it was! Within reigned the spirit of Him who brought peace, and light and love to the earth. There lived the dear old man of God, with his devout family, and there, he did his last best work. Many of us rang its bell, sat at its board, enjoyed its fellowship and bowed at its altar.

Death and change have done their cruel work. Its inmates are scattered, and strangers have taken their places. The little study in the rear, dearest of all earthly spots to him, where he loved to pray, and work, has been robbed of its books and desks, and he has gone out to come back no more.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### CHRIST IN HIM.

ON the 22d of February, 1858, I stood on the Capitol Square at Richmond, Va., and witnessed the unveiling of the equestrian statue of Washington. It was a chill and stormy day, and yet the park was crowded. When the veil fell off, and the horse and rider broke upon public view, a great shout rent the air. Bands played patriotic airs; an orator pronounced an eulogy, and a poet sang the honors of the great American.

Mine is an humbler task. I venture to unveil, as best I can, the christian character of J. B. Jeter. This I do, not in the midst of roaring cannon, nor martial music, nor swelling pomp, nor yet with the hope of arousing the noisy enthusiasm which on that memorable day, burst forth in honor of Washington. It will be an ample reward for me if, by uncovering a well-finished christian life, I can magnify the transforming grace of God, and stimulate in some, a yearning for a better life.

Dr. Jeter was a christian for nearly sixty years. Before his conversion he was an upright, self-contained youth. His moral sensibilities had not been blunted, nor his soul blistered by the flames of evil passion. The gospel can reach low, and lift the degraded,

but happy is he, who can enter Christ's kingdom, unstained by vice and unshackled by bad habits.

Of course, there were evil possibilities within him. His ambition was prodigious, and if it had mastered him, who can tell, to what lengths it would have borne him? His love of præminence—that unhalloved craving for the highest seat—was his sore besetment. Passionate, impatient of control and mischievous, he was not always quick to respect the rights of others. Without local attachments, and bent on adventure, he was fair game for the tempter. Such was the boy, upon whom the Lord laid his hand in 1821, and summoned into his service. His conversion was genuine, and of its reality, he never had a serious doubt.

We are to study him, not so much in the processes of his growth, as in the maturity and completeness of his character. We may, at least, pause at the threshold to mark the maxims and habits which entered into the formation of his spiritual life. He started with one single purpose—that, *to give himself, without reservation, to the service of God.* It was the guiding principle of his life. It held him and kept him. His feelings were moody and variable, but his covenant abided. He was the Lord's by solemn compact, and there he stood, fixed and unshakened.

His faith in the gospel was vital. He never knew the unhinging power of a real doubt. Nothing was great to him but Christ, and he was "all and in all." He saw him in experience, in providence and in the Scriptures. He lived in fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Dr. Jeter was not emotional in his piety. He tended in the direction of system, regularity and punctiliousness in his religious habits. Not that he was destitute of feeling, but he was devout and reverential even without emotion. He was about as faithful, in his attention to the means of grace in times of coldness, as he was in seasons of revival. Indeed, while he often deplored his leanness of soul, he never got very cold.

He was a devotional student of the Scriptures. He read the Bible for his own sake—read it every day—read it, often, upon his knees. He had copies of the Scriptures for his personal use, and read them literally to pieces. A number of these were found in his study, after his death, and they had been so marked and worn, that they were, no longer, fit for use.

Nor was he less devoted to secret prayer. He never measured his prayers by rules, nor prayed by schedule. I do not suppose that he spent as much time upon his knees, as Payson or Clopton, but he prayed regularly and irregularly. When he arose in the morning, he immediately repaired to his study, and engaged in private devotions. These could hardly be called secret, for his prayers were often heard beyond the limits of his little sanctuary. He often prayed in the night, and upon his bed. Prayer was his remedy for insomnia. It is known that he rarely went to sleep, without folding his arms upon his breast and repeating the devout hymn—

“Father, whate’er of earthly bliss  
Thy sovereign will denies,  
Accepted at a throne of grace,  
Let this petition rise :



“Give me a calm, a thankful heart,  
 From every murmur free ;  
 The blessings of thy grace impart,  
 And make me live to thee.

“Let the sweet hope that thou art mine,  
 My life and death attend ;  
 Thy presence through my journey shine,  
 And crown my journey’s end.”

Dr. Dunnaway mentions the fact that whenever Dr. Jeter went to conventional meetings, if a time was set apart for devotional exercises, he always attended, and entered heartily into every part of the worship. He looked upon prayer as the key which unlocked all mysteries.

“Before entering upon any enterprise he would first seek the Divine guidance in prayer. When he conceived the idea of devoting himself to editorial work, he called one morning on Dr. Dickinson and said : “ I call to see you on an important matter. I propose to unite with you in establishing a Baptist weekly in this city. Think over it, and *pray over it*, and I will see you again.” To pray over the matter was all that was then proposed as the first and most important step in the enterprise.”

Dr. Jeter’s piety, like his temperament, was mercurial. When he was converted he fell into the notion of the times, that a man’s religion was in proportion to the sombreness of his manner. He undertook to encase himself in the grimness of the Puritan. The project miscarried. He was too well converted, and too spontaneously joyful, to be consistently gloomy. His sense of the ludicrous played havoc with his asceticism. He laughed at his simulated misery. He had a capital liver ; indeed, he

said that he did not know that he had a liver, and he was a stranger to the horrors of dyspepsia. His sunny nature was a medium through which his spiritual hopes beamed with resplendent glory. Though full of thought, and ridged with care, his face glowed with a soft religious light.

He was a *real* man. He was genuine through and through. Between his seeming and himself, there was no disharmony. In him, there was no crookedness. He wore no masks. He was inherently, subjectively, essentially honest. The reader must have found out already, that I am no blind eulogist of Dr. Jeter. Of his errors and mistakes, I have spoken with unsparing candor. I determined in dealing with his moral and religious features, to set out in the clearest light, his wrongs and sins, so far as I could find them. It surprised me that I could not put my hand upon anything, in his later life which could be branded, as manifestly wrong. I appealed to others, to tell me, wherein he fell short, and needed amendment. They confessed that they did not know. He was so high in his consistency, so sincere in his nature, so transparent and true, so broadly charitable and gently just, that I could find no fault in him. He was a trophy of transforming grace. The gospel had finished its work in him. This he could never have said, and yet he well-nigh implied it, in the oft-expressed wish, that when death came, it might come suddenly. He asked for no death-bed, and offered no prayers for dying grace. Having lived faithfully, he was not afraid to die.

It is customary in books of this class, to emphasize

every quality which enters into the constitution of christian character. In dealing with Dr. Jeter, I choose to select only a few conspicuous traits in his religious life, and will let them stand, as samples of the whole.

#### HIS LOVE OF MEN.

It was often said that he did not know men. Shrewd people sneered at his ignorance of human nature. There are two ways to find out men. The first is by suspicious vigilance. We assume that they are false, and need to be watched. It is a mild form of the detective system. We eye our neighbor as a doubtful character, and expect to catch him in villany. The other is by trustfulness. We start with the supposition that men are upright, and mean well. We trust them and put them upon their honor.

Which is the better way? The former has its drawbacks. It wrecks confidence, fosters suspicion and makes men deceptive. If we know that we are watched, it only increases our temptations and gives a motive for concealment. The latter appeals to what is noble in the human soul. It rekindles honor and puts men on their good behavior. Nothing goes farther in making men trustworthy, than to trust them. Many will cheat a trickster who would deal fairly, with an honest man. Men, far gone in shame, have been galvanized into momentary honesty by contact with trustful men.

Dr. Jeter believed in men. He treated them as gentlemen, and assumed that they intended to do right. Now and then, he was over-reached by the

wiles of the unscrupulous. A. B. Clarke, Esq., himself a simple-hearted christian man, and for years connected with the *Religious Herald*, relates that a stranger once came into the office, represented himself as a Baptist from Ohio, stated that he had lost his money, and applied to Dr. Jeter for relief. He loaned him twenty dollars, upon the promise of its speedy return. He was never heard of afterwards. The oily scamp imposed on the charity of the kind old man. This was not a solitary case, and yet he was probably not deceived more frequently, than he would have been, if he had been more suspicious. Cunning people are notoriously credulous.

There is a fellowship in goodness. Dr. Jeter's purity and ingenuousness made him, keen-eyed in detecting merit. The unworthy may have sometimes outwitted him, but he rarely committed the mistake of repelling the meritorious. He lost little by trusting bad people, and gained much by trusting good people. There was a protective quality in his own goodness. The corrupt and scheming were afraid of him, and very few got the advantage of him.

It is a mistake to imagine that he was a weakling in dealing with men. He was guided, in his judgment, by the divine standards. He despised idleness, cant, flattery and cunning. When he turned his two blue eyes upon a stranger, and subjected him to an examination, he could find out, about as much as a professional detective. If he convicted a man of rascality, he refused to help him; if he stood the test, he helped him freely; if the case was in doubt, he

gave the applicant the benefit of the doubt. He sometimes gave money to the unworthy, to get rid of them. He would pay them to leave.

His opinions of men were high,—much higher than the average. It often astonished me to find, how thoroughly he respected the gifts of men who were far inferior to himself. He rarely expressed adverse criticisms of sermons, or addresses that were devout and modestly delivered; but for the sophomoric and pedantic, he had a contempt which he could not conceal. It has been said of him that he would not say anything of a man, in his absence, that he would not say in his presence. It would be nearer the truth to say, that he would not utter in a man's absence, the criticisms which he made upon him, when present.

He had his ups and downs with men. He once told me of a minister who was settled in Richmond for several years, who treated him with a reserve and spitefulness that he could, neither understand nor cure. He tried every expedient, in the way of hospitality, visits, pulpit courtesies and kindly commendations, to cast the evil spirit out of the brother and to bring him around, but without success. Not long before his death, a well-known brother became affronted for some unknown reason, and treated the old Doctor with a frigidity which cut him to the quick. He sought anxiously to recover his favor, and finally succeeded.

He had his enemies, or at least he was sometimes treated with the gravest injustice. In one of his churches, he had a deacon who gave him great trou-

ble. It was one of the bitterest trials of his long life. He was a man of superior gifts, high position and wide influence, and he used his power to the discouragement and injury of Dr. Jeter. It is one of the mysteries which only Heaven can explain, how good men can sometimes do such cross and ugly things. Dr. Jeter outlived this brother, and it has been said, by good critics, that the finest article that ever emanated from his pen, was his tribute to the memory of that man. That was magnanimity. He could not only forgive an injury, but he could heartily honor and bless those who had been unkind to him. This he did in no swelling and vain-glorious way, as if he were proud to do a pretty deed. He did it, because it was in him to do it.

He knew how to respect men who had strong blemishes of character. In the past generation, there was a minister of real worth, who was yet noted for his pomposity and egotism. He was the subject of much severe criticism. Dr. Jeter was very fond of him, and once, when asked his opinion of him, said: "I greatly admire him, and I admire his egotism, because it is so thoroughly amiable. He thinks well of himself; but then he thinks well of the rest of us also."

Sir Humphrey Davy was once complimented on his great discoveries. He replied: "My greatest discovery is Faraday." While our State mission work was yet in chaos, the board met one day to select a secretary. The members were bewildered, and knew not where to look. Dr. Jeter turned to a modest, black-eyed youth and said: "Eureka! I have found

him. I have found the man. Here he is. Put him into this office, and he will give his life to it." They put him in, and the result is known. That man was Henry K. Ellyson.

A winsome trait in Dr. Jeter was his cordial esteem for brethren whose characters were marred by palpable and grievous blemishes. One did not have to be very good, in order to win his love. His eye could detect a single virtue in a mass of rubbish. He was slow to lose confidence in persons, or even to become impatient with them. I sometimes thought that his cordial respect for odd and peculiar men was the brightest charm of his character. Take, for example, this picture of Epa Norris, one of his Northern Neck deacons :

When I went to reside in the Northern Neck, Deacon Norris received me very cordially. It was not long, however, before an event occurred by which he was temporarily alienated from me. At that time the use of collars, separate from shirts, was just coming into fashion. By chance I borrowed a collar, and, while using it, spent a night at the plain and hospitable home of the deacon. On rising in the morning I remarked that I had never worn a collar before—that I was pleased with it—and that I must get me a supply of collars. He seemed to be awakened into solemn meditation. After some delay, he said: "I am not sure that it is right to wear collars." Without the slightest doubt of my ability to convince him that there was nothing wrong in the practice, I commenced an argument in its favor. The more I argued on the subject, the more deeply he seemed to be convinced that it was sinful. "It is," he said, "hypocrisy—a make-believe—you pretend to have on a clean shirt, and you haven't." As a crowning argument, he said that Lunsford and Straughan never wore collars; and he was sure, if they were living, they would not do it. Having failed in argument, I resolved to see what I could do in

the way of conciliation. I said to him, "Brother Norris, if my wearing collars will hurt your feelings, I will not wear them." "You think it right to wear them," said the old man, "and that is as bad as if you were to do it." I could avoid the practice, but could not change my opinion about it; and we parted, leaving the question undecided.

I was willing to let it drop; but Deacon Norris was not a man to yield his convictions. At every opportunity the subject was rediscussed, and the same arguments were repeated. It chanced Deacon Gaskins and myself spent a night with Brother Norris. Gaskins had a more discriminating and logical mind than Norris. The grave question about the lawfulness of wearing collars came up for discussion. I was glad to commit it to the hands of the two deacons. Deacon Norris repeated his stereotyped argument: "It is hypocrisy; you pretend to have on a clean shirt, and haven't." Deacon Gaskins replied: "Brother Norris, when you have been from home and your cravat has become soiled on the outside, do you never turn it and put the clean side out?" It was a nail driven in a sure place. Deacon Norris was accustomed, as was the fashion of the day, to wear a cravat of spotless white, carefully tied at the back of his neck. He was too honest to deny that he sometimes turned his cravat for the purpose of concealing its dirt, and of too much penetration not to perceive that the act involved the very principle which he was so fiercely condemning. He was for a while silent, evidently endeavoring to see if there were any escape from the consequence that followed the confession that he was bound to make. He could see no door of deliverance. With a sorrowful countenance and signs of deep penitence, he said: "Yes, Brother Gaskins, I have; but if the Lord will forgive me, I will never do it again." Whether the old man needed forgiveness for the supposed fault I cannot say; but it is quite certain that, whether forgiven or not, he never again turned his cravat to conceal its soiled exterior.

For months the controversy was continued with undiminished earnestness; but without any increase of light. At length, it was closed. The deacon and I were together at Mrs. Downing's. She was an intelligent, pious old Baptist, of the Lunsford school; he



proposed that the question should be decided by her, and I gladly assented to the proposition. Brother Norris, to be sure of a favorable decision, undertook to state the case. Mrs. Downing stopped him in the midst of his discourse with the question: "Doesn't Brother Jeter wear collars?" On learning that he did not, she said: "Well, he must have some. I don't know how he can get along without them." "See, here, child," said the deacon, and endeavored to renew his argument; but the good sister would not hear it. He was silenced and gave up the controversy; but was neither convinced nor satisfied. Some time afterwards he asked for a letter of dismissal from the Morattico Church, of which I was pastor, and of which he had been an honored deacon for thirty years, to join a church nearer to him, in an adjoining county. Convenience was the plea for the change; but the brethren all thought that the trouble about the collar was at the bottom of it.

It was not long before the old brother learned that wearing a collar was not the worst evil that could afflict a church. He soon got into great difficulties with his new relation—difficulties in nowise affecting his Christian character, but greatly disturbing the repose of his old age. Years before I left the Neck he had entirely forgiven, or, at least, overlooked, my sin of wearing a collar, and was in cordial friendship with me.

It is, perhaps, more than thirty years since Deacon Norris went to his long home. He was a good man, but had his imperfections—peculiarities, perhaps, they should be called. His faults, if faults they were, were virtues over-rigid hardened into wrong. His conscientiousness was noble; but he erred in wishing to make his conscience the rule for other people's conduct. His deep convictions were commendable; but they betrayed him into intolerant dogmatism. He could never have been a great man; but, with better training and under other circumstances, he would have been a noble specimen of Christian piety, and might have been a martyr in the cause of Christ. With all his oddities, I loved and venerated him, and cherish unfeigned respect for his memory.

Dr. Jeter gave liberally of his time, counsel and

money in helping others. He took marked interest in the education of sprightly boys and girls, and, in his own quiet way, assisted those who were in necessitous circumstances. Many of his benefactions of this kind were not known, beyond the immediate families upon whom they were bestowed. An enterprise might be unpopular, but if he believed that it was really meritorious, he would identify himself with it, and do his utmost to ensure its success. It would be easy to enlarge this sketch by introducing those who stand ready to testify to his cordial sympathy and helpfulness in their struggles. I must at least insert this grateful and beautiful letter from Dr. C. H. Corey, President of the Richmond Institute, for the training of colored ministers.

RICHMOND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
RICHMOND, Va., March 20th, 1887.

*My Dear Dr. Hatcher,*

I learn with sincere pleasure that you are about to publish memorials of the late Dr. Jeter. I look forward to its perusal with peculiar interest. Dr. Jeter was a man for whom I had a most profound regard and a sincere affection. About nineteen years ago I came to Richmond an entire stranger. I was to succeed Rev. Nathaniel Colver, D.D., and Rev. Robert Ryland, D.D., in their work of training colored ministers. Our school-room was a small brick building, which stood in "the bottom," near Shockoe Creek, below Broad Street, and was a part of the establishment known as "Lumpkin's Jail." My own home was on the premises, in the house occupied by the former proprietor of the place, Mr. Lumpkin. Dr. Jeter was among the first to find his way to my unpretending home, in this most uninviting place, and to extend to me his sympathies, and to assure me of his hearty co-operation in my work. He and his "Junior," Rev. A. E. Dickinson, D.D., not only did what they could to make me feel at home, but tendered to me the columns of the *Religious*

*Herald*, which they assured me would always be at my disposal in the interests of my work. Then and ever afterwards Dr. Jeter was a frequent and welcome visitor to our institution. The young men always hailed with delight his coming and listened to his words of instruction and encouragement with unfeigned pleasure. His attitude towards our work, both in public and private, largely contributed to secure at an early day the confidence and co-operation of the denomination in Virginia. His words of kind approval and appreciation to me personally were not only an encouragement, but an inspiration, as I felt myself honored in having so great and good a man for my personal friend.

So deeply had Dr. Jeter impressed his personality upon me, that whenever I saw his commanding form, whether he walked the streets or rode along on his old white horse, a benediction involuntarily escaped my lips. It was my privilege to join the company of mourners that followed him to his resting-place, on the banks of the James. And now, among the beautiful places where slumber the great and good in that "city of the silent," there is no spot near which I more reverently linger, than that where rest the mortal remains of Jeremiah Bell Jeter.

CHAS. H. COREY.

Ministers sometimes complained that Dr. Jeter was cold and inaccessible. I think that at times he was signally lacking in that ease and warmth of manner which always attracts those who are shy of distinguished men. The truth was that many preachers were afraid of the old Doctor. They shrank away from him, and awaited approaches on his part. But he was absorbed with other things. He was not thinking about them, and least of all was it, in his heart, to slight them. One had to charge upon him and arouse him, in order to win his attention. Those who sought him easily found him. A few sore and sensitive men had hard thoughts of

him, and never ceased to tell how many times they had been introduced to him, and how he always failed to know them the next time. They told the truth. He did not know them, and introduction meant little with him. He recognized persons, not by their forms or faces, but by their personality—their expression, their voices, their smile and their laugh. Deep in his heart, there was an ardent love for his christian brethren. His ear was open to the voice of their sorrow, and he was always ready to counsel or cheer them. In the simple incident below, a young preacher tells how Dr. Jeter helped him.

Dr. Jeter was known to be a kind, but withal a close and severe critic. Dr. Wilson used to say of him, "He rides me like an elephant."

Shortly after I came to Richmond, a mere stripling and poorly prepared for the work before me, Dr. Jeter came to hear me preach. When I saw him, I hastened to him and besought him to preach for me. But he firmly declined. He took a seat on the platform behind me, and while I was preaching I observed frequently a broad smile on the faces of the people. This was so unusual, and so unexpected to me, that it almost disconcerted me. But I learned afterwards, that Dr. Jeter's hearty nods of assent to points in the sermon, and his silent, but visible, smiles of approbation had proved so contagious, that they spread over the congregation. At the close, he thanked me for the sermon, and spoke so kindly and encouragingly to me, and the members of the church that I have ever regarded that visit of the dear, good man as one of the links which strengthened the union between the young and weak beginner and his flock.

He never flattered men. Indeed, some thought that he was unduly reserved in the matter of commendation. The fact was, that he set such a low

estimate upon the praises of men, that he failed to remember, how grateful they were to other people. Those who got a compliment from him, valued it as a jewel of the first order, and kept it, as a precious souvenir. What he said in the way of compliment, was usually spontaneous, the outburst of an impulse, briefly spoken, and soon forgotten. Sometimes he dropped a commendatory word, with unconscious aptness, and it went like balm to a bruised spirit.

A certain Baptist merchant of Richmond, became seriously embarrassed in his business. The report went out that he had failed, and caused much painful surprise. A few days, after the suspension of his business, Dr. Jeter, in passing down the aisle of the church, one Sunday morning, met him. He grasped him by the hand with unwonted warmth, and said, "How are you, brother? I have heard fine news about you." Just about that time, the sad brother was feeling that all the news concerning him was of the worst sort. With mingled surprise and curiosity, he asked the Doctor what he had heard. "Why, I heard that you had failed in business, and *failed honestly*. It is nothing to lose your money, if you have been able to retain your integrity." The kind word went far to reconcile the brother to his misfortunes. He did "fail honestly," and not long after, started again, and rose to high prosperity.

#### HIS CANDOR.

Candor is an ambiguous term. Harsh deeds against propriety, and religion, have often been committed in the name of candor. Unfeeling men

trample upon the sensibilities of others, and then seek to justify their brutality, by ascribing it to a frank and outspoken spirit. Unthinking people, who are incapable of self-containment, and who are perpetually blurting forth their indiscretions, plead candor, as an atonement for their folly. Real candor is honesty of nature—the capacity to estimate things just as they are. Only the truth-loving man can be candid. Dr. Jeter was a candid man. He saw things as they were, and valued them at their worth.

He knew himself, and I must be candid enough to add, that he thought highly of himself. This, the word of God gave him the right to do. His sturdy self-respect was one bulwark of his strength. He might fail in his sermons, or his plans, and often did, but he did not fall out with himself, on that account. There was in him much that deserved respect, and he knew it.

But he did “not think more highly of himself” than he ought to have thought. His self-respect saved him from vanity. No man of his clear common sense could have been conceited. That he had gifts and adaptations, he could not but know, and he was free from that spurious humility which would prompt him to deny, or disparage his powers. He did not think that he was a great man. He fell so far short of his aspirations, that he felt little of self-exaltation. As to his spiritual attainments he was thoroughly dissatisfied. He once said of Daniel Witt: “I never knew him to do a wrong thing in my life; but as for me, I have been stumbling and

blundering all my days." He did not parade ostentatiously, but he confessed, his infirmities.

He rarely spoke of the faults of others, without coupling with the remark, a confession of his own. He was once in company with several men who were strongly condemning the folly of an absent brother. They struck him hard blows, and showed no mercy. Dr. Jeter, who knew that they were right in their judgment, said nothing until the talk ended, and then remarked: "Human nature is a great fool, of which I am one." The quaint speech did its work.

He loved to be criticised. If men praised him, he was ill at ease; but when they condemned him in a kind spirit, and to his face, he enjoyed it. He selected men of critical tastes, and subjected his performances to their faithful inspection. Those who know Dr. Ryland's unpitiful methods as a critic, will not doubt Dr. Jeter's honesty in asking for correction, when it is known that among critics, Dr. Ryland was his favorite. Sometimes men struck him malignantly, and while he did not like their motive, he sought to use their attacks for his own improvement. He believed that an enemy had his uses.

The crowning proof of his candor was seen in his readiness to confess a wrong. He seemed to have no false pride, and found more pleasure in acknowledging that he was wrong than he did in proving that somebody else was wrong. Not that he was facile or vacillating, or that his convictions were not sharp, or that he was not ready to defend his opinions; but he had the capacity to discover his own errors and the manliness to confess them.

In 1858, a plea was made in the General Association of Virginia, in favor of the Baptist church in New Orleans. He arose and opposed it. He declared that the attempt to establish the Baptist cause in that city, was an expensive, and profitless task, and ought to be abandoned. His remarks gave surprise and pain. Several brethren arose, and presented such an array of facts, against his position, as were overpowering. He took the floor again and said: "I have spoken unadvisedly. I did not understand the situation in New Orleans, as well as I supposed. I request that my utterances will be counted for nothing. I not only withdraw them, but I will cheerfully contribute to the cause." The devout candor of his confession, not only atoned for his mistake, but became a magnetic plea for New Orleans.

On another occasion, he arose to answer a speech made on a certain question. He took up two or three points, and demolished them to his own satisfaction, and finally attacked the strong point of his opponent. As he began to pick it to pieces, he saw it in a new light—saw that it was conclusive against him. He paused, in deep thought, for a moment, and then, breaking into happy laughter, said: "I see that I am wrong, and my brother is right. Let us vote on his side."

At a meeting of the Foreign Mission Board, he made a very emphatic statement with reference to the Italian Mission. He fully believed in the accuracy of the statement, and maintained it with bold and eloquent zeal. It happened that he had overlooked certain important facts, in possession of the



Board, which went far to discredit his views. The secretary quietly handed him the record, and, upon examining it, he saw his error, and gracefully confessed it.

In matters of fact, he was liable to error. This he well knew, and it rendered him cautious in speaking. His half-knowledge never made him dogmatic: it only rendered him, modest and careful.

He studied principles rather than men, and in matters of doctrine, he rarely went awry. If, however, he misquoted a scripture text, or misstated a doctrine in ethics, or religion, he gladly suffered correction. His bearing toward an opponent, was the perfection of courtesy. Difference in age, or learning was nothing to him. He was willing to learn from any, however humble or obscure, they might be. Here is a pleasant little incident, furnished by Rev. J. B. Hutson, which finely exemplifies his spirit:

It so happened that I got into a private controversy with Dr. Jeter, on the question of dancing. He maintained that dancing is not sinful *per se*, and that it is not a sufficient cause for church discipline, except when carried to excess, or attended by other wicked conduct.

I argued that the example was bad, that it often led to ruinous sins, that it was a great grief to many pious people, and that it laid a stumbling-stone in the way of the weak. All this he admitted might be true, but he insisted that we are left to liberty and charity in regard to such matters, as to whether we will refrain from lawful things for the sake of others or not. Said he: "It is a matter of love, and you cannot make a law for love."

Sitting in his study one day, the discussion was resumed. He asked me seriously for my authority, in excluding a member from the church on the charge of (persistent) dancing. I referred him to the language of the apostle in regard to eating meats offered to

idols. He picked up his Testament, with which he was so familiar, and, turning at once to the 8th chapter of 1 Corinthians, he began to read, commenting with earnestness from verse to verse, in favor of his views upon the subject. By and by, he came to the 12th verse and read, "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." He paused a moment, looked thoughtful, closed the book, and said, in his peculiar voice, with deep emphasis, "*The apostle seems to condemn it.*" And there the discussion ended. But I was amazed at the honest candor of the great and noble man that sat before me.

A gentleman said recently that he believed that it was impossible for Dr. Jeter to see an error in another without telling him of it, if he had the opportunity. This might strike a stranger, as a decidedly disagreeable virtue. But not so. As a critic, he was peculiarly amiable and sympathetic. He became a critic by having to educate himself. He loved those who helped him in that long struggle, and his real motive in criticising others, was to help them. He did his work in a genial, respectful way.

I must admit that his amiability was not adequate to every emergency. Now and then, when he fell afoul of a pedant or a crank, the point of his blade was painfully sharp. When one had marked faults in his character, the Doctor would put in his knife until it went to the root of the matter. At times, he worked in his criticisms indirectly. One preacher was criticising another on his sermon in a tart way. Among other things, he expressed contemptuous surprise at the smallness of the preacher's crowd. "Was his house crowded?" Dr. Jeter asked. "No," said the man, "it was not one-third full." "Then," said the Doctor, "why did you speak of his crowd?" By this

time, it dawned upon the brother, that he was talking too much.

Perhaps no man ever fell under the Doctor's criticisms so often as this writer. He seemed to feel at perfect liberty to pick me to pieces whenever we met. I went into his office, one Monday morning, when he greeted me with unwonted cordiality. He said: "Sunday before last you preached an uncommonly fine sermon. It was capital. I did not think that you could preach so well." I thought he was spreading the pleasant ointment with unusual thickness, when he added, "But I think your sermon yesterday morning was one of the *meanest that I ever heard anybody preach in my life.*" I mildly suggested that he would please strike an average in his criticisms, but he insisted that when a sermon was mean, it ought to perish without mercy.

At another time he said to me, "You had a good sermon last Sunday, but you spoiled it by the violence of your delivery." He was very anxious to correct a peculiarly grievous blemish in my manner, and after whacking me about it, again and again, he wrote a critical article at my expense, and published it as an anonymous communication in the *Religious Herald*.

It seemed natural for him to criticise people—that is, in their presence. If a guest used a wrong word at his table, he would call him to account.

#### HIS COURAGE.

By nature Dr. Jeter was bold and aggressive. He was fiery in his purposes and defiant of obstacles. But in his matured christian life, he was very gentle.

His fierce, exacting spirit had found its place at the foot of the cross.

But this does not mean that he had become tame, spiritless or yielding. It simply means that his courage had gotten out of his blood, into his conscience. In committing sin, or in any wanton deed he was a coward. He was afraid to do wrong. The very thought of harboring evil, or conniving at wrong, would have convulsed him into terror, but he was not afraid to do right. In the discharge of his duty, he was intrepid and heroic. In his youth, he stood in the forefront of the temperance movement of Virginia, and bore obloquy and injury, without dismay, and when, in after-days, he saw violent men making shipwreck of the temperance cause, by their vicious methods, he turned and fought them. His standing in the old Triennial Convention, for a half-hour, waiting to be heard, and never yielding to the vociferous outcry against him, constituted a scene of moral sublimity. He was then a young and untried man, but he stood the ordeal with transcendent strength and composure. The battle which he fought in Richmond, in favor of a separate church for the negroes, was one whose violence and peril it is hard now to estimate. But he never quailed before the popular scowl.

But to me, the most pleasing sign of his intrepidity was his composure in defeat. He did not court disaster, but he was not afraid of it. He was often frustrated in his plans. He was too conservative to be in harmony with the extreme men, and too progressive to find a following among the old fogies. The

result was, that he frequently operated without a constituency. It was his fortune in many cases to stand alone, and he once said to me, that he supposed he had been more frequently defeated in his propositions, than any other man in the denomination. He lived a long time, however, and saw many of his measures which were rejected, when first introduced, afterwards taken up and adopted. Sometimes those who helped to defeat him, resuscitated his schemes, adopted them as their own, and pushed them to success. I used to enjoy seeing him defeated—it made me love him more to see how calmly he took it. It was not a case in which the lion lay down with the lamb; it was the lion becoming the lamb.

I have been free to speak of Dr. Jeter's high and ambitious spirit. In his youth, it was looked upon by his older and more sedate brethren, as the greatest blot upon his ministerial character. We may well believe that it took a long and prayerful struggle to subdue it. By the grace of God, he won a complete victory. The last vestige of self-seeking and pride seemed to have been swept from his heart. He became as guileless, unconscious and docile as a little child. The spirit of the lamb reigned in him. Earthly honors ceased to charm him; his dreams of greatness faded away; human praises lost their power to intoxicate him, and for years it could have been truthfully said of him, that though in the world, he was not of it.

In his old age he was treated with the utmost veneration. The highest seat after which he had yearned in his youth, was constantly offered him,

but he did not desire it. He cared nothing for office, and took it for its burdens, and not its distinctions.

His lofty and serious bearing imparted a certain severity to his manners, which some mistook for haughtiness. In speaking once of the charge sometimes made against him by his kindred, that he was proud, he said, "They do not know me. I have not forgotten the rock out of which I was hewn. I have a thousand things to make me grateful, but not one to make me proud."

Before the Lord, he was indeed lowly in spirit. There was not one touch of Phariseeism in him. He not only believed that his salvation was the gift of divine grace, but in every prayer, he renewed the confession of his sins and demerit, and threw himself helplessly upon the mercy of Christ.

Of his abilities as a preacher he had the lowest opinion. He rarely spoke of his sermons after preaching, except in reply to the remarks of others, and then always with the utmost modesty. How he felt about his preaching comes out in this incident from Dr. John A. Broadus:

It was probably in 1857 that Dr. Jeter preached, during a week of protracted meeting, in Charlottesville. I have often said, and still see no reason to change the opinion, that it was the best *series* of protracted meeting sermons I ever heard. There was no display of specific adaptation to the occasion, but the real adaptation was most admirable. Every sermon made the pastor glad that precisely this and no other had on that evening been given; and the *rapport*, the sympathy, between preacher and hearers grew steadily day by day. It was on this occasion that he made a remark which was published without his name in a treatise on Homiletics. He was reclining one afternoon, with a look of that

weariness which is apt to come by reaction during a series of special efforts; and at length he said, "Well, I must get ready to preach. But I can't preach. I never did preach." And then, with a look curiously blended of eager longing and sadness, he said, as he sprang up on the couch, "Oh! I never heard anybody preach." What earnest minister has not again and again felt that the gospel is higher than all human reach, even as the heavens are higher than the earth?

#### HIS GREAT-HEARTEDNESS.

During the last five years of Dr. Jeter's life I was his pastor, and I do not know how I can better set forth his Christian spirit than by mentioning a few facts which I observed during that period.

Dr. Jeter was, beyond all comparison, the most devout, reverential and responsive worshipper that I have ever known. He had all the traits which fit one for that exalted service. He loved the courts of Zion. He rarely failed to be present at both services on Sunday, and at the prayer-meeting on Wednesday night, unless on duty elsewhere. Neither bad weather, nor company kept him away. If absent on any account, he was careful to explain or apologize when he next met me. His pew was just in front of the pulpit, and he made it a point to be in his place when the worship began, often coming in just at the moment.

He entered into the exercises with a wakeful, unctuous interest. He sang the hymns—every one of them—from the first line to the last, if he knew the tune; and if he did not, he kept his eye on the words, as if trying at least to sing with the spirit. He heard the Scriptures read with a tender, solemn

awe, as if listening to the voice of God. He was a magnificent hearer—open-eyed, upright and eager. He rarely appeared drowsy. If the preacher committed errors in interpretation, doctrinal statement, or even in emphasis, or grammar, he might expect to hear from the Doctor later on that subject, and yet, his mien was so benignant and friendly, that his presence was always refreshing. His smile, his glistening eye, his unconscious bows, his falling tears and beating breast were signals of cheer and support. It was positively awful to mark the depth and ardor of his worship. One could not look at him without feeling that his worship was an earnest and living thing.

At the Lord's Supper he was always peculiarly solemn, and often in tears. At times he would break down completely and sob aloud. Whenever we sang "There is a fountain filled with blood," it seemed to melt him completely. The people often cried in sympathy with him. His prayers at the table were tender and grateful.

At the prayer-meeting, he had a seat to the right of the pulpit. Now and then, he came, spent the hour in worship and then, left without a word. He was not asked to speak, but he knew that he was always heard with pleasure, and if the spirit moved him, as was often the case when the pastor was dull, he would speak. His talks were occasional and always short. He never rambled. He rose to say something, and when he said it, he quit. I think that the most luminous and eloquent strains that ever fell from his lips were in his off-hand prayer-meeting talks.



“One night the pastor made an address on “Providence in the Christian’s Life.” At its close a hymn was sung, and then Dr. Jeter came out, and asked that he might bear his testimony to God’s protecting care over him. He related an experience in which he had been brought very low. An enemy, gratuitous in his malice and crafty in his methods, had struck him a blow which put his name and usefulness in great peril. He had no means of defence, and was compelled to take his trouble to the Lord, who, by an extraordinary providence, delivered him from the power of his enemy. The story was well told, and when it ended, the power of God was in the place.”

At the annual meeting of his church, reports were always presented from the officers and committees as to the year’s work. Many shunned the meeting because of its statistical heaviness, but he went and watched eagerly every item in the reports. Good reports found approval in his silent smiles and nods; but if any chanced to be lame and poor, you might look out for Dr. Jeter. He would hit upon some item, worthy of praise, and so shield the recreant committee, from undue censure, as to put everybody in a good humor. The church once adopted a measure which he did not favor, which prompted him to say: “I like this measure and will support it—not that I really *do* like it, but I see that you like it and that makes me like it.” A simple thing for an old man to say, and yet there was enough old-time religion in it, to raise the spiritual temperature of the whole church. His nature was full of light, and lighted others as well as himself.

During his life, I felt no need of outside help, in protracted meetings. Not that it was understood that he was to help, and not that he ever dreamed

that he did give any aid worthy of mention. What he did was spontaneous, and was always apt, timely and effective. In instructing inquirers he was unexcelled. It was affecting to see him, over seventy-five years old, on his knees, beside a weeping sinner, trying humbly to point him to the cross.

At the beginning of one of the protracted meetings at Grace Street, he suggested that each member would select an individual, as an object of prayer, saying that he would do the same thing. As the meeting advanced, he referred to the matter several times, urging the brethren not to grow weary in their prayers, and saying that God had not yet heard him, but that he felt sure that he would. One night there was a great crowd present, and a deep interest prevailed. Just before preaching, the pastor said that if any persons had received Christ since the night before, he would be glad if they would come forward and confess their faith. Several came, among them a young man, well known, upright and respected, but to that time, utterly inaccessible on the subject of religion. He had never indicated the least desire to be a christian, and, by a sort of repulsive dumbness, had balked every attempt to reach him. As he moved up the aisle, the light of a happy surprise broke over the face of the congregation. Dr. Jeter was in his favorite chair, near the pulpit, and as the young men approached the pastor, he sprang up and seizing his hand said, so as to be heard all over the house: "Why, George, is this you? I knew you would come. Here he is, brethren; here is the man I have been praying for. God has heard me." Then, with a radiant and tearful face, he testified to the faithfulness of God in hearing the prayers of his people.

I beg to add here an account of the last prayer-meeting Dr. Jeter ever attended in the Grace Street Church:

In December, 1879, Dr. Jeter requested that the church would hold a "Promise Meeting," and that each one would come pre-

pared to name some Scripture promise which had been fulfilled in his own case. The suggestion was new and drew together a large company. After the exercises were opened, Dr. Jeter arose and said: "It is always painful to speak in seeming compliment of myself, but while my remarks will be personal, I can declare that they are not prompted by egotism or vanity. I began life poor and friendless, but I soon learned to trust the promises of God. I noticed many scriptures in which the Lord promised to crown with favor those who gave freely of their substance to him. I took him at his word and have always found my highest pleasure in giving my heart, my time and my money to him. I have never tried to make money and never craved riches, but now, an old man, and near my end, I find my hands are full. I am not rich, but I have enough and to spare." He then repeated the various passages in which it is promised that those who give shall be blessed with earthly goods, and witnessed that these earthly promises had been fulfilled to him.

The scene was impressive, and had a curious and instructive sequel. A widow lady having heard the announcement of this promise meeting, felt that she must go. She was then in straitened circumstances and struggling hard to live. She hoped to catch some promise that would support her in the midst of her anxiety. She found it hard to get to the meeting; obstacles sprang up before her, but she had a pungent conviction that she must hear Dr. Jeter that night. She went and his words broke upon her like a revelation. She resolved that she would trust God and give a large part of her earnings to him. Seven years have passed and God has lifted her up and crowned her with plenty.

That meeting had another thrilling episode. Among those who came to bear his testimony to the faithfulness of God was Dr. H. W. Davis, an honored physician of Richmond, and now a beloved deacon of the Grace Street Church. As his statement was written, its substance is given here:

"As one who feels that I am the least of Christ's followers, and yet rejoicing that by the grace of God I am what I am, I wish to relate an incident in my humble life. Almost twenty-two years ago I professed conversion while a student at Richmond College,

and was baptized by Dr. Jeter and became a member of this church. Five years after that time grave doubts and fears gathered upon me, and an almost irresistible disposition to neglect my christian duties took possession of me and prompted me to withdraw from the church. This act ever afterwards gave me the deepest sorrow.

You will ask, brethren, if for seventeen years I was prayerless and without hope? No; scarcely a day passed during that long period in which I did not lift my feeble prayer to God, that he would not take from my heart the assurance of my acceptance with him through Christ my Saviour. This I sought in the hope that I might feel justified in returning to the fellowship of the church. It is one of the solemn facts of my experience that, during all of that time, there blended with my petition the special prayer that I might come back to the Church during the life-time of the man who baptized me.

I cannot express the strange anxiety which I felt about this matter. While I realized the necessity of my re-union with the church in order to my christian efficiency, my doubts appalled me and held me back. I could not rid myself of the idea that if Dr. Jeter died before my faith was restored, my skepticism, already so trying, would end in a complete distrust of God's mercy. This led me in later years to pray that the God of salvation and mercy would spare me the bitter trial of seeing Dr. Jeter die before I returned to the church.

It has now been nearly a year since my righteous and patient Father brought me low at the foot of the cross, and answered the prayer which for seventeen years I had made. I was restored to the Church, as you know, and that while Dr. Jeter yet lives."

While reading this paper Dr. Davis was standing within a foot or two of Dr. Jeter. When he finished the old Doctor arose, took him by the hand, tenderly congratulated him and wished for him a long life. It adds much to this pathetic incident to say that this was the first time that Dr. Davis ever revealed it, and it was also the last time that Dr. Jeter was ever in the prayer-meeting.

Dr. Jeter was a great giver. He gave to almost every worthy object that appealed to him, and gave

in large sums. He told a laughable story of a man who was an agent for the endowment of a new college. He was trying to raise ten thousand dollars, and wished the Doctor to give him a start. He plead his cause with protracted earnestness. Dr. Jeter, feeling uncommonly poor at the time, was pondering the question as to whether he would give him twenty-five or fifty dollars. He finally asked the brother how much he expected of him, when he said "Fifty cents." He said he felt like a millionaire, and gave him several times as much as he asked.

His friends often condemned him for his reckless prodigality in giving, but he was constantly lamenting that he could give no more. He once expressed the wish that he had a house full of money, so that he could help every deserving cause. His maxim was, that he could not afford not to give. He could not sacrifice the luxury of giving for the mean pleasure of having. He said that his religion didn't work right when he stopped giving.

He would give in any way—publicly or privately, systematically or impulsively. One morning, at the close of an appeal in behalf of ministerial education, he got up and said: "I came here this morning intending to give twenty-five dollars to this object, but my heart has been enlarged by the sermon, and I will give fifty dollars." That helped the collection wonderfully.

The last time that he ever attended a business meeting of his church, was for the purpose of advocating the repeal of a law which forbade extra collections, except by the formal consent of the church. He said the

rule savored of narrowness, and that a proper appeal for money would hurt nobody. Giving was voluntary, and a collection compelled no one to give, and if any desired to give, they ought not to be denied the privilege.

He never knew how to take collections, but he often helped them greatly by the promptness and cordiality of his contributions.

The last time that he ever attended the Pastors' Conference of Richmond was for the purpose of advocating the establishment of a Baptist Home for Aged Women. That enterprise was enshrined in his heart. He talked about it for years, and while he never lived to realize his wish, it is pleasant to say that such an institution now exists in Richmond—a monument to his kindly and philanthropic spirit.

He was singularly responsive to appeals for help. Indeed, if money was wanted for anything and Dr. Jeter was around, you might safely count on at least one contribution. He never knew; how not to give. The gate to his treasury was off the hinges. Rev. George F. Williams, now of South Carolina, states, that while he was a pastor in Richmond, he once made a statement, through the city papers, that he had found a crippled Confederate soldier who was sick and destitute. He asked that, at a certain hour, persons willing to relieve the man would bring their gifts to the Venable Street Church. The appointment fell upon a raw, gusty afternoon, and though the church was located far away from Dr. Jeter's home, he took his gift in hand, and carried it to the place.

His generous deeds were sometimes clothed in tender and beautiful sentiment. It was one of his customs, for many years, on Christmas morning to fill a basket with confections, fruits and pretty books and swinging it on his own strong arm, trudge around to the homes of the poor, and scatter his gifts among the children. Dr. A. B. Brown relates that he was once in Richmond, on the day for decorating the soldiers' graves. Walking up Grace Street, he found Dr. Jeter's carriage, filled with flowers, standing at his door, and that, too, after the time set for the decoration. He rang the bell, and asked the old gentleman, if he was not going out to the cemetery. He smiled, almost blushing, and said it was too soon for him to go. Dr. Brown reminded him that he was already belated. Thereupon Dr. Jeter said: "I never go until the others leave, and I reserve my flowers for such graves as chance to be overlooked." It is not easy to tell why that simple act was done, and yet, who does not feel that the very glory of Dr. Jeter's character shone out in it?

Dr. Jeter never grew old in spirit. He was free from that sensitive folly which leads some to conceal their age, or to be wounded, when reminded of it. He was infinitely above such nonsense. He had a confessed horror of losing sympathy with the times, or, of dwindling into imbecility. He prayed that he might not outlive his usefulness. The outward signs of age were manifest enough, but a perpetual freshness and vivacity marked his spirit. He was radiant, hopeful, elastic and exuberant in his joyfulness, up to the moment that he stepped over the line into the Silent

Beyond. He was fearful of sinking down into a morose old age. This story of Dr. Broaddus shows that the sunlight played brightly over his soul until the night came :

The last time I saw Dr. Jeter was at the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta. Being requested to conduct devotional exercises during the first morning, he read the last chapter of Second Timothy, the Apostle Paul's farewell words to the world. With a very quiet and tender allusion to his own advanced age, he offered expository remarks upon the passage read, which seemed as thoughtful, tasteful and impressive as anything I ever heard. I think it was during that meeting that Dr. Manly and I were walking with him down street. Something that was said led him to observe that in youth he had determined that if he should live to be an old man he would not fall into the fashion so common among the old of imagining everything was growing worse. Suddenly stopping on the sidewalk, and turning to us with a characteristic quick movement and peculiar look, he added, "And I should no doubt have carried out my resolution ; but, unfortunately for me, since I became an old man, things *have* all been getting worse." And then he laughed, as we started on, with that comical laugh which we, who loved him, remember so well, and the very memory of which has power to awaken cheerful feeling.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE HAPPY END.

**D**R. JETER'S love of life was wonderfully intense. It was, in the days of his prime, his ruling passion, though not strong in death. He sometimes expressed the wish to live a hundred years. During the times of his freshness, and strength, his whole being glowed with vital enthusiasm. He loved to live. He loved nature, loved men, loved conflict, loved honor, loved to think, loved to grow, loved to learn, and loved to love. The blasts of adversity sometimes struck him rudely, and his burdens often got heavy, but sorrow never weakened, in him, the earthly tie. The sea of life was often rough, and threw its blinding spray into his face, but the waves never went over him. Loss and grief quickened his vitality. The future was his friend, and, when roughly handled by the present, he took refuge in hope.

The springs in his nature never wore out. Upon his earthly sky, there was a never-dying radiance. He enjoyed, with exquisite zest, what was, and revelled in the expectation of what was to come. He was, in the highest and purest sense, an optimist. His foot kept step to the music of progress. He believed in the future glory of humanity, often say-

ing that the discoveries, and inventions which have already been made, were but earnest of the more splendid achievements which would be made hereafter. Then, too, he was always hopeful, as to the success of the gospel. He believed in its Divine power, its steady growth and its inevitable triumph. He was never infatuated with the dogmatic and fanatical teachings of the adventists. He did not set the day for his Lord's coming. But his keen-eyed faith caught glimpses of the coming glory. Christ in his view, was not only the central figure, of history, and the Great Head of the church, but he filled the heavens of the future. These things rendered his earthly existence, unfailingly bright, and kept him in high and joyous humor. This world was almost a heaven to him.

Not that he dreaded death. He knew his frailties, and foresaw the inevitable. But death stood far from him, and rarely annoyed him with its harbingers. His deep, passionate love of life did not spring from a mere horror of the grave. He longed to live, because life was worth living.

He was not tormented by any uncertainty as to his future. He did not cling to the ship from a dread of the sea. His arrangements, as he sometimes calmly said, were made for eternity. His faith in Christ, as his Saviour, was a conscious thing. He knew Him whom he believed, and was strong. I heard him say publicly, several times, that if his religious hopes were not well founded, he would probably die without finding it out. He was so clear in his assurance, so deep and strong in his joy, and

so entranced by his heavenly anticipations, that he said, if deluded, he never expected to be undeceived. Whether saved or lost when he died, he had in him while he lived the unclouded persuasion that he would be saved. Eternity had no terror for him.

As he grew older, the grace of God sanctified, without extinguishing, his vital ardor. He came gradually to link more intimately his labors with his life. For him to live was Christ. The highest charm of his latter days was his work.

Pleasure and recreation only whetted his energies, and seasoned his toils. He was no drudge, spurred forward by necessity or by fear. As a trusted servant, free to choose his tasks, he was eager to surprise his master, by the measure and the manner of his service.

In 1870, he had a sudden and dangerous sickness. His disease was peculiar, difficult to reach, and liable to produce speedy death. It laid him very low, racked him with suffering, and brought him, face to face, with the dread monster. His calmness was extraordinary. Apart from his physical anguish, he betrayed no sign of weakness. He was not afraid to die, but he was utterly unwilling to die. He evinced an almost obstinate determination, not to die. He said that he was not ready to leave the world. He had no enemies to reconcile, nor habits to break, nor business complications to settle, and he did not ask for time to examine anew, the foundation of his hopes, but he did have a profound conviction that his work was not finished. He insisted, that he must be cured, and persevered, until he discovered the surgical expert who gave

him relief. At the critical moment, when death seemed imminent, he was rescued. He speedily regained his vigor, and returned to his work, but, I think, that, ever afterwards, he looked upon his life as, in a peculiar sense, a loan from the Lord. He wore the sobered mien of one who had heard the ringing of the first bell. His sense of age and frailty grew stronger.

A brother congratulated him on his recovery, and said something as to his perennial youth. He replied in a serene, and yet wonderfully solemn way: "No; my youth is gone. I am now old, and I must not shut my eyes to the fact." He said, next to nothing, about his death, and, yet in my frequent intercourse with him, he was constantly making me understand, that the thought of dying was in his mind. He did this, with such delicate and wordless art, that I could not tell when or how it was done. He was always reminding me, and yet never reminding me, of his approaching end. Now and then, perchance, he dropped a word which hinted the secret of his thoughts, but never by word, nor act did he suggest, that the coming event cast a shadow across his soul. Death was a decree of heaven, and he was submissive.

At the Southern Baptist Convention, which met in Nashville, Tenn., in 1878, he was called out, one morning, to speak. As he slowly ascended the platform, there was, in his appearance, a mellow and chastened dignity which no words could describe. After addressing the president, he paused for several moments, with his head gently bowed and a tinge of

sadness on his face, and then said in measured accents: "I came to this meeting, brethren, with the purpose to behave myself as a weaned child—not intending to speak one word." This was followed by another pause. The scene was impressive. It was luminous with great suggestions. It told more plainly than words, that the old veteran was quietly unbuckling his armor and preparing to retire from the battle-field. To his more observant friends, it was evident enough for several years, that he was noiselessly untying his boat and getting ready for the voyage.

He believed fully in the doctrine of the future state. He said that he had recast many of his old opinions, but as to the immortality of the soul, the reward of the righteous, the ruin of the wicked, and the exaltation of Christ, he believed them with a faith which had been growing for sixty years. Dr. Jeter believed in an intermediate state,—not in a state of isolation or of unconsciousness for the departed soul, but in the dwelling of the disembodied and redeemed spirit, in the presence of God, until the day of the resurrection. Death opened to him the Pauline vision of an instant presence with the Lord.

We attach deep significance to the dying testimony of saints. It is valuable. It comforts the survivor and braces faith in the sustaining power of the gospel. Dr. Jeter estimated such testimony very highly. In the several memoirs which he wrote, he relates carefully the last utterances of his subjects. He groups the death-bed words of Daniel Witt into a paragraph, surpassingly beautiful and pathetic.

But I confess that the most impressive fact connected with Dr. Jeter's last sickness was his silence. He knew that his end was at hand; at least he was strongly persuaded of it. He threw out occasional remarks which indicated this feeling, and yet he did not speak, with any great freedom, as to his eternal prospects.

There was always a notable modesty in his faith, or, rather, an indisposition to speak too confidently about himself. It was only when wrought into spiritual excitement, that he seemed inclined to talk of his heavenly hopes. He said to his wife that he had been trying to pray, but that his thoughts seemed to be confused. His sufferings interrupted his devotional exercises, and this may have had something to do with his reticence on spiritual topics. Besides, he did not know, by any extraordinary presentiment, that death was at hand, and he was too kind to excite needless fears in others.

But it was like him to be quiet in solemn moments. He heard the footsteps of the heavenly messenger and a great hush fell upon him. He was still, that he might hear the summons. But even his silence was voiceful. It had about it, the traces of a great solemnity.

I do not mean that he was absolutely silent. His ejaculatory prayers, his frequent testimonies to the goodness of God, his deepened sweetness of manner to his loved ones, his outspoken joy in greeting his friends, his repetition of Scripture, his snatches of holy song in moments of relief, and even his tempered pleasantries were so many testimonials to the

steadfastness of his faith, the comfort of his hope and the strength of his love.

It cannot be truly said, that he was ever despondent during his last sickness. He had a desire to live, but a desire long subdued to the Divine will, and limited, by the yet stronger desire not to live, unless he could work. It was not for a man like him, to part company, with so happy a world as this, without a pang of regret. From the earthward side it was a sore affliction to die. He measured the probabilities of his recovery, and used all possible means to prolong his life. Solemn and anxious, his situation made him, but not despondent.

His spirit never lost its playfulness. A lady called one morning and found him alone in his chamber, in a studying gown, much the worse for wear. In reply to her question as to how he felt, he said, "My condition is comfortable, but my appearance is frightful." He then explained that he had another gown—a new one and very fine—too fine to be sick in.

Before his fire, was a rug on which were the figures of two dogs, suddenly aroused by the approach of a cat, and ready for a battle. This scene caught his eye, and seemed greatly to entertain him. He indulged in humorous surmises, as to the probable issue of the impending conflict. He lectured the dogs and counselled the cats. By this and other means, he did much to break the tedium and dispel the gloom of his sick chamber.

To one of his friends he gave, a few days before his death, a graphic account of his experience in estab-

lishing the First African church in Richmond. The whole scene seemed opened before him, and he rehearsed it, with a vividness enhanced, perhaps, by the undue excitement under which he was then laboring.

In physical suffering, he was a child. He had known very little of it, and could not bear it, so bravely, as some. His paroxysms were terrible, and he came to dread them. It was, perhaps, under that feeling that he said, beforehand, of the night in which he died: "I am apprehensive of this night." Deep words they may have been, and laden with a meaning unknown to us. Perchance he penetrated the shadows of that night, and saw the dome of the Eternal City. Perchance his quickened sense caught sound of the angel, as he unlocked the gate of heaven, to let him in. At least he saw the solemn crisis in his fate, and named the very hour when the supreme struggle would occur.

With characteristic forethought he arranged his temporal affairs with a view to death. He bequeathed his library and manuscripts to Richmond College—a simple act of generosity and, yet richly fruitful, for, out of it, sprang the costly and magnificent Library Hall, which is now the most imposing feature of the college which he loved so well. He also expressed a desire for the republication of his works, and sermons, and requested Dr. John A. Broadus to act as his literary executor. This service, owing to manifold engagements, Dr. Broadus felt it necessary to decline, to his own regret and to the regret of many others, but to none so much as this writer.

Many allusions have already been made to Dr.



Jeter's physique. It was an almost perfect organism. It worked like a thoroughly adjusted, and well-lubricated engine, and performed its varied functions, with almost unbroken regularity, for nearly four-score years. Its muscles never contracted, nor stiffened to the hurt of his work.

But after all, it was a body. It had upon it, the seal of mortality. It could not resist the silent work of deterioration. It was well made and faithfully preserved, but it was made to die. Neither native vigor, nor the wisest moderation, nor the broadest and most pervasive piety, nor the highest medical art could protect it from decay. Dust it was, and unto dust it had at last to come.

When he died not a few persons evinced a desire to ascertain the physical causes of his death. As this is a topic with which I do not feel capable of dealing, I am pleased to present a statement from his physician, Dr. M. L. James, on that subject. He not only speaks as an expert, but his paper breathes a spirit fully in harmony with the religious character of this volume.

Dr. Jeter's physical organization was one of the most perfect I have ever known, and until the last ten years of his life the functions of his body were as well performed as the outlines of his figure were well proportioned. This perfection was the result of a naturally vigorous constitution and exceptionably good habits in meeting the requirements of health. To a degree observed by few other men that I have known, he was temperate in all things. He never used tobacco, stimulants, or any agents which specially impress the nervous system, except coffee and tea, and these even in moderation. And yet he had no element of asceticism in his character, and subjected himself to no rigors of physical discipline; but enjoyed the creature comforts of life—using without abusing them. He was as literally conservative in their use as, in social and moral relations, he was conservative in questions of public policy. His digestion was phenomenally perfect for a student, and his nervous system so well poised

that to the last year of his life there was, what is so rarely seen in men of his age, not a trace of unsteadiness in his carriage nor in his hand-writing. He had an immense capacity for work, and work was the joy of his life. I have seen him, when in heated seasons of the summer the temperature was so extreme that most men thought only of securing a degree of comfort which made life tolerable, work with an intensity of energy that would have been commendable when the thermometer was at zero. And yet I never knew him to work excessively except at one period (to be presently referred to), when misled by over-estimating his powers of endurance. In his observance of the laws of physical health, as in other respects, he exhibited his usual wisdom and piety, recognizing that the same God who has ordained moral laws has also established physical laws, and their violation is both sinful and injurious. Under such discipline—discipline truly judicious tho' not austere; I may say, Godly discipline—Dr. Jeter developed a body which was a fit instrument for his soul, and without a body of such strength he could never have accomplished in life what he did accomplish; and become, as in the judgment of many thoughtful men he did become, one of the most truly great men which his State has produced in his generation.

Under such regimen his strength remained unabated almost to the last. Ten years previous to his death, to the professional inquirer, searching for the evidences of decline, there were some organic changes common to advancing years, that could be detected; but to the ordinary observer, he would have appeared as being in the full possession of his physical faculties. Three or four years previous to his death, however, the wearing effect of time was distinct, but not marked. It was about the beginning of this period that I remember meeting him upon the pavement one day, and being struck by the remarkable elasticity of his movements, with a familiarity made allowable in the disparity of our ages by his own genial spirit, I remarked interrogatively, "Still growing younger?" He answered with some seriousness, but no sadness: "No; I feel that I am growing older."

But to the last year of his life, I never perceived any decline in the faculties of his mind. In this connection I may repeat a remark strikingly illustrative of his mental traits and of his wisdom. Coming into his presence one day, he half-playfully and half-seriously remarked to me: "I have just been thinking how I should find out when I had got into my dotage."

Another result, doubtless, of his judicious regimen, was his exemption from serious sickness through nearly his entire life. He informed me that, except a short spell of malarial fever during his pastorate in the Northern Neck of Virginia, which in such an atmosphere was probably unavoidable, until the year 1867, when he was sixty-five years old, he had never had any sickness worthy of note.

In the spring of 1867, however, after very laborious and protracted work in the editorial chair of the *Religious Herald*, he was seized with very unpleasant head symptoms which awakened serious apprehensions in his own mind and in the minds of his friends, lest they should prove the premonitions of paralysis. Satisfied, myself, however, that these troubles were only a very aggravated form of nervous prostration, the result of his intense and protracted labors, I at first

advised (he having informed me that it was important that he should remain at home) that he should reduce the amount and intensity of his labor. But very soon finding that, with his devotion to his work, the necessary moderation was at least uncertain, as long as he felt the responsibilities of his office, I advised him to take a protracted season of relaxation, in a region remote from the publication of the paper. Under that advice he spent an entire summer in Canada, doing no writing whatever, except during the last few weeks of his vacation, when he sent an occasional letter to the *Herald*, descriptive of the country. This respite from labor and responsibility had the desired effect, and I very well remember, upon his return, when I met him upon the pavement, his manner of describing his delight and the completeness of his recovery was, that when he went out to walk he felt that he wanted to fly.

In the summer of 1870, again, while attending a meeting of the Middle District Association, in the county of Powhatan, he was seized with a violent inflammation of the bladder, a result in part of one of the organic changes referred to as the product of advanced life. His sufferings were intense, and with great difficulty he reached his home. For several days afterwards life seemed to be hanging by a thread. The public mind was greatly exercised at his alarming illness. There were repeated meetings of his brethren for prayer for his deliverance. God answered those prayers, and in a comparatively short time, after a season of the most intense suffering and extreme prostration, he was as completely restored as the organic changes would allow.

From that time to the middle of January, 1880, Dr. Jeter's health was good. Then there was a return of the last trouble, as a result of cold. It was in a mild form at first, but in the course of a day or two became so serious that he sought my counsel. For four days the trouble was marked by great severity, but then responded so favorably to treatment, that hopes were inspired that in a short time he would again be able to resume his accustomed labors. While suffering from considerable physical debility, his mind seemed as vigorous as ever, and he was disposed to indulge his natural playfulness, which is remembered by his friends as so characteristic. Occasionally, however, he expressed some doubts as to the final issue, and more than once expressed the hope that his life might terminate with his capacity for usefulness. During this period I saw him daily. He was entirely submissive, and his faith was always steadfast.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the week preceding his death he rode out each day, and enjoyed the rides, except that of Wednesday. My visits were interrupted at this time by my own indisposition, but he afterwards informed me that on that day he was greatly chilled and experienced a sense of great fatigue, and on Friday was seized with a severe pain in the region of the heart.

Resuming my visits on Saturday, I saw at a glance that something had occurred to sap the very foundations of his vital forces. An examination made it very distinct that serious inflammation of the interior structures of the heart had taken place, constituting the disease known among physicians as *endo-carditis*. This was attended by more than the usual amount of constitutional shock, with the complication of congestion of the lungs.

This condition continued throughout Saturday, Sunday and a por-

tion of Monday, he being delirious to a greater or less degree during these days. His delirium was rather that of an unnatural activity of mind than that of an irrational condition. Whenever his attention was strongly aroused he was entirely himself.

The exhibition of mental power during this period was wonderful. I heard him make arguments which, in logical force and compass of thought, would have done credit to any man in the country, under any circumstances. Sometimes, notwithstanding the wide-spread wreck of his physical powers, his intellect would blaze out like a meteor. The defence of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures was a subject upon which he was greatly exercised, and was a theme of deliverance worthy of a permanent record.

Neither in his delirium, nor at any time during his sickness, did I hear from him a single word wanting in faith, justice and charity.

On Monday marked symptoms of amelioration occurred, which continued to within an hour of his death—his mind becoming entirely clear when he was fully awake. During the morning of Tuesday Mrs. Jeter, stating to him that the family thought him better, asked him what he thought of himself. He replied that he thought his condition very serious, but immediately added, "the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." Throughout the day he repeatedly expressed a presentiment of coming trouble at night, and even designated the hour of three o'clock as the time when the trouble would begin.

At bed-time I called for the purpose of spending the night with him, as I had spent the preceding night. With his characteristic consideration for the comfort of others, he insisted, with much of earnestness, that inasmuch as I was not well, and he was so much better, I should go home for a quiet night's rest. As I lived but two squares off, for his gratification, I reluctantly consented, feeling too anxious as to his condition to leave him with complete satisfaction for the entire night.

At three o'clock, true to his presentiment, he was seized with intense suffering. I very soon reached him and found him experiencing an unmistakable paroxysm of *angina pectoris*. For the unprofessional reader, I would say that, usually, this disease is confined to persons advanced in life, and while occurring in sudden paroxysms, it being associated with grave organic changes, and involving the most vital organ of the body, is, in such cases, almost invariably fatal. The more obvious expression of these paroxysms is a violent spasm of the heart. Besides the extreme pain, it is attended with an overpowering sense of distress, such as is realized in scarcely any form of physical suffering.

But a few months before Charles Sumner, the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts, had died of it, and it is rather remarkable that so many eminent men have died of it. When I reached him he was pale, cold and pulseless, but entirely conscious. His consciousness was, however, unavoidably absorbed in his physical agony, which was so distinctly expressed in his features that it was painful to look upon him. He remarked to me: "Doctor, this will carry me off," and it was but too sadly apparent that his statement was true.

I was, of course, engrossed in devising and applying every conceivable measure of relief, and yet I can still remember the scene as

one of the most impressive I have ever witnessed. Hanging upon the wall above the great sufferer and now dying saint was the picture of his distinguished co-laborer and devoted friend, Dr. Richard Fuller, who had already crossed the river a short time before. Pasted upon the frame of this picture was the last letter which Dr. Fuller had from his dying bed sent to him who was so soon to follow—only three words, but words so full of meaning when uttered, so full of significance as now placed—*the supreme struggle*.

The merciful God, whose goodness I had so often heard our venerated and dying father recount with thanksgiving when in health, compassionately made this, his supreme struggle, a brief one. In less than an hour he had triumphed over death, and in a few minutes more the noble features which had just now writhed in agony were as free from the traces of pain as his glorified spirit was free from the traces of sin.

The death of Dr. Jeter occurred at four o'clock on Wednesday morning Feb. 18th, 1880. As he was born on the 18th of July, 1802, he lacked just five months of being seventy-eight years old.

The news of his death speedily spread through the city, and created a profoundly sad impression. It really seemed as if Richmond was in mourning. All classes of the people, rich and poor, Jew and Christian, white and colored, seemed to feel the mournful spell. Nor was the distress restricted to Richmond. The tidings of his death spread a pall over thousands and thousands of hearts, not only in Virginia, but in every section of the country. The papers, secular as well as religious, published full accounts of his death, and in many cases pronounced the highest eulogies upon his character. Telegrams and letters, almost without number, came with their sad messages of sorrow and sympathy. Churches, societies, boards, Sunday-schools, associations and institutions of learning adopted and published resolutions in his honor. These it would be pleasant on many accounts to incorporate in this story. They

would not be without their value, perhaps, in enabling those who did not know Dr. Jeter, to form an estimate of his reputation and influence.

But, in the later years of his life, he had become effectually weaned from the empty honors of this world. He cared nothing for them. They made no impression on him. He was quick to honor others, but he really desired nothing for himself. It strikes me, therefore, that it would be more in harmony with his guileless and heavenly spirit, to exclude from this memorial, these formal tributes of praise.

On Thursday afternoon succeeding his death, in response to a known public wish, the remains of the deceased were taken from his home, and placed in the Grace Street church, so that those who desired might take a sad last look, at the dear face of this venerated servant of the most high God. For several hours, a stream of saddened and tearful people filed by the coffin and viewed the body. Among these were many prominent citizens, including Mr. Holliday, then the Governor of Virginia. I append here a list of gentlemen, who acted as pall-bearers in the removal of the body to the church, and also, of those who kindly undertook the task of draping the church for the funeral.

Messrs. T. J. Todd, T. H. Ellett, W. S. Pilcher, G. B. Taylor, Jr., Luther Martin, James T. Dickinson, S. S. Carter, W. W. Lefew, A. E. Cox, Dr. J. L. M. Curry, J. T. Ellyson and G. W. Henderson.

The coffin lid bore the following inscription:

REV. DR. J. B. JETER,

Born July 18, 1802. Died February 18, 1880.

A committee, consisting of B. B. Van Buren, T. H. Ellett, W. R.

Hall, E. W. Gates, Mrs. Hallowell, Mrs. Pilcher, Mrs. Ellett, Miss J. M. Ballow, Mrs. Van Buren, Mrs. J. N. Parker, Mrs. O. D. Browne, Mrs. S. S. Carter, Mrs. John E. Laughton, and Mrs. Dr. Curry, draped the galleries and pillars supporting the same and the pulpit in mourning.

The funeral was set for twelve o'clock on Thursday. Long before the time for opening the house, the churchyard and adjacent streets were densely thronged with people. Very many of these were unable to gain admission to the church, notwithstanding that the great building was crowded, in every part, to its utmost capacity. It was estimated that fully a hundred ministers were present. Many Baptist ministers came from great distances, at their own charges, and simply, as an act of respect. The exercises were very simple. His favorite old hymns, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss," were read, and heartily sung by the congregation. Four addresses were delivered. They were, of course, prepared on short notice, and were not, perhaps, elaborately reported in the papers at the time. It seems due to the reader that some extracts from these addresses, at least, should be given. These we here append :

Rev. J. R. GARLICK, D.D., said that he felt like a son, attempting to officiate at the grave of his father. When a boy, Dr. Jeter had baptized him; to him, more than to any other man, he had been accustomed to turn for counsel. He looked upon it, as a precious boon that he had enjoyed his friendship, and been guided by his counsel.

He remembered that when Taylor, and Witt, and Poindexter, and William F. Broadus, and Fuller, and others of our "princes in Israel," had fallen at their posts of duty, Dr. Jeter had spoken of them with deep feeling in one of our great gatherings, but had added with great power: "And yet, my brethren, while these have died, Jesus lives; the Lord reigns, the foundations of His kingdom are not removed, and we must go forward with hope to our appointed work."

And so he would say as we stand by the cold clay of the grand old man we were about to bury.

Rev. T. S. DUNAWAY, D.D., of Fredericksburg, Dr. Jeter's intimate friend, said:

"For the last twenty years, I have known him most intimately. Perhaps no two men whose ages, and gifts were so unequal, were ever on terms of closer and more constant friendship. And I shall ever regard, it as an honor, that I enjoyed the love and confidence of such a man, and a blessing, that I was ever brought under his influence.

"Take him altogether—physically, intellectually and morally—I regard Bro. Jeter as one of the noblest and highest types of his race that I have known. His character was beautifully symmetrical, made up, as it was, of a rare combination of the highest qualities of head and heart, without that admixture of blemishes and defects, however small, which so often mar the characters of good and great men.

"His judgment was sound, discriminating and impartial. His counsels were wise, safe and prudent. His friendship was warm, faithful and constant. His judgment of men was lenient and charitable. As a polemic and debater, he was just, ingenuous, tolerant and open to conviction, for he was ever in search of the truth. As a companion, he was genial and pleasant, enjoying the innocent joke, yet never undignified.

"But Dr. Jeter was to be loved and admired especially for his qualities of heart. Those best acquainted with his private and inner life know him, to have been a man of singular purity of heart, thought and expression. Every word he uttered, and every thought he expressed showed that they came forth from a pure fountain. His piety was of the simplest and highest type. He was a close and daily student of the word of God, and a man given to prayer. The last time I saw him, and the last moments I spent with him, were, at his request, moments of prayer. He then talked of his hopes and prospects of heaven, saying:

"I am a poor sinner,  
And nothing at all;  
Christ Jesus my Lord  
Is my all in all."

Rev. D. S. DOGGETT, D.D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, said that the vast throng present was there to honor a faithful and distinguished minister of Jesus. He was there to pay a tribute to one whom he had known and loved for forty-five years. The first Baptist preacher whom he had ever heard was Dr. Jeter, preaching in the house of the grandfather of Dr. Dunaway.

He was a pronounced Baptist, but none the less a pronounced christian, and his life was a christian royalty which all rejoiced to acknowledge and claim for our common Christianity. There was not an evangelical minister in Richmond who had not grieved at his death. He had done his work, and God had said, "It is enough; come up higher." He made the christian's "living sacrifice," and now its sweet odors are floating on the air. He did not feel that this was only an hour to mourn; we could also make it an hour of re-



joicing. This was a funeral, but a funeral illuminated and robbed of its gloom. Death was there, but death was robbed of his terrors. It was a blessing for this man of God to have lived. It was also a blessing for him to have died. His death was not an eclipse, but a setting of the full-orbed sun, while his golden rays still linger behind. He is not dead, but has been translated—has gone to meet his Lord in glory.

Dr. J. L. M. CURRY made the closing address, and began by saying that the tearful audience and the manifestations of christian fraternity and communion, as just expressed by Bishop Doggett, were the proofs, if any were needed, that Dr. Jeter had unusual claims to respect and admiration and love. No one who knew Dr. Jeter would hesitate to put him among the aristocracy of the world. As a preacher, a pastor, an editor, a citizen, a christian, he lived up to the measure of developed faculties, and was "an Israelite in whom there was no guile."

Those who knew Dr. Jeter but slightly detected readily his transparency of character, his child-like simplicity, his unsuspecting guilelessness, his generosity, courage, integrity, truthfulness. Few knew how instinctively he shrank from whatever was evasive, disingenuous, insincere, untruthful. Fewer still may have known that while inflexible in his opinions, and, at times, engaged in high debate, in religious or politico-religious polemics, he bore himself so loftily, so knightly, as to make friends of his opponents. Gladstone says of Macaulay that, with great uprightness and kindliness of mind, he had a constant tendency to exaggerate, to view things in violent contrasts. Dr. Jeter never colored a fact, never consciously misstated an argument, never depreciated an adversary. He pursued only the truth, but was largely tolerant and catholic in his opinions. Claiming and asserting his own indefeasible right of individual judgment, he conceded, ungrudgingly, equal latitude and liberty to every other man.

Dr. Curry said he would be doing injustice to Trustees, Faculty and students of Richmond College not to utter their deep grief at the loss of such a benefactor and friend. He mentioned that fifty years ago, at 5 o'clock on a spring morning, Dr. Jeter met, in the meeting house of the Second Baptist church, Dr. J. B. Taylor and a few friends to confer on the necessity of furnishing higher education to young men preparing for the ministry. Out of that conference grew the Education Board, and from that Board sprang Richmond College. For the half-century since, save the few years of residence in Missouri, Dr. Jeter had been a member or President of the Board of Trustees.

In that connection, Dr. Curry said Dr. Jeter's course deserved special mention and praise. Without the advantage of a collegiate, or ministerial education, he became a profound theologian, well-versed in general literature, and a writer whose pure English and lucid style gained for him the eulogium of the American Addison. Lifting himself above the prejudices of early disadvantages, he became the friend and benefactor of educational institutions. A backwoods preacher in early life, he was the champion of ministerial education, and died the revered President of the Trustees of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, an institution which commanded his prayers, energies and contributions. He also took a deep interest

in the education of girls, and was the President of the Trustees of the Richmond Female Institute. Nothing touching the welfare of Richmond College was indifferent to him, and his last direct contribution to the *Religious Herald*, of which he was the principal editor, was in reference to the college. Faculty and students always had in him a sympathizing and enthusiastic friend and defender. The board meetings attested his punctuality, sagacity and wide-awake activities. All exercises at the College, even competitive declamations and annual sports of the young men, found him present with the appreciativeness and gleesome enjoyableness of a boy.

At the time of Dr. Jeter's death, the *Religious Herald* had several eminent gentlemen as associate editors. These aided greatly in voicing the general grief, by personal letters, which appeared in the *Herald* of the following week, in which they gave their estimates of their revered old chief. I append extracts from these letters. I may add here that, through the quick and enterprising spirit of the junior editor, the *Herald* published an elaborate and impressive notice of the death, including a good likeness, an historical sketch and a full account of the funeral of the deceased.

LETTER FROM DR. J. A. BROADUS.

*Louisville, Ky., Feb. 19, 1880.*

O what a loss! A loss to Southern Baptists, yea to American Baptists, a loss to the Southern Convention, to our Theological Seminary, to Richmond College, to the *Herald*, to the whole cause of truth and righteousness in the world! And there are thousands who will say, as the present writer does, in deep sadness, What a loss to me!

For, by those who knew him well, he was warmly loved. I have heard persons say that he was reserved, and they could not get near him. There was no real foundation for this, except that he was sometimes abstracted, very changeful in his moods, and always perfectly natural, never seeming to think of courting popularity by mere cordiality of manner. I remember vividly a sojourn of nearly two weeks under his roof in 1857, when preaching for him, and day by day I learned to love him more warmly. Ah! what a true man he was, what a genuine friend, how humble and deeply devout a Christian!

And they who were never near enough for passionate love, but who knew him at all, what one among them, but cherished high respect for his sterling ability, his sincerity, honesty and conscientiousness? Many

have questioned the correctness of some of his opinions, or the wisdom of his action in this or that; but whoever thought of questioning that he was doing what he believed to be right, and that he was acting in the fear of God? Amid the collisions of life, and the manifold exhibitions of human infirmity, that is much to say.

It was a noble example, working his way up without any educational advantages, and by diligent and wise study, amid the most active duties of the ministry, attaining such true mental discipline, such wide and exact knowledge, as his preaching and writing displayed. The difference in men's advantages is a small thing compared with the difference in men.

He was a preacher of great power. Very unequal—frequently making comparative, and, sometimes signal failures—but that befalls almost all who are excitable enough to rise high, and who allow themselves freedom in speaking. And when his mood and the circumstances were favorable, he not only rose high, but he carried the hearers with him, for they knew that he spoke that way only when he felt so. And as to the spirit of his editorial writing, that may now be repeated which I said some years ago: I have read nearly everything he has published, during all these fourteen years, and while he has had many editorial controversies, has been often sharply attacked, and has defended himself stoutly, yet, so far as I know, he has never once betrayed an unlovely spirit. In looking solemnly back from the death-bed the wisest and best of Christian men will have a thousand things to regret, if regrets be not swallowed up in humble gratitude and sustaining hope. But as to the spirit of it, I think Dr. Jeter did not write

“One line which, dying, he could wish to blot.”

Some of us who write for religious papers may feel that we have cause to lay that example to heart.

#### LETTER FROM DR. W. T. BRANTLY.

*Baltimore, Feb. 19, 1880.*

My acquaintance with Dr. Jeter began in the days of my childhood, when he was the guest of my father, then a pastor in Philadelphia. He was at the time residing, I think, at Lancaster C.H., Va., and was on a visit to the City of Brotherly Love to see its lions, and perhaps to attend to some matters of business. We walked together to the Fairmount Water Works, and I remember how carefully he inquired into the working of the machinery, intent on understanding everything he saw. During the visit he preached in my father's pulpit, but I have no recollection of the sermon, except the peculiar voice in which it was delivered. We met again, when I was leaving Philadelphia, to enter college. Dr. Fuller was my travelling companion, and as we entered the steamboat, I recognized Dr. Jeter, and introduced him to Dr. Fuller. It was their first meeting, both being *en route* to the Baptist Triennial Convention about to meet in New York. The friendship, begun in boyhood, has been strengthened in age; and the more intimately I have known him, the greater has been my regard for him as a man, a christian and a minister. Though a man of remarkable gifts, he was ever modest and unassuming. Devoid of envy

and jealousy—those mean vices which sometimes disfigure noble minds—he was the hearty eulogist of excellence wherever he found it. Among all our denominational writers of the day, I know not one who exceeds him in the felicity with which he used his native tongue. In brilliancy of style, in wealth of illustration, in rhetorical beauty, in classical eloquence, we have known writers superior to Dr. Jeter; but, in the power of expressing thought forcibly and exactly, and in making his meaning patent to all, he has had but few equals. The thoughts of some others may move in a wider range or take a sublimer sweep, but what he saw—and his horizon was far from being circumscribed—he saw clearly, and made his readers see them in like manner. Though not ornate, there was a beauty in this perspicuity which imparted interest to all his writings, whilst it set forth his vigorous thinking to the best advantage.

LETTER FROM DR. JAMES UPHAM.

*Chelsea, Mass., Feb. 18, 1880.*

Our brother had done up one large life-work when he took his seat in the editorial chair. But he brought to it, and retained to the last article he penned, a vigor as of youth, an experience as ripe as it was varied, a judgment ever safe, and a breadth of charity and a refined courtesy that were unsurpassed. He seems to me to have lived two full lives, and lived each equally well; and now he has just gone on to the ampler service of the life to come.

Thoroughly Southern by birth, education, sympathy and conviction, he was yet clear-headed enough and large-hearted enough, to rise above mere sectionalism, and to be thoroughly national in his love, aspiration and labors; and no Southern man has done more toward hastening the period when North and South shall be fully united in love, sympathy and mutual helpfulness.

LETTER FROM PROF. B. PURYEAR.

*Richmond College, Feb. 23, 1880.*

Of late years I have been much in the company of Dr. Jeter, alike from business, official and social relations. In these frequent interviews, his character opened upon me, in such transparent beauty and simplicity, that I sought to make them as frequent as possible, and at length came to feel that I had lost my best privilege, my purest pleasure, if, for any cause, I failed to have at least my Saturday morning's talk—whether lively or severe—with our late loved and revered associate. No man susceptible to impressions, could leave his presence without realizing an influence, strengthening, elevating, ennobling. His looks, his manner, his language, never conveyed the suggestion of evil. No man, I venture to say, ever had the effrontery to utter an impure thought, or propose a duplicitous policy, in his presence. Whatever was little, or base, or low, skulked from his presence.

I have heard men who are reputed greater preachers; but does the man live who has more effectually commended the gospel of Jesus Christ? He delivered the message of his Master in words apt and fit, in style terse, vigorous and clear, not seeking "enticing words of

man's wisdom," but content, like Paul, to preach only Christ, and Him crucified. He sought only to convey the truth as he believed it, and his evident sincerity and singleness of purpose gave power and unction to his utterances. Borne on by the fervor of truth and the glow of a genuine enthusiasm, he frequently reached the loftiest heights of true eloquence, and so made impressions as permanent as powerful.

I have known more profound scholars, more brilliant men, than Dr. Jeter; it is easy to find them; but when we consider his vigorous common sense, that went directly to the gist of the matter, eliminating circumstance and accident; when we consider his well-balanced faculties, brought, by his own guidance, to their highest development, under the most forbidding circumstances, showing an energy of will competent to conquer any opposition; above all, when we contemplate his moral attributes, his honesty and truth, his exact justice, his unostentatious, abundant generosity, his sincerity and guilelessness, that broad, catholic spirit which entered into and qualified his judgment of men and things, his simple, unwavering faith—immediately patent to his hearers and readers—in the divine doctrines he proclaimed and practiced, I have no hesitation in saying that, in the best and most comprehensive sense of the term, he was the greatest man I ever knew.

Rev. William S. Plumer, D.D., an eminent Presbyterian minister, was a devoted and admired friend of Dr. Jeter. Col. Thomas J. Evans wrote a letter inviting Dr. Plumer, to attend the funeral. Unable to come, he wrote the following letter :

*Columbia, S. C., Feb. 20, 1880.*

MY DEAR MR. EVANS,—Some hours before your letter reached me, the train had gone—the last train which can possibly reach Richmond before the funeral. Please state this to the friends. I loved and honored Dr. Jeter very much. I revere his memory. He was an upright man, true and noble; a dear brother in Christ; and an able and faithful minister of the blessed gospel. He has got the start of me. But I hope soon to meet him in a better world. I am a sincere mourner, though far away. Give my love to all who loved my honored and my blessed brother. I thank the friends for desiring my presence. Dr. Jeter has wept with me in my affliction. I should have considered it a privilege to be one of those who should carry him to his burial.

Faithfully yours, WM. S. PLUMER.

The following gentlemen acted as pall-bearers on the occasion of the funeral :

#### THE PALL-BEARERS.

The following is a list of the pall-bearers: Rev. H. A. Tupper, corresponding secretary of our Foreign Mission Board; Rev. Dr. T.

L. Preston, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Richmond; Judge R. L. C. Moncure, of the Supreme Court of Virginia; Col. D. G. Potts, of Petersburg; Rev. J. J. Lafferty, editor of the *Christian Advocate*; James Thomas, Jr., Hon. H. K. Ellyson, A. Y. Stokes, A. B. Clarke, Charles Ellis, C. Jacob, A. P. Fox, R. H. Boshier, W. Goddin, Thomas J. Evans, Rev. T. T. Eaton, Rev. A. G. McManaway, Rev. J. H. Eager, Rev. J. B. Hutson, Rev. C. H. Ryland, Rev. S. C. Clopton, Rev. G. F. Williams, Prof. H. H. Harris, and Deacons T. H. Ellett and W. S. Pilcher.

The day for his burial was singularly beautiful,—radiant, balmy and bracing. Not only an immense procession, but many persons, on foot, followed the remains to the grave. Dr. Jeter had never provided a section for himself in the cemetery. On the morning after his death Dr. Curry and myself went out to Hollywood, at Mrs. Jeter's request, and selected the spot for his burial.

Hollywood is very beautiful. Nature and art have combined to make it a place of rare attractiveness. It is a part of that broken, rugged section of country which borders on James River, just above the city, and is diversified by brooks, shadowed vales, hill-tops and native oaks. To these natural beauties, grief and love have added the choicest products of art. It was a favorite resort with Dr. Jeter. He delighted to drive along its shaded avenues, admire its scenery and talk of its dead. It has now become the home of his body, until the morning of the resurrection. His grave is, on the crown of its loftiest hill, and in full view of the celebrated falls in the river. It is only a little distant from another elevation where sleeps the dust of James Monroe and John Tyler, former Presidents of the United States. Not long after Dr. Jeter's death, Dr. Plumer, who had expressed the hope of soon meeting him in the spirit world,

died. His remains were taken to Richmond, and interred within a few paces of the place, where we laid Dr. Jeter. In life, they were linked in love, and often labored together. Now their bodies sleep very near to each other, and their kindred spirits are with God.

Some time after his death Mrs. Jeter had erected in his honor a monument,—a simple, lofty granite shaft—fit type of his own exalted, guileless and imperishable character.

No attempt has been made to enumerate the many formal honors which were bestowed upon him during his life. It may be well, however, to indicate, at once, the esteem in which he was held, and the burdens which he was called to bear, by mentioning the various official positions which he held at the time that death put an end to his labors.

“ In addition to his duties as senior editor of the *Religious Herald*, he was also President of the Board of Trustees of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, at Louisville, Ky.; President of the Board of Trustees of Richmond College; President of the Board of Trustees of the Richmond Female Institute; Vice-President of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Vice-President of the State Mission Board of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.”

In his reminiscences of Dr. Jeter, Dr. Dunaway wrote a very readable article on “The Monuments to his Memory.” After speaking of his controlling influence in the General Association of Virginia, the Triennial Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention, he concluded in the following words :

“ About fifty-six years ago Dr. Jeter met Dr. J. B. Taylor and a few kindred spirits, at five o'clock one spring morning, in the Second Baptist Church, to confer on the necessity of furnishing higher education to young men preparing for the ministry. Out of that confer-

ence grew the Education Board, and from the board sprang Richmond College. From that time till his death, save the few years of his residence in Missouri, he was an active member of the Board of Trustees, and, for the most of that time, the president of the Board, which position he was filling with great acceptance and efficiency at the time of his death. He gave to Richmond College his thought, time, labor, love and money; and its history could not be accurately written without giving his name a conspicuous place on almost every page. Nothing touching the prosperity of the College was indifferent to him. His last direct contribution to the *Religious Herald* was in reference to this educational institution. Richmond College, in all its grand proportions and architectural beauty, stands at the head of the street on which he lived and died—a monument to the noble man who was one of its founders, and one of its truest, best and wisest friends.

#### SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

Never having himself enjoyed the advantages of a collegiate or theological training, he was nevertheless the friend and benefactor of all educational institutions. He was the champion of ministerial education, and took a lively interest in the establishment, growth and prosperity of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and gave liberally of his means to endow it. He was also the honored President of the Board of Trustees of that institution at the time of his death.

It would be a fitting tribute to his memory if the Baptists of the South would erect a handsome building in connection with that institution, or richly endow one of its professorships, as a memorial of him and of his zeal, fidelity and liberality in its behalf.

#### RICHMOND FEMALE INSTITUTE.

Dr. Jeter was also deeply interested in the education of females and was one of the founders and patrons of Richmond Female Institute. He was a constant visitor to that school, and was ever ready to do, give and sacrifice for its prosperity. He was, at the time of his death, the President of its Board of Trustees, and the Institute sustained a great loss in his death. On the casket at his funeral, among other floral offerings, was a beautiful anchor and cross of immortelles with the inscription: "A tribute of love to the memory of our late President, by the faculty and students of Richmond Female Institute."

As I look around I see other monuments to his memory, which I would like to mention; but I must forbear, as this article is already too long—too long for the average reader of this restless, busy age; but too short to half tell, even in briefest outline, the wonderful story of his deeds. In a former article was mentioned the valuable labor performed, the good accomplished and the influence exerted, by his able writings as editor and author.

What a long, busy, honorable, useful life was his! How great is and must be his posthumous influence! What a noble example did he leave behind him! What an inspiration to the living! How rich



and glorious must be his heavenly reward! How bright his crown in glory! "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and forever."

When I think of him in his glorified state, resting from toil, care and pain, dwelling amid the splendors of an eternal day, I check my grief and suppress the tear of sorrow at his death, and say :

"Forgive, blest saint, the tributary tear,  
That mourns thine exit from a world like this;  
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,  
And stayed thy progress to the realms of bliss."

The most conspicuous monument erected in honor of Dr. Jeter was the Jeter Memorial Hall at Richmond College. I leave it to my life-long friend, Dr. C. H. Ryland, Financial Secretary of Richmond College, to furnish the history of that monument.

#### THE JETER MEMORIAL.

DR. WILLIAM E. HATCHER:

*Dear Brother:*—As chairman of the Jeter Memorial Committee, you are well acquainted with the history of its work, but as you desire an official statement of the origin, progress and completion of the enterprise, I gladly give the essential facts from the record. From the time of Dr. Jeter's death there was a consensus of opinion that so conspicuous a character should receive an enduring monument at the hands of his many friends and admirers. An informal conference was held on the 9th of March, just three weeks after he died, and other meetings followed on the 16th and 18th instants. There was no difference of opinion as to the propriety or wisdom of a memorial, but there was a wide divergence of views as to the shape it should take. A few very earnestly insisted upon a statue on the Richmond College campus, but the following paper was subsequently cordially adopted: "In response to the very general desire that some suitable memorial of the life and labors of Rev. J. B. Jeter, D.D., should be secured, we, the brethren and friends who have assembled to consider the matter, after due deliberation and consideration, recommend the following as the most appropriate and feasible method of meeting the wishes of all concerned and honoring the memory of the great and good man whose death has so grievously afflicted us.

"1. In consideration of Dr. Jeter's attachment to Richmond College and his long service in its behalf, and furthermore of the bequest of his books, manuscripts and copyrights to the institution, and in view of the fact that in the present unfinished condition of the main building there is no suitable receptacle for his gift, it seems to us most appropriate to provide, by the completion of the college edifice, for a spacious library hall, which shall bear the name of the distinguished dead and afford ample protection for this bequest.

"2. As testifying, further, our love and admiration for this eminent citizen and faithful servant of God, we recommend that a full-size bust, and a full-length portrait be secured, to be placed in the hall which bears his name.

"3. That these suggestions and recommendations be adopted as the sense of this meeting, and steps be at once taken to put them into practical operation. With these instructions as a basis, and after the appointment of a general agent and treasurer, the work was eventually committed to an executive committee of five with power to act. This committee consisted of Rev. William E. Hatcher, D.D., Chairman; Rev. C. H. Ryland, Secretary; Professor H. H. Harris, James B. Winston, Esq., B. B. Van Buren. H. K. Ellyson, Esq., was the Treasurers; and Rev. A. E. Dickinson, D.D., Agent."

The consent of the trustees of the college having been secured, the south wing of the main edifice of the college was let to contract in the fall of 1881, with the understanding that the committee would be responsible only for the erection of the building and completion of the Library Hall.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the anxious labor of the committee. They were gratuitously and lovingly performed, and with a skill that has not been questioned. The appeals of the agent were so cordially responded to by friends at the North that, with the aid received at home, an ample fund was in a short time secured with which to complete in a most creditable manner the proposed memorial. The work was gratefully accepted by the trustees of the college on the 18th of June, 1884, and in the evening of the same day, in the presence of a brilliant assemblage, the beautiful hall was formally opened.

Respectfully,

CHARLES H. RYLAND, *Secretary.*

#### THE CLOSE.

It has already been mentioned that the funeral of Dr. Jeter took place at the Grace Street Church, of which he was a member. Owing to the great multitude in attendance, comparatively few members of that church, were able to secure admittance, and this, together with the fact that the writer, the pastor, was detained by sickness, led this church to arrange for a memorial service. This service was held on the first Sunday morning in March, 1880, and in answer to the request of the church, I delivered an address on the life and character of Dr. Jeter.

This address was subsequently repeated, by re-



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VIRTUE  
FAITH

Presented to Wm A. B. Saunders  
Dec 20 1893, by Mr. G. J. Johnson  
Her Sunday School Super  
intendent of Lewis Street  
Sunday School.



quest, before the Virginia Baptist Historical Society at its anniversary in June of that year. That service, held in connection with the General Association, took place in the First Baptist church, Petersburg, Va. In some respects it was a scene never to be forgotten. The handsome auditorium was fittingly decorated. A vast congregation, including several hundred Baptist ministers, many distinguished laymen and, not a few chief women of the state, filled the house to overflowing. On the platform were assembled the old preachers—dear old men of God—who had long been associated with Dr. Jeter in christian labors. A truly heavenly spirit, sad indeed and yet delightful, pervaded the assembly. It was one of those unique, impressive, wonderful occasions which could never be repeated and cannot be fully appreciated by those who did not witness it. It was the remarkable spectacle of the Virginia Baptists, in solemn assembly, lamenting the loss and honoring the memory of the most illustrious man that God had ever given them.

Esteemed friends have urged that the address, then delivered, should have a place in this biography. Since, however, its historical portions and its characterizations have already appeared, and, generally in enlarged form, in former chapters, I could not comply with the request without encumbering this story with needless repetitions. I venture to present the closing part of that address and with that, this loving and unpretending tribute to Dr. Jeter will end :

“ We have heard much mournful speech concerning the death of Dr. Jeter. A wail of lamentation has filled the land, because

of his departure. "What shall we do without him?" is the sad question which has trembled on a thousand lips. You remember that when Moses died, the nation was in tears. A deep and staggering sense of loss filled the camp. At that moment, the Lord appeared unto Joshua and said: 'Moses, my servant, is dead; now, therefore,'—therefore what? Despair? A broken cause? No light in the future? Such, in God's eye, is not the logic of providential losses. 'Moses, my servant, is dead; now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.' Moses is dead,—that is sad, indeed,—but the Lord reigneth and His promise endureth unto all generations.

"There is, I admit, a sorrowful aspect in the death of our venerated brother. It has not only produced a shock, but a void. His towering form had long loomed, in stately grandeur, before us, as our trusted and inspiring leader, and it made us step more firmly, because he was leading us. His like we may not hope to see again. He dies without a successor, and we shall miss him.

"You must pardon me for saying that Dr. Jeter was more to me than any other living man. When in the gloom of that Wednesday morning, a messenger summoned me from my bed, and told me that the dear old man had shut his eyes in death, I confess that an anguish unutterable transfixed my heart. The earth dwindled, and looked strangely empty and lonesome without him. For a time, I could not rid myself of the feeling, as I looked upon the faces of men, that the best of this world was gone. Yesterday, when I came into this house and swept my eye over the faces of friends and brethren, dear as life to me, I felt a dreadful sense of change. *He was gone*, and for a moment it seemed that he had taken everything with him.

"And yet we must not mar the glory of his departure by too loudly bewailing it as a loss. Beneath our sorrow, there is the swell of an uplifting, triumphant joy. It is said that upon his dead face, there lingered the radiant traces of a smile. His life itself would be an unfinished thing, if robbed of the crowning beauty of its end. In going, he has left us a double heritage,—a peerless life, and a victorious death. His end was a cloudless sunset.

"He did not die out of time. Let no broken shaft mark the spot where sleeps his form. Let his monument be erect, towering

and complete, and upon its apex, hang that crown of glory which is the peculiar heritage of the old. He lived nearly ten years beyond that solemn boundary which God has set to our mortal pilgrimage, and in, those borrowed days, his strength was not 'labor and sorrow.' His last days were his best.

"His bow abode in strength. His heart never lost its hope, nor, his brain its force, nor, his hand its skill. Time scattered snow-flakes on his locks; care furrowed his face, and burdens bent his shoulders; but grace kept him buoyant, joyful and busy to the end. It was the wish of his heart that he might live for his work, and not outlive it. The ink had scarcely dried in his pen, when the angel came to call him.

"He died splendidly,—in all his ripened, glorious prime. He did not crumble into decay, nor shrivel into imbecility. Disease did not waste and age did not shatter him; but, like the imperial leader of Israel, he came to Pisgah, with eye undimmed and strength unabated. I account his death pre-eminently happy. In the stillness of the winter night, when his hour came to go, his loving Father put his finger upon the enginery of his heart,—that heart which had been beating, beating, beating, for nearly eighty years, and beating always highest for his Father's honor. He felt the solemn touch, and the vast machinery of his life trembled, groaned, creaked and shivered; but only for a moment, and then, standing suddenly still, his glad spirit was out and gone, upward and away, in its celestial flight. It was a translation in its suddenness, and an ascension in its triumph and glory.

"When he left the world—! Ah, but he has not left it! I do not say, for I do not know, that his spirit yet remains with us. Perhaps it is so. He will come back to cheer and guard us, if he may. But I do know that his grave, his memory, his influence, his teachings will abide. The light of his life will not go out. The track through space, along which he ascended to his eternal home, will always be luminous. I have fancied, if indeed it was a fancy, that when the gate of pearl was opened for him to enter, truant beams of the heavenly glory broke out, and are now at large on the earth.

"His death was a benediction. It will help those who survive, to live better. It sets out the Christian course in its completeness and beauty. His death was even better than his life, for it was

the consummation and complete rounding up of that life. He has not only shown us how to live, but how to die.

“His removal from earth was no loss to him. The most entrancing visions of the heavenly glory that, some of us, ever had were opened by his sermons. How his soul used to climb and pant, as he portrayed the glory of Christ, the exaltation of the saints, and the unfading joys of the skies! Borne upwards on the pinions of faith, he seemed sometimes to catch sight of the celestial city, and to mingle in its holy services. Much as he loved this world, he often sighed for heaven. Indeed, earth had no charms for him, except his foretaste of the world to come. For a long time, before he went out from us, his heart had left us—his conversation was in heaven.

“He had a right to go. He was fairly entitled to his discharge from the army of the church militant. He had more than served out his time. His mansion was ready, and his rest remained in waiting for him. Sixty years he had walked, and worked, and waited. It makes me glad to think that he has entered into the heavenly court, and now beholds the King in his beauty.

“I always speak tremblingly of heaven. It befits not us to talk, in glib flippancy, of that holy, unseen world. But it seems that we knew enough of Dr. Jeter to speak, in no uncertain tones, of his eternal destiny. What fate befel him beyond the outer gate of this world? If he went to be with those whose spirit he breathed, and whose likeness he had, then we may, in full confidence, declare that he has gone to heaven.

““These which are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? These are they, which came out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’ Was not the spirit of our venerated brother, meet for that company? His robes had been washed in the blood, and he had overcome the world. What is the occupation of this white-robed multitude, which no man can number, standing before the throne, with palms in their hands? Do they not cry with a great cry, saying: ‘Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb?’ Why might not he join that multitude, and take part in those employments? For three score years on earth, he had earnestly striven to glorify God, his Maker and Saviour. What is the history and inward char-



acter of those who crowd about the heavenly throne, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb? Are they not sinners saved by grace, and created in the image of Christ? Then let Jeter press up and take his place in their ranks. Christ Jesus had redeemed him with his own blood, and had been formed in him the hope of glory. But do they tell me that the redeemed wear crowns and wave palms of victory? Why not crown him? He fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith. He was meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

I confess that there was something imposing, and even regal in the honors which fell upon this christian father when he came to his earthly end. Who could have ever dreamed that the rude Bedford boy, that set out sixty years ago, as a Baptist preacher, would close his life in the midst of such distinction and grief? On the day of his burial, I was imprisoned in my chamber by sickness, and was denied, even the tearful pleasure, of following his dust to his silent home. But as the cortége passed my gate, I quit my bed, and with my wet face pressed against the window pane, gazed at the hearse as it bore him away to the cemetery. There came back to me the memory of his first entrance into Richmond. Then, an awkward, untutored youth, clad in homespun, covered with dust, astride his weary horse, and carrying in his saddle-bags, all his earthly store. Thus he came then, but now he was going out of the city, not to come back again. What a change! Then a stranger in a strange city, but now he was going out, escorted by a great and weeping host.

I opened the papers from every part of the country, and found his editorial brethren crowning him as a chief. Churches, societies and conventions made haste to pay him honor. Genius and art stepped forward to embalm his memory, and preserve his fame. Ministers of Christ of every name bewailed his loss, and unveiled him to their people, as an example to them in righteousness. To-night the Baptist Historical Society calls us together, to hear the story of his worth, and to plait upon his brow the garlands of honor. Already a movement is on foot to erect for him a monument, in harmony with his spirit, and worthy of his name.

Why speak of these things? Can we help him by pageantry and swelling praises? By no means. He never sought to honor

himself while he was alive, and now he has passed beyond the pale of every worldly distinction. But it is, at least, worth while to recall the Word of the living God. "Them that honor me I will honor." These kindly demonstrations in his favor are significant. They are the echoes of the salute fired, on the celestial plain, when he went up to get his crown. Heaven and earth unite in exalting a faithful man.

We can never forget that when he came to the supreme moment, when he felt the cords of life suddenly snapping, and had breath for only a single word, he said: "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." His dying word was an anthem and a shout. From that death-bed of anguish and confusion he has passed into the presence of the Sovereign of the universe, and is permitted, with unclouded vision, to gaze upon the majesty and splendor of his throne. O, who can tell with what exultant joy he now sings "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth?"

What a happy moment when his spirit crossed the river and saw the great City! What floods of rapture swept over his soul when he heard the peal of the heavenly music, and saw the face of his Redeemer! What a greeting his old comrades gave him—Broadus, Poindexter, Taylor and Fuller! What a moment when he and Witt met in their eternal reunion! Joy upon joy when he saw again the spirit of his glorified mother. If, on the December morning, he shouted as he emerged from the baptismal waters, I wonder what he said at his coronation. If he could be happy, amidst the changes and sorrows of this world, I wonder what his feelings were when he touched the pavement of the heavenly Jerusalem. If he delighted to sing while walking through the valley, I wonder what note employed his lips when he stood on the everlasting hills. And yet I wonder not. Hark! I hear his song rolling through the skies, and this is its chorus:

"Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."







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