

—A correspondent of the N. Y. Observer says, that in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., there is a prayer-meeting daily, at which there are about a thousand people.

LAST HOURS OF SENATOR FOOT.

We cannot forbear quoting at length the principal portion of Rev. Dr. Sunderland's deeply interesting and beautiful account of his interviews with Senator Foot in his last hours, as embraced in the funeral sermon delivered in the Senate chamber, and published in the Press of this city.

On Saturday evening, March 10th, on calling at his rooms, at Mrs. Carter's, on Capitol Hill, I found he was then in bed, and that the disease had proved more difficult of treatment than at first supposed.

He had suffered at times of great distress, and frequently interrupted by weeping and sobbing, he said: "I know it is but a poor time for a man to pay attention to the concerns of his soul when he is brought face to face with death."

Continuing, he said: "I feel that I can never be strong enough to God for giving me a pious ancestry. My father and mother were both devoted Christians, and I was fully instructed in early childhood in the lessons of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Since I was going on to state, by way of evidencing still further the tokens of Divine favor granted to himself and his friends in the long, upright, useful life he had been enabled to lead, and judging by the standard of men in the comparatively pure and noble example he had given both in private and public relations to his fellow-countrymen, and especially the young men of this generation in our land; when, misapprehending the object of my remark, and supposing I was about to lead him to rely upon his past life and character for his future prospects, he quickly interposed to say, "All that I do not want is a monument. I must have a heart-work. I must have the foundation of the stone of Christ alone to stand upon."

I explained to him, by reference to my own experience, the nature of saving faith and the difficulties I found in exercising it.

Here, Lord, I give myself away. 'Tis all that I can do.

I then endeavored to turn his mind away from the thought of trusting to the simple work of submitting and surrendering all to the hands of God, and distinctly made the proposal that he should now, in the spirit of a little child and with unquestioning confidence, commit all the interests of his entire being, for time and eternity, to God, and asked if he would join me in a prayer, thus consecrating him forever to the Lord; to which he promptly and earnestly assented.

Here, Lord, I give myself away. 'Tis all that I can do.

I began to understand that this comprehends all, and I am beginning to lean alone on Jesus Christ, as my Saviour and Friend.

On Thursday, the 22d of March, there was an evident progress in his spiritual experience, and I began now to think that his feet were surely planted upon the rock, and his hope was being confirmed.

Jesus, the vision of thy face Hath overpowering charms, I shall not fear death's dark embrace

Then, after prayer, in which he again solemnly dedicated himself to God, I again took leave of him.

Thus he continued until Monday, March 26, when the symptoms of his disease became more alarming. The day before (being Sunday) he had informed his friends it would be the last Sunday he would spend with them on earth.

On this day, therefore, the physicians became alarmed, and at about five or six hours, but rallying again, the feeble powers of nature made a stand, and in the evening he seemed somewhat revived.

On Tuesday morning, March 27, I repaired early to his chamber, arriving about nine o'clock, and with a short time of absence, remaining until about the hour of six o'clock in the evening. This was the last day with him on earth. As if forewarned of his approaching end, he spent the whole day in receiving his parting with his friends and performing his sacred duties.

bowed upon his hand in the grief of her affection, he said, looking round on the circle, "why these tears? There is no occasion for weeping. This is heaven begun below!"

A few moments after, when his brother, Dr. Foot, but two years younger than himself, who had arrived a few days before from his home in Canada, and to whom in their first meeting, he had expressed the same feelings that he should not recover, now came towards him, but filled with emotion, immediately turned away to conceal it, he said to me in an under tone: "If God has given it to me to leave such a name as my family will not be ashamed to remember, it is not a cause of pride or boasting, but of gratitude to Him who alone doeth all things well; and if when I am gone they shall sometimes think of me, and mention me as belonging to them, it will prove that I have at least studied not to give them pain."

To Mrs. Browning, a lady friend in the house, he said: "I am glad to see you this morning; these earthly partings are severe, but there are no fears, no sorrows in heaven. There we shall meet, I trust, ere long!"

When Secretary Stanton entered the room some time about mid-day, he seemed very much gratified, and said: "You are kind to visit me, Mr. Stanton. I am here yet; living and dying. I have no acute pain, no severe distress; but a general sinking of the system, the constitution breaking up. But I am surrounded by so many kind friends, they seem to bear me up as on angels' wings."

The Secretary of War said to Senator Foot: "The President intended to come with me, but was unavoidably prevented by the presence of one of our best officers, and could not get he could call during the day, and directed me to express his kindest regards and sympathies."

Not hearing the words distinctly, some one repeated them, to which he replied: "Oh, yes; if he comes I would be pleased to see him. It is twenty-three years ago since we first met. If the President comes I shall be glad to see him. The Secretary always anticipated everything; he is one of the best men I ever knew. This world cannot reward him, but there is a God in Heaven can do so, and I am sure he will not lose that reward. There is a God on high who will not fail to reward him."

Presently he added: "I have a good deal of physical strength left, so that I might continue perhaps a week, but on that point I do not speculate." On the Secretary remarking that "We are all in God's hands," he responded: "Oh, yes; and he is dealing with me in great mercy. The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice! And well may God reign, and well may the earth rejoice; that he does reign. That there is a God who reigns over all there can be no manner of doubt. We do not come into this world by chance; we are not creatures of accident. We have been born under a superintending Providence and are candidates for a certain eternity."

Then pausing again, as if contemplating his approaching departure, he said: "When I leave this place I wish no parade, no ostentatious demonstrations to be made, only the ordinary proceedings which custom and propriety impose; and thus I desire to be borne to my friends and home in Rutland, Vermont, and laid among the people who have been so faithful to me—more faithful, I fear, than I have ever been to them. Let me be sent home to the people who have done so much for me; they will prepare everything, and there by them let me be buried."

Presently Mr. Bassett, floor-keeper of the Senate, came in and was greeted in the same ardent and earnest manner by the dying Senator. He recalled his first meeting with him fifteen years ago, and testified to his uniform kindness, and said: "I cannot reward him, but God will do it, and that will be a far better, higher, more glorious reward than man can ever bestow."

Some one again inquiring if he did not feel great exhaustion and bodily distress, he replied: "Not much distress; this I consider one of my comfortable days. Then turning he saw Mrs. F., weeping at the foot of the bed, with Mr. Browning at her side. He said, pointing to his wife, "there, my dear wife, my beloved wife—to part with her is like tearing the silver cords asunder." On being approached by these ladies, Mrs. B. remarked "that they had been permitted to enjoy each other's society long on earth, and they indulged the hope that this society would be resumed again in Heaven."

"Oh, yes," he answered, "we have been a family long held together, and memory is full of tender visions of the past. God grant that they may be renewed in another and better world."

At this time Senator Fessenden approached him, to whom he eagerly stretched out his hand and said: "My dear friend Fessenden, the man by whose side I have sat so long, whom I have regarded as the model of State and parliamentary leader—on whom I have leaned and to whom I have looked more than to any other living man for guidance and direction in public affairs, the grief I feel, that the silver cord which has so long bound us together must now be severed. But, my dear Fessenden, if there is memory after death, that memory will be active, and I shall call to mind the whole of our intercourse on earth."

The Senator thus addressed, too much affected to reply in words, stooped over and kissed the brow of his grief-stricken friend, and turned away in silence. Towards evening, when it was intimated that the same Senator had returned to inquire after him, he was asked if he desired to see him, his reply was prompt—"Always," "always." With hands clasped they remained for some time, the enfeebled Senator repeating his grateful sense of the friendship so long existing between them, and being in turn assured of its valued estimation by his friends.

talk; these things cannot alarm me." Then taking the Senator by the hand, he said, "Yes, I know the man—a man about whom there is no deceit; with whom, neither in public nor in private, was there a deceitful thought or a deceitful word." His friend then remarking that he must have suffered very severely, he replied, "I have supposed that the frailty of human nature could not endure it so long;" and then recurring evidently to scenes of the past in which he had mingled with his friend, and as if soliloquizing, he added, "He was one of the first and best of my associates, and there was no mistake about him." Then turning to the Senator, he said, "The latter was about to leave him, 'You are not going out of the city?' On being answered in the negative they exchanged 'farewells,' and were parted forever upon earth."

To another Senator—Brown—who came in soon after, he said, "I am glad to see you, my dear associate; you know what it is to be a disciple of Christ. I hope we shall meet in heaven. This world is a poor place for saints or sinners to dwell in forever. Its scenes are passing away, its fashion perishes. There is nothing steadfast, nothing stable here."

He continued for some time, speaking to one and another, sending last tokens of love to absent kindred and friends, and doing his last work on earth. At about half-past two o'clock, all being prepared, by his desire and with the consent of his physician, who was indefatigable in attending to every wish, in the presence of his family and a few Christian friends, he signified his public profession of faith in Christ by receiving the symbols of the Lord's Supper, and joining, for the first and last time on earth, in that communion which all God's children hope to renew in Heaven. On receiving the bread into his mouth, he uttered in a low, but solemn and reverent manner, these words: "This bread is the symbol of the broken body of Christ Jesus, through whom alone I live for the mercy of God and the gift of eternal life." This most affecting and solemn scene, only to be appreciated and understood by those who have known experimentally the life which it outwardly sets forth, was concluded by singing the following lines, during which his soul seemed borne away, indeed, as on angel's wings:

Now firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent word: What more could I say than you have heard? What more could I say than you have feared?

After this he seemed to be satisfied, and only awaited the appointed hour of departure. To Mr. Seward, Secretary of State, who visited him in the after part of the day, he addressed similar words of tenderness, and exchanged with him the affectionate regards of their former friendliness. But his hours were rapidly running out, and he seemed too eager for their conclusion.

The morning came, and all the while he lay peacefully, attended by his kindred, whom he delighted repeatedly as ministering angels sent to soothe and comfort him, and make light his pathway to the tomb. At about eight o'clock, on the morning of Wednesday, the 28th of March, it was evident he could not much longer survive. Then, as if admonished by some invisible attendant that his moments were few, he signified his desire to see once more the light of the sun in Heaven, and the Capitol on which it shone, and where he had so long served the people of his State and country, and where his associates would soon again assemble. They lifted him up, but his eyes were already dim. He sank back upon his pillow. Seeing his time was at hand, the words of the 22d Psalm were then read, and a solemn prayer went up from the lips of one, the dearest to him on earth. He called her to his side, and folded her in his arms for a moment, then, as his breathing became choked, he said: "What! can this be death? Is it come already?" Then, lying a few moments longer with eyes all full of a celestial radiance, he lifted his hands and looked up, exclaiming: "I see! I see! The gates are wide open! beautiful! beautiful!" and without a movement or a pang, immediately expired.

I have a solitary offer for dwelling so long on the closing scenes of one whom I loved as a father, and to whom, for years past, I have learned to look for a father's counsels in many of my earthly affairs. Thus, how many will miss him in all the ranks and conditions of society; how will he be lamented by a harassed and sorrowing people. They shall tell to whom it more properly belongs—others there are who will make the record of his history, and depict the attributes of his private character, and trace the direction of his private life; others there are who will show his position in the mighty passage of the nation through one of its most peaceful and momentous periods, who will gather the garlands for his brow and erect a monument to his memory. It is ours to derive from the solemn dispensation of Providence, which has thus removed him from our midst, the practical lessons it is so preliminarily designed to enforce upon us.

1. First we see the difference between Pagan and Christian light. The sentiments of the ancients and of heathen sages now are and were exceedingly uncertain, clouded and obscure in respect to a future state, and the conditions of happiness therein. Their hopes, though often earnest, were and must be consequently far from having a good and firm foundation on which to rest. But in the clear light of the Christian revelation all is significant and satisfactory. The deepest cravings of our nature are here met, and the soul rests upon the word and promise of God as upon the basis of an everlasting rock.

2. Again we see the nature and necessity of making preparation for death and a future state. It is to believe in God and in the record which he has given of His Son, that if thou shalt believe with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. And this is the work of God that ye believe in him whom he hath sent; and then it is added in another place: "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee by thy faith; for thy works, for they shall be dead, being alone." Hence since by works we are alien from God, having rebelled against him, both not reason teach, as well as Revelation declare, what is now so vitally enforced by our own experience, even under earthly state of society, that there must be repentance and regeneration of heart and reformation of life in order to the restoration of those who have so rebelled and so endeavored to destroy the Government and disintegrated society itself! We cannot fail to see the reasonableness and the imperative motive of all this under the Divine government, how ever it may be questioned in those political systems which have been erected by the hands of men.

departed Senator, which has just now been kindly furnished.

[From a class-mate.]

THE VALUE OF A PIOUS ANCESTRY.

When Solomon Foot was a member of college, he was living with a widowed mother, who had removed to Middlebury to give her son the peculiar literary and religious advantages that the place afforded. It was understood in the class that the father of Mr. Foot, a physician, I think, by profession, had been a man of very decided religious character; and this was judged to be a favorable circumstance, by the religious members, when speculating on the probabilities of the son's conversion. The father was judged a man who must have derived great consolation in his early separation from his family by death, from a scripture passage like this: "Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me."

But the widowed mother of Mr. Foot is particularly remembered by her prevailing anxiety for his conversion and usefulness. And I have never failed to recollect an interview that I had with this excellent lady during my four years' residence at Middlebury, in which this was the burden of her conversation. I have often thought that the mother of Augustine never felt more anxiety and persevering desire for her son's conversion than did the mother of Solomon Foot for his conversion.

4. We may see, too, the value of early religious training and the benefit of an habitual observance of the ordinances of God's house. I have had occasion to observe many persons in the closing scenes of life, and I have never found one who had enjoyed such training and observed such habits that did not exhibit the fruit of it in the final hour. Nor did I ever see one who had gone through life without that that did not manifest a corresponding deficiency in sentiment, opinion and experience, when the last trial came upon them. This result must necessarily follow, and that human being who has come and gone out of this life without such a training and such a habit deserves the most profound commiseration.

5. We may see, again, the consistency and dignity of a Christian life and the satisfaction of a Christian hope. Such a life bears in it a self-demonstrating power; such a hope is evidence of its own priceless, inestimable nature. Those who have attained them in early years, and worn them well to a good old age, show by their example, as well as their profession, how true and how real is the excellency they possess. Those who have to regret their long neglect or indifference to such a life and such a hope, still bear witness to the incomparable value and desirableness of both. They are confirmed by a sense both of their loss and of their gain, both now and for evermore.

6. We see once more the beauty and glory of a Christian death, and the abounding fullness of a covenant keeping God. What clearness, calmness, composure, moral sublimity in the chamber where a child of God is found! How surely, tenderly, punctually in the Almighty power and grace vouchsafed to make "all that bed in peace," and to fill the dying scene with memorials the most living, and the most lasting, and the most affecting of all human experience on earth! And it is God's power and verity displayed when he says, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee!" Who in view of all this would not strive to lead this life that our departure from it may be joyful and triumphant? And who would not exclaim with one of old, and with a clearer motive, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

Special Notices.

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Harrisburg, will be held in the First Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg, on the second Tuesday in April (10th inst.) at half-past seven o'clock P. M. Special Reports and Minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, will meet in the Calvary Presbyterian Church, on Tuesday, April 10th, at three o'clock in the afternoon. The opening of the session, the sermon of the Moderator, Rev. Richard A. Mallory, will be delivered at the evening at half-past seven o'clock. Reports of Presbyterial Standing Committees, and Reports from Churches ordered for Wednesday, at ten o'clock A. M. J. C. SHEPHERD, Stated Clerk.

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Valley, will be held in the First Presbyterian Church in Lexington, on the 2nd Tuesday in April (10th inst.) at half-past seven o'clock P. M. Opening sermon by Rev. Alfred J. Snyder, Moderator. Stated Clerk, T. J. SHEPHERD.

The Presbytery of Lyons, will meet in Savannah on Tuesday, the 10th of April, at 2 o'clock, P. M. H. H. Y. Stated Clerk.

The Presbytery of Keokuk meets in Keokuk, Iowa, on the 2d Thursday (12) of April at 7 o'clock, P. M. G. C. BEAMAN, S. C.

The Presbytery of Iowa City will meet at Ames on the 3d of April, at 10 o'clock, P. M. G. B. A. Stated Clerk.

The Presbytery of Union will meet in New Providence Church at Marville, Tenn., April 20th, 1866, 11 o'clock A. M. W. H. LYLE, Stated Clerk.

The Catacombs by Calcium Light. Mr. Brown—It is not perhaps known to most of the readers of the American Presbyterian, that on Sabbath after Sabbath for the last three months, a beautiful picture of French and Swiss, (but mostly French) are colored and mounted and are being presented to the Rev. Mr. Maury. In order to help them in defraying the expenses of the Hall, Sunday-school, &c., Prof. Delaunay, on Thursday evening, 12th inst., at 100 Chestnut Street, gave an Exhibition of the Roman Catacombs by the Calcium Light. The lecture will be in French. We trust especially will be the kind patronage of the friends of French Evangelical Protestantism in our midst.

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