

J. C. Mackorell, Mrs. Elder, Mrs. Belle Douglass, Mr & Mrs. Smith Gordon, and Mrs. Margaret Brice. Of the members of fifty years ago, only two remain: Mrs. Eliza Grafton, granddaughter of Jas. Caldwell, one of our first elders, and Rev. D. Harrison, who is with us today.

During the late war our church was invaded, the Bible taken from the pulpit, the communion service, baptismal font, and Tokens taken from the closet underneath the old pulpit. All seemed discouraged but one man, whose devotion and sacrifice as the only active elder gave hope. But for him our doors would have been closed. Many of us remember his earnest prayers for this church. We are often reminded of him when we look at the Bible on the pulpit, his last gift to this church. His remains lie beside his wife in the corner of the cemetery, and the inscription is written there—"Sacred to the memory of George H. and Mary Miller."

Sad reflection! Not one living now who was first enrolled; and sadder still, when the next Centennial comes we will have gone to our final home, even the little boy baptized last Sabbath, William Banks Douglass.

May we be prepared for the home where there will be no need for churches or preaching, to be with Jesus, seeing and knowing the loved ones gone before, who now stand with "Beautiful, beckoning hands" just across the river.

III- Our Indebtedness to the Past and our Obligations to the Future-

- Sermon by Rev. W. G. Neville-

Text: "Their works do follow them," Rev., 14-13;

That is, their works follow them into the world, or their works follow them in this world, or both. I shall consider the passage today in the sense that their works follow them in this world. "Their works do follow them."

And our works will follow us. Man dies and passes off the stage of action in this world, but his work continues to live and his influence goes on to the end of time. Those that once lived where we now live are gone-their faces and forms are seen no more, but their works are still living. The places that know us now will soon know us no more forever, but our works will remain here and they will be felt by those who come after us.

Thus we are indissolubly connected with the past and the future. We are connected with the past in our thinking and modes of thought, in our habits and manner of life, in our doctrines, principles and policies, and in all of our environments. We are simply what the past has made us. We are connected with the future by our hopes and aspirations, by our works which are to follow us and by the impression these works are to make upon the generation which are to come after us. The future is to be what we are going to make of it.

Hence the full sweep of a man's influence and life can never be taken until the end of time. Thus we can see the propriety and justice of waiting till the last day of judgment. Not till then will all the facts in connection with a man's life be in, and not till then can a just estimate be formed of that life. Your influence goes on and on till the end of time. It is impossible for you to trace it out in its different ramifications, but the omniscient eye of God keeps up with it. He knows every chain of events and influences with which your work is connected, He knows all that is involved.

Thus as we stand here today with the past stretching out behind us and the future stretching out before us, we feel like taking off our shoes, for we are standing on sacred soil. The blessed dead are in the past-they are gone to an infinitely better and happier world, but we can think of the hallowed associations which cluster around their memories and which crowd upon us today as we are engaged

7.
in these memorial services. "Their works do follow them." And we can feel the influence and power of these works today. We feel we are in the company of those who died in the Lord, for we are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. We feel like Concord's sainted dead for one hundred years are hovering over us to-day. If this is so, blessed dead, we welcome you here today, and we congratulate you upon your blessed estate. The sainted dead are blessed because of their rest. They have quit the toils and turmoils of earth and have entered into heaven's rest. They are blessed because of their service. They have entered upon a higher, nobler, sweeter service. They are forever freed from the weariness, drudgery and disappointments which are incident to our service here, when they were in the flesh, they could sing:

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

"E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

"When in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave."

"His prophecy which they sang on earth has been fulfilled in their experience and lives in heaven. They are singing in a sweeter, nobler strain the song of Moses and the Lamb.

They are blessed because, their works do follow them. These works follow them in bearing witness to their faithfulness. They tell us how they toiled and suffered-how they sacrificed and made self-denials. These works follow them, and in this way, they continue to do good. The blessed dead have in these works a kind of permanent investment which is perpetually bearing a dividend towards increasing their happiness and joy. These good influences which they put into operation before they left this world are still going on and they are streams of happiness which continue to flow into their hearts.

The glorious future, potential with grand possibilities, looms up before us. As we stand here today on this neck of land which separates between the past and the future, we are forcibly reminded of,

Our indebtedness to the Past and our Obligations to the Future.

This will be my theme for this occasion. We do not appreciate, as we should, our indebtedness to the past; nor do we realize, as we should, our obligations to the future. We are the beneficiaries of the faithful work of those who have gone before us. They toiled, not simply for themselves, but for others, for generations unborn, and we to-day are enjoying the fruits of their faithful labors. Every blessing which we enjoy has come down to us through the toils and the tears, the struggles and sacrifices of those who have lived in the past. The books we read, and whose pages give us so much pleasure and profit, are prepared for us oft-times at sore cost to their authors. The great thoughts that warm our hearts and inspire us to noble living are the fruit, many times, of pain and struggle. Men had to pass through darkness and doubt to learn the lessons of faith and hope which they have written in such fair lines for us. They had to endure temptations and fight battles in which they well-nigh perished, that they might set down for us their bright, inspiring story of victory and triumph. They had to meet sorrows in which

their hearts were about broken, to learn how to write the strong words of comfort which strengthen us as we read them in our times of grief. We do not know what some of the glad hymns of faith and hope cost those who first sang them. They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

Go back in imagination beyond the limits of memory and think of the time when your mother watched by your little cradle. You were without care, but you were your mother's care. You were helpless, absolutely so; but your mother's strength was always in reach and at your service. Think how your mother, like a ministering angel, guarded and nourished you. Think how she laid out all of her time and energy and strength for you. Think how she spent perhaps many a weary and sleepless night for you- how when others all around were unconscious in sleep she sang to you those beautiful nursery rhymes and those sweet hymns of praise. If what a man's mother has suffered and done for him is no incentive to him to make something of himself, then there is certainly nothing good in the man. How we are indebted to those gone before!

"We exult in our civilization, our advancement, our refinement, our knowledge, our culture, our arts, our Christian society, the pleasant things of our modern life. Do we remember that all this comes to us from the toils and sacrifices, the study, the thought, the invention, the sweat and the pain, of thousands who have gone before us? There has not been a true life anywhere in the past, however lowly, that has not contributed in some degree to the good we now enjoy." "Their works do follow them". We do not enjoy a blessing, or a comfort, which did not come to us at great cost to somebody. These blessings and comforts have come to us through the toils and tears, through the sorrows and sacrifices, through the efforts and energies of those who have gone before. This is seen in every department of life.

In the material and industrial world.

In the houses we live in, in the sanctuaries we worship in, in the clothes we wear, and in the victuals we eat. Look at science, and agriculture, and mechanics. See what has been done in each of these departments. Consider the labor-saving machines and contrivances by which one man can do now what it took five, or ten, or twenty men to do a few years ago. See the comforts and the conveniences which we now enjoy and which come down to us through the labors of the past.

Our forefathers had to contend with the forests and the deserts; they had to contend with the inconveniences of travel which existed in their times but they have left us the fruitful fields and our beautiful homes; they have left us the railroad and other comfortable and expeditions modes of transportation. How they had to struggle in order to secure what we now possess and enjoy! They toiled hard when they laid the foundation for our modern civilization. Every achievement in science, every invention and discovery in the material world is a monument to the faithful labors of those who have lived before us. "Their works do follow them."

Our indebtedness to the past is also seen in the civil and political world.

As we rest serenely under the American Flag, enjoying the blessings of liberty and good government, our minds ought to go back, occasionally, at least, to the trials and conflicts through which our forefathers had to pass in achieving these blessings for us. How they had to endure hardships of war under peculiarly trying circumstances. How they had to face the foe; how they had to contend with the elements of nature; how they had to pass through many a cold night, though the snow, the sleet and the rain! How they left their humble homes, their loved ones exposed frequently to the enemy and the hardships which were characteristic of those times! How many of them poured out their

life-blood on the battle field ! How they all consecrated themselves and all they had upon their country's altar ! Noble and costly sacrifice ! They had to do all this, in order that their posterity and succeeding generations in this country might inherit the blessings of good government and be free from the tyranny which has so oppressed them.

Our indebtedness to the past is also seen in the educational world.

The log school house which served its purpose nobly in its day and generation has been replaced by the beautiful academy, or graded school building. The blue-back spelling book which in its day was one of the greatest blessings bestowed on the human race, and God forbid that I should ever say anything against it. Man's mind would do a great work if they would erect a monument to the author of that book. But that monument has already been erected in the heart and lives of the millions who were assisted by that grand and noble book in their first steps towards getting an education ! But this book has gone-it has served its purpose, perhaps. Yet, its works do follow. After holding its grasp on the human mind for so long a time, it paved a way for a great blessing,

See how the appliances in the school-room have been improved and multiplied ! How the methods of teaching have been advanced ! How the opportunities for getting an education have been increased ! How the facilities for difusing a good literature have been multiplied ! At one time only the wealthy could own books and only a few at that; for there were not many extant ! But now a good book can be bought for only a few cents ! The whole Bible can be bought for twenty cents and the copy of the New Testament for five cents ! See the large and ever increasing stream of literature as it pours into our midst. These things come to us at great cost to those who have gone before. Every school house, every good book, every appliance in the school-room, every printing press-they all remind us of our indebtedness to the past.

Our indebtedness to the past is seen especially in the religious world.

All the accumulated blessings of religion which we enjoy come down to us through the toils and sacrifices of those who have gone before. These blessings have been growing and multiplying, every day better and larger than the day before. We have in our possession all the achievements of the past. We have the fruits of their labors and even their experiences. We are enjoying today the fruits of the labors of all the good people who have lived in the past. We are enjoying the fruits of the labors of Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Daniel, and John and Peter, and Paul and Augustine, and Luther, and Calvin and Knox, and Wesley, and Spurgeon. "Their works do follow them." Blessed are the sainted dead ! They are blessed in that they have blest us through their labors. They sowed the good seed in their trials and conflicts and persecutions and we are reaping the harvest of their wise sowing. If they could only see the fruits of their labors-and why can't they ?-they are rejoicing as never before in their sowing. Ah, if Paul can see what his works are still doing in the world comforting, strengthening, and inspiring God's people, he is rejoicing as never before in those perils and stonings and ship-wrecks and that nakedness and hunger which he endured while on earth. It was hard while he was passing through them, but now he can thank God as never before for those crosses and trials and thorns in the flesh, and he can rejoice as never before in his infirmitics that the power of Christ may rest upon him. They have worked out for him, and are still working out for him, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

How precious these treasures are which have come down to us through the past ! How costly they are ! What a stream of conflicts and trials the religious

blessings we enjoy have come through! Oh, how those faithful ones who have gone before had to strive and struggle in order to achieve, conserve and transmit to us the blessings we now enjoy! Some were sold into slavery and carried into captivity, others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; and others had trials of cruel mockings and scourging, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were sawn asunder, they were stoned, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in the deserts, and in the mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth. They had to pass through all these experiences in order to hand down to us the priceless blessings which we possess and enjoy.

And when we survey the life and work of our divine Lord and Saviour, we see this truth reaching the very climax of its realization. See how he had to pass through the exhaustive suffering of the garden and the cross; how He sweat drops of blood; how He drank the very dregs of that cup of intense suffering! He endured all this in order to secure for us and transmit to us the inestimable blessings of the gospel which we now enjoy. Oh, how Jesus toiled and suffered for us! And it was a willing sacrifice on his part. He preferred the garden Gethsemane to the Paradise of God; He preferred the cross of Calvary to the throne of heaven; and he preferred the scoffs and maledictions of a wicked and gainsaying world to the admiration and homage of the intelligence hosts in glory. For it was only in this way that he could secure for us the blessings of eternal life. These blessings come to us at infinite cost.

When we contemplate the priceless treasures which have come to us at such a great cost and sacrifice; which have come to us through the death of our Blessed Redeemer, and which have come to us through the lives and death of Christ's disciples, which are baptized with the blood of Jesus and the martyrs, we feel something like David's when the three brave men brought him water from the well by the gate of Bethelhem, having had to cut through the line of the Philistines in order to get the water to him. David was so impressed with the bravery of these men and the danger to which they had exposed themselves, that he would not drink the water which they brought, but he poured it forth unto the Lord. "Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" Even though he was so thirsty, this water was too sacred and it came at too great a cost for him to drink it. It could be properly used only as an offering unto the Lord.

As we stand here today on this historic spot and contemplate the unnumbered and priceless blessings which have come to us as an heritage through the toils and tears, the sacrifices and sufferings of those who have lived and are now dead may the Lord help us to appreciate properly these blessings, and at the same time, to realize fully our indebtedness to the past.

Our obligations to the Future.

The past is gone, and it is irreversibly fixed. The future is before us—it is yet to come. It is filled with grand and glorious possibilities. We are to be factors in the development of the future. The past has given us a sacred trust. We are the custodians of all the precious treasures of the past. We have all the accumulated wealth of all the ages that are gone. What an awful responsibility! The future is dependent on us for the blessings which she is to possess and enjoy. Shall we meet our obligations to future generations by transmitting to them the blessings which have come to us from the past? Let us embalm these blessings in our good works and hand them down to those who are to come after us.

The future is, in a certain sense, the result of the past. We can assist in shaping the future. We have a certain control over the agencies and influences which

have been put into operation in the past. As we touch these things which pass through our hands and lives, what kind of impression will we make on them? Are we turning them into channels of influence and usefulness, and are we going to keep them there as long as we have any control over them? We are the link between the past and the future. Let this be a golden link, binding together the good works of the past with the good works of the future. God forbid that we should break the continuity of good works!

In all probability, each one of us will strike a chord in somebody's life which will vibrate forever. In this connection, let me call your attention to the imperishable nature of good deed. Every really good deed will last forever. Every noble thought, every kind word, every act of self-denial for Christ's sake, record themselves in the scending-board of eternity and never die away. Our work may be very imperfect in this world and it may be very incomplete; but if it is done in the name of Jesus, and for His sake, it will last forever and it will stand every test. Our good works are as imperishable as the everlasting truth. There is an element of immortality in every noble thought and impulse, in every kind word and smile, and in every good deed and work. These thoughts and words and deeds are embalmed in the hearts and lives of those who come after us, and they are transmitted from one generation to another.

What shall the message of our lives be to those who are to come after us in the regular line of the world's history? Shall it be, "We transmit to you the sacred trust which we inherited from the past; we have cherished the inheritance and have been blest by it; we have used it for the glory of God and for the advancement of His kingdom; we give it to you intact, and may you ever be faithful to the trust?" God grant that this may be our message to future generations.

Go on then Concord, with renewed strength and energy on thy mission of love, to instruct, to strengthen and to comfort all who shall in the future make this their spiritual home. Having completed one hundred years of thy record on earth, be thou faithful to the end. Then Christ will confess and reward thee and all their faithful sons and daughters before an assembled universe. The books will be opened and the roll will be called. The book of life will be opened and the roll of the sainted dead will be called. What profound silence and interest will prevail! No sound, except the voice of the angel who calls the roll, will be heard. He calls from the Lamb's Book of Life; Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel, Peter, James, Paul. Christ will say, "I confess them." Then the angel will come on down through the ages, calling the roll; Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Knox, Wesley, Spurgeon, Doughtless Christ will say, "I confess them." Many names will be called which have been forgotten on earth.

How our hearts will be thrilled with interest when the angel comes to Concord's roll! The names of the pastors and the supplies will be called; Robt. B. Walker, Wm. G. Rosboro, Robt. McCullough, James B. Stafford, John Douglass, James A. Wallace, Jas. R. Gilland, Wm. J. McCormick, G. W. Boggs, T. W. Brwin, T. H. Lowry, John C. McMullen, C. R. Tomphill, S. R. Hope, Wm. G. Noville, Robt. P. Smith, H. R. Kirkpatrick. God grant that we may hear the voice of Jesus saying, "I confess them."

Then the names of the elders will be called, some of whom are; George Miller, Wm. Douglass, John Douglass, A. B. Douglass, H. W. Price, J. D. Craig, J. H. Blain, W. E. Thompson, H. G. Miller, S. G. Miller, S. D. Patrick. May we hear the voice of Jesus saying, "I confess them."

Then the names of the deacons will be called, some of whom are; John A. Stewart, E. D. Mobley, George L. Kennedy, John C. Lackorel, Thos. W. Price, Alexander MacDonald, J. H. Caldwell, J. H. Allen. May we hear the voice of Jesus saying, "I confess them."

Then the long list of private members will be called. Will Christ say, "I confess them. May it be so!