

## CHAPTER XIX

## IN MEMORIAM

HITHERTO my life has been preparatory. I want to live; yes, when I think what God will do for Iowa in the next twenty years I want to live and be an actor in it." Thus exclaimed one who came here to labor in the ardor of youth, but was early called to die.

Looking back through our quarter of a century, we recall others who also have fallen by the way. It is due to them, and meet for us, that they should have a place in these reminiscences. The names of all, of course, cannot appear; only such as stand freshest in mind as we take our backward look.

The words quoted at the opening of this chapter were those of the one first taken, and he from the Band. This was Horace Hutchinson. He died at Burlington, March 7, 1846. He was a native of Sutton, Massachusetts, a graduate of Amherst College in 1839, and of Andover Seminary in 1843. His disease was hereditary consumption, against which he had been struggling for years. Not quite thirty years of age, having been permitted but little over two years to prosecute his Master's work, to which he had be-

come ardently attached, and for which, by his natural enthusiasm and richness of intellectual culture, no less than his culture of heart, he was eminently fitted, and just settled most happily in his domestic relations,—it was no wonder that he felt that he was just ready to live, and wanted to live; that it was hard to die. Yet he was cheerful, resigned and ready. His end was peace.

What a breach was made in our ranks, not only as we missed the light of his cheerful face, and the warmth of his genial nature, but felt that, in all plans for Iowa, the benefit of his sound judgment and hearty aid, on which we had begun to rely, were so soon removed! How, by this early death among us, was our work more seriously and devoutly apprehended! How keen was our sympathy with her who was thus early called to exchange bridal robes for weeds of mourning! Though removing soon after from the territory, and entering into new relations in a neighboring state, she was still reckoned as one of us. Mrs. Hutchinson, for a time Principal of Abbott Female Seminary at Andover, Massachusetts, was subsequently married to the Rev. S. J. Humphrey, April 18, 1854, and died at Newark, Ohio, August 18, 1860. She was born at Grafton, Massachusetts, Feb. 20, 1823. Thus, by that first death, did God teach that there were paths of sorrow for us to tread, as well as of hope, success and joy. The lesson has been again and again repeated. It will be pardoned, perhaps, if we

follow these providences first in reference to the Band.

Four years passed away before the second came. Eliza C. Robbins died at Muscatine, July 16, 1850. She was a native of Canterbury, Connecticut; born June 7, 1819; was married Sept. 27, 1843, and started in a few days as one of the only two wives in that first journey westward. Her lot, as has been told, was cast in what was then called Bloomington, now Muscatine. She accepted it heartily. With natural overflow of good feeling, and a happy turn in all circumstances, she easily accommodated herself to the numberless annoyances and discomforts of a new country. In no home were the bachelor brethren more welcome than in hers. Putting everybody at ease in her presence, she won rapidly upon the hearts of the people. For seven swift years did she act her part, singing as she went, with a joyous heart; and then her work was suddenly ended. The cholera, that for a summer or two raged on the river, seized her as a victim, and in a few hours she was dead. Behind her were left a stricken husband, three little children, a bereaved people, and many mourning friends, — mourning, yet comforted; for a cheerful light plays about the sadness of that hour as they remember how she passed away in the strength of that beautiful psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd," which was read to her by a kind Christian friend in the moments while she was still conscious, but unable to speak.

Two years later, a third bereavement came. In this case, too, a wife was taken. Sarah E. Hill died May 21, 1852. She was born in Bath, Maine, Aug. 8, 1823, and was, therefore, twenty-nine years of age. As a worker, she was confined to a few short years; but they were years filled with the glowing enthusiasm of an ardent soul. Entering with zeal on the mission work, she attached herself at once to every thing in Iowa. All the brethren, all the sisters, all the churches, everything in and about her adopted state was hers. Into every plan and method of mission labor she threw her whole soul. The college, now in its prosperity, is the result, in part, of her faith and her gifts. It is not strange that to-day her two sons, as Christian young men, are on the list of its students; for, in their infancy, she gave them heartily and believingly to the Lord. After the labors of eight years, — some of them at frontier points, where mission work meant hardship and privation — she has found her grave on the banks of the Mississippi. Summer by summer there are those passing up and down the river who are wont to think, "There on those beautiful bluffs was our sister buried." How soon all such travelers shall cease!

A few more years, and God spake again; this time, also, by the removal of a wife and sister. As her name is written, all who knew her will remember her quiet, gentle ways, the sweetness of her disposition, the steady, humble traits of her Christian character. Nat-

urally retiring, she found her province and her sway chiefly in the realms of domestic life, and yet won esteem and influence in wider circles. It was with apprehension that we saw the paleness of her cheek, amid the devotion of a wife and the cares of a mother; but we feel now that it was meet that a spirit like hers should be taken to a better world. Harriet R. Ripley was born at Drakesville, New Jersey, Sept. 13, 1820, and died at Davenport, April 4, 1857, at the age of thirty-seven.

It remains for one more lesson to be noted. This time it is the death of a brother; bringing us down to March 31, 1867. Then died, in Ottumwa, B. A. Spaulding, the second of the Band now deceased. He was truly a man of God. Possessed of more intellectual worth than it was his ambition to show, his aim was, in a frontier field, in the true home missionary spirit, to lay foundations for Christ. This he did in many a heart and in many a place. At the first, his was preeminently the work of an evangelist. Traveling on horseback over the New Purchase, he had twenty-five or thirty different places of meeting, some of them a hundred miles apart; preaching in groves and cabins, and organizing churches, where, ten years before, had been the Indian dance. For years he toiled thus, till, in due time, it was his privilege to see the heaven-pointing spires, to hear church-going bells, and to welcome new laborers in that at first wild and uncultivated region.

It was in these years that he subsequently declared that he had more joys, amid greater hardships, than at any other period of his life. Gradually his labors were contracted within narrower limits, till he became the pastor of the church in the place he at first selected as his home, and where he died. It was his privilege to be an actor in the twenty years for which Brother Hutchinson longed; and yet he was not satisfied. His disease, too, was consumption; and, as it began to be apparent that he must yield to it, his words were, "Oh, to do more for Jesus! Oh, for ten years to live, and do something for Christ!" But his work was done; and he was resigned, as, on a Saturday night, the death-shades gathered thick about him. "Is this the dark valley?" he inquired. Being told that it was, "It will not be long," he said. "Will it last till morning?" It did last till morning. At the Sabbath dawn he passed up to the day of rest. He was born in Billerica, Massachusetts, July 20, 1815; was a graduate of Harvard College and Andover Seminary. Dying March 31, 1867, he was fifty-two years of age. He left a wife and one child.

We have now noticed where a husband or a wife has, in repeated instances, been taken. Meanwhile, children have been born, and children, too, have died; but of them we cannot speak in detail. We must be content with this bare recognition of God's chastening hand in their removal. Changes have been going on outside the Band. A few names will be given, such

as are freshest in the mind of the writer. In other minds, doubtless, there are other names not given, just as fresh and just as worthy of mention as those that will appear.

First, as intimately associated with that of Mrs. Hill, because near as to time and place, was the death of Brother Thompson. William A. Thompson died May 3, 1852. All who were in the state at that time remember the mystery that shrouded this calamity. Judging from his intentions when he left home, and the position of his horse and buggy when found, it was thought that he must have been drowned in attempting to row a frail skiff across an arm of the Mississippi, in high water and a boisterous wind. There were suspicions of foul play, but they were not regarded as well founded. For weeks search was made for his body in vain. Standing by the newly-made grave of our sister, upon the bluffs overlooking the waters of the Mississippi, the thought was, "There, somewhere, is the grave of our brother." The following June, as the brethren were holding their annual Association at Muscatine, a few were walking, at a leisure hour, by the river's side, when a human body was seen floating towards the bank. Was it, could it be, that of their brother? This was the question that flashed on their minds. It soon appeared almost to a certainty that it was even so; yet to identify the body was difficult. Of the signs, they were not absolutely sure. A garment sent to the anxious, weary wife es-

tablished the fact. Thus, sixty miles below where the sad accident occurred, God brought to us the consolation that at least the body of our brother had been found. We buried it in the same ground where was buried the first sister taken. Brother Thompson was a good man, humble, earnest and prayerful. Entering the state at the same time with the brethren of the Band, he was reckoned as one of them. His loss was deeply felt by all.

Those here in the autumn of 1853 remember the joy occasioned by the arrival of two young men, apparently in the vigor of life, directly from their seminary studies. Mysterious has always seemed their fate. One of them, as he entered his field, seemed to labor as with the blessing of God on him—a young man of rare mental and social qualities and ardent piety. How astounding was the news of his sudden illness and death! Strong were the sympathies that his young wife carried back with her to her Eastern home. The brother here referred to was E. C. A. Woods, who died at Wapello, Nov. 4, 1854. Born in Newport, New Hampshire, September, 1824, he was thirty years of age.

The other was Oliver Dimon, who went to Keosauqua. By his excellences he won the affections of his people. But disease was on him, and he soon became prostrated and was carried back to his Eastern home to die.

Similar to these cases was that of another, who had

been trained among us. Joseph Bloomer was converted in one of our churches, at one time a member of our college, though he graduated at Amherst in 1856. From the first, so eager was he to be in the field, that he could not wait the usual course of study. It was well, perhaps, in his case, as one destined to early death, that he did not. He went to McGregor late in 1857. His labors were limited to a few brief months; but they were months of much zeal and great promise. The people felt the power of an earnest preacher among them. "Sharper sermons," said one, "I never heard than fell from his lips. I do not know, but, under God, he would have converted the whole town had he lived." He died suddenly, Feb. 21, 1858.

Another called from his work on earth was L. R. White. He, too, was a young man; though he was permitted to labor several years among us,—first at Le Claire, then at Summit and then at Brighton. At Le Claire, with great labor, he secured the erection of a house of worship. Many a one knows the foil recorded in that brief sentence. At Brighton he did the same thing. The sad fact in our memories is that the first gathering held in the new meeting-house was that convened at his funeral. His death was occasioned by a cold, together with over-exertion in his efforts to secure the completion of the house at a given time. He wrought, as many another missionary has done, with his own hands. He died at Brighton, May 30, 1858.

Later down, a father in the ministry was taken. Alfred Wright died at Durango, Nov. 8, 1865. Few who ever knew him will soon forget the inward grace that shone out on his cheerful face. So, also, we think of French, Waters, Mather, Brown, Leonard, and others.

Meanwhile, sisters were also passing away. There was one under whose roof, in the earlier years, we used always to find a hearty welcome, and whose calm trust and cheerful endurance preached us many a sermon; who, after years of suffering, died in the triumphant hope of joys to come. This was Mrs. Emerson. She closed her life at Sabula, January, 1856.

A few months earlier, one who had recently come among us, and was just entering joyously into our Iowa work, was called to the higher service of heaven. Mrs. Sarah W. Guernsey died at Dubuque, May 10, 1855. Her remains rest in the old burial-ground at New Haven, Conn. Pleasant memories of her and her Christian activities will long linger with those who then composed her husband's flock.

Another was Mrs. Abbey A. Magoun, a sister of Mrs. Hill. Of gentle nature, she was firm in the service of Christ. As a Christian woman, a mother, and a pastor's wife, she adorned her calling and station. She, too, sleeps on the banks of our beautiful river. Her death was at Lyons, Feb. 10, 1864.

We must speak of another, who, a little later, died at Durant, Dec. 7, 1866,—Mrs. Mary F. Bullen. We

could not, if we would, efface from our minds the sweetness of the expression she wore. Not even by death's cold touch shall it be marred. We well remember it, as turned to a heavenly smile.

There are memories, too, of dear brethren of the churches — of the hospitable Edwards; the venerable Cotton, a lineal descendant of old John Cotton of Boston; of Father Vincent, who, at one of our meetings, said the brethren were all daguerretyped on his mind; of brethren, too, at the East, who in heart have been with us and of us, such as Mackintire, Carter, and others. How many come to mind, who to-day are with the multitude around the throne; who rest from their labors, and their works do follow them!

In the summer of 1863, during the Associational Meeting at Burlington, a few of the brethren, with their wives, went out to the grave of their Brother Hutchinson. Gathering around it, with uncovered heads, they bowed in prayer to God that the mantle of all that was excellent in him might fall upon them.

As we linger thus among the memories of the departed, may all that was noble in their lives and excellent in their characters be with us that remain, to stimulate and to cheer, till our race, too, shall be run, and we shall be reckoned with them!

Since the foregoing was written, and while this work is going through the press, another name is to be added to those of the Band who have gone. Eras-

tus Ripley died Feb. 21, 1870, in Somers, Connecticut, age fifty-five. He was born in Coventry, Connecticut, March 15, A.D. 1815; was a graduate of Union College; also of Andover Seminary, in the class of 1843. Elected as resident licentiate, he remained at Andover till the spring of 1844, when he joined his classmates in Iowa, taking charge of the church in Bentonsport. He remained at this place till the summer of 1848, when he was chosen the first professor of Iowa College at Davenport. From this time he was identified with the interests of the college; at first the only, afterwards associate, teacher, as Carter Professor of Ancient Languages, until the time of its removal to Grinnell in 1859. Shortly after this he returned to his native state, where, until his death, he was engaged in the profession of teaching, in which he took a high rank. Mr. Ripley's leading powers were those of a linguist. He was a good preacher, an enthusiastic teacher, and sought to lay all on the altar for Christ. His work is done, and he, too, has passed away.