

PA 20-38



Biographical Sketch

of

The Late Rev.

Joseph Walworth Sutphen

Missionary at Marsoban

WHEN, at the beginning of this century, an earnest longing for the turning of the world to God was awakened throughout the true Church, the going forth of a warm-hearted brother or sister to a heathen country aroused a strong fellow-feeling among those whom they left behind. The missionary was looked upon as a hero of Christian chivalry; his self-denials and willing losses of home and religious comforts were dwelt upon in thought and public speeches, until tears mingled with farewell prayers, and gifts flowed freely into the treasury; his career was followed by an affectionate admiration, his messages back were eagerly sought after and read, his slightest successes hailed with delight, and his failures or hindrances mourned over; and, when it pleased God to call him up higher, his death had the honors of martyrdom and his name a marked place among the saints of whom the world was not worthy. As, however, the few of such noble spirits became many, and the church grew accustomed to such events, this somewhat romantic interest gave way to more sober sentiment, and the work in foreign lands began to be regarded as rather an ordinary duty of Christ's servants. The sympathy with the pious adventurer was, we should hope, not less strong, but less enthusiastic. The details of missionary toil, suffering, enterprise, and progress, were too numerous and various for

any of us, but those whose special duty demanded it to be thoroughly acquainted with, and churches or individuals, while not withdrawing their hearts or prayers from the whole, bestowed their particular attention upon such parts of the great field as were commended to them by peculiar circumstances. We do not altogether regret a change which is agreeable to the ways of Providence; but there is ground for fear that oftentimes some of the distant husbandmen have not always been sufficiently cheered by tokens of that watchful and tender remembrance, which was promised them when they left our shores, and they had a right to look for. Even, when they fall in the distant field, their deaths, except in more eminent cases, receive but a passing notice, and their very names are too soon forgotten by the Church at large. Yet there are few such deaths which do not cause sorrow deep and sore, though solaced by evangelical hope, amidst circles of loving relatives and former pious associates, to whom the absent ones were only the more dear because so long and so far away. It is not unnatural, therefore, that those who did know them and the pleasant graces with which the Holy Spirit adorned their character, should seek to preserve and set forth modest memorials of the less noted yet faithful missionaries who are not, because God with whom they walked on earth has taken them to himself; nor are we unwarranted in believing that the records of a single-

hearted, ardent life, will not be without profit to the reader.

With such feelings and expectations, a brief narrative is now given of one whose memory is very precious to all who enjoyed the blessing of his kinship or friendly association; whose example is a strong exhortation to a holy following of Him who wrought while it was day, and whose excellent qualifications of every kind for the branch of service which he chose, promised, if his time had been longer, to have given him high rank in the missionary army.

JOSEPH WALWORTH SUTPHEN (late missionary of A. B. C. for Foreign Missions at *Marsovan*, in Turkish Armenia) was born in the town of Sweden, Monroe Co., N. Y., on the 14th of February, 1825. He was of the seed of the righteous, an inheritor of the entail which assures the blessings of the covenant to children and to children's children. His father (still living, and eminently sustained by the best comfort under his recent trial), Mr. Peter Sutphen, is of the family of that name in New Jersey, and, as all who know the name will know, of most respectable Dutch descent. His mother (also still living, and equally conscious of the Saviour's everlasting arm around her) was the daughter of a pious Scotch merchant resident in New York City, and her maiden name Martha McKinnon. Their descendants unite the blood of the best Presbyterian stocks. Mr. and Mrs. Sutphen went early in life to

the town of Sweden, then a wild and thinly settled country, where he has ever since cultivated a fine farm, not far from the now pleasant village of Brockport. There Joseph and his elder brother (Mr. Ten Eyck Sutphen, a deacon in the reformed Dutch Church on the Heights, Brooklyn) spent their early years with their father in the labors of the field, and in the enjoyment of parental teaching at home.

Very early in life Joseph had a warm fondness for books, with an understanding beyond his years; and, although his first advantages were only such as the common school of the district afforded, he had gained before his 8th year a remarkable knowledge of geography, and was delighted with every opportunity to increase and practise his knowledge of his favorite science, an evident leading of Divine Providence towards his subsequent choice of work in a foreign field. The kindred study of astronomy also was especially pleasant to him, and he was well grounded in the elements of an English education. At nine years of age he began the study of Latin, in the Brockport Collegiate Institution; but, as his constitution was far from strong, he was obliged often to intermit his pursuits to recruit his strength on the farm. But such intervals were "dark days to him." Feeble as he was, his parents kept him at home with difficulty, from his uncontrollable passion for books and study. At the age of fifteen, through the out-door labors of the farm, under the Divine blessing, his

health was much improved; and in the autumn of that year, his outward conduct made it evident that serious thoughts occupied his mind. Before this time he had shown a distaste for religion, but now he was induced to attend a stated evening prayer-meeting, and there he was among the foremost of a number who became seekers after salvation, although his hope in Christ was not confirmed until two years had passed away, when he was about seventeen. He then united with the Presbyterian church in Sweden, of which the Venerable Moses Gillett, though feeble from advanced age, was the greatly blessed pastor. Joseph, who had always led an irreproachable life, now became eminently spiritual. Longing to honor his glorious Redeemer with his utmost strength, nothing could satisfy him but a speedy preparation to preach His name in heathen lands. He at once applied himself again to study of Latin and Greek, that he might pursue his way to the ministry; and in 1844 he entered the Sophomore Class of Hamilton College, Clinton, New York. There are abundant proofs of his struggle to maintain a spiritual life while in College; yet all his letters throughout this period breathe an earnest desire to carry the gospel among the benighted heathen. He was graduated in 1847 with much distinction, standing at the head of his class. His attainments must have been varied, as he was engaged during the following year in the Rev. Mr. Kellogg's school (at Clinton) for young ladies, taking

charge, more particularly, of a German class, besides teaching Greek, Latin, and Mathematics.

In the autumn of 1848, he came to New York for the purpose of pursuing his studies, united himself with the Presbyterian Church (then) in Duane street, under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Dr. James W. Alexander (who bears testimony to the ardor of his piety), and entered the Union Theological Seminary, where he became greatly beloved by both his professors and his fellow-students. During the three years of his theological course he was superintendent of the Sabbath School in the Asylum for the Blind, and there, also, are many gratifying recollections of his devoted industry. At the close of his studies in New York (June, 1851), with his heart fully determined to go to the heathen, he spent the summer and part of the autumn in the dear circle of his home. On the 14th, Oct., it was determined by the American Board that he should be sent to the Armenians (a field including Constantinople and ⁶⁰Asia Minor); on the 7th, November he was ordained; on the 24th he married Miss Susan Huntington Kellogg, whose strong missionary spirit resembled his own, and who survives him; on the 29th he sailed from Boston in the bark *Sultana* for Smyrna, where he arrived on the 16th January. After a few days he took passage in a French steamer (the *Mentor*) for Constantinople, and reached *Pera* on the 22d of January, and it was for some time uncertain

whether he should labor at Erzurum, Sirus, or Marsovan; he remained with Mr. Dwight, at the station in Pera, studying the language until the last of March, during which time, Mr. Dwight writes, he made rapid progress. Then taking steamer up the Black Sea, he reached *Trebizond* about the 1st of April. There he tarried with Mr. Powers, pursuing diligently and successfully the study of the language in which he hoped to preach the precious, glorious, everlasting gospel, until towards the 1st of July, when it was decided that he and Mr. Bliss should be fixed at Marsovan; then the two brethren sailed for *Samsun*, whence traveling some sixty miles overland, they arrived at *Marsovan*, where, a fortnight afterwards, they were joined by their wives. On the 25th, September he was attacked by dysentery, a disease to which he had a predisposition for some time. There being no physician nearer than Trebizond, he, with Mr. Bliss, had to prescribe for himself, from such slender medical knowledge as they could derive from the few medical books in their little library; but it is a consolation for the friends who were about him to know that the treatment pursued was judicious, and in accordance with English practice. All remedies were unavailing; he rapidly lost strength, and during the last three days of his life, he suffered great agony. On the 9th, October, the eve of the Sabbath, his spirit, recalled by Him who gave it, went upward to his eternal rest and the sanctuary above.

So briefly may the main events in his beautiful life be narrated, but a much larger space would be needed for a full portraiture of his religious character and enterprising spirit. This will not be attempted farther than to show, by extracts from his own letters, and some from those of his family, the characteristics of his disposition, and the principles which, from the day he gave himself up to God until the hour of his translation, ruled his whole conduct.

The most marked qualities of his temper were affectionateness, sincerity, earnestness, and perseverance, combined with a strong good sense, and humble, cheerful courage. In all the near relations of life he showed such tenderness, and fidelity, and delicate thoughtfulness, as to win in return a regard rarely met with even between those most closely connected. The friends he made—and all who were associated with him in study, work, and familiar habits, were his friends, which dearly, to their deep sorrow for his loss proves but too well. At the same time, his frank, cordial honesty of heart and speech secured him, almost irresistibly, the respect and confidence of all with whom he had to do. Wherever he was, at home, in the College and Seminary, at sea and on land, not only among Christians, but also among the unfortunate and the benighted to whom he ministered in private or public, his single-heartedness was acknowledged by all. "To many here," writes Mr. Bliss, from Marsovan, "it

has been a most impressive lesson, that he should have broken away from all the endearments of his home and come to this distant land, to lie down and die, all because of his desire to tell them the way of salvation. Everywhere he left a conviction of his pious sincerity and the reality of his religion. Mr. Crane (who went out in the same ship some time after him) writes us, that one of the crew of the Sultana, though disposed to carp at religion and to find fault with its professors, confessed that there was one man in the truthfulness of whose piety he could not but believe, and 'that man was the missionary, Mr. Sutphen.'" His manner at all times was that of one moved by a strong conscientious persuasion of right, child-like in simplicity yet fearless of all but sin, modest yet unshrinking, energetic yet mild, sober yet cheerful, forgetful of himself in his anxiety to serve his fellow-men for his Master's sake. He would not be baffled in what, after prayerful consideration, he undertook, and was noted for keeping all engagements, even the slightest, that he made. At one time, having promised to preach at a place miles away, and a violent storm coming up, he resisted all the dissuasions of his friends, who would have kept him in the house, and went. He found no one out to hear him, and called at once on a man that lived near by, and said: "My friend, I came in my dear Master's name to bear a feeble message to the little flock who are used to worship at the school-house, but

as I cannot have that privilege, do let me preach to you." He then entered into such an earnest conversation, "reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," and brought the great concerns of eternity so clearly to view, that the man has since said he never felt the power of the Gospel so brought home to him as then.

To an invalid relative who had thought that his ministerial profession would make him "gloomy," he replies: "I find it nowhere recorded in the sacred pages that our religious and social duties conflict; or that a man, in serving his heavenly Father, is to neglect his earthly friends. Nor is it anywhere intimated that the most earnest Christian may not relish in common with the world all the blessings of this life, so far as it may be his lot to receive them. . . I find much difficulty in so arranging my duties as to accomplish each day all I should do, or, at least, enough to satisfy me. . . Now, dear ——, keep cheerful, enjoy God daily in prayer and in reading the Scriptures. Be active in devising ways of doing good. Turn your thoughts, so far as you can, away from yourself to others, for such a plan will contribute much toward making you well. May God spare you to serve him much and faithfully; and may your sickness wean you from this perishing world." Again, in a subsequent letter, October, 1849: "I have been reading your letter to ——, in which you express discouragement about your complaint. I believe that I know something of your feel-

ings. At all events, I wish to comfort you, for it is your right and my privilege that I should sympathize with you. It gives me pain to hear that you are unhappy; and, though I cannot change the course of bodily ailment, yet the experience of many Christians assures us that happiness does not always depend on the state of the body. We cannot, dear ——, keep too constantly before us the purpose of our being sent into the world. It is not, as many suppose, merely to enjoy this life. If it were, we should then give ourselves up to the one business of pleasure, and say: 'What shall we eat? what shall we drink?' . . . Life is sweet to every one, all cling to it instinctively, and wish to have it prolonged, even when the burden, through disease, is almost intolerable. But, oh! if the reason why we so cling to life were to assure ourselves of our acceptance with God, then might we long for years to serve him in. I hope and pray that your case may yield to the treatment you are under. Yet how important to have a fountain of happiness within, more deep than the hope of returning health! Would that this fountain might be ever flowing, unaffected by the circumstances of life. Perhaps the comfort of health is never again to be yours in this life. Can you feel cheerful when you think it may not? Can you rejoice in the belief that 'to die is gain,' when 'tears shall be wiped from all faces,' and 'the inhabitant no more say, I am sick?' I send Mrs. C. a book (*Life of Mrs. Isabella Graham*) bought with the

balance of her money. I hope you will read it. I have been particularly pleased with the letter, beginning on page 25, by Mrs. Graham on the death of her husband. Your afflictions may one day be found to have been, like Mrs. G.'s, the means used by the loving Saviour to draw you nearer to him."

Again to the same, from Marsovan (August 24, 1852): "I am sorry that you are not as well this summer as last winter, and that you speak very discouragingly of yourself. Dear ——, how much we are willing to give for health when once lost! But let us remember every day that if it be God's good pleasure that we be deprived of health it is best for us to be so. He accomplishes in different ways his plans to secure the sanctification of the believer's soul and the growth of his kingdom. To some He gives strength and vigour, that by their *deeds* they may glorify Him; to others He gives pain and suffering, that by their *patience* they may honor His name; and, perhaps, the latter are fully as useful to the Church as the former. I rejoice that I have the evidence that your afflictions in former days were not without the fruit of the Spirit. I pray that ere long you may be revisited with health, and so be enabled *actively* to effect something in the service of our Master; but still remember, that though your ill-health should always prevent your doing so, yet, if your heart correspond warmly to his calls, He will take the will for the deed, and you will not lose your reward. Besides, our happiness

does not depend upon the amount of this world that we enjoy. When we have communion with our Saviour, and there is formed in us a relish for spiritual food, we gradually become independent of the world; and I can imagine that with fullest joy the believer may be enabled to exclaim: 'Though my outward man perisheth, the inward man is renewed day by day.' "

Such were his counsels to others, and such the principles of his own steadfast Christian virtue.

His missionary resolution was not conceived in a sudden heat, nor fed by imaginative speculations, nor so obstinately intent as to forget the Providence that is over all. It was the fruit of a deep, settled conviction that he was not his own, but belonged wholly to Christ, and that the wants of the world, combined with the bent which God had given to his mind, constituted a call for him to go far from home, among the people "in the religion of the shadow of death." His courage was great, because derived from a firm trust in his Master's promises, and his enthusiasm high but calm, because it flowed from a heart filled with the love of Christ; yet he never made his own will the guide of his steps, but was ready to forego it when the will of God interposed. "He was," as one, who knew him well, says, "a plain, humble Christian, never so happy as when about his Master's work. To do His will was the great purpose of his life. His fervent love for souls could not

have been feigned. He often said to me, when thinking of the multitudes which throng the downward way. 'O my dear brother, we have a great work to do! Let us work with our might, for soon the night of death will be upon us! Do let us be about our Father's business! Oh! that my skirts may be free from the blood of souls!'

It was erroneously stated, in the *Missionary Journal*, that he did not decide upon a missionary life until the last year of his theological course. Even from childhood his favorite studies and generous heart inclined him to that direction. His mother says, that "when quite a boy he was reading (as he thought unnoticed) an old paper, and she saw the tears rolling fast down his cheeks. Curious to know what could so affect him, she suddenly took the paper from his hand, and found that it contained a brief account of the claims of China upon Christian zeal." The mistake in the *Journal* probably arose from his uncertainty respecting the particular field abroad in which he should labour; but his feelings on this point were according to the main sentiment of his life. His first desire was to go to the Chinese. He diligently sought to make himself acquainted with the condition of that people, reading every book which related to them that he could lay his hands on, and gained considerable knowledge respecting their difficult language; but afterwards, when having offered himself to the American Board, and they thought it best that he should go to

India, he at once gave up his long-cherished preference, and laid his plans accordingly. His state of health and temperament constrained him, however, to ask during his last year in this country a change of destination from the sultry, bilious climate of India; and then, there being an urgent call for missionaries among the Armenians, it was decided that he should be sent among them, and that field he liked better than any other, except China, which had his first, strongest love.

On this subject he writes (October 14, 1851): "Drs. Pomeroy and Anderson think that I should go to the Armenians, and perhaps, the committee will think so too. Twelve additional laborers were lately called for to that field alone. There is none of greater promise in Asia, or perhaps in the world. May the Lord bring back the pure doctrine to the corrupt churches of Asia, and make their light shine over China and India. It may be, that the Great Head of the Church designs to reach these remote and difficult fields by such means. I am thankful that Providence seems to call me in this direction. I have long thought that I should like to go there, but have feared that if I turned my desires that way, it might be from a wrong motive, and not from a desire to honor Christ." Again (October 27, 1851): "I am glad that you are pleased with Armenia, as the field of my labour. . . God grant it may be as you hope, and that our separation for this world be not

final, but that we may see each other again in the flesh."

Six months before this (March, 21, 1851), he had written to his father: "I yesterday saw two missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Porter, sail for the Gaboon, Africa. Dr. Campbell, of Spring Street Church, conducted the devotional exercises on board of the vessel. The hymn sung was 'Blest be the tie that binds,' etc. I believe that from some cause I am becoming more tender in my feelings. Things which once did not affect me, now draw tears from my eyes, especially when I hear some tender and affecting hymn sung. . . I was glad to see both missionaries so cheerful. . . It is, perhaps, less affecting to the missionary to take ship among comparatively strangers than to leave his near friends at their fire-sides; and yet I imagine that the time to me of deepest anguish (if such a word be allowed) would be to see the land where all my kindred dwell fade from my view. . . . I am glad that you bear in mind, at the Thorne of Grace, my going out as a missionary. I feel that I have need to examine again and again my call to the work. . . . No doubt there is danger that the heart may faint in the day of trial. If a person views the work soberly, he will doubtless feel an involuntary shrinking from it, even when he looks at it prospectively, but much more when he meets heathenism hand to hand.

"You know that God has thrown a cloud over my path in the sickness of S—— (Miss

Kellogg, afterwards his wife, to whom he was then betrothed). Whether her sickness is to be temporary or not is unknown. It seems that at present she is not well, and her symptoms are such as to alarm her friends. But I have no doubt that God, if I daily commit my way to Him, will direct me; and whether He send me East or West, it will be the same to me. I propose to prepare myself, with all diligence, during the present year, for the *great work of preaching the gospel*, giving my thoughts and energies to that work, and leaving to God's providence the *where* I shall preach it. May God strengthen me to preach that glorious gospel—I know that it is glorious." After his licensure to preach, he writes: "May your prayers abound for your son that he may walk worthy of his vocation. I trust that I am called by the Spirit into the ministry. The indications of Providence have pointed in that way, as it seems to me. I believe that I desire to be made useful in the vineyard of the Lord. I shall deem it the greatest honour if I may, by God's grace, be instrumental in saving souls from death. I hope that I see my own weakness; but the strength of Jesus is made perfect in our weaknesses."

Again, hearing that Miss Kellogg's heart-disease was assuming a more threatening form, he says: "I wrote to Mr. — that I would hold things in check until the doctors pronounced on her case. If it appears that I cannot go abroad, then I shall take it as

an indication of Providence that I should labor nearer home. This I am willing to do, East or West, North or South. God is my witness, I have no wish but to go where He would send me. God may provide in a short time, so that the way will all seem clear. I know it is best that our path be sometimes cloudy, and we are not able to see far in advance. We then learn to trust Jesus more fully."

On the 7th of June, 1851, he writes to his mother: "Will you, often remember me at the Throne of Grace? How much a young minister needs strength from on high! What a feeble reed am I! and my bodily weakness is not the worst part. I look forward to the summer spent at home with much desire; and yet, my dear mother, how soon must such a visit be over, and we must part! No one can know how sad I feel at the thought of parting from my mother; but faith in Christ rises victorious over all sorrow. We shall soon meet, and our present separation is for the glory of our Divine Lord. I believe that in going to the heathen I only follow in the path of duty. Oh! how willingly could I give up the purpose, if God should manifest that to be my duty! But, if it be my duty to go, how can I say nay, while millions of souls for whom Christ died are without the gospel? and who dare say it is not my duty to go? God has seemed to favor my going from the first, has not hitherto thrown any obstacle (save one) before me, which He might so

easily do. I do not think that I hold to the idea of going simply *because I long ago formed the determination*, and must necessarily do so to be consistent with myself; although I know that it is a great disappointment to the Church when a young man does so abandon such a purpose. . . . Duty must direct me."

"The same spirit," says his brother, "he manifested to the time of his leaving America. He did not have proper notice of the time when he was to sail. I went on with him to Boston, after he had paid us a very hurried visit, and did what I could to help him and his dear wife off; but all was bustle and confusion to the end, as there was so much to be done. The vessel sailed promptly on the 29th November, 1851, and he bade me adieu with much affection, but without a tear. His heart was entirely in the great work in which he was engaged; and, forgetting the things which were behind, he pushed forward, without faltering a moment, to those which were before. The great struggle of his heart had been the parting with his dear mother, then so aged and feeble that he could not hope ever to see her again on this side of the grave. Little did we then think that he would go to the grave before her!"

In his journal at sea, December 31, 1851, he writes: "I thought to-night, while Brother Eddy was praying, that very great changes may occur with us before another New Year's Eve. But God loves us, and he can keep us. I hope that He has much for my dear wife

and myself to do before he calls us home. We have done according to our best light in leaving our country for the Armenian field. We are now well; the climate there is, so far as we know, suited to us. Let us, therefore, not have any anxiety. I do not feel like forming any great plans for the present year. Ship-board is not the place either to form or to execute great plans. With God's help, I hope soon to get settled in my new home. I also hope to acquire the language quickly. This is the first thing. God give us health, wisdom, humility, love, success!"

After his arrival among the missionary brethren until the time of his death, his time was so fully taken up with his studies and labors and preparations to labor, that he had but little time to write more than an account of his changes and doings. Notwithstanding, he could not refrain from frequent brief expressions of his love and trust in God, his desire for the furtherance of the Master's Kingdom, and his entire satisfaction with the work to which he was called, and had devoted himself. He never looked back after he had put his hand to the plough, and so had his Master's testimony to his fitness, through grace, for the kingdom of God, whose heavenly glory he soon after entered. "I assure you," he says (from Trebizond, May 8th, 1852), "however contrary it may be to what you suppose, that it is no easy thing for a missionary to be a spiritual, heavenly-minded Christian. There are as many temptations

here as, perhaps, anywhere. At the same time, there are the strongest motives to activity and benevolent exertion. When one reflects that, of thousands who meet his eyes wherever he walks, there are probably less than twenty souls who understand any thing of the reign of Christ, have received his Spirit, and are prepared to enter upon a happy reward, the thought is most solemn and awful. I have been occupied an hour every day in reading the history of the missions in Western Asia from their beginning until now, as found in the back numbers of the *Missionary Herald*, and nothing is more surprising or more common than the hostility of the Eastern churches to the Bible. It is looked upon as an infidel book, as indeed it is in respect to their form of worship. That which we regard as our richest blessing, and the true Christian learns to prize the more, the longer he has it, is by these Christians unknown or hated, and by the Mussulman despised."

Trebizond, June 9th, 1852.—"You may be somewhat surprised that we remain so long here. Mr. and Mrs. Bliss arrived here two weeks ago, and have been busy in making preparations for returning to Marsovan. For this, much time and labor are needed, as Mr. B. took with him but few articles when he went into the interior last fall. . . . I am more and more pleased with these friends who are to be our associates. I regard it as a marked providence which unites us. I hope that they will find us willing and faithful fellow-labor-

ers." After speaking of the amount of salary—\$600—which had been assigned him, he adds: "It surely ought to satisfy me as to temporal wants. It is very different here from Constantinople, where rent and living are so expensive that \$1,500 per annum hardly enable Mr. Dwight, with economy, to save himself. If we are spared in health, we can, I trust, lay by something to aid the brethren, who for adhering to the truth, in many cases, make many sacrifices. An example has been set to missionaries by our late lamented brother, Dr. Azariah Smith, at Aintab, who in his life was the means of organizing the most flourishing Protestant community in Western Asia. He lent money in small sums, on good security, at moderate interest, to those in need. The interest which many pay here is enormous, and ruinous in the extreme: sometimes as high as 15 and even 20 per cent. I believe that, with prudence, a missionary can do much good with a little money. As the majority do business on a small scale, a loan of \$10, \$20, or \$30 might give them much relief. I think that you will agree with me in this; that is, if the money be judiciously managed. You ask me what I wish done with the dividend on my railroad stock. I am persuaded that it will be best to use it in this way, at least for a time. However, I should prefer to have your judgment in respect to it first."

At the close of a letter from Marsovan (July 6, 1852), which is filled with details of

his journey, arrival, etc., he adds, "I love these kind-hearted, simple, and by no means stupid people, and am glad if it be the will of God that I should spend my life in this destitute city."

In his last letter from Marsavon (September 7, 1852): "You ask if we are happy. Surely we ought to be; for goodness and mercy only have followed us thus far."

Talia agentem et meditantem mors praevenit. "Purposing and doing these things, death prevented him," is the comment of the Roman historian on the sudden death of the ambitious, energetic Cæsar. It rises to the mind as we contemplate the sudden removal of our zealous, active friend. His weakness and suffering during his illness were so great, that he could not converse much; "but," writes Mr. Bliss, three days before the end, "he has been remarkably patient and resigned; not an impatient word has escaped his lips, and he is so grateful for any little attentions we show him, as to quite melt our hearts with love to him. What he has said has been very consoling to us. He told me the other morning that though, in consequence of the morphine which he had taken to check the *diarrhoea*, his mind had been most of the time rather in a state of stupor, yet that he had many precious views of Christ, and that he was to him the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. He has uniformly assured us that while he has a strong desire to labour on in the work upon which his

heart has been for so many years fixed, yet if the Lord was pleased to call him thus early away, he had not a repining word to utter. . . . As I was leaving his room, I asked him if I should write to you [his brother, Mr. T. E. Sutphen]. He said: 'Perhaps it would be well to do so.' I asked if he had any message to send? 'Tell him,' said he, 'I have great occasion to bless the Lord for his goodness to me in many respects. He has been pleased to make me very, very sick, and as yet it is uncertain what the event will be. Sometimes it seems as if he would grant me deliverance—and sometimes as if he would not. But whatever the result may be, He will certainly do what is right, and what will be for His own glory.' I asked if he was quite content to leave the event in God's hands? to which he answered, 'Oh! yes! oh! yes!' Overhearing me ask Mrs. Sutphen for your direction, he said, as if to himself, 'Oh, that dear brother! Shall I ever see him again?' then added, 'Yes, oh! yes!'

Mr. Bliss writes again, Marsovan, October 14, 1852: "I wrote you eight days ago of the sickness of your brother, and of the fears we had in regard to the issue. He left us on Saturday last, October 9th, a little before ten o'clock in the evening. During the last four days of his sickness, his sufferings were very intense; but throughout all not a murmuring word escaped his lips, and when his pains were so excruciating as to drive reason from her throne, and to convulse his body with agonis-

ing spasms, so that it was difficult to keep him in his bed, it was most touching to see with what gentleness and sweetness he would even then respond to whatever was said to him. For ten or twelve hours before his death, his sufferings seemed much mitigated, and, although able to say but little, he appeared to be enjoying great quietness of mind. To my question, how his mind was occupied? he replied: 'With thoughts of heaven—good thoughts of heaven.' Mrs. Sutphen asked him if he thought he was dying? He said: 'I don't know; perhaps so; it is very easy.' Prayer was proposed; and when he was asked if he had any particular request which he wished made, he answered: 'Pray that His kingdom may come.' After this he gave Mrs. Sutphen messages for his father and mother, and other friends in America; and then seemed to sink into a state of unconsciousness. Sometimes he moved as if in pain; sometimes he would rouse himself a little; but apparently took little notice of what was going on around him. The last, calm, heavy sleep of dissolving nature was gathering over him—gradually his breath became more laborious—at length it ceased—a slight quiver on the lower part of his face—and he was gone—without a struggle. His funeral was attended on Monday. A goodly number of the people of the place were present. I preached a short sermon from 1 Peter, i., 24, 25. A solemn, tearful interest was manifested in the word spoken, and, I hope, good was done. Then the few

native brethren bore him to his grave, in a field belonging to our landlord, about a quarter of a mile from the city, and there we laid him. Protestant funerals in this country are often scenes of great excitement, our enemies making use of such occasions to vent their rage upon the followers of the truth; but in this case all was quiet. . . . Your brother has gone from us; but he will not soon be forgotten, either by his missionary associates or the native brethren. His lovely Christian character, his earnest and unwearied efforts to prepare himself as speedily as possible for active labour, his eagerness to do anything in his power ever since his arrival in the country to help on the good work, endeared him to all our hearts. He was indeed 'a brother dearly beloved' by us all. Rarely has a young missionary given such promise of future usefulness, and to us it seems passing strange that he should have been taken away when just ready to grasp the sickle, and from a field over the whole extent of which a rich harvest is perishing for lack of laborers. But He who sitteth on the circle of the heavens, sees what we see not; and to His mind there were wise and benevolent reasons for all that He has done."

Mr. Bliss, in a very touching letter, recently received at the Missionary Rooms, Boston, remarks: "Surer testimony that our departed brother belonged to Christ, and now rests in him, is to be gathered, not from broken sentences uttered amidst the agonies of raging

disease, but from the life he lived among us. That life we shall none of us soon forget; so beautiful a transcript was it of the Christian character, so harmonious a blending of gentleness, meekness, and humility, with ardent zeal and untiring activity in his Master's service. Though he died within nine months of his arrival in this country, and within three of his reaching his station, and though much of his time had been passed in circumstances unfavorable to study; yet, such had been his industry and consequent success in acquiring the language, that he had already begun to work. He was taking charge of the small Bible class, conducting its devotional exercises himself, and giving all the requisite instruction. And before he could do this, he was ever seeking to make himself useful, not disdaining the humblest labors, if he might help on the work. How often was he asking us, 'Is there not something I can do to assist you?' He seemed to be ever pressed in spirit, burning with desire to work while the day lasted. How little did we think that a day so promising at its commencement was to end while yet the freshness of earliest morn was on it!

LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE EVENT.

"Without doubt this afflictive event was designed to teach us and the Church at home some needed lesson. Of the twelve new missionaries for whom we have so long waited and prayed, Mr. Sutphen was the first. He came, but, alas! he has gone before the second

has appeared. What is the lesson taught? Is it that we did wrong to ask for new missionaries, that Mr. Sutphen ought not to have come, and that no more should be sent? Shall we, or the Church at home, or any candidate for the missionary service, put such an interpretation upon our brother's early death? Doubtless we should learn to 'cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils,' and to remember that not by the might of missionaries, either new or old, but by the Spirit of the Lord, is His cause to advance. But while the Lord would have us rightly esteem human instrumentality, he certainly would not have us discard it.

"And by so early taking away 'the first of the twelve,' may it not be his design to startle us all from our leisurely method of doing his work? Ought not, therefore, we who are in the field to read in this providence an admonition to call louder and more earnestly for helpers in our work? And ought not the Church at home to read in it an admonition to send forth its sons, not one by one, as may suit earthly plans or earthly affections, but in numbers more in correspondence with the demands of the work, and more in correspondence with its obligations to Him who hath purchased all its sons and daughters with His own precious blood?

"And let no one think that because our brother's course was ended so soon, his choice of the missionary life was a matter of regret. Who shall say how much his usefulness, while

yet in his native land, may have been increased by his choice of that life? Who shall say how much good that choice may have done to the church in his native town, awakening an interest in the missionary work never before felt, and which the news of his early death shall only deepen? Who shall tell what impressions for good that choice may have made upon the companions of his youth, upon his fellow-students in the college and in the seminary, and upon those who listen to his preaching before he left his native shores? And though in this country he never preached a sermon to a native audience, yet who shall tell what impressions may have been made upon those who here witnessed the clear shining of his Christian life? As we were about to kneel in prayer beside his dying bed, he was asked what particular petition we wished presented for him. 'Pray,' he replied, 'that God may be glorified, and his kingdom extended.' All personal desires seemed absorbed in longings for the advancement of God's kingdom and glory. And this was the spirit, not only of his dying moments, but of his whole Christian course. It was this which led to his selection of the missionary life. And though that life was numbered by nine short months, we praise God for our brother's choice thereof, and believe that it was not in vain.

"We often go to Joseph's grave, and meditate upon the present loveliness and happiness of that spirit, which, when among us, seemed

so lovely and full of the joy of the Lord. The grave is in the midst of a wide plain, yet when there we always feel retired from this world, and near the confines of the eternal. Two little almond trees, with their limbs entwined in each other, are growing near the grave, and we are trying to train them to cast their shadow over it." (Mr. Bliss, December 29, 1852).

To these very just and edifying remarks of our departed friend's missionary associate, we may add that, while we use the means of spreading the Redeemer's kingdom, the excellency of the power is ever of God. He employs the instrumentality of His people for their sake, not because He needs them. We should be cautious lest we rely upon the human agency, or fear that, when the arm of flesh is withdrawn, the blessing goes with it. The history of each believer is of great account with the Head of the Church. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." So when a brother is called from usefulness on earth, we know that death is his as well as life; and that God is ordering all for his eternal good. If the Master calls the labourer home in the early forenoon of his day, and says to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" should we not rejoice for him that he has "gone home and taken his wages?" All that he desired to know, yet knew but in part here, he now knows perfectly; all that he hoped to win after his pilgrimage here, he is

now enjoying, and his heart here yearning after the love of God, is now filled with it to overflowing. The angels will watch his dust until the "illustrious morning" of the resurrection, and then shall it be raised in incorruption, in power, and glory, made like to Christ's own glorious body.

Thus are we comforted by the exceeding blessedness of our brother, whose faith let us follow, that, when the Master pleases, we may join him in his joy.