

Memorial Service

FOR THE LATE

REV. ELIAS RIGGS, D.D., LL.D.

MISSIONARY OF THE
AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
FOREIGN MISSIONS

MEMORIAL SERVICE
FOR THE LATE REV. ELIAS RIGGS, D.D., LL.D.
MISSIONARY OF THE
AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Dr. Riggs, the veteran Missionary of the American Board, died at Constantinople on the 17th of January, 1901. His funeral occurred two days later, on one of the worst of winter days. His numerous friends were unable at the time, in any fitting way, to give expression to their deep appreciation of Dr Riggs's character, and of the great work Providence had permitted him to accomplish in the Levant. It was strongly felt that a memorial service should be held on some suitable occasion, at which the feeling of his fellow laborers and of the community at large might find expression. Such an opportunity was given in connection with the Annual Meeting of the Western Turkey Mission at Constantinople, in May.

The service was held in the Bible House Chapel, on Sunday, May 19. The chapel was filled with a large audience, among whom were Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians, English, Scotch, and American friends. The Rev. M. Bowen, Levant Agent of the American Bible Society, presided. After he had offered a brief prayer, the congregation united in singing the hymn, "Jerusalem, the glorious." After reading a portion of Scripture, Mr Bowen introduced the Rev. Dr. Greene, of the American Mission, who presented the following "Biographical Sketch."

Dr. Elias Riggs was born at New Providence, New Jersey, November 19, 1810, the year in which the American Board was formed. His father was a minister of the Gospel, who laboured during his whole pastorate in the same country parish, namely in the place where the subject of our memorial was born. Not only through his parents, but also through his grandparents and his earlier ancestors, Dr Riggs came from a pious and cultured stock.

At four years of age he had already learned to read, at the age of nine he began the study of Greek, and at the age of thirteen the study of Hebrew. His father's sudden death when the subject of our memorial was fourteen years old overwhelmed the son with a sense of irreparable loss, and led him to turn for relief and refuge to his Heavenly Father. When fifteen years of age he entered Amherst College, and soon after united with the College Church. During his college course he continued the study of Hebrew and the cognate languages, and both at the time of the junior exhibition and at the Commencement of 1829 he delivered an oration in Greek. Entering the junior class of Andover Theological Seminary in 1830, during his first year in the seminary he prepared and published the first edition of the Chaldee Manual. Among his seminary instructors were Moses Stuart, Leonard Woods and Edward Robinson, and among twenty of his fellow students who became missionaries were our own Dr. Schauffler, Dr. Schneider and Rev. P. O. Powers. Graduating from the seminary in 1832, on the urgent solicitation of the Prudential Committee of the American Board, he accepted the appointment of missionary to Greece, to be associated with Dr. Jonas King. On September 18th of the same year he was married to Miss Martha Jane Dalzel, and two days later was ordained as an evangelist by the Presbytery of Elizabeth Town, New Jersey.

Crossing the ocean in a brig of only 180 tons, Mr. and Mrs. Riggs reached Malta in December, 1832, and after a voyage from Malta of twenty-eight days in a Greek bark, reached Athens on January 28th, 1833. Athens was still in the hands of the Turks, but on the 14th of the following month the authority passed to the Bavarian Prince Otho, and by invitation of the city authorities, Dr. King and Mr. Riggs were present at his formal reception.

Mr. and Mrs. Riggs remained nearly five years in Greece, part of the time in Athens, but most of the time at Argos, where their first son, Joseph, born in Athens, died. Kindly received at first by the Greek ecclesiastics and people, the missionaries, joined later by the Rev. Nathan

Benjamin and wife, while maintaining regular preaching, gave most of their time to educational work, especially for girls. For years the only female teachers in Greece were trained in the mission schools at Athens, Syra and Argos, or were the pupils of those so trained. At length, however, the Government, on the demand of the Greek bishops, issued an order requiring that all the higher schools, public and private, should employ an ecclesiastic to teach the Catechism of the Greek Church, and should put an ecclesiastical picture in every school-room. Finally, in view of the diminished prospect of usefulness in Greece, Mr. and Mrs. Riggs, by direction of the Prudential Committee, in November, 1838, removed to Smyrna.

During their residence of nearly fifteen years in Smyrna three daughters and two sons were born to Dr. and Mrs. Riggs, and their second son, Samuel, born at Argos, died by reason of a fall from the terrace of the house. Though only eight years of age, "he had begun and made considerable progress in a loving, trusting, Christian life."

For nearly six years in Smyrna, Dr. Riggs preached in the Dutch chapel to full audiences of Greeks and Greek-speaking Protestants, and took part with the Rev. Mr. Temple in preparing and editing Greek books and tracts. Mrs. Riggs also, while giving the principal part of her time to the instruction of her children, prepared a series of "Letters to Mothers on the Training and Instruction of their Children," a work which, published under the title of "The Mother's Manual," found so much favour in Greece that it was adopted by a society in Athens, and issued as one of their publications. Similar letters written by Mrs. Riggs were subsequently published in the Armenian and Turkish "Avedaper."

In 1844, owing to the increasing opposition to the evangelical work among the Greeks, by decision of a deputation from the Prudential Committee, Dr. and Mrs. Riggs were transferred to the Armenian Department, and began the study of the Armenian language, and the following year, by request of the mission, Dr. Riggs, with the aid of Armenian scholars, began a translation of the Bible into the spoken Armenian language. This work occupied seven years, and in 1853 an edition of the entire modern Armenian Bible in octavo, with references, was published in Smyrna.

In May of the same year, by request of the Constantinople Station, Dr. Riggs and family removed to the capital, and for three years Dr. Riggs devoted his time to the Bebek Theological Seminary, first in connection with the Greek department, and then as instructor in theology.

In 1856, after an absence of nearly twenty-four years, Dr. and Mrs. Riggs visited America—the only visit to the homeland made by Dr. Riggs during his long missionary career. During his two years' stay in America, Dr. Riggs, at the request of the American Bible Society, carried through the press a 12mo. edition of the Armenian Bible, and on the urgent invitation of the Union Theological Seminary, at the same time gave instruction in Hebrew to the three classes of the seminary. During the same period, on Sundays, Dr. Riggs frequently gave missionary addresses in places in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

In May, 1858, Dr. Riggs received from the directors of the Union Seminary an invitation to a professorship of Hebrew literature, but after consultation with the secretaries of the American Board, declined the invitation, since he had already become interested in the newly formed Bulgarian mission, and had already begun preparation for a modern Bulgarian translation of the Scriptures. Returning the same year to Constantinople, Dr. Riggs and family, by request of the station, took up their residence in the house occupied by the Girls' Boarding School in Hasskeuy. Shortly after their arrival six of their children were prostrated by scarlet fever, and on November 29th their daughter Elizabeth, in her twentieth year, and just about to enter upon missionary work, died. For three years Dr. Riggs preached statedly in Armenian, and taught a Bible class in Armenian, in the Girls' Boarding School. In the autumn of 1859, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Byington, he made an extensive journey in Macedonia and Bulgaria, but while at Adrianople was hastily called home by news of the threatened loss of sight by his son Charles.

Sympathy for his son Charles led Dr. Riggs to efforts in behalf of the blind in Turkey, and in order to give the Word of God to these poor unfortunates, he prepared a primer for the blind in Armenian letters according to the system of Dr. Moon, he himself inventing a few characters to complete the alphabet. In this alphabet he wrote out the Gospel of John and two Psalms in Armenian, and the Gospel of Matthew in Armeno-Turkish, and when these were printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society, he alone would correct the proofs. Indeed, as occasion demanded, Dr. Riggs gave attention to this work for a period of nearly thirty years, the last edition of John having been completed within about a year of his death.

In 1861 Dr. Riggs assisted in the ordination of Armenian pastors at Nicomedia, Bardezag and Rodosto. In the autumn of 1862 Dr. Riggs was greatly weakened by a

hemorrhage from the lungs, and, accompanied by Mrs. Riggs and three of their children, visited Egypt, where the family passed the winter. The following year, while his family returned to Constantinople, Dr. Riggs made an extensive tour in Central and Eastern Turkey, and attended the annual meeting of the Eastern Turkey Mission at Diarbekir. Four days after his return to Constantinople, on July 2nd, Miss Emma Riggs, joyful "that she was going to see her Saviour and be like Him," passed to the better land.

In January, 1859, Dr. Riggs began the work of the Bulgarian translation of the Bible, and with various other labours and not a few interruptions, this was his principal work for twelve years. He was assisted in this work by two of the best Bulgarian scholars, and on the New Testament was aided also by Dr. A. L. Long. In June, 1871, he was able to lay before the first annual meeting of the Bulgarian Mission, convened at Eski Zagra, the first bound volume of the new Bulgarian Bible.

In October of the following year Dr. Riggs was again compelled to leave Constantinople, and to spend the winter in Egypt on account of his health.

In June, 1873, Dr. Riggs became a member of a committee, designated by the British and Foreign and the American Bible Societies, to prepare a standard Turkish version of the Scriptures, and this work occupied the principal part of his time for five years.

Soon after the completion of the revised version of the Scriptures in Turkish in 1878, Dr. and Mrs. Riggs left Constantinople for Aintab, and during the following winter Dr. Riggs gave lessons in Hebrew and Greek to select classes in the Central Turkish College.

Returning to Constantinople in 1879, Dr. Riggs and family took up their residence at Scutari, and here on September 18th, 1882, occurred the golden wedding, made memorable by the meeting of the four surviving children and twelve grandchildren, by the hearty congratulations of missionary and native friends, and by handsome testimonials on behalf of the two Bible Societies.

In 1885 Dr. and Mrs. Riggs, on account of Mrs. Riggs's enfeebled health, again visited Aintab, and here again Dr. Riggs, besides continuing work for the Publication Department at Constantinople, gave instruction in Greek and Latin and exegesis in the college. Here also on November 15th, 1887, Mrs. Riggs fell asleep in Jesus.

In April of the following year Dr. Riggs returned to Constantinople, and during the ensuing twelve years of life devoted himself to literary work, chiefly for the Bulgarian

Mission. Tenderly cared for during these years by his daughter, Mrs. Trowbridge, his life continued to be one of rich usefulness. He carried through the press a Bulgarian commentary on the New Testament, and a Bulgarian handbook of the Bible, and by request of the Bulgarian Mission, prepared extensive notes, to be used in a future revision of the Bulgarian Scriptures. Some four hundred Bulgarian hymns, besides not a few in Armenian, were also translated by Dr. Riggs.

To our dear Father in Christ the end came on the night of January 17th, when, after an earthly life of ninety years one month and twenty-eight days, and a missionary service of almost sixty-eight years, he awoke in the heavenly mansions, satisfied with his Saviour's likeness. The funeral occurred on the following day, and his remains were interred in the Ferikeuy Cemetery by the side of his daughter Elizabeth.

The salient points of this memorable life have been culled principally from the *Reminiscences of Dr. Riggs*, printed in 1891 for his children. The appreciation of his work and character will be expressed by others.

The Rev. S. Michailides, pastor of the Evangelical Greek Church of Constantinople, being next introduced, gave in Greek an address—of which the following is a careful translation—on

“DR RIGGS'S WORK FOR THE GREEKS.”

“The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.” Psalms cxii, 6.

“The memory of the just is blessed.” Prov. x, 7.

We have come here to day, in the spirit of these words, to unite in a memorial service for Dr. Riggs, who not long ago passed away from this life at Scutari, opposite Byzantium, and who, through his nobility of character, education, and Christian piety, was venerated by all, being indeed the Patriarch of the Levant Missionaries of the celebrated American Board. It is not a religious service for the repose of the soul of the deceased, for that is now in Paradise in accordance with our Lord's words (John v, 24); but it is a memorial service, in which the assembled relatives, fellow-workers, and friends recall the virtues and relate the life-work done by the deceased, and thus incite themselves to imitate his virtues; while those who received any kindness from him have the opportunity to express their gratitude, for “the memory of the just is always blessed.” I gladly accede to the request to mention concisely some things in regard to the work that Dr. Riggs—whose name is fondly revered by us Greeks—did among our people both in Greece and Turkey.

(1) The late Dr. Riggs was born in America in 1810. Being naturally endowed with extraordinary intelligence and aptitude for the acquisition of languages, he made at a very early age great progress in ancient Greek as well as in his vernacular. At college he made the acquaintance and friendship of a Greek fellow student, Dr. Paspatis, who taught him the modern Greek pronunciation. Dr. Riggs was so pleased with this pronunciation that he used it in delivering his graduating oration, which he had prepared in ancient Greek. Dr. Riggs was perhaps one of the first philhellenic Americans. He rejected the erroneous and graceless Erasmian pronunciation, and began to read Greek as we Greeks read it. On completing his college course at the age of 20, he devoted himself to the study of Theology, and so at the age of 23 he was ready for the work that God had prepared for him. (2) Since 1828 there had been in Greece a pious American, the Rev. Dr. Jonas King, who, being encouraged by John Capodistria, then President of Greece, wrote to the American Board of Missions about the spiritual and religious needs of the Greeks. He believed that the Greeks would readily receive the light of the pure Gospel together with the wisdom of their forefathers. The Board of Missions selected and sent out four worthy pious men of Greek sympathies, the first of whom was Dr. Riggs, then 23 years old. He came to Greece towards the close of 1832, full of youth and religious zeal, and stayed at Athens, working there and training himself in the modern Greek for a year and a half. In July, 1834, he went with a fellow missionary to Argos, in the Peloponnesus, and started there the first school for boys and girls. At the same time two other missionaries—Revs. Houston and Leyburn—settled at Areopolis, in Mani, and started similar schools there, introducing along with other lessons the study of the Bible. By the kind efforts of these men, assisted by the benevolence of their countrymen, the naked children were provided with clothing, their youthful minds were developed by education, and their soft but naturally sinful hearts were enlightened by the pure Gospel and led to the Saviour, Jesus Christ. Thus the deceased, but never to be forgotten Elias Riggs, was one of the missionaries sent by God to Greece at a time when both materially and spiritually she was reduced to ruins. I have not the time to describe the necessity which our nation was then and still is under of receiving the light of the pure Gospel which God at that time sent to Greece. But, alas! the schools at Areopolis and Argos, which were working under the direction of Dr. Riggs, were both closed after four years of earnest work, and so

the evangelical flame but recently kindled was unfortunately extinguished, and all the missionaries except one had to leave Greece. This happened because in 1838 the Greek Government required either that that human catechism which had obscured the mind of the whole nation should be taught by an Eastern priest, or that the schools should be closed. So Dr. Riggs saw his sacred work for God's pure Word thus being destroyed. Unable to accept any order contrary to that of God, and giving thus the example to subsequent missionaries, he closed the schools, with the assent of his fellow labourers, although he had loved the Greeks and their rich and beautiful language. Thus, after six years of godly work, he bade farewell to Greece and went to Smyrna, believing he could be more useful there—as he certainly has been—both among the Greeks themselves and among the other peoples of Turkey. While living in Smyrna during nearly 15 years, although he was working at the Armenian and Turkish languages, he did not forget the Greeks, whom he so much loved. Had divine Providence permitted it, he was ready to spend his life working for their good. And, indeed, he still worked for them, both by preaching to them the Word of God, and by publishing books for them in their own language. The most important of these books are "A Mother's Manual," and "Scriptural Questions" on the historical books of the Old Testament. Dr. Riggs was the first also to compose or translate sacred hymns for the Greeks, to be used as they are to-day in our public worship. And this is the reason why the Greek hymn books are dedicated to Dr. Riggs. (3) Though Turks, Armenians, and Bulgarians are under obligations to Dr. Riggs, we Greeks are none the less so. (a) Like a true Christian he belonged to all, so that none can exclusively claim him. He earnestly devoted himself to anything that God offered him for the good of any person or of any people. Three or four weeks before his death he translated a beautiful hymn into Greek, which we joyfully sang at Gedik Pasha on New Year's eve, 1901. It was, I believe, his last work in the language in which he began to preach Christ in the Levant. (b) We evangelical Greeks are the plant that has sprung from the seed sown in a short time but with faith by Dr. Riggs and his fellow labourers. (c) He has given us for our imitation the example of his virtues, conspicuous among which were: a most remarkable gentleness at all times and to all men; Christian humility, which may be imitated by those who are inferior to him; wisdom, or an almost unlimited knowledge, for which he was always regarded with respect and admiration by all who knew him. Worthy of

mention also were his quiet industry and marvellous simplicity of life, and systematic and orderly habits. Through these qualities he was able to accomplish immense work and to preserve the health granted to him, prolonging thus his valuable life for over 90 years.

Thus has Dr. Riggs worked for the Greeks, and thus did he consecrate a godly, regular, and earnest life to the service of his fellow creatures, and thus did he serve the Missionary Society which sent him. He honoured the Lord by his work, and actively served his fellow men during 68 years out of the 90 of his life. Then full of years his body was gathered to his fathers, leaving a never-to-be-forgotten example of Christian life both to his sons and to his faithful daughter, who has cared for him during these 12 years, and also to all who knew him or read his works. His soul has ascended to Heaven, there waiting for the unfading crown of his labours which the Lord, the righteous judge, will bestow upon him. With the living he will be one of the righteous who are in "everlasting remembrance," and "his memory shall be blessed" as it is this day.

The audience then united in singing the hymn,—

"The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks."

After which the Rev. Dr. Herrick was introduced. Dr. Herrick had been for many years associated with Dr. Riggs in the work of Bible translation. His address was as follows:—

DR. RIGGS AS BIBLE TRANSLATOR.

Dr. Riggs's preparation for his life-work began with his parentage. His father was a highly respectable classical and Hebrew scholar. Under his training the future Bible translator, whom it may be difficult for most of us to picture as a lad, began the study of Greek at nine, and that of Hebrew at thirteen years of age. He entered college in his sixteenth year, and in college acquired Modern Greek through association with two Greek classmates, and not only pursued the study of Hebrew, but of its cognate languages also. During the course of his theological studies at Andover he wrote and published, with the approval of Professor Edward Robinson, a grammar of the Chaldee language.

For the work to which his life was mainly given, on which he directly entered thirteen years after he became a missionary, that is when he was thirty-five years of age, his equipment was broader, more thorough and complete than has been attained by any other missionary of the American

Board. As a linguist he had probably no peers in America or in Great Britain, and very few on the Continent of Europe. He never took pride or pleasure in enumerating the more than twenty languages with which he was acquainted. But we confidently assert, what his modesty would not allow him to do himself, that he had, before he reached middle life, gained a scholar's mastery of the at least twelve languages, in and with which his life-work lay, reckoning the ancient and modern form of the Armenian and Greek as one and not two languages. Observe, we say a scholar's mastery. He was the last to claim, and we do not claim for him, a facile use of the colloquial tongue in the case of some, even of the languages in which he wrought for years. These twelve languages are the Hebrew (including Chaldee), Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, Greek, Latin, Spanish, English, Armenian, Bulgarian, Slavic and Turkish. We do not care to lay stress upon Dr. Riggs's very respectable acquaintance with French and Italian, German and Russian, Persian and Sanscrit. The *accuracy* of his knowledge of languages, as also of many subjects besides languages, was quite as unique and surprising as its breadth. It may be pretty confidently asserted that, for sixty years of his life, he had no peer in his knowledge of Greek—Ancient, New Testament, and modern—the Greek of learned writings and that of various dialects spoken by Greeks in different localities.

An incident of our Turkish Bible translation work comes to my memory that illustrates more than one of his characteristics as Bible translator, to be mentioned hereafter. One of the committee presented and defended a translation of a Greek word in our text that gave a sense quite different from that which he had adopted in his Armenian and Bulgarian texts, and supported his view by reference to authorities that Dr. Riggs was accustomed to respect. Dr. Riggs looked surprised, but patiently examined the authorities quoted and others also, spending considerable time. When the examination was finished, he remarked with a placid smile, not at all as though he were passing an authoritative judgment: "Well, the Greeks do not use the word in that sense, and they have never done so." Our discussion was closed, and the proposed rendering was not adopted.

Dr. Riggs's work on the Armenian Bible began in 1845 and continued seven years; that on the Bulgarian Bible began in 1858 and continued twelve years; and his work on the Turkish Bible was from 1873 to 1878, and again two years from June, 1883. It should be remarked that Dr.

Riggs's relation to the Bulgarian and the Turkish versions differed in two important respects from his relation to the Armenian version. In the Armenian his was the sole responsibility from first to last, while in the translation of the Bible into the Bulgarian, in the larger part of the work, the responsibility both in the shaping of the translation and in the printing, was shared with a colleague, Rev. Dr. Long, to whom the idiomatic and acceptable character of the version is largely due, and these gentlemen were efficiently assisted, throughout, by two competent native scholars.

In the Turkish version Dr. Riggs's position was that of critic on a text already prepared, and he had no responsibility for the issue of any editions of the version. What was stated above relative to the time Dr. Riggs was occupied with the several versions requires important modifications on two sides, viz.: During all those years Dr. Riggs was doing a great amount and variety of other work, both in the Department of Publication and out of it, either in regular preaching or teaching or both; and on the other hand, in other years than those devoted chiefly to translation, he was carrying editions of the Bible in one or more languages through the press, and this work always requires the most constant and scrupulous care, to prevent little mistakes from creeping in and to discover and correct possible mistakes, infelicities and inconsistencies that have crept in, undiscovered, in previous editions, as will be the case in all human work. The amount of proof-reading done in those sixty-eight years, were it possible to be stated, or could the sheets be collected in one place, remembering that every letter, point and figure, passed under the closest scrutiny, would be simply appalling. And add to this work of Bible printing and proof-reading an immense amount of similar work in the Department of Mission Publications, and add to this that any man who had anything, in any language, in the press, would say, "Dear Dr. Riggs, *could* you glance over one proof of this book? I should value it *very* much." "O, yes, I'll try to do so" he would smilingly reply—and it was never a glance, if anything, but a careful, critical reading that he gave it. I do not say the proof sheets that he read in his life time would fill this room from floor to ceiling, if packed into it, but I am certain that if all were dumped in here, none of us would find any place to sit for the enormous pile. No wonder he never found it possible to begin that other work for which he was so eminently fitted, viz., the preparation of biblical commentaries, till he was well past three score years and ten. And when, do you suppose, he found time to furnish three races, in as

many countries, with the hymns they sing in Divine worship? O, that was his recreation. He translated and printed more than 300 hymns, and that three times over into three several languages; and the gentle messenger who called him out of earthly life was bidden wait at the threshold while he finished the last of these.

Let us note certain characteristics of Dr. Riggs's mind as related to his great life-work.

1. *His profound reverence for the Bible.*

His faith in the word of God was so absolute, so sincere, so settled a thing, so wrought into every fibre of his mental and spiritual being, that it ceased to be true, long before I knew him, even if it could ever be said to be true, that the *responsibility* he laboured under in transferring the sacred text from the original tongues into the languages of these lands, was of the nature of a *burden*. He was not oppressed with the gravity of his task. He served as the High Priest in the temple served. He carried the Ark as the anointed priests carried it. That was the work assigned, the appointed service, and faithfully, gratefully he discharged the trust, as under the Master's eye. The sense of profound reverence was always with him, one of the prime constituents of his equipment.

2. *Dr. Riggs had infinite patience of scholarly research.*

He worked with moderation rather than rapidly. There was no unsteadiness about his mental work. If he worked ten hours a day, and in his prime he sometimes did, the work of the tenth hour was just as clear cut as that of the first. To illustrate exactly what I mean by his infinite patience of research, let me put the matter concretely. When the committee of three voting members began working together on the Turkish Bible in 1873, Dr. Riggs, besides the princely equipment with which he began his translation work twenty-eight years before, was twenty-eight years in advance of us in *experience*, in the work of translating the Bible. How many questions had become *settled* in his mind in those twenty-eight years! What perfect right he had to shrink from re-examining such questions! Who would have dared offer a word of criticism, if he had said, a thousand times: "This matter, gentlemen, I've gone through with. My mind is made up. Take all the time you require to investigate. Here are the authorities, these lexicons, these versions, these commentaries, and as many others as you choose to examine, but excuse me." Did he ever say this, or anything like it? Never. He was the first to turn to authorities, old and new, with an open mind, to go with us over the subject, as though it were new to him.

He was a conservative biblical scholar, but, till my last session with him, the 24th of last December, when we could all see the gleaming of the white wings of the angel band, eagerly awaiting permission to "sing him to his rest," Dr. Riggs was never unready to give patient ear, and to weigh in just balances, *any* scholarly interpretation of Scripture, let it come in the form of biblical criticism, or from history, or the ancient monuments and tablets. He said to me, not long ago, "I've had to change many things in my Bible Dictionary. The excavations in Egypt, Syria and Babylonia have shed much new light on Scripture." Our latest work together was to make certain changes in our New Testament versions, necessitated by the consensus of modern biblical scholarship, so far as those changes were permitted by Bible Society rules. For the Bible translator, "various readings" in the New Testament and the possibility oftentimes in the Old Testament of tracing forms in an ancient language like the Hebrew, to more than one triliteral root, require of the modest and unprejudiced scholar, endless patience, the open mind, and a readiness to revise again and again a judgment already carefully formed. This temper it is which makes a scholar like Dr. Riggs well-nigh certain to form and re-form correct judgments. Dr. Riggs was ready and that for the twentieth time, if necessary, in order that not the least avoidable error should be allowed to find place in his work, to search far and near, for *just* the right word for an ancient gem, or Asiatic bird, or musical instrument, or vessel of the temple, and was really unhappy if obliged at last to confess that certainty of translation of a matter so ancient and so recondite was unattainable.

3. *A third characteristic was unfailing considerateness to junior associates.*

Dr. Riggs did all his Bible translation work with one or more associates working with him, either native or missionary or both. In the case of the committee on the revision of the Bible in Turkish, the number was large; including all assistants, it consisted of seven persons. During the seven years, when this work was in hand, there was never an occasion when Dr. Riggs showed by silence or by speech, by look or tone of voice—he was far too perfect a gentleman to say it out intentionally—that *his* judgment deserved special respect, that his vote ought to count two to our one, that his knowledge and experience ought to overshadow our ignorance and inexperience. You may be pretty sure what effect such a spirit as he showed had on us. Practically, in the matter of the meaning of the text, he made a majority, though he disclaimed all right to more than a

single vote ; or, better, we found ample reason to coincide, ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, with his judgment, and he doubtless had more respect for us, if in the hundredth case we showed that we had studied up a subject somewhat as he so often set us an example in doing. In the matter of choosing the proper word in the language into which the translation was made, no man could be more ready to defer to those whose acquaintance with usage was wider than his own.

Although in all the work of Bible translation and in the passing of numerous editions through the press, Dr. Riggs was himself *facile princeps*, yet no man was ever more ready than he was to give due and more than due credit to junior associates and assistants, to printers, to proof-readers and compositors. I often observed the very kind relation between him and an old Bulgarian compositor who worked on the Bible for many years. For myself, I learned from those years of association with that noble mind and character, new lessons in the Divine forbearance, in the infinite patience of our Heavenly Father with us. With filial gratitude do I recall one instance when I had almost offended one English colleague by too warmly expressing my desire to get on faster in the work. Dr. Riggs called me aside after all others had left, and with exceeding gentleness and sweetness administered a reproof which was more effective than any I ever received before or since.

My friends, I am detaining you already too long. One thing remains, without which this review of a theme I love to dwell upon would be inexcusably incomplete. What has been the result of Dr. Riggs's great life-work? rather what will be its result, when all its fruits are garnered? Generally, I have little fondness for statistics. But bear with me while I read you the answer to questions I have asked at the proper sources of information. Since Dr. Riggs's translations of the Bible appeared, there have been sold:—
Of Armenian and Armeno-Turkish Bibles, 98687; Testaments, 142,763.

Of Bulgarian Bibles, 56,184; Testaments; 75,600.

Osmanli-Turkish Bibles, 7,359; Testaments, 27,498.

The number of single Gospels and other portions in these three languages exceeds half-a-million, 151,600 of which are in Osmanli-Turkish.

I repeat, all this was not one man's work. Scores of alert minds and skilled hands contributed to the great result, but in it all, Dr. Riggs was first and chief. Have you scales with which to weigh, or rules by which to measure the significance of a life-work like this?

The homes, the schools, the churches, where Dr. Riggs's translations of the Word of Life are read, and where the hymns he translated are sung, are numbered by the ten thousand, and extend from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf, from the snows of the Caucasus to the burning sands of Arabia.

The mansions of the home he has now gone to are populous, the golden streets of the city where he resides are thronged by those from many lands, of many languages, whose feet have been guided thither as the result of his life's endeavour to place the Word of God before them in their own vernacular tongue. Thousands who have sung his hymns in earthly temples now join the chorus of those who sing evermore :

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Worthy are thou, for thou hast redeemed us unto God with thy blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation."

The next speaker was the Rev. Avedis Asadourian, who dwelt more particularly on the subject of Dr Riggs's work for the Armenians. Mr Asadourian spoke in Armenian, of which the following is a translation :

The Apostle Paul writes thus to the Corinthian Church : "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." 1 Cor. xii, 7-10.

I have been requested to speak of the labour of the Rev. Dr. Riggs on behalf of the Armenians. This venerable missionary of the American Board, by the grace of the Divine Spirit, had a special fitness to labour in the ministry of the Gospel in our land. From his youth he had a great capacity and desire to master languages, especially the ancient languages of the East. In college and in the theological seminary he studied Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic and Chaldæan, and when he had finished his course of study, he was able to write grammars of the Arabic and Chaldæan languages. On coming to Turkey he learned likewise Armenian, Turkish and Bulgarian, and in a little time was able to publish small grammars of the Armenian and Turkish for English-speaking persons who wished to learn those languages.

Others will tell the story of his life, but I wish to speak briefly of his love and devotion to our land and to his chosen work. In a ministry of nearly sixty-eight years, only once, and that after twenty-four years of continuous labour, did he visit his native land. There also he did not remain idle, but superintended the electrotyping and printing of an edition of the modern Armenian Bible, which he had prepared. He loved to work, and almost to the hour of death his pen was in his hand. While he was in America, the Trustees of Union Theological Seminary, observing the great intellectual and linguistic ability of Dr. Riggs, called him to the professorship of Greek and Hebrew literature, but he immediately solved the question by declining the invitation, and said: "I cannot remain in New York without doubts as to my duty, but I can return to my missionary work without any doubts at all."

We can divide Dr. Riggs's labours for the Armenians into two parts; one, his labour as a missionary, and the other, as a translator.

First, as a teacher in the Theological Seminary at Bebek he gave instruction in Greek and theology to our esteemed brethren, Rev. Mardiros Schmavonian and Rev. Toomas Boyajian and to Dr. Baronig Matteossian and Dr. Hagopos Giragosian and others. In the Girls' Boarding School at Hasskeny also, he gave lessons on the Bible and in moral science. The men and women from among our people who were his pupils to this day remember with joy and esteem his able instruction and lovable characteristics, and the salutary impressions which he made upon them. From the pulpits of our churches Dr. Riggs often preached wise and edifying sermons on God and his Revelation; he visited neighbouring churches, and took part in the ordination of pastors at Rodosto, Nicomedia, Bardezag and other places. He also travelled to the more distant parts of Turkey, and visited our churches at Aintab, Harpoot and Erzurum. Wherever he went he was received with great respect and love, and his modest and sweet presence and profound knowledge of the Bible left an indelible impression on all hearts.

Secondly, Dr Riggs's great service for the Armenian people was in the work of translation. He translated and published in Armenian many books and tracts; he likewise composed and translated from other languages many hymns which are constantly sung in our houses and places of public worship with great joy and feeling, and have been the means of growth in grace to many. But Dr. Riggs's most precious work for us Armenians was that he prepared the

modern Armenian translation of the Bible. In this work of Bible translation he had able assistants, but by reason of his knowledge of the original tongues he was the man of authority and the leader, and was able to give us an Armenian Bible of great exactness and purity ; and even now, though half a century has passed since the translation was made, there is no imperative necessity of a revision and change of language.

This was the most important part of the work done by missionaries for the Armenians in Turkey. For, though the Armenian people for many centuries had had a translation of the Bible in the ancient tongue, few were able to read and understand it. Such indeed is the case to this day. Hence for the success of the evangelical work among the Armenians, a translation of the Bible into the modern tongue was indispensable. Praise to God that this great work was accomplished by Dr. Riggs, and that by the English and American Bible Societies this modern Armenian Bible has been sold very cheaply in all parts of Turkey.

Not only in this work, but also in the translation and revision of the Turkish Bible, Dr. Riggs rendered a great service to those Armenians who speak only the Turkish language. To the work of Bible translation in Armenian and Turkish Dr. Riggs devoted twelve years of his life—a great and blessed service, whose fruit will abide for ever. By reason of this service the truth of God's Word is now preached to many thousands in all the cities of Turkey, to the enlightenment and salvation of immortal souls. Praise to God also that many have enjoyed his saving grace, and that thus his Word has been strength to the weak, comfort to the sorrowful, and pardon and peace to the penitent.

Dr. Riggs was one of the few distinguished men, gifted with great intellectual and linguistic ability, nevertheless we never saw in him a spirit of pride and vanity ; on the contrary, he was by nature very meek and humble. Every time I visited him, I saw in him a growth in grace. When not long ago I went to congratulate him on his ninetieth birthday, and, thinking that this might be my last opportunity, said to him : "In the name of the churches of Bithynia and the whole Protestant community, I present sincerest thanks for your great and blessed work," in his own sweet and humble way he replied : "I give thanks to God, who gave me grace and opportunity to perform this work, and to my Saviour I render all the glory and praise." Great and noble soul ! We bless God for the gracious and fruitful life, whose labour has brought so great blessing to our nation and to other peoples. He is dead, but the fruit

of his labour abides for ever. Heaven only will tell us the greatness and the worth of his service. We shall ever remember his name with profound esteem and love, with blessing and gratitude, and we will ever pray to God that the blessed Book, whose translation in the modern tongue he gave to the Armenian nation, may be the means of the enlightenment and salvation of countless thousands.

After the congregation had joined in the hymn "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," Mr. Bowen read a paper which had been prepared by the Rev. Robert Thomson, of the American Mission, Samokov, Bulgaria. Mr. Thomson was unable to attend the meeting, but kindly sent the paper which he had prepared on Dr. Riggs and his work for Bulgaria.

Although Dr. Riggs's work as a Bible translator is to be the subject of a special address on this occasion, it is impossible to speak of his work for the Bulgarians without a brief reference to his share in the preparation of the Bulgarian Bible. That share, as he himself frequently said, consisted mainly in making it his care that the sense of the original should be accurately expressed. It must therefore be mainly due to him that in the Bulgarian Bible, completed and published in 1871, readers have been put in possession of all but the latest results of learning to be found in the English Revised Version, and that they have enjoyed a translation which, while removing many of the obscurities of the Authorised English Version, also gives simply and clearly not a few passages which the extreme literalness and conservatism of the Revised Version render unnecessarily difficult. Even as it stands, the Bulgarian Bible is a monumental illustration of the lucidity which Dr. Riggs's marvellous power of entering into the spirit of the originals enabled him to impart to the translations in which he participated. And it is easy to believe that the matter which he has left prepared for the prospective revision of the Bulgarian Bible should make it, if that revision be not too long delayed, as perfect a translation as is possible at the present time. The European Turkey Mission four years ago passed a resolution in annual meeting that the changes which had taken place in the Bulgarian language called for a linguistic revision of the translation (as distinguished from a revision involving a fresh translation from the originals.) The annual meeting of the following year, however, saw fit to annul this resolution in so far as it called for this revision at once—believing that it would be advisable to defer the work for a few years. But in anticipation of it Dr. Riggs was invited to prepare whatever notes he considered

necessary. His extraordinary modesty led him to think that he was not competent to make any suggestions from that particular point of view ; but the invitation induced him to undertake what was practically a revision of the Bible as a translation. The letters written by him in the course of its progress give most interesting hints of improvements that may be looked for. And so, when the Bulgarian Bible shall be brought—it is to be hoped, before many years—into greater harmony with the language as now spoken, Dr. Riggs, though gone to his reward, will still lend his aid towards the perfecting of the new version. The ripest fruits of that great learning which kept advancing to the very end, and which no physical weakness could cloud, will be embodied in the work.

Nothing could more significantly testify to the value of Dr. Riggs's work on the Bible than the embarrassment which the Holy Synod of Bulgaria has manifested within the last eight or ten years over the question of its duty towards the people in regard to the Bible. Pressure was brought to bear upon the Synod to give the nation an authorised modern version. Unwilling to adopt and authorise the Bible Society version, it announced the intention of itself making a translation of the Scriptures. But the translation never appeared. Doubtless one great difficulty was the lack of men sufficiently acquainted with the original tongue ; but it also leaked out that the translation, if made, would have so completely established the accuracy of the Protestant version that the Synod was unwilling to lend itself to such a result. Later—only last year—the matter was again revived ; and this time the Synod's organ in Sophia published a long list of discrepancies between the Bible Society version on the one hand and the Septuagint, Vulgate, Slavic and Russian on the other, and thus prepared the way for the announcement that the Synod had determined to begin at once the preparation of a modern Bulgarian Bible, which should be an accurate translation of the modern Russian Bible. This called forth an animated discussion in the leading papers of the country, in which this proposed translation of a translation was both ridiculed and denounced, and in which the learning of Dr. Riggs and Dr. Long in the original languages of the Bible, their honesty, and the competency of their Bulgarian coadjutors were insisted on as an absolute guarantee for the faithfulness of the Bible Society version. It is again doubtful whether the new venture will ever appear ; but if it does, the solid merits of the Bible of Riggs and Long put it beyond the reach of harm.

Closely connected with this must be mentioned Dr. Riggs's share in exercising a powerful influence on the Bulgarian language itself. This influence has repeatedly and generously been acknowledged by competent authorities. In the first instance, he had to decide, when he began work on the Bulgarian Bible, whether the Macedonian or the Thracian dialect should be employed—the two being at that time about equally prevalent. With astonishing intuition he decided in favour of the Thracian; and there can be little doubt that this fact did much—perhaps everything—to turn the tide in the direction in which it has flowed so strongly ever since. Then, there had to be laid down the principles, which presently became the traditions, by which the work of the Bulgarian Publication Department was to be guided. These were strongly conservative. The Department refused to give way in the slightest before the inrush of foreign words, phrases, and turns of expression. Always when possible it fell back upon the Slavic and Russian rather than adopt a European word. It aimed at the purest Bulgarian; and it adhered to the most classic orthography till finally compelled to yield some points. By this policy the Department was able to keep the ear of the people at large, to whom the foreign words were meaningless; and it earned the gratitude of some of the prominent men of letters as having done much to shape and fix the language, and to stem the tendency to denationalise it. As has already been said, in spite of all, the language has changed much since the Bible was translated; but it would have changed more, and in a much more abnormal fashion, but for the restraining influence of the Mission's publications. In all this, Dr. Riggs's accurate knowledge of the root Slavic, and his remarkable ability to enter into the construction and spirit of the language, enabled him to render most valuable service in this direction. Very frequently he would bring little lists of words culled from the *Zornitsa* or other publication, and point out some slight inaccuracy in their spelling or the manner of their use. His knowledge of the early and standard dictionaries and Scripture versions was astonishing; and he used it to throw everything that was published into as conservative a form of pure Bulgarian as seemed possible to reach.

To pass to another subject, Dr. Riggs several times expressed his regret that, in spite of all his explanations, the Bulgarian commentary on the New Testament was almost always referred to as his. As a matter of fact, it was the commentary prepared by members of the Asiatic missions, revised and adapted to the needs of the Bulgarian field by a

committee of three from the European mission, of whom Dr. Riggs was one. Yet after all, there is considerable ground for speaking of it as his work. The other two members of the committee were so closely occupied otherwise, that the main work both of the revision and of passing through the press fell on him. The comments on two important books had been entirely lost; and he prepared new matter to supply their place. He enriched the work by inserting or substituting, each in its proper place, all those comments which are contained in his published book: "Notes on the Difficult Passages in the New Testament." And in not a few important places, where he could not adopt the view advocated in the MS. he was revising, he rewrote whole paragraphs. In these ways the Bulgarian version of the commentary felt his influence strongly; and if the work cannot fairly be spoken of as his, his is at least the guiding and master hand throughout it.

That influence may be briefly characterised. He was never laboured. He had the gift of first rapidly seeing straight to the heart of a subject, and then making it clear to his readers in a few plain and lucid sentences. His tendency was to prune, thus leaving the rest light, luminous, and stimulating. His way out of a difficulty was always simple, never tortuous or complicated, and so inspired confidence. And then, his standpoint of interpretation was invariably that of intense humility before God. With a robust Calvinism, he always left God absolute on His throne, feeling sure that, whatever might be the apparent difficulties, the Judge of all the earth would do right. He had the humility of boundless trust; and his confidence in God was thus implicit because it merged into intense and saint-like love. In his interpretation of Scripture there never was, therefore, any sternness or harshness. The spirit of adoption in him was too thorough to make it possible for him to think of the sovereignty of God apart from His love. In the issues raised by the later scholarship, Dr. Riggs took a distinctly conservative ground. In the course of time the evangelical work in Bulgaria will need more elaborate and extended commentaries; but it will never get anything more trustworthy in interpretation or more virile in tone than this first one which it in so large a measure owes to Dr. Riggs.

The other great Bible-aid which Dr. Riggs gave Bulgaria was the Bible Dictionary, every line of which was either written or closely edited by him. Marked, in so far as its contents correspond to those of the commentary, by the same characteristics, the dictionary also gave ample

scope to Dr. Riggs's wide learning, safe judgment, astonishing memory, and minute accuracy. It produced a great sensation when published in 1884. The native press wrote of it in terms of unmeasured praise, and took occasion from it to address some very pointed remarks to their own clergy. It has had a wide sale, and is now nearly exhausted; but again, Dr. Riggs, though dead, will yet speak to Bulgaria; for the complete materials for a new edition, corrected up to the latest knowledge, were prepared by him during the last two or three years of his life, and await publication in the near future.

Finally, Dr. Riggs became in special manner the sweet singer of the Bulgarian Israel. Dr. Long began the translating of hymns before him; and, in all, fourteen pens besides Dr. Riggs's have contributed to the Hymnal; but his pen kept at work more regularly and for a longer period than any other. The Bulgarian collection, as enlarged by the newly issued supplement, comprises 626 hymns; and of these, 478, or somewhat over 76 per cent., are his some of them being original. The record is astonishing, for the comparative poverty of the Bulgarian language in monosyllables, and its embarrassing wealth in words of polysyllabic length, render versification in the ordinary metres unusually difficult. Dr. Riggs's hymns wonderfully preserve under these circumstances the thought of the originals; yet they are more than mere versified translations. They have the grace and turn of true poetry; while many of them carry the worshipper along with an inspiration of diction and with a swing and a vigour not excelled in the best English hymns. Activity in this line was hardly an effort to him; rather it became the loved solace of the last years—and indeed of the last months and weeks—of his life, when extreme weakness permitted him no other kind of labour. And the very last hymns that he contributed to the supplement, only three weeks before his death, are amongst the finest that he wrote. And in addition to these 478 hymns and a few temperance songs that he prepared, Dr. Riggs also translated a large number of Sunday School hymns for the infant and junior classes, finding it as easy to write down to the level of the little ones as up to the level of the experienced saint. The children delight in the songs; and so his work gives powerful aid in the Sunday Schools and Kindergartens.

Dr. Riggs made one extended and important tour in Bulgaria, attended annual meetings in all the interior stations, occasionally preached, contributed now and then to the *Zornitza*, and through that medium gave to the nation his

wife's valuable "Letters to Mothers." Everywhere he was most highly esteemed for his learning and his long and valuable labours; and those who knew him venerated him for his gentle and simple and kind and saintly character. But his work for Bulgaria was mainly done in the study and the office. And the Christians of the land realise that they have supreme reason to thank God for the gift of the man who gave them in their pure, native, modern tongue the Bible, the Bible Dictionary, the New Testament Commentary and the Hymnal—the four first needs of the religious life.

The closing address was given by Rev. H. S. Barnum, D.D., of the American Mission at Constantinople, on

DR. RIGGS AS A MAN.

It is with admiration and in grateful recognition that we have spoken to-day of the rare scholarship of our departed father and brother, of his remarkable linguistic ability, and of his long and useful labours on missionary ground. But that which makes our tribute one of affection, and which brings so many of us here to offer it, was the character of the man. His mental endowments could be appreciated by many who met him but casually, or only saw the results of his labours; it was the special privilege of those of us who were admitted to a closer intimacy with the quiet and retiring man to perceive the moral qualities which were his grandest possession and his strongest attraction.

It is easier to feel the beauty and power of such a character than to analyse it. Even were we to succeed in naming all its different elements, the enumeration would no more enable one to appreciate the man than naming the colours of the rainbow would give one a conception of its splendour. It is the heart which feels the power of character, and that power a child may feel whose analytic ability is all undeveloped. But now that Dr. Riggs is no longer with us, and we have, for his sake, gladly seen ended the long days of weary yet patient waiting for the heavenly vision, it may help to bring the man more vividly before our minds if we recall some of the traits of his character.

The fundamental trait was consecration. There are few, if any, now living who knew Dr. Riggs in the days of his youth, but the abiding characteristics of his mind were evident. We cannot imagine him brought to the missionary field by a romantic feeling, or by a wave of sympathy with the missionary calling sweeping through the college or seminary where he studied, or by a general desire to do good, without thinking of the consequences. It must always have been in the nature of the man to investigate, to count

the cost, and to look on all sides of the question. From what we knew of him later, we can say with as much confidence as if we had been the friends of his student days, that he knew, as well as it was possible for a young man to know, what the life he was choosing meant. Not impulsively but deliberately he took the step which, seventy years ago, called for readiness to bear greater hardship than is the ordinary lot of the missionary to-day. I have called consecration a trait in the *character* of Dr. Riggs, as true consecration always is. The single *act* of choosing missionary service was but one expression of the abiding fact that duty, and not self-interest, controlled his life. This spirit of consecration was strikingly shown again, when he declined the flattering and attractive offer of a professorship in Union Seminary, and came back to his work in the Orient. The same consecration breathed in his daily life and constituted its most winning charm. He was a Christian Nazarite, who had given himself to a life-long service. And it was sweetly evident to those whose lives touched his, who heard his prayers and the helpful comment with which he often accompanied the reading of the Bible, that his consecration was not to any abstract duty, but to a glorious Person, to whom he was bound by ties of strongest love and gratitude.

Another trait of Dr. Riggs was conscientiousness. There are good men who do not intentionally do wrong, but who live in an easy, careless way, with no very delicate sense of right and duty, and not holding themselves to a very strict account of their conduct. Such was not the character of him of whom we speak. His conscientiousness did not go to the extreme of asceticism, for he had a sound common sense which kept him from all fads and excesses. But he was scrupulously conscientious in everything. This was seen in his use of his time. So long as he had strength for work, he esteemed it both a duty and a delight to work. If his strength permitted but one or two hours of work a day, he limited himself to that, but that much he did faithfully. Through much of his life he suffered from physical weakness, yet the total result of his life-work was marvellous, because of the conscientious use he made of his hours and minutes.

And so, his conscientiousness appeared in his use of money. This was true with reference to the money of the Board. For some reason, the question of his salary for the present year was left undecided, and Dr. Barton, the secretary at Boston having charge of his mission, suggested that my salary be taken as fixing the amount of his. I have two notes of inquiry, written by Dr. Riggs at the beginning of the

present year, and the decision to which he came was to ask for less than the amount to which he was entitled, and which the Board would gladly have given him had he lived. He ever felt that the Lord's money is to be used with care, and that to waste it is sin.

And he had the same feeling with reference to his own money. He lived economically, guarding against needless expenditure, and yet he did not go to the extreme of denying himself and family what was essential for health and comfort, neither did he selfishly lay up for his own benefit. He saved that he might use. He gave 1000 dollars towards the rebuilding of Aintab College, which was destroyed by fire. He contributed an equal amount towards the endowment fund of Anatolia College. He put of his own money into the publication work, and especially into the Bulgarian Commentary on the New Testament, the preparation of which was one of his last labours. Those near and dear to him had frequent proofs of his generosity, and while his body was lying in his house awaiting the burial service, two Armenian priests who had called to express their sympathy, told me how liberally he had given in aid of the poor in his own neighbourhood.

Dr. Riggs was an humble man. This was a quality, the fragrance of which we detected, as we do the sweet scent of the violet, by his presence in the room. He was not boastful, he did not talk much of what he had done. He could not but know that his linguistic gifts were rare, and he took pleasure in the public recognition of his services given by his Alma Mater on the seventieth anniversary of his graduation. But he let others tell what he had done. The beautifully illuminated address presented to him some years ago by the British and Foreign Bible Society he kept out of sight, and this was a characteristic act. There was a time when our aged brother, eminent saint as we all felt him to be, doubted whether he was worthy to be numbered among God's people, or had any inward evidence that he had been the subject of renewing grace. Happily, these clouds of doubt passed away long before the end of his life.

We should omit one of the most striking characteristics of Dr. Riggs were we to fail to mention his loyalty to truth. Considering his physical weakness, we marvelled that he kept himself so well informed with regard to the progress of science, and especially with regard to current events in the world's history. It was delightful to see one who knew that the crossing must be near, so eager to see the papers, and so interested in news of the world he was about to leave. But one could not converse with him for even a few

minutes without hearing something from his lips which showed that he was interested in the world as the world which Christ had redeemed, and that he watched passing events for evidence that the Kingdom of Christ was advancing, and that more of his fellow-men were being brought to share in the blessings of the Gospel.

Dr. Riggs was conservative in his theological views, without being narrow. He received his theological training at Andover under Dr. Woods, in the days when the teachings of Dr. Park, who later occupied the same chair, would have been considered heretical and dangerous liberalism. But he was not one of those who issue from the seminary with stereotyped views which know no change, and no progress. Though few knew the Bible better than he, he welcomed new light upon it, and such light he was continually seeking. He accepted the demonstrations of geological science, and adopted the later view as to the length of the creative days. He came to welcome and enjoy the participation of women in social religious meetings, and those of us who know the feeling prevailing in Presbyterian and Congregational churches in America on this point a whole generation after the days of his youth, can appreciate what a change of sentiment this indicates.

But Dr. Riggs was a conservative theologian, and I, for one, am glad that he was so. He did not go on the supposition that the higher and more destructive criticism is, the truer it is. He regarded with much apprehension the conclusions of reverent critics like Driver, Briggs and Harnach. The Bible was, for him, the infallible Word of God. The revelation which it contains of the Divine will and character, and of the way of salvation, he regarded as the most priceless of human possessions. Anything which seemed to him to throw doubt on the credibility or authority of the Bible, he looked upon with a dread almost amounting to horror.

And would we have had it otherwise? Not in the van of higher criticism was the place of our revered father. The church needs no additional impulse to urge it forward in this direction. The influence which Dr. Riggs could most fittingly exert, and for which we are grateful to him, was one tending to hold us back from advancing too rapidly in the line of new theological thought, and from giving up what are vital parts of the truth of God. And if he failed to accept some of the facts which modern criticism seems to have demonstrated, it was better so than that he should go a step too far in the other direction. His conservatism became him well.

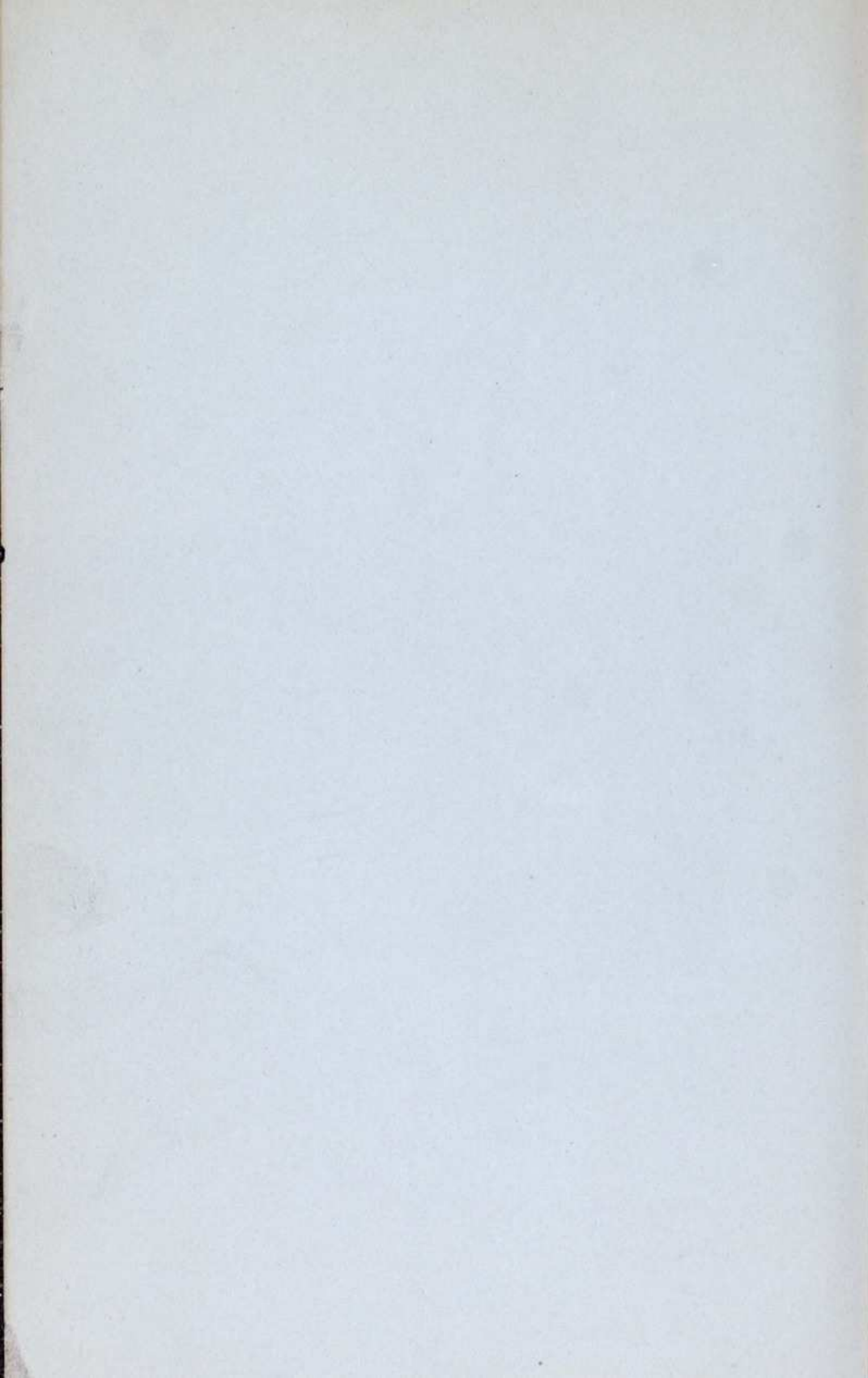
For those of us who knew Dr. Riggs and saw in him these noble qualities, the memorial service in which we unite to-day is not a perfunctory one, but a tribute of sincere love and gratitude. Thank God that we knew him here, and came under the influence of his life and character! May we one day be with him again in the world where there is no growing old, and where we shall know fully the truth, along the way to which the church is advancing gradually, through centuries of study and discussion.

After Dr. Barnum had concluded his remarks, prayer was offered by Rev. W. A. Farnsworth, D.D., of Cæsarea, now the senior missionary of the American Board in Turkey.

The congregation then joined in the hymn:

“Why should our tears in sorrow flow,
When God recalls his own.”

and the meeting was closed with the benediction by Dr. Farnsworth.



PA5-16