



REV. CLEON KEYES

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✻ AN APPRECIATION ✻

∴ By A. N. White ∴

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By A. N. WHITE

DEDICATED TO THE OLD BAPTIST PREACHERS
OF KENTUCKY. WHO HAVE COURAGEOUSLY FACED
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THEIR VOCATION,
BORNE THE BURDEN AND HEAT OF THE DAY OF
LIFE, KEPT THE FAITH, FINISHED THEIR COURSE,
AND ARE NOW WAITING FOR THE CALL OF THE
MASTER TO COME UP HIGHER.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the closing years of his life, Paul, the aggressive apostle and devoted missionary to the Gentiles, in a letter to his young friend, the pastor of the church at Ephesus, reviews his own career. And part of the letter reads thus: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me on that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing." What a magnificent record! What a glorious prospect! What an inspiring ideal to set before the young Timothy!

And there have been men since Paul's day who have lived noble lives and wrought with steady, earnest purpose to honor God and help men to saner thinking and nobler living. Personal contact with a man of this mould of character, a man who maintained high ideals and fought the battles of life and ran its race according to the rules laid down by the master umpire, would make it easier for a man to give himself to the right and cheerfully meet the obligations which the providence of God had imposed on him. And there are not a few, laymen and pastors, some gone to their reward, some still living, who can testify to the uplifting influence of the pastor who for a third of a century preached the gospel in Lewisburg Baptist church and exemplified its truths in the community by a godly walk and upright conversation.

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I.

ANCESTRY.

The subject of this sketch, Cleon Keyes, comes of a good old English family that emigrated to America in the year 1653 and settled in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Wherever the descendants of these early New England settlers have found themselves they have borne an honorable part in the civic, educational and religious institutions of the country. Gershom Keyes, his direct ancestor and from whom the Southern branch of the Keyes family is descended, left New England some time in the second quarter of the eighteenth century and settled at Harper's Ferry, in what is now known as Jefferson county, West Virginia, on the Potomac river, which forms the boundary line of the State with Maryland, and at the mouth of the Shenandoah, where the united streams force their way through the Blue Ridge Mountains. The scenery around Harper's Ferry is celebrated for its beauty and grandeur. So close an observer as Thomas Jefferson pronounced the passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge one of the most stupendous scenes in nature and well worth a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to look upon it. In the midst of this grand and beautiful handiwork of nature the South-

ern branch of the Keyes family was cradled. There is still extant a letter written by George Washington, in the year 1762, to Gershom Keyes concerning the survey of the tract of land on which the town of Harper's Ferry is located, and though one hundred and seventy years have passed since then the Ferry is still in the possession of the Keyes family.

THE PIONEER SCHOOL.

In the early years of the last century Frank Keyes and his wife, Elizabeth Langfitté Keyes, settled on the east bank of the little Kanawha river, about five miles from the town of Elizabeth, in what is now Wirt county, West Virginia. To them were born eight children. Cleon, the subject of this sketch, was born October 23, 1822. His childhood and early surroundings differed in no way from that of the children of other pioneer settlers. And it does not tax our credulity to believe that he was brought up in the school of hardship, self-denial and self-reliance. Although his father was never identified with any church and never made a public profession of faith in Christ, yet the home in which Cleon first saw the light was ruled by Christian influences. His mother was a God-fearing, exemplary Christian, and she diligently taught her children the love of all that is good and noble and the hatred of all that is wrong and degrading. The exemplary life and teachings of the mother were not lost on the son and the memory of them was fresh in his mind till the last, and he fondly dwelt on them while many events that occurred later in life had faded from his memory.

The opportunities for acquiring an education in those early pioneer days were very limited, and in most homes books were few, and for the greater number of children the schoolhouse was remotely located and offered meagre accommodations in the way of physical comforts to the children that had the good fortune to be able to attend. And not infrequently the man who wielded the birch was not a pastmaster in the art of teaching the young idea how to shoot. With all these handicaps, however, the pioneer boy was bent on going to school, and being possessed of an eager desire to acquire an education, in company with an older brother and two sisters he walked the miles that stretched between his father's home and the schoolhouse, and in doing so he often had to wade the creek or the river. Being ourselves in the possession and use of illuminating oils and gases that furnish every farmhouse and village with light almost equal to the light of day, we can appreciate the eagerness of the boy to acquire an education when he tells us that after the long walk from school in the afternoon he would gather brush and pine-knots to make a light by which to study his lessons and read the few books to be found in the home and in the neighborhood.

III.

EARLY RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS.

In early life, when nothing more than a lad, he united with the Methodist Episcopal church on probation, as it was and is still the custom of that church to receive members. However, when he began to study the New Testament as to what constitutes Scriptural baptism and church membership he changed his views on these subjects and was not long in deciding that his convictions compelled him to adopt the teachings held and proclaimed by the Baptists. Accordingly, he applied for membership in the Baptist church located in the neighborhood, and made profession of faith in Christ and was immersed the first Sunday in June, A. D. 1840. The ordinance of baptism was administered by Elder Enoch Rector, at Reedy Riffle, in Little Kanawha river, and he became a member of Bethesda Baptist church. And if ever he entertained any doubts as to the wisdom of the step that he took at that time and the correctness of his denominational affiliations no one ever heard him give voice to them.

Soon after he was received into the fellowship of the church God laid his hand on the young man and marked him for his own, and so strong was the con-

viction that he was called of God to proclaim the glad tidings of great joy he could say with Paul, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." He was bound to give himself to this work and when the "I must" in response to the Divine leading was changed into the "I will" then followed, as in every case of duty recognized and accepted, a glorious freedom of action. We come upon this imperative word "must" again and again in the ministry of our Lord. It was the law of the spirit of his life. And does not this same law still operate in the heart of every one born of the Holy Spirit and called of God to preach the gospel? It has the same all-dominating sense of obligation which caused Paul to say that a necessity was laid upon him to preach the gospel. And in that sweet bondage is found the soul's freedom.

But in the case of our young man there were many difficulties in the way, and to many persons they would have seemed insurmountable. And they looked formidable enough to him. First of all there was the impediment in his speech which often made it difficult for him to coin his words properly and quite as difficult for others to understand him. And more serious still, when a mere boy he had become addicted to the habit of profane swearing and it was his wont to preface almost every word with a terrible oath. After his conversion and reception into the church this deplorable habit was not easily thrown off, and its inexorable grip on him caused him great sorrow and humiliation, and there was ever present

the apprehension that he would stultify the profession he had made and bring reproach on the church of which he was a member. Added to these was another serious handicap, viz.: the want of any thing like a proper education, and there was no encouraging prospects by which the difficulties in the way could be overcome. He was, however, so firmly persuaded that God had called him to preach the gospel, he requested the church to grant him—in the quaint phrase current at that time—“the privilege of exercising his gifts.” The sanction of the church was obtained and on the fourth Sunday in February, 1841, when he was little more than eighteen years old, he preached his first sermon and he lived to witness the seventieth anniversary of his beginning to preach the gospel. His text on this eventful occasion was: “Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.”

It was an embarrassing occasion for the tyro in the roll of a preacher. The house was full to overflowing. The whole community turned out to hear their neighbor boy. There were present his own family, his neighbors and friends. The girls and boys with whom he had romped on the playground and who had been parties to his piccadillos, were looking up into his eyes. And not least there was present his mother beloved, all atremble with joy and apprehension, joy that her boy would become a herald of the cross and apprehension lest he should not acquit himself creditably. There is no record as to how well he succeeded

in his maiden effort to preach the gospel, but it is in evidence that in less than a month from that day he was licensed of the church to preach.

IV.

HIS FIRST REVIVAL.

During the spring and summer of 1841 he preached occasionally in his immediate neighborhood and the surrounding communities. In the autumn of the same year he went to Rector College in Pruntytown, Taylor county, to prosecute his studies under the direction of Rev. Charles Wheeler, a graduate of Brown University and a classmate of Adoniram Judson, and at that time the principal educator in that part of the State. Pruntytown was something over a hundred miles from his home, and yet when the time came for him to bid the homefolks good-bye he started out afoot and walked almost the entire distance, carrying all his possessions in his hands. For some reason or other, unknown to the writer, he remained in college only a few months, and henceforth his studies and reading were prosecuted alone in connection with the preaching of the gospel and caring for the churches to the charge of which the providence of God called him. While still in college, however, he was sent by Rev. James Gawthorp to the West Fork church in Marion county to supply for him one Sunday, Mr. Gawthorp being sick and unable to go. The result of this visit was perhaps a surprise to the

young preacher, to the pastor who sent him, and to the church to which he was sent. However that may be, the church was so impressed by the preaching of this young man, who was still less than twenty years old, that they invited him to remain and preach for them a series of sermons. And thus encouraged by the open door before him and stimulated by the approval of his brethren, without any expectation on his part and without any preparation when he went to the community, he found himself in the midst of his first revival. He caught the ear of the community and riveted their attention from the first, and God honored his word and many souls were converted and never did a young mother rejoice more over the coming of her first-born than did this young preacher rejoice over the first fruits of his ministry. During this series of sermons he preached from this text: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," and the immediate, visible fruits of this sermon were the conversion of twenty-three souls who made public profession of faith in Christ. There were twenty-nine conversions during the meeting and of this number twenty-eight joined the Baptist church, one going to another denomination.

Soon after the close of this meeting our young licentiate was invited by the church to preach for them once a month, the regular pastor, Rev. James Gawthorp, preaching twice a month. This arrangement proved satisfactory, the old pastor and the young Timothy working together harmoniously for a

few months, when, to enlarge his sphere of usefulness the church called for the ordination of the younger man. Accordingly he was ordained in the spring of 1842, and commissioned by the West Fork church and sent forth to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances in accordance with the views as held and proclaimed by the Baptist denomination. Rev. Charles Wheeler, his preceptor, was Moderator of the council. Revs. James Gawthorp and Thomas Swigert were also members of the council.

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FIRST PASTORATE.

Mr. Keyes at the time of his ordination had not completed his twentieth year. Within a few months from the day of his ordination he became pastor of Miracle Run Baptist church in Monongalia county. In after years, when speaking of his early ministry, he was wont, humorously to say that, to make sure there should rest no shadow of doubt on his qualifications as a bishop, he proceeded to complete them by taking unto himself a wife, and thus before he was a full-fledged citizen of the Commonwealth, viz.: on February 23, 1843, he was married to Joanna Holland, daughter of Rezin and Joanna Hollard. Mrs. Keyes, who was a true helpmeet and devoted mother, after several years of patient suffering, survived till the year 1873, when her sufferings were ended by the summons from the angel of death and she went to dwell on high in the city which hath foundations and whose builder and maker is God.

Though small of stature and having no look of the athlete about him, yet our young preacher was making rapid strides. Converted and baptized before he was eighteen years old, licensed to preach and having ended his collegiate course, he was ordained and married

before he had attained his majority. He was certainly making some progress. But I am sure no one who knew him well would gather from these facts, however highly our hero honored the wedded life, and however great the demand for preachers, that a young man would be justified in rushing into either matrimony or the ministry without thoughtful consideration of his course and the fullest preparation for both steps. We all know what an ardent advocate of education he was for both the sons and daughters of our people, and our Baptist schools and colleges had no warmer supporter than he. I have a vivid remembrance of one of his speeches on the subject of theological education. It was delivered before the Bracken Association in the early seventies, while Dr. Boyce was in Kentucky canvassing the churches to raise the endowment to justify the removal of the Seminary from Greenville to Louisville. The advantages of having the Seminary in Kentucky were set forth by himself and others, and after he had appealed to the churches to come forward and endow our school of the prophets he closed with this homely and forcible illustration. If a man had to fell a forest he would economize time and labor by looking well to the temper and edge of the axe he was to use, and so long as either could be greatly improved it would be wise to defer the beginning of the work. And if he could speak to the young men who are to-day contemplating the ministry, or any other vocation, he would say remember the childhood and the

waiting time of the Son of Mary in the Galilean hills. Don't think all the opportunities of preaching the gospel and winning success are rushing by so fast that you must throw yourself into the thick of the fight before you are equipped for the fray.

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VI.

BECOMES A MISSIONARY.

In the same year of his marriage, he was appointed missionary in Preston county by the General Association of Virginia. In 1844 he was called for half-time service to the care of the Middleville church, in Taylor county, and in the autumn of 1849 he located in Pruntytown, the county-seat. Early in the year 1850 he became pastor of the Baptist church in that town, and in July of the same year he became pastor of the church at Clarksburg, giving to each of them two Sundays in each month.

Sometime in the autumn of 1850, Mr. Keyes conducted a series of meetings with the Baptist church in Parkersburg, West Virginia, which stirred the whole community and resulted in the conversion of eighty souls. One of those converted on that occasion was a young man, just past eighteen years old, who ever afterwards retained a vivid remembrance of the meeting and the preacher who conducted it. The late Charles Rhoads, of Ohio, is the man to whom I refer, and who for thirty-five years rendered faithful and eminently efficient service in the Sunday School cause in the Buckeye State.

From the "The Memorial of Mr. Rhoads," by Prof. Ira M. Price, I quote the following:

"When the biography of Ohio Baptists is written and their Bible School history is completed the name of Charles Rhoads will be deservedly honored. No one more fully appreciated the work he did than the writer, and at this moment it is a matter for regret that more exact notes of his work in Ohio are not at hand. . . . A less energetic man would have failed, a more conservative man would have made little impression. The work demanded was that of a reformer and organizer. Coming into Ohio largely through the influence of Judge T. W. Ewart, who was one of the most efficient church and Sunday School workers Ohio has produced, Brother Rhoads conducted the Sunday School Institutes, as they were called, throughout the State, and at the same time acted as the most effective promoter of the work of the Publication Society that we have so far had. To Brother Rhoads the Sunday School was no mere Sunday kindergarten, but the Bible studying service of the church. . . . His plea was that the school must be made in the largest sense a school into which the membership of the church and as many others as possible should be gathered and a systematic course of Bible study pursued. In his later years he came to regard a regular course of study, graded to the different ages and acquirements as needful in sustaining anything like a successful result."

At the age of seventy, Mr. Rhoads was still engaged

in Sunday School work. But in the spring of 1903 he began to note signs of failing strength, and he gave up his customary active life and returned to his home in Granville, Ohio. He died in a hospital in Columbus, October 20, 1906, where he submitted to a surgical operation, after which he survived only two days. Concerning this crisis he wrote to his son-in-law, Prof. Ira M. Price, under date of September 25, 1906, to this effect: "I have been looking forward to this for over three years. I am not confident of a favorable result, but am hopeful. I shall live if I can. If my time has come to die, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. I shall grieve only for my wife's sorrow."

Since writing the foregoing paragraph I have received a copy of a letter, written by Brother Keyes, concerning the meeting at Parkersburg. It is inserted without abridgement, because of its pertinence in this connection and because it was the last letter written by the aged pastor, and is dated three and a half years before his death occurred:

"Kentucky, Oct., 1907.

"Hon D. D. Johnson, Esq., Parkersburg, W. Va.:

"Dear Bro.:—Your kind favor of the 20th ult., was received several days since, requesting me to give you such account as I can of the Parkersburg church. When I knew it, but especially the meeting held with

them in October and November, 1850. I shall confine my communication to the meeting.

“I very reluctantly engaged in that meeting. The reason of my reluctance was that in the fall of 1848, with Bro. Rector as pastor, at his request, I spent a week there, preaching twice a day, but utterly failed to arouse the church, or the unconverted. The meeting, it seemed, was a complete failure, and at its close I resolved never to attempt another protracted meeting in Parkersburg.

“In 1850 the Parkersburg Association met in Sistersville. I attended, and the messengers from Parkersburg, with Elder Hoff, who was supplying the church, urged me to go to Parkersburg in the fall and hold a meeting with the church. I frankly told them I could not do it. I was very busy with my own churches, could hardly spare the time, but most of all because of my promise not to hold a meeting there. They insisted and urged and finally it was agreed to leave the matter with Elder John D. Riley, who, after hearing my statement about the former effort and my solemn promise, decided against me; said the promise was a bad one, better to be broken than kept. So there was nothing left me but to yield. I then told them that the Lord willing, on Friday night before the third Sunday in October, I would begin a meeting, but could only promise two weeks, no more.

“But I did not reach them until Sunday, and preached the first sermon that night. The brethren had started a prayer meeting Wednesday night be-

fore. I devoted the first week preaching to the church, saying nothing to the unconverted. But there was evidently a deep interest among the unsaved, as was manifest by the numbers who presented themselves at every invitation for prayer.

“Wednesday, the 15th day from the starting of the prayer meeting, was a day of fasting and prayer. It was well attended, and deep interest manifested. Early in the afternoon, I heard some one singing in the gallery. I looked up and saw ‘Aunt Jinny,’ an old colored woman, member of the church weaving backward and forward, singing in a high treble key, ‘If you git dar before I do, look out for me, I’s e coming, too.’ I said to myself, thank the Lord, it has come at last. Up to that time there had not been a single conversion. That day there were five, all young people who joyfully professed faith in Christ. From that time the meeting moved on gloriously. There were conversions at every service as well as at their homes. It was useless to think of leaving them, so the meetings were continued till the third Sunday night in November. It had resulted in a precious harvest. There were forty added to the Baptist church, thirty-six by baptism and four by letter. How many converts in all I do not remember. Some united with the Methodists, some with the Presbyterians, some with the country churches. Take it all in all, it was perhaps the most remarkable, and in its influences, far reaching revival I was ever engaged

in. It was a meeting of much prayer and face to face work with the unsaved and backsliders.

“Elder Hoff was the leader. He entered heart and soul into the work and worked wisely, Deacon Dudley and wife came into the church by letter and became a tower of strength and influence. D. T. C. Farrow and his brother, Joseph, were roused as never before and did effective work. Add to these Deacons Hopkins and Simpson, Coffey and Tims, and others, all Godly, earnest men and women, fired with love to God and for souls, and it is easy to see how the meeting was a success. Deacon Farrow is, so far as I can recall, the only worker with me in that meeting now living. They are all gone, entered the mansions above singing the praises of God and the Lamb in that home ‘where congregations ne’er break up and Sabbaths never end.’

“My daughter has just reminded me that I have failed to make mention of Brother Charles Rhoads, one of the converts, who made a very useful Christian.

“Yours in Christ,
C. KEYES.”

“P. S.—Dear Bro. Johnson: Please excuse pencil. I can’t handle a pen well and my children have refused to copy, saying it is plainly written and may be more appreciated if in my own handwriting. This may be so, so I yield. I shall be eighty-five the 23rd

of this month, totally deaf and nearly blind. This is the only letter I have tried to write in years.

“Good-bye, K.”

The pastorates at Pruntytown and Clarksburg began within a few months of each other and ended at the same time, 1857, when Mr. Keyes removed to Kentucky. The data for any thing like a satisfactory history of the work at the former of these churches could not be obtained, but reliable general information shows that the work of Mr. Keyes was very successful. During one meeting in which the preaching was done by the pastor sixty souls were converted and received into the church on profession of faith in Christ and by baptism.

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VII.

CLARKSBURG.

The Baptist church at Clarksburg was organized A. D., 1848. Sixteen constituent members went into the organization. Their first pastor was Rev. James Woods, who preached for the church once a month. During the first year following the organization there was very little change in the condition of the little church, and the outlook for it was not very hopeful. In February, Mr. Keyes, then just a little past twenty-seven years old, was invited to come to Clarksburg and hold a series of meetings in the Baptist church. The records do not show that he was requested to discuss the doctrines that distinguish Baptists from other denominations. The meetings continued for several days and nights and the preaching at the Baptist church arrested the attention of the whole community. The people came and heard the word and the Holy Spirit was present to make it effective, and as a result of these meetings nineteen souls were converted and received into the church.

During these meetings Mr. Keyes never shrank from preaching a full gospel, though the church for which he was preaching was few in numbers and had little social prestige, and less financial standing. The

majority of those who attended the meetings were Pedo-baptists and had scant sympathy with the doctrines that distinguished the Baptists from other denominations. But the preacher emphasized the doctrines of salvation by grace, a converted membership in the constitution of a church, believers' baptism, and he boldly proclaimed that the immersion of a believing penitent and that alone met the requirements of the New Testament as to the ordinance of baptism. His forceful presentation of the New Testament doctrines on these subjects aroused opposition in the community and to neutralize the doctrines proclaimed at the Baptist church the Pedo-baptists called to their assistance a distinguished professor of theology from Pennsylvania. He came and the preacher and his subject were heralded abroad far and wide. Of course, he preached on the subject of baptism. Mr. Keyes was present and at the close of the sermon he arose and modestly asked permission to say a word. His request was granted and to the surprise of everybody present and to the consternation of some of his friends he announced that at a certain time and place he would reply to the arguments in the sermon to which they had just listened. Many of his friends considered his intellectual furnishings and logical acumen insufficient to cope with so formidable a champion of long established ecclesiastical practices. But Mr. Keyes' able and enthusiastic statement and defense of the teachings and practices of the Baptists completely disarmed the Pedo-

baptist champion, silenced his guns and the controversy for the time being was at an end. Henceforth, Baptist teachings and practices were better understood and more respected in Clarksburg, and the little church from this time held an honorable place in the community and exercised a commanding influence among the forces that lead to righteousness and the uplift of men. And today after the lapse of sixty years, Mr. Keyes is remembered in Clarksburg as a successful preacher and an able champion of Baptist principles.

Although the organization had been effected something like a year and a half the little flock still had no home and were worshipping in the court house. Judge Duncan, one of the leading citizens of the community, had given the church a lot on which to erect a house of worship, but it was not centrally located and Mr. Keyes persuaded them not to build on it, but to exchange it for another lot more convenient for their purpose. This lot also belonged to Judge Duncan, who on request agreed to exchange with the church. In June, 1850, Mr. Woods, having resigned as pastor, at the request of the church, the General Association of Virginia appointed Mr. Keyes as their missionary at Clarksburg, and for the next seven years he preached for them two Sundays in each month.

When he accepted the care of the church and began his work in Clarksburg the temporal possessions of the whole church did not exceed five hundred dol-

lars. A good lot on which to build a house of worship had been secured but there was hanging over it a debt of one hundred and forty dollars, and a contract had been let for building the church. Between three hundred and fifty and four hundred dollars had been promised for building purposes. These subscriptions were in small sums, ranging from twenty-five cents up to a few that amounted some to ten and a very few to twenty-five dollars. The persons who had given these promises were scattered over a large part of North West Virginia and Western Pennsylvania. It is not surprising that many of these promises were never redeemed. In fact only about one-half of the money promised was collected and turned over to the treasurer of the church. The foundation of the building was laid in the fall of 1850, and there it rested till the spring of 1851, when Mr. Keyes sought an interview with the contractor about the work, and the latter frankly expressed doubts about the ability of the church to pay for the house when completed. To the surprise of the church and the community the pastor agreed to take the contract off the hands of the contractor, obligating himself to meet the payment of expenses already incurred and guaranteeing payment of contracts for brick work, lumber, and plastering.

This was the situation nine months after Mr. Keyes located in Clarksburg. The solid assets were almost a negligible quantity. But he went to work with not a dollar on hand and only a few small subscriptions,

scattered over a large extent of territory. He employed a foreman, had the present foundation torn out, laid a broader one and changed the whole plan of the building so that stronger walls and a more attractive house could be erected. The members of the church, then not more than forty in number, would gladly have relieved the embarrassment, but as nearly all of them were dependent on their daily labor for a living they had little to give. There was only one thing to do; go among the churches and ask for help. He started out and in canvassing the churches for money to build, he performed a marvellous amount of work and traveled on horseback over a large extent of country. In the prosecution of this work Mr. Keyes made two trips to Pittsburg, one to Cincinnati, one to Wheeling, one to Richmond, Fredericksburg, Warrenton, Culpepper C. H., and Berryville, Va. This may not strike one as a formidable undertaking. But we must bear in mind that the facilities for travelling sixty years ago were not what they are today. If we wished to visit now every place mentioned we could accomplish the work within a few days and the outlay of money would not be great, and the inconvenience and hardship would be negligible quantities. But to accomplish this work at the time of which I write necessitated an absence from home extending over weeks and even months and the covering of stretches of country through primeval forests that called for the finest courage and the greatest endurance.

But the main dependence for the success of the building enterprise was on the churches located in what was then called North West Virginia. From large numbers of persons small sums were gathered from time to time that in the aggregate amounted to a considerable sum. In all these financial struggles there were friends in Clarksburg who admired the splendid courage and heroic efforts of Mr. Keyes and his little flock, and they often came to the rescue and lent them small amounts to tide the work over difficulties. The house called for by the plans would be considered today modest enough for any village or rural congregation, but in that day it was regarded as an imposing structure and considered much beyond the attainment of the little band of Baptists in Clarksburg. The combined possessions of the whole church did not amount to more than five hundred dollars and to build such a house required the strongest faith and called for the most heroic efforts. But the pastor and his little congregation never lost heart and so they pushed on with the work till the building was completed and in the month of July, 1853, it was formally dedicated to the worship of God. Rev. John Winters, of Wheeling, preached the dedication sermon. Ever since the church was organized they had been worshipping in the court house, but now they had a home of their own. The house and furnishings cost the modest sum of \$2,500, and even this was beyond the original estimate.

No sooner was the church domiciled in their own

house of worship than they began another important movement, and on Sunday, August 7th, a Sunday School was organized, and so wisely and efficiently had the pastor managed his little congregation that much of the prejudice against Baptist principles had been allayed and very soon almost every family in the town was represented in the Baptist Sunday School.

In the autumn of 1853 Mr. Keyes had the assistance of Rev. Wm. Wood, of Pennsylvania, in a series of special meetings. Mr. Wood was a man of great spiritual power and had decided evangelistic gifts. It was a precious meeting and its quickening influence was felt throughout the whole community. The church was greatly edified and received into its membership about fifty souls, on profession of faith in Christ and by baptism. The cause was greatly strengthened, influentially, numerically and financially, several men of social prestige and possessed of means being among the new members. Their influence and financial assistance were greatly needed by the little church and they were not a disappointment to their pastor and brethren.

I close the history of Mr. Keyes' work in Clarksburg with a statement from Mr. Homer D. Boughner, who has furnished all the data for the narrative of the work in that town. He says: "If a church house was ever erected as the result of faith and prayer that old church was. It still stands as a monument to the wise leadership of Rev. Cleon Keyes, although not now used by the congregation. Pastor Keyes re-

mained in Clarksburg till 1857, when he went to Kentucky. He laid deep, spiritual foundations which have enabled the church to withstand more than one very acute situation and come forth victor. The name of no man who ever lived in Clarksburg is more highly revered than that of Cleon Keyes. When the present handsome new house of worship was about to be built in 1895, Bro. Keyes was invited to visit Clarksburg and to help in sollieting funds. This he did successfully. And at his suggestion and through his advice the old site was abandoned and the most desirable corner lot in town was purchased, upon which the present beautiful and well-appointed house of worship now stands. In a membership of over five hundred there still remains one of the constituent members of the church, Miss Martha A. Reager, one of the fast friends of Rev. Cleon Keyes during his pastorate. She frequently speaks of him and his work in those early days, and loves his memory."

VIII.

REMOVES TO KENTUCKY.

Mr. Keyes continued to serve the churches in Pruntytown and Clarksburg till July, 1857, when he was called to the Lewisburg church, in Mason county, Kentucky. And from that time on till the close of his active ministry his work and influence were given to churches in Bracken Association. During the thirty and more years of his active ministry among us he was more or less closely identified with every important movement among Kentucky Baptists. Our missionary enterprise and educational institutions ever had his ardent support.

In the year just mentioned his name first appears as pastor of and messenger from Lewisburg church, in connection with the names of Harlow Yancey, W. S. Calvert and Wm. L. Parker. Harlow Yancey and W. S. Calvert have long since finished their labors. Wm. L. Parker abides with us still. He has passed the ninetieth milestone in the pilgrimage of life and is expecting soon to obey the summons of the Master to join the general assembly and church of the first born whose names are written in heaven.

John Holladay, John Brown, W. W. Gardner, James W. Bullock, George Hunt and John DeGarmo

were the pastors, in so far as the record shows that welcomed Mr. Keyes to the Association, and not one of them lived to attend his funeral and speak a word of his life and work. When the writer of this sketch located at Carlisle in 1876, as pastor of the Baptist church there were eight or nine pastors, mostly young men, serving churches in the Association, some of whom have passed over the river, some have gone to other fields of labor, but not one of them is now residing in the Commonwealth. And only an occasional hand-grasp from his old friends and intimate co-laborers in the ministry at that time cheered him when the shadows of the evening of life were gathering around his couch and when he could no longer hear their voices and could with difficulty recognize their faces. During the more than fifty years of his sojourning among us, Lewisburg church honored herself by sending him as delegate to the annual meeting of the Association, and what is so rare as to be worthy of special note, is the fact that of the first fifty-two years in which he was commissioned to represent the church in the deliberations of the Association, on only two occasions did he fail to answer to roll-call, and those were occasions when deafness and partial blindness had come upon him and he had otherwise become physically unable to be present.

IX.

HARBINGERS OF WAR.

Just one year before Mr. Keyes cast in his lot with the people of Kentucky the Republican party became a national political organization, and three years from the time of his coming a Republican President was elected, and on the 4th of March, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States. Between the time of Mr. Lincoln's election and inauguration the country was greatly excited over the impending crisis. The political ferment was almost at the boiling point and only a little more agitation was necessary to bring about an explosion. That little agitation was forthcoming. On the 17th of December, 1860, a convention met in Charleston, and after three days of deliberation, passed a resolution declaring that the union hitherto existing between South Carolina and the other States was dissolved. The sentiment of secession spread with great rapidity. By the 1st of February, 1861, all the States bordering on the gulf of Mexico had passed ordinances of secession. On the 12th day of April, at half past four o'clock in the morning, the bombardment of Fort Sumter was begun. After thirty-four hours of terrific cannonading the fort was reduced to ruins,

set on fire and obliged to capitulate. Then the dogs of war were unleashed and from city, town and countryside there was a rush to arms and the world was soon to witness the devastation of one of the fairest countries upon which the sun ever shown, and the people of the Southland, with all their pride of birth and noble traditions were to be reduced to poverty and humiliation. The pillars of government trembled to the very base and the plough-share of confusion ran through society from center to circumference. Families were disrupted, the band of brother was raised against brother, and, in Kentucky, those who for years had been neighbors and friends found themselves on opposite sides of the line of cleavage. And not infrequently when the line of battle was formed brother would face brother in the sanguinary struggle; and it is a possibility that some soldier-boy that wore the blue was shot to the death by his own brother who wore the gray.

It is a very difficult thing for one to hold and maintain an absolutely neutral position on any question, however unimportant, but when the question at issue is of such gravity as to justify resort to the arbitrament of war, then the neutral man will be found to be the negative man in all the essentials of manhood and therefore a negligible factor in adjusting the world's difficulties. The world has yet to see the cold neutrality of an absolutely impartial judge, nor has it often seen the much bepraised man who could hold fast, without wavering the golden

mean between two jarring opinions. When questions of moment agitate church and State the man with good red blood in his heart cannot stand aloof and be indifferent concerning the issues involved. And if he be a Christian and a lover of his country he will feel that an imperative duty is laid on him to be informed so as to guide his actions. He will soon be found on one or the other side of the line of cleavage. He will simply scorn to play the roll of neutrality.

Cleon Keyes did his own thinking on questions political and ecclesiastical and he thought them out to a satisfactory end as a guide to his own conduct. And yet he had great respect for the man of honest convictions, however much they differed from his own. It never once occurred to him that a man could not be every whit a man, honest and conscientious, and yet differ radically with himself. And what he cordially granted to others, he asked the same of them concerning himself. If he allowed others to follow where their convictions led he, too, would follow his judgment in affairs political and ecclesiastical. The questions agitating the public mind at the time of which I am writing were questions about which patriots could honestly hold different views. And the result was that when the line of cleavage was drawn, friends and neighbors whose children had married and intermarried for generations throughout the whole State found themselves in opposing camps.

And when the glove of battle was thrown down by one side it was promptly taken up by the other and

there was no hesitation in the North or in the South when the call to arms was made. The South gave her best as evidence of her good faith in the contention. Often in the same company were found a father and his beardless boy side by side. And sometimes, too, an officer of high station would bestride his war-horse and under him in the ranks would be a son carrying a gun. And for four years the internecine destruction of property and life went on till the resources of the South were exhausted, and the ranks of the Southern army were thinned out to a mere shadow of their former numbers.

But the end came at last, as there comes an end to all things of human invention. The Southern boys did not come back as they went away. They left home to the music of braying horns and beating drums and banners streaming in the wind. Their hearts were elated with hope and they never believed it possible for defeat to be written in their calendar. Fathers and mothers were proud of the sons they sent forth in defense of their country, many of whom would never come back again. Four years hence some of them were to return home, some on crutches, some with armless sleeves, some with shot-riddled bodies and all with faces tanned with the suns of four summers and the winds of four winters. They had left homes that were the abodes of plenty, peace and happiness, and that were also the nurseries of faith, patriotism, education and refinement. They came back to find the land despoiled of its beauty and prosperity.

and in many places the homes that had sheltered them had been reduced to ashes and here and there were seen isolated chimneys that were only sad reminders of a vanished glory. I am aware that this picture does not exactly appertain to the condition of things in Kentucky at the close of the war. The people in the Cotton States were a solidarity in suffering and poverty after the war just as they had been a solidarity in prosperity and happiness before the war. But while the doctrine of secession was not so prevalent in Kentucky as it was further South, yet the number and character of those who looked with approval on the action of the Cotton States were to be an important factor in determining the result in many a hard fought battle, and when their convictions led them to identify themselves with the Southern movement they took their stand accordingly, and in doing so they antagonized the convictions of their neighbors and friends and thus it came about that families were disrupted and life-long friends were arrayed against each other and many of the members of our churches found themselves in different political camps. All were glad, however, whatever the complexion of their politics, when the fraternal conflict had come to an end and the survivors of the battlefield could return to their homes. And yet there was a sadness, a gloom and despondency that settled down like a pall over the whole Southland. There was one thought that sustained them; they

had done their best and were not ashamed to look the world in the face.

In the year A. D. 1525, one of the hotly contested battles of history was fought under the walls of the city of Pavia. The imperial legions of Spain were directed by Marshall Lanoy. The French army was commanded by their King, Francis I. The French arms were beaten and their king and his army were forced to surrender. When the French king extended his sword to Marshall Lanoy he looked him straight in the face and said: "Today we have lost all save honor."

After one of the fiercest and most sanguinary conflicts recorded in the annals of nations and extending over a space of four years, the wisest and bravest of the Southern leaders saw that the march of events was against them, and that it was useless to prolong the hopeless contest. And when, on April 9th, 1865, Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House, and the half-starved and half-clad armies of the South disbanded and returned to their homes they could look the world in the face and say: "We have lost all save honor." And subsequent events have amply justified the proud boast, and today the children of the men who followed Lee and Jackson in Virginia and of those who followed Johnston and Bragg in Tennessee and Georgia, have no more precious heritage than the fact that their fathers wore the gray.

DAYS OF RECONSTRUCTION.

When active hostilities closed and "grim visaged war smoothed his wrinkled front," a sigh of relief went up from every heart. But the country was far from being in the condition it was when the war cloud burst on the land in 1861. The courage and patriotism of men who are willing to stand up and be shot at to maintain their convictions have always challenged the admiration of the world. The literature of courage has always been popular and the history of the brave is written in letters of gold. But unfortunately, like the wheat in the parable of the sower, along with this splendid courage there grow up also the basest passions of the human heart and the crimes committed in the name of liberty and patriotism are legion, and the noxious weeds of suspicion and distrust remain to curse the community long after the smoke of battle has blown away. Such times demand men worthy of trust in every community and church. Confidence and fraternal regard must be restored or there can be no society worth the having and no church or Commonwealth worthy of respect.

Happily for the churches in Bracken Association

they had among them a man whose character was a guarantee of all that was noble and uplifting, and who had the confidence of his brethren. They might differ with him on many important questions, both political and ecclesiastical, yet could they trust him. Though aided greatly by others in the stupendous work before him, Cleon Keyes was the leading spirit in restoring confidence and healing the breaches in the churches and community, that sprung up in the wake of a four-years' sanguinary struggle. And well might the bravest, wisest and most hopeful ask: "Who is sufficient for these things?" It was like the task of reconstructing society anew and the work was not that of building with stones fresh hewn from the quarry; but the work was the more difficult one of collecting and refitting together the fragments that had been so badly misshapen by the malign influences which prevailed during that turbulent period. Fortunately for Mr. Keyes and the churches in the Association he was richly endowed with the saving grace of common sense, and possessed of a heart made tender and sympathetic by divine love. "With malice toward none and charity for all," he stood ready to be used of God to strengthen the things that remained. No man had a keener appreciation of what was lost by the upheaval of the four-years' war than Cleon Keyes, and no man had discerned more truly the value of what remained, and no one recognized more quickly the importance of a speedy restoration of confidence and good will in the whole community.

That the social, political and ecclesiastical atmosphere in Kentucky was surcharged with the spirit of alienation and distrust that prevailed in the whole country we can readily believe; and that the churches in Bracken Association were greatly disturbed by the diverse political views among them admits of no doubt; and the fact that so few of the malign influences of the war descended to curse the churches after the smoke of battle had blown away, was due largely to the personal influence of the Lewisburg pastor, aided by a few wise brethren of the same mind and heart. The names of many brethren, whose influence and counsel aided this work of restoring confidence, might be mentioned, but the want of space forbids the insertion of only two, viz.: A. M. Peed and Harlow Yancey, the latter of whom was regarded by Mr. Keyes as one of the safest advisers that a pastor ever had.

After a careful reading of the minutes of the Association, covering the whole period of the war, there is found not one reference to the fact there had been a civil war, nor any reference to the fact that the soil of Kentucky had felt the tread of armies and that further South the land had been laid waste, industries paralyzed and that in almost every family the badge of mourning was worn for the gifted sons of the Southland, who had gone forth at the call of their country and had not come home again.

During the greater part of that chaotic period Mr. Keyes was in charge of the churches at Mays Lick

and Lewisburg, giving to each half-time service, and the skillful management of these two organizations saved them from much trouble, and it also showed the manner of man who ministered to them. It is a well-known fact that at the time when the war came on Mays Lick church had reached a critical period in her history, when an unwise step would have been fraught with untold evil. The church was then in charge of a man who did not have the qualifications to meet the demands of the hour and who failed signally to hold the confidence of the brethren. The occasion demanded that a strong man should be in charge of the church, one "who stood four-square to all the winds that blew," one whose character could be respected and whose judgment could be relied on. The need was great at the close of the year 1861, when James W. Bullock resigned and the church found themselves beneath an impending trouble. Of this period Dr. Cody, in his history of Mays Lick church, writes: "When Mr. Bullock resigned the church there was one man, and he a near neighbor, on whom all could unite and to secure his services two Sundays in the month were given up. Cleon Keyes' pastorate extended from February, 1862, to May, 1871. This was a great blessing to the church. The danger that was immanent was averted and the church passed through the civil war without leaving on her record book a single word of evidence that there was such an event as the war of secession.

"During the last years of Bro. Keys' pastorate the

house in which the church now worships was built, being the fourth since its organization. The church desired preaching every Sunday, and Bro. Keyes, feeling that he could not give up Lewisburg, which he had served during his pastorate at Mays Lick, offered his resignation, which was accepted. The official connection only was severed, and from that day to this the church has not ceased to admire and love him."

The well balanced character of Mr. Keyes shines the more conspicuously when it is borne in mind that he had decided convictions and active sympathies. The foundation material on which character is built is furnished by convictions and the strength and persistence of all human endeavors are measured and determined by those same convictions. Real convictions are not as easily found as many would suppose. They are based on important realities and the possessor of them strives to incarnate them in his own life. It is sometimes troublesome to have convictions, and more troublesome to stand by them. But our hero took the trouble to have convictions on all the important questions of the day. And what is of paramount importance he had the courage to avow his convictions and the ability to maintain them on all proper occasions.

Some of Mr. Keyes' most intimate friends and ardent admirers were men and women of New England birth and education, and held political views diametrically opposite to the views held by himself, and yet there was no breach of Christian fellowship between

them. So it was with many of his neighbors, between whom and himself there were views sharply divergent on questions, both political and religious, but they could differ with one another and yet have confidence in each other's integrity. A man with a character well established on the basis of the confidence of others in his integrity and probity will sooner or later be able to serve his fellowmen effectively and will be trusted even by those who think they have just cause to differ with him.

It was the privilege of the writer, some thirty years since, to have an intimate acquaintance with a fine specimen of the "Old Kentucky gentleman." In his neighborhood he was highly esteemed and greatly respected and his counsel was often sought. In some way or other he and one of his neighbors become estranged from one another. It so happened on one occasion that this neighbor and one of the old gentleman's sons were competitors in the exhibition of some fine stock. Esq. Wm. Lindsay, the name of the old gentleman to whom I refer, was one of the judges in awarding the premium. The competitor against his son was asked if he was willing for Esq. Lindsay to act in the capacity of referee. His immediately reply was, "Yes, if my stock in his judgment deserves the premium it will be awarded me." This was an expression of confidence that might be earnestly coveted and highly prized by any man.

In many cases throughout a long life as pastor and neighbor, and especially just after the war was Mr.

Keyes called to adjust difficulties between his neighbors and the brethren in his own church and other churches in the Association. And sometimes his good offices were sought in difficulties between men in churches of other denominations. Though he may not always have been successful in bringing about a reconciliation between the estranged parties, yet was the failure never attributed to a want of confidence in the integrity of purpose on the part of the mediator. There has ever been in the past and always will be a place for the peacemaker in every community and church and he has more of God's work to do than any other man. His office as such is the very office of the Prince of Peace. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." And the choicest fruit of the Spirit is peace and peace-making, and no greater praise can be bestowed on any man than this: that he had so lived as to be worthy of the benediction pronounced in the seventh beatitude of the sermon on the mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."

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XI.

PREACHER AND PASTOR.

In the full vigor of his physical and intellectual manhood, Mr. Keyes stood among the first of his craft in the State, and those who have heard him preach and know of the character of his work can testify to his worth. He was a great reader, and his knowledge of the current events, in the political and ecclesiastical organizations of the country, was extensive and correct; and he utilized it all as grist in his mill. His powers of analysis and synthesis were of a high order and when the thoughts of others passed through his mind they came out with a new setting and became effective in his work of preparation for the pulpit. His extensive and thoughtful reading and close observation made it easy for him to whip into shape the material at hand when once he sat down to the immediate work of preparation for the pulpit. He very seldom wrote at great length in the preparation for the pulpit, though his sermon sketches were ample for his logical mind. They were written in a small, neat, legible hand, and in the divisions of his sermon firstly was always germane to the subject and secondly naturally followed firstly and the progress of the thought was cumulative and convincing.

I quote Dr. Cody again: "God has endowed him with a fine mind, which is quick and clear and logical and by work and persistent purpose he has without much assistance from the schools become a fair English scholar and in the domain of theology and religion his knowledge is accurate and profound. "He is a preacher 'that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' His convictions are strong, his judgment is good, his opinion is honestly formed, fearlessly expressed and his purpose of life has been so manifestly to glorify God that he has gained a wide and deep influence and he is often sought in counsel. Nature formed him for a doctrinal preacher, but his heart, full of love, overflows and theology is transmuted into religion. He is a most entertaining speaker and his addresses lit up by a vivid imagination and warmed by a most genial spirit, not only have the force of logic, but put every one into an excellent frame of mind and even his foes smile while feeling his keen lash. There are much greater orators and scholars. I have known some more brilliant and profound, many have surpassed him in pushing themselves to the front, but if the fruit of the Spirit, 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance' is the standard of measurement ere long Cleon Keyes will enter the kingdom above covered by that which is rich and ripe."

Whenever you find a man that is really well informed about current events and has convictions

about the issues of the day, you will find others no less well informed and with no want of convictions. It seems inevitable that there should be different views held by different men on all important subjects—political, social and ecclesiastical—agitating the public mind. However firmly one may be convinced of the correctness of the views held by himself, and however able he may be to maintain them, he will find others holding opposite views just as firmly and equally ready and able to do battle for them. And whenever conflicting opinions meet in the arena of debate, whether in the social circle, on the hustings, in legislative halls or in religious assemblies, there also will be revealed the character of the combatants. And at no time did the real character of Mr. Keyes stand out more prominently and shine more splendidly than when, in our Associations and conventions, he was contending for some measure he thought ought to be adopted. Others might differ sharply with him and bring forth many reasons to sustain their position but he would meet them fairly and treat their arguments with due respect. By nature he was courteous and this natural courtesy was elevated and refined by divine grace and the Holy Spirit working in his heart and directing his conduct wrought in him what might be felicitously called a nobility of character stamped with an unfeigned love of his brethren on the one side and a deep humility on the other, only found in the hearts of those who are possessed of the mind of Christ. Again and again has the writer heard him

advocate measures in the Association which he believed would be best for the cause of Christ and just as strenuously oppose those which he thought would fail to promote our denominational work. He would to the best of his ability expose the weakness of the arguments against his measure, but he was more concerned about having his own views fully understood than he was about defeating the measures of others, and to make plain his position he would bring forward many homely and apposite illustrations. When, however his position was clearly understood, and then if the brethren did not sustain him, he would gracefully submit to the will of the majority and fall in line to carry out the behest of the Association.

XII.

FIRST YEARS AT LEWISBURG.

It is a well known fact that Mr. Keyes was induced largely to come to Lewisburg on the suggestion and through the influence of his friend and immediate predecessor, Charles Parker, on whose advice the church extended him a call to become their pastor. When Mr. Keyes located at Lewisburg in 1857 the church was very much disorganized and discouraged. They had recently sustained the loss of a popular pastor, a man very much beloved for his character and his work. The malign influences of former dissensions also remained to disturb their tranquility, weaken their hands and dishearten their efforts in Christian work. Between the years beginning July 18, 1853, and ending June 30, 1857, there was not a conversion in the congregation and not a soul received into the church on profession of faith in Christ and by baptism. There seemed to be an absence of any strong bond between the members and as a result there was very little co-operation in active Christian work.

During the first year of Mr. Keyes' pastorate at Lewisburg the demoralized condition of the church weighed heavily on the mind and heart of the pastor, and at one time he was in great doubt whether or not

he had made a mistake in leaving Virginia and coming to Kentucky. In fact he went so far as to confer with some of his brethren as to the propriety of tendering his resignation and returning to his former charge, which was still open to him. However, he held on to his work and before the close of the year 1858, patience and diligence in cultivating an unpromising vineyard began to give promise of a rich vintage. To change the figure, the long night of darkness began to disappear and the clouds that had so long hidden the face of the sun of righteousness began to break away and the true light to appear. The Lord was about to come and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, was come. For the Lord's servants took pleasure in her stones and favored the dust thereof. During this first year's pastorate there had been faithful, pointed preaching of the Word and the Holy Spirit had prepared the hearts of the people. The Lord was ready to say to pastor and people: "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields for they are white already unto harvest."

At the time of which I write S. L. Helm was pastor of the Madison Street Baptist church, in Covington. He was then in the prime of his life and in the full vigor of a magnificent physical and intellectual manhood. He was six feet tall and weighed nearly two hundred pounds. His presence was commanding and his voice strong, vibrant and winsome. His oratory had nothing about it to indicate that he had studied in schools of expression. In fact he never

studied models of oratory, either sacred or secular. But he could get the ears of the people and hold them when he began to preach. He knew Christ and him crucified. He knew the plain teachings of the Bible on the subject of salvation. He knew men and their needs. He knew the story of the cross. He knew what God had done for himself and what he had promised to do for every one who believed in him. He could effectively tell the story of the cross and make his thoughts impinge on the hearts of his hearers. God had greatly honored him in the churches of which he had been pastor, and now he was invited by the church and pastor at Lewisburg to preach for them in a meeting of days. This was the beginning of a friendship between Mr. Helm and Mr. Keyes that without interruption continued for more than twenty-five years till the former was called from labor to reward in the year 1884.

The preaching of Mr. Helm at once riveted the attention of the community and held it without abatement for many days and nights. The Holy Spirit was present to make effective the preaching of the Word. Sin was made to appear very heinous and offensive to God and a veritable curse to man. Sin was set forth as the most deadly evil in the world; not only are great crimes exceedingly sinful but all manner of sin is hateful in the sight of God and ruinous to the soul. Men and women were made to tremble in the sight of a holy God and in dread of the judgment to come. Men and women against whom no

great crimes could be charged were made to tremble under conviction and led to ask the way of life. The remedy for sin was set forth, but it was a costly remedy. Nothing less than the blood of the crucified Son of God could atone for sin and repair the damage that sin had done in the soul of man. The cross, which was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, and which yet seems to the world the culmination of weakness, was set forth as the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes. Many did believe and confessed Christ before the world and were baptized and received into the church. The visible results of the meeting were an increase in the membership of the church of forty-seven souls. A large percentage of those added to the church was of mature life and heads of families. Husbands and wives on several occasions came forward together and were received into the church and sometimes their children came with them and were received into the church with their parents. This meeting made a profound impression on the community and an impulse was given to the cause of religion that was felt many years afterwards. One feature of the meeting is worthy of special note. For some cause or other it was deemed advisable to discontinue the meetings for a few days. And it was with fear and trembling that the services were resumed. But the fear was soon dissipated; the interest in religion had not abated and several more souls were converted and added to the church.

The marked seasons of revival in the church under the pastoral care of Mr. Keyes after the one just mentioned were in the following years, viz.: 1864, 1868, 1875, 1877, 1882, 1883, 1888. The last named year the association convened at Ewing and the Lewisburg church reported an increase in the membership of 67, on profession of faith in Christ and by baptism. The entire membership of the church at this time was 181—perhaps the largest in its history.

After this year the name of Mr. Keyes does not again appear in the minutes of the association as the pastor of the historic Lewisburg church, which he had faithfully and efficiently served for a generation. During his pastorate he had been serving an intelligent congregation that seconded his efforts in every good word and work, and that were liberal contributors to our educational institutions and missionary enterprises.

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XIII.

THE SHEPHERD HEART.

When the Southern Baptist Convention met in Louisville, in 1909, Dr. Len G. Broughton, of Atlanta, made a speech before that body, which attracted a good deal of attention at the time. Doubtless many of those who heard it can recall how, throughout the armory he thrilled his hearers. His subject was, "The Indispensable Needs in Evangelistic and Pastoral Work." Among these needs he laid great stress on what he called "the shepherd-heart." His argument ran somewhat thus. No more deplorable misfortune can befall a child than to be born into a home where the mother love is wanting. It would not be difficult to forecast what the finished product of such a home would be. There may be house for shelter, richly furnished and well appointed, choice food to eat and fine raiment to wear without stint and yet there may be absent the essential conditions that makes a true home; the mother love may be wanting, a condition which no material possessions can compensate for; because without the mother's love the child will always be handicapped in the development of character by the absence of something it has never missed because it has never known of it.

And likewise a church may be possessed of all the visible qualifications and appointments for worship and work; a pastor well informed on the fundamentals of Christian doctrine and able to discuss them intelligently and eloquently. The services may be maintained regularly, the ordinances administered properly and yet where the shepherd-heart is wanting there is no other consideration in the qualification of a pastor and the constitution of a church that will compensate for its absence. The pastor with the shepherd-heart does not depend alone on his pulpit ministrations. He has a quick eye and sympathetic heart to discover those in his flock to whom have come misfortune and on whose hearts are laid heavy burdens and who have become discouraged. He instinctively learns of those to whom have come fierce temptations and he comes to their protection. He rejoices with those who rejoice and weeps with those who weep. That which promotes the joy and prosperity of his people increases his own happiness.

The shepherd-heart was large in Mr. Keyes. He had the prime qualifications of a successful pastor. He studied to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He had a firm grasp on the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, which to him, first and last, was the Word of God. An examination of his sermon sketches shows that he often preached on such subjects as the sovereignty of God, the divinity of Christ, the sufficiency of the atonement,

the glory of God, the work of the Holy Spirit, salvation by grace and the certainty that the work begun in the heart by the Holy Spirit would be continued till the day of Jesus Christ. And it may be added that he had the faculty of making these trite subjects glow under his touch. Two essential elements in a preacher and teacher marked all his sermons and speeches; plainness of statement and force of expression. His hearers never failed to grasp the subject-matter of his sermon and rarely did they fail to recognize the convincing quality of his speech. He did not juggle with words and put into them any farfetched or strained meaning: with him they stood for ideas and were vehicles by which to send the truth to the hearts of his hearers, and he used them with all the skill and power at his command, for conviction, for persuasion and edification.

During the long pastorate at Lewisburg Mr. Keyes went in and out before his people with the dignity of a patriarch and the innocency of a child. His services were given from no sordid motive, but were prompted by a spirit of loyalty to the Master and an ardent love for those to whom he ministered. He rejoiced in the prosperity of his people and sympathized with them in their misfortunes. He mourned over those who departed from the ways of righteousness and tried to lead them back to the paths of virtue and uprightness.

“And as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-pledged off-spring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds and led the way.”

XIV.

HIS FRIENDS.

The classic example of friendship in the Bible is that which is told of Jonathan and David. In this inspired story of friendship between man and man we learn that it was the Holy Spirit who paved the way and produced in the heart of each of them the possibilities of so strong attachment. And who can doubt that the matchless character and fruit of this beautiful friendship have been portrayed mainly to set the seal of God's approval upon human friendship, based on consecration to his will and service. The account of what passed between these two young men in that memorable interview in the field is the most pathetic on record. All the circumstances show that though Jonathan had not hitherto spoken of it he was fully aware of David's destiny; more than that he had a presentiment of the fate of his own house. And yet in view of it all, he believingly submitted to the will of God and still lovingly clung to his friend. There is a tone of unswerving faith in God and full confidence in David. There is in the record not a shadow of suspicion, not a trace of jealousy, not a word of murmuring and complaint. More touching words, surely were never uttered,

than the charge which Jonathan laid on David in view of what was soon to come upon them both: "And thou shalt not only, while yet I live, show me the kindness of the Lord that I die not; but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David, every one of them from the face of the earth."

For grace of expression and poetic beauty David's lament over Paul and Jonathan stands without a rival in the annals of literature. And when his thoughts turn directly toward Jonathan his tones tremble with most touching pathos. "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle? O Jonathan thou wast slain in the midst of thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother, Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." If there ever was friendship in the world, pure, unalloyed by any inferior metal, disinterested, free from envy, without any element of selfishness, incapable of harboring a suspicious thought and capable of rejoicing in another's gain even to his own loss it had glowed in the bosom of the young prince that was slain on Gilboa's mountain. "Battle spear never pierced a more generous heart, nor had war a more graceful victim offered on her blood-stained altar. Man never possessed a more loyal friend than David lost in the death of Jonathan: and no man with a head and heart can read his tragic history without feeling that he was

worthy of the extraordinary, though not extravagant, laudation that David bestowed on him.”

I have not thrown this picture of touching and noble friendship on the canvass to institute a parallel or even suggest a comparison, but to call attention for a moment to the surpassing beauty of a friendship founded on correct principles and to fix the mind on the fact that all the qualifications for a true and lasting friendship blended into a harmonious whole in the character of the subject of this sketch. His bearing toward all men was that of one who thinketh no evil and who never used the microscope to detect faults in the conduct of others and he was always reluctant to believe that any one ever thought or purposed evil concerning himself. His conduct was always transparent and bore on its face the stamp of sincerity.

Some of the ardent friendships that enriched his life, date from the very beginning of his ministry in Virginia, when he was quite a young man. Among these early friends was Judge Holden, of Clarksburg, grandfather of Dr. M. B. Adams, who was one of the mainstays in the church. Another was Elder Charles Parker, who came to Kentucky in 1856, and became his predecessor at Lewisburg. This minister at his best, had commanding pulpit ability and in revival services he preached the gospel with great force and often with wonderful success. Between him and Mr. Keyes there grew up an ardent attachment and their comradeship was beautiful to look on. There is found among Mr. Keyes' papers the frag-

ments of a letter written to him by Mr. Parker before either one of them had located in Kentucky, the date of which however has been unfortunately torn off. By prefixing the words "I will" to the last paragraph it reads thus: "I will be in Clarksburg, Friday night, and on Sunday morning, I will leave Clarksburg for Buchannon where I have been invited to hold a series of meetings. My object in writing you prior to the time of my coming is that I wish to see you and I am fearful that if I do not inform you of my proposed visit to your village you will be away from home. We have been separated so long that I should feel much disappointed if I should not find you at home." In his history of Lewisburg church, found in the minutes of Bracken Association for the year 1884, the Lewisburg pastor refers to his friend Parker in very tender and appreciative terms, and though he was removed from the time of his death, a space of nearly thirty years, the survivor showed no abatement of affection for a former brother and co-laborer.

Mr. Keyes had almost a genius for making friends, whether among the educated and refined portion of the community, or among the less fortunate as to education and social position. Wherever he was once entertained in a home, ever afterward he was a welcome and honored guest and his presence was as highly appreciated by the younger members of the family as by the older ones. And once to come under the charm of his personality and the magic of his

conversation was to acknowledge his power and influence. And he had not only the rare faculty of winning friends, but the rarer one of holding them and gripping them to himself with bonds only to be broken by death.

The strong ties of friendship between him and the Yanceys, the Calverts, the Prestons, the Miners, McIlvains, Bullocks, Peeds, Marshalls, Duvalls, Dudleys, Gaithers, Bruces, Powers, Parkers, Allens, Fritts, Chappells, Herndons, all of whom lived within the bounds of Bracken Association—and now nearly all passed over the river—challenged the admiration of every one. This admiration of him and affection for him were not confined to his own churches or denomination or neighborhood, but extended wherever he was known, even to those who held views, politically and ecclesiastically the opposite to those held by himself. But naturally the strongest ties of friendship grew up between him and his brethren in the ministry of his own denomination. The following are the names of some of the pastors with whom he was more or less closely associated in Christian work during the last twenty-five years of his active ministry, viz.: Helm, Varden, Brown, Halladay, Bent, Nunnelly, Riley, Frost, Barbee, Bow, Garrett, Zeal, Owen—his own son in the gospel—Vardeman and J. S. Felix.

When the writer of this sketch located at Carlisle, in 1876, and became identified with Bracken Association, a former class-mate, then pastor in the Associa-

tion, said to him that he would find a true yoke-fellow in Bro. Keyes to whom he could go at any time and feel no restraint in conferring with him about any matter. This was a true estimate of the man and every time a pastor or layman had occasion to consult him about the work in the association or any matter personal to himself he found in the Lewisburg pastor a sympathetic friend and a wise counsellor. But perhaps the most striking example of ardent friendship between an old man and a young one was that which grew up between Mr. Keyes and the late Dr. J. S. Felix, of blessed memory. This highly cultured and eloquent young man became pastor of the Baptist church at Augusta in the early Autumn of 1872, when he had little more than attained his majority. He was a graduate of Georgetown College and an under graduate of Crozer Theological Seminary. Soon after he accepted the pastorate of the church at Augusta his ordination was called for. Besides the pastors and laymen from churches in Bracken Association there were present at this ordination, Dr. W. H. Felix, an older brother of the young pastor and Dr. James P. Boyce, then beginning his very arduous work of securing an endowment sufficient to justify the removal of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary from Greenville, S. C., to Louisville, Ky. It fell to the lot of Mr. Keyes to conduct the examination of the candidate. The examination had not progressed far till it was evident to all present that two bright minds confronted each other. And it

was observed by those present that the examination was no merely perfunctory performance to meet the requirements of long established clerical usage. The questions put to the candidate by Mr. Keyes showed an extensive and accurate knowledge of theological literature and the answers were clear and clean cut, showing penetration and grasp of mind. At the close of the examination and after the church had been advised to proceed with the ordination Dr. Boyce got up and asked permission to say a word; and in a few appropriate remarks he spoke in the highest terms of the satisfactory character of the examination; of the questions asked the candidate and his answers to the same. From that time on for more than fifteen years Keyes and Felix were closely associated in associational work. This friendship for each other strengthened as the years passed on and after short separations their greetings were beautiful to behold. The last occasion when circumstances brought them together after a long separation, and not long before the death of the younger man, was at Two Lick Baptist church, when Bracken Association met there in the year 1902. To a stranger looking on, the meeting seemed more like that of a venerable father and a noble and gifted son, than the greeting between two men separated in years by a distance stretching over nearly a quarter of a century. But there was a bond between them stronger than that which binds father and son in the flesh, the bond of a common hope, a common faith in a common saviour

and made stronger by service together and communion with each other and devotion to Christian ideals. Of Mr. Keyes it may be truly said—

“He was a man of soul sincere,
In action faithful, and in honor clear;
Who broke no promise, served no private end,
Who gained no title, and lost no friend.”

XV.

DAYS OF INACTIVITY.

The time comes in the history of every man when activities cease. The plow of the husbandman stands still in the furrow, the merchantman no longer haunts the marts of trade, the physician gives up the practice of the art of healing, the voice of the politician is heard no more on the hustings, the fingers of the musician never again sweep over the keys of his beloved instrument from which erstwhile he was wont to evoke entrancing harmonies; and the voice of the beloved pastor is no longer heard calling sinners to repentance and his people to nobler living. Fortunately or unfortunately for the children of men this time does not always coincide with their summons into the presence of the great judge. It is certain however that the Lord of life and death knows when he can do without the services of this one or that one.

In some rare cases the fruitful activities of men begin early and continue many years without abatement of quantity or quality of work, and they move on steadily till they have reached the end of four score and more years. In the realm of constructive statesmanship we know conspicuous examples in the lives and activities of William E. Glad-

stone in the parliament of England and John T. Morgan in the Congress of the United States, both of whom rendered efficient services to their respective countries, when according to ordinary reckoning they were living on borrowed time. And in the ranks of our own Baptist ministers we have as examples of fruit-bearing in old age, Alexander McClaren, in England and Henry G. Weston, in our country, both of whom performed signally efficient service for the Lord many years after they should have been chloroformed according to a reputed deliverance of the specialist, Dr. Wm. Osler; and even after they had passed the eightieth milestone in the pilgrimage of life some of their richest fruits were borne.

Again and again, however, the Lord takes his servants in the zenith of their maturity and in the midst of efficient activities when as yet their eyes are not dim, nor their natural force abated. When the late beloved Dr. T. T. Eaton was called from activities to rest he seemed to our eyes to be the very embodiment of a magnificent physical and intellectual manhood, and certainly gave promise of many years of efficient service in the Master's vineyard—but in the midst of successful and promising activities, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye his labors were cut short; and panoplied in the whole armor of God he was called to give account of his stewardship. And who can doubt that sudden death to him was sudden glory? The active, working, period however at sometime, comes to an end. Perhaps health fails, or circum-

stances change, or doors of opportunity are closed, or fields once white unto the harvest, are now reaped and no other fields are whitening. Arrest in some way or other is laid upon the activities of men, when the day of service declines and the shadows of the evening of life are stretched out. If however, the cessation of activities and the end of the earthly pilgrimage but not coterminal and the servant be required to wait awhile for the coming of the Lord, then also comes the need of faith and patience. There may be still some doubt while a man is underset with outward helps, such as health, riches, friends, whether he leans upon those or upon God. But when all those outward props are plucked away, then it becomes manifest whether something else upholds him or not; for if there be nothing else he falls, but if his heart and mind stand firm as before, it is evident that he laid not his weight upon these things which he had then about him, but was built upon the sure foundation, which though not seen, was yet able to sustain him.

It was the privilege of Bro. Keyes to be called into the service of the Master while still in his minority, and while the dew of youth was yet on his brow. Soon after he was eighteen years old he preached his first sermon and before he had reached the age of twenty God had signally set the seal of his approval on his ministry and many souls were converted under his preaching. And this work of preaching the gospel and caring for the churches over which the Holy Spir-

it had called him to preside continued without interruption for nearly half a century. Then came total deafness and partial blindness and the increasing infirmities incident to old age; and then came also the sad consciousness of the inability to maintain a high standard of efficiency and the necessity of withdrawing from the pastorate of his beloved church and giving place to a younger and more active man.

But when he found himself retired and his beloved pulpit—from which he had preached the gospel for a generation—occupied by a successor he did not sit down and fold his hands in ignoble ease and idleness and rail against the providence that had seen fit to make him for the remainder of his days only an onlooker, while the work in which he had so gladly engaged was done by somebody else. Such a course would have belied his whole career and stultified the teachings and practices of fifty years. Duty, “the stern daughter of the voice of God,” still sounded in the ears that could no longer hear the voice of praise or blame from man. The sense of loyalty to the Master and the habits of fifty years would not allow him to abandon entirely the work which had been so much a part of his life these many years.

To his successors at Lewisburg he gave a hearty welcome and on all occasions manifested a willingness to co-operate with them in every movement that gave promise of prosperity to the cause of religion in the church and community. And while his innate modesty would not permit him to intrude his advice

upon any one, yet when sought by his pastor concerning any movement in the church, or by the pastors in the association he freely conferred with them and gave his influence and limited activities to the missionary enterprise within the bounds of Bracken Association.

After his retirement from the pastorate of Lewisburg church he preached only occasionally, but he performed highly efficient service for our missionary work within the bounds of Bracken Association, by visiting the churches and calling from house to house to solicit contributions for the work. And in other ways he addressed himself to the work of earning a livelihood for himself and those dependent on him. But the compensation for his work as the agent of Bracken Board was small and the supplement made to it in other ways was almost a negligible quantity.

It is more than probable that during his active ministry in Bracken Association Bro. Keyes preached in every church reporting at her annual gatherings; and his work as agent for the association and the help he rendered Dr. Boyce, when soliciting for the Endowment of the Seminary at Louisville, makes it probable that he was in more homes in the boundaries of the association than any man who has ever lived among us. He was always a welcome and honored guest in the homes of all who knew him and many persons, young and old, can testify that the memory of his presence remained as a sweet fragrance and a perpetual benediction.

Some author says that one test of a genuine poet is that his own soul feeds on the song he sings. And it may be said with truth that the soul of our departed brother fed on the promises which he could so skilfully apply to the help of others when preaching from the pulpit or in the homes of his people, and when he could no longer look on the beauties of the landscape, nor behold the stary heavens, nor listen to the singing of the birds or hear the voice of prayer or praise, yet could he behold the promises of God afar off and was persuaded of them and embraced them. He fully believed that his life was in the hands of a gracious God. And in the last years of his life his faith was no less strong than in the days when his voice was heard calling sinners to repentance and urging his people to endure as seeing him who is invisible. This doctrine of God's care for his chosen ones he preached in season and out of season, he proclaimed it from the pulpit and in the homes of his people. In his last days he exemplified that life of faith which breathes the atmosphere of eternity and which looks on things unseen and eternal and beholds the glory of God. And thus by his patience, optimism and the ability to see the silver lining behind the darkest clouds he brought forth fruit in his old age and to him we can very well apply the beatitude of Jeremiah, "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters and that spreadeth out her roots by the river and shall not see when heat

cometh, but her leaf shall be green and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall he cease from yielding fruit."

In his old age the true preacher lives in a charmed world. An interesting story is told of Wm. Blake, who lived about a hundred and fifty years ago, and who was both, poet and painter. He saw visions and dreamed dreams in a sooty street in the great city of London. But his friends said they could not share his raptures. They looked where he looked, but somehow they could not see what he saw and hear what he heard. The trained eye and ear were lacking. To many of his servants who are only waiting the summons to come up higher, God gives a foretaste of the glories that await them, and to them these future glories become present realities. A few years ago when Mr. Keyes was present at the funeral services of one of his old friends and parishioners and being too feeble to go to the place of interment, he sat down on the steps of the old church and mused. And there passed before him the names and forms of the many friends and loved ones whose bodies were sleeping in the old church-yard at Lewisburg. And looking down the vista of coming days he saw the graves opening and the dead arising clothed upon with the habiliments of glory. In relating the experience of this vision to the writer, in tones most reverent, he said: "White, I felt like shouting."

“There is a land mine eye hath seen,
In visions of enraptured thought,
So bright that all which spreads between
Is with its radiant glories fraught.”

In his days of patient waiting, Bro. Keyes preached his most effective sermons and brought forth his richest vintage. He never went out of service and never ceased to bring forth fruits. He only waited for promotion and while he waited he served. “I am not tired of my work,” said the hero missionary, Adoniram Judson, in his last days, “neither am I tired of the world, yet when the Lord calls me, I shall go with the gladness of a school-boy bounding away from school.”

If James Russell Lowell be right when he says, “Not failure, but low aim is a crime,” then the faithful pastor needs not to fear lest he should outlive his usefulness. John Wesley could only faintly utter a few syllables when they lifted him into the pulpit at the age of eighty-seven, but the eloquence of a whole life of devoted service spoke louder than any wealth of words. Again and again was the Nestor of our Baptist ministers heard to say, “I don’t know why the Lord is keeping me here. He knows and I am not worrying about the matter. When he wants me, I am ready to go.” And thus lived and died Cleon Keyes, the faithful witness, the beloved pastor, the true yoke-fellow in the Master’s service.

“Of no distemper, of no blast he died,
But fell like autumn fruit that mellowed long;
Even wondered at because he dropped no sooner.
Fate seemed to wind him up for four score years;
Yet freely ran he on nine winters more;
Till like a clock worn out with eating time,
The wheels of weary life at last stood still.”

OTHER APPRECIATIONS.

I.

As the worshippers enter the Baptist church in the city of Fairmont, West Virginia, directly in front of them and just at the right of the pulpit they see a vari-colored window on which is found this legend:

“Rev. Cleon Keyes.”

This memorial window was placed there by three friends who knew Mr. Keyes when life was young and the dew of youth was yet on their brows. This man of God had so gripped them in the days of their young manhood and womanhood that in all the after years his influence was felt in their lives. Hence, this window. One of these three friends, Mrs. A. J. Stone, of Fairmont, furnishes the following reminiscences:

“My recollections of Mr. Keyes date back to my early childhood, when he was pastor of the Baptist churches at Pruntytown and Clarksburg. His home life was strikingly unselfish and admirable. His eldest daughter and I were boon companions and I was often in their home. I recall the delight of his invalid wife and children, called forth by his return from duties at Clarksburg. The sacrifices he made in this respect are known only to God. I am sure I never

saw a man who loved his home with more beautiful devotion than he. His sympathy with the younger members of the home circle was marked and while he joined in our laughter and merriment, he often did not know what prompted them, because he was partially deaf; catching some of us he would say, "What are you laughing at?" and when we had explained he would be right in the thick of the fun.

"His hospitality was proverbial. I remember on one occasion, when he was returning from a visit to his mother and sisters, in Cincinnati, that he journeyed by stage-coach with some friends, a gentleman, his wife and two little girls. They were all worn and weary and he proposed that they stop at Pruntytown and have a rest in his home. He found out before they reached Pruntytown from the stage agent, that his family who had been visiting the parents of his wife in an adjoining county, had been detained there by the illness of Mrs. Keyes. There were no railroads or telegraph lines in those days in this region. So to relieve the embarrassment he came to my father and asked that we receive his guests. The request was gladly complied with and they stayed with us a week while he went on to see about his family. It was always a pleasure to serve him and my father who often called him 'Little Keyes' was ardently fond of him.

"His devotion to the missionary enterprise and his ideas along this line of Christian work were far in advance of his times. I recall his ardor of fifty years ago and feel that his theory and practice were equal

to that which we have reached in the world today. I have a vivid remembrance of an occasion in one of our church meetings when he made an ardent and eloquent appeal for Foreign Missions. Our senior deacon responded in a spirit of criticism. Bro. Keyes in his halting speech, said, 'My brother must be laboring under some strange hallucination.' The deacon mimicked him and advised him to use words that he knew the meaning of. I remember being so indignant that I put my head in my mother's lap and sobbed and cried uncontrollably. I think that little episode had something to do with severing the relations between pastor and church. The deacon was a man of strong prejudice and never forgave his pastor. He died outside of the pale of the Baptist church while Cleon Keyes moved onward and upward.

"We never ceased to regret his going from among us; and all these years we have kept in close touch with him and his work. It has been my privilege to visit twice in his Kentucky home and it was a great pleasure to know how he and his family were loved. Mr. Keyes' influence has been with me all my life; his letters in the first years after leaving West Virginia inspired and strengthened every generous impulse of my heart.

"He abounded in humor and had a keen appreciation of it in others. On one occasion he had as a helper in a series of meetings a minister known as 'Little Billy Woods.' Mr. Woods announced at the close of the services one evening that on the following

evening he would preach the funeral sermon of the first Christian who should die in the town; and that two evenings hence he would preach the funeral sermon of the first unsaved man who should die. The next morning the visiting minister came into the service before the pastor and a note was handed him at the door of the church. A prayer-meeting was in progress, so he passed on into the pulpit and behind the high desk he read the note. Very soon the pastor came in quietly during a prayer and they read the note together. As a child I was always in saints corner, and could see behind the high desk. Thus, I was a witness of the convulsive laughter that followed the reading of the note. The preachers dined in our home that day and I heard the note read. The note was something like this:

“ ‘Dear Bro. William Wood:—

“ ‘Stay thy hand; I are yet alive and don’t want my funeral preached now.’

Signed by an eccentric man who was a member of our church.

“My reminiscences of Mr. Keyes are of such a personal character, that I give them reluctantly. He was very fond of sacred song. I remember a sermon he preached on the subject of church music. He criticised some familiar hymns, one of which I never sing, but that I think of him and omit the lines he did not like, or sing them as he suggested. They are:

'Assured, if I my trust betray. I shall forever die.'
He suggested, 'O, may I not my trust betray, but
faithful live and die.' "

II.

AS I REMEMBER HIM.

By J. M. Frost, D.D.

“Dear Bro. White:—

“I congratulate all concerned that you are making a permanent record of the life and work of Cleon Keyes, wherein he wrought for God and God’s cause. It is a labor of love on your part, a service altogether worthy of your subject, an occasion of gratitude for the many who honored and loved him.

“I remember him as a man of great character—gentle and kind of heart, strong and courageous for the truth, true and unswerving in his integrity and uprightness before God and men. This testimony given of my heart and candid judgment as I look back over the years, will not be discounted or discredited by any who knew him. Throughout all that section where he labored his name was a household word in Baptist homes, while other denominations paid tribute to his genuine worth of character and efficiency in service.

“I met him first in the spring of 1871, when as a young man fresh from school. I began my first pastorate at Maysville, Ky., nine miles perhaps from

his home at Lewisburg. He was present at my ordination, taking an active part and lending a helping, guiding hand. At that time he was fairly well advanced in years, but in the prime of his preaching power and masterful leadership of men, readily recognized and honored by all. He had a large place in his life and love for young preachers, always in his ministry making way and opportunity for their advancement. Several of us, during those early years in Bracken Association, lived and labored under his gracious shadow, and the heart of every one would bear glad testimony to his gracious touch as he led us on to the nobler things, and set before us high ideals as ministers of Jesus Christ, entrusted with his word in richness and fullness.

“I was with him in the hours of his bereavement and sorrow, and then with him too, when the sunshine came again breaking through the clouds. We were closely associated for many years until our paths parted, when I left Kentucky. It surely is something great for a man, that you can walk with him through many years, see him in varying circumstances, and never find cause for even modifying an exalted opinion which you had formed concerning him. This was Cleon Keyes from the first time I knew him until the end, except as he grew in all the things that make for manhood in the ministry of our Lord.

“Many, many years have past since last I saw him. Still I have always kept in touch with him even during the years when he was for the most part

shut in. I never even to this moment, think of him without a fresh sense of appreciation and affection. It was worth so much to a young man to have such a man come into his life, and I shall never cease to be grateful for his helpful touch. He walked with God and was not, for God took him. He wears the crown that is his, and his works do follow.

“J. M. Frost,

“Nashville, Tenn., April 29, 1912.”

III.

(The following tribute appeared in the "Western Recorder," soon after the death of Mr. Keyes. The writer is a grandson of Judge Holden, who was a warm friend of and a true yoke-fellow with Mr. Keyes during his pastorate in Clarksburg. Dr. Adams also had intimate and pleasant relations, as friend and pastor, with this aged man of God during the last eighteen years of his life.)

CLEON KEYES.

"On Thursday, April 27, 1911, Rev. Cleon Keyes, of Maysville, Ky., was buried in the burial ground of the Lewisburg Baptist church, Mason Co., Ky.

"The writer took part in the funeral service by request of the family. An able sermon in memory of Bro. Keyes was preached by Rev. A. N. White, of Pewee Valley, Ky., and the writer made a brief address offering an appreciation of his life and services. Rev. J. M. Haymore, of Maysville, offered the prayer, Rev. N. F. Jones, of North Fork, read the Scriptures and Rev. L. N. Thompson, of Mayslick, pronounced the benediction.

"Cleon Keyes came to Kentucky about 1858 and settled at Lewisburg, Mason Co., and became pastor

of the Lewisburg church, over which he successfully presided for thirty-two years. He was the pastor of the writer's grandfather, at Clarksburg, W. Va., before coming to Kentucky. Among the traditions of my boyhood were memories of the able pastorate of Bro. Keyes, at Clarksburg. He helped my grandfather cut the timbers which were used in the construction of the first Clarksburg church. The church now one of the most prominent and fruitful in West Virginia; and those who have known its history readily ascribe to the solid and enduring work of Cleon Keyes much of the credit for the subsequent success and prosperity of the church.

“In writing the history of Bracken Association since 1858, much of the largest portion of the record would be devoted to the faithful labors of this man of God. He was intensely loyal not only to the interests of the various churches of which he was pastor, but to the interests of Bracken Association and the larger interests of the Baptist cause in Kentucky.

“When the writer became pastor of Lewisburg church, in 1893, he found Bro. Keyes living near the church and active and useful as a member there. During the four and one-half years of that pastorate, the youthful and inexperienced preacher found in him a most tender, helpful and loyal friend and brother. He was as companionable as a young man would have been and all preachers, young or old, found this true of him. He was at all times the preacher's friend. In social hours, his hearty laugh would ring

out, revealing the springs of inward joy and happiness, for through all his afflictions and trials and he had many, he was a happy and trustful man. It could, with a large measure of truth, be said of him as it was said of his Saviour that he was made perfect through sufferings, for he had certainly attained a high degree of saintly character by the time God called him home.

“He was an able preacher of the Gospel of Christ. He possessed a mind of uncommon clearness, and strength. He had no vague ideas about anything, but held all opinions and convictions with positiveness and clearness. He was an intense Baptist and could tell why and never lost a suitable opportunity to do it. His fidelity to New Testament religion and the Baptist faith he impressed upon the Baptists over a large area of Northern Kentucky.

“Too much cannot be said in praise of his lovely and pure Christian character. Here was the citadel of his strength. His strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure. No one could be long in his company without saying, ‘Truly this man is a child of God.’ He wrought well and has earned his reward. The writer asks the honor to bear this simple testimony to his worth and helpfulness.

“May God bless and care for the loved ones he leaves. His daughter, Mrs. Clara Allen and her husband and another daughter, Miss Sallie, faithfully

ministered to him in his years of weakness. They too will receive their reward, for they ministered to God's prophet and God never forgets.

Frankfort, Ky.

M. B. Adams."