

[Goodrich, Moses]

Rev. Moses Goodrich

Rev. Moses Goodrich, the son of Moses Goodrich, was born in the City of New York, Oct. 24, 1817, and died at Anoka, Minn., Dec. 18, 1880.

Upon the death of his father, in 1825, his mother was left with eight children and without means, and Moses was taken in 1827 to Stockbridge, Mass., where he received the careful training of a New-England home in the family of his uncle, and a common school education. At the age of seventeen, he was sent to New York and was received into the family of his oldest brother, by whom he was employed for two years. In the Spring of 1836, through the aid of Cyrus W. Field, a Stockbridge schoolmate, he obtained a position in the store of A. T. Stewart, where he spent the next five years. He was a regular church-goer, sometimes with the Presbyterians, but more often with the Methodists, during the first year. He had never heard of Universalism until 1835, when he was induced by an acquaintance to attend a discussion in the church of the Second Society, Orchard Street, between the pastor, Rev. T. J. [Thomas Jefferson] Sawyer, and a Limitarian preacher named Slocum. He perceived that Mr. Sawyer had the advantage in the argument, but his prejudices were too strong to admit his conclusions. After eighteen months, in which he heard the subject much discussed, he was brought to a personal examination of Scripture evidences, and after much diligent and prayerful study and reflection, he was convinced of his former error, and joyfully accepted the better faith. He became a member of the choir, the Sunday school, and the church in Orchard Street and thenceforth found his greatest pleasure in advancing the cause of God's universal and efficient grace.

At the end of his clerkship, while considering a project for going into business, he asked the advice of his pastor with whom he was intimate, and at the suggestion of Dr. Sawyer, abandoned his previous plans and determined to enter the ministry. After seventeen months preparatory study, he entered the New York University in Sept., 1842, upon a free scholarship, as sent by the Second Universalist Society. His books were presented by G. [Gerhardus] L. Demarest, D.D., then a member of the Orchard Street Church.

After graduating from college, in 1846, Dr. J. Smith Dodge, Sr., volunteered a loan of one hundred dollars a year, for three years, to Mr. Goodrich, and he began to study Divinity under the instruction of Dr. Sawyer, then Principal of the Clinton Liberal Institute, in the class with B. F. Bowles, G. H. Deere, C. H. Leonard, C. R. Moor, Bernard Peters, Nelson Snell and others.

After nearly three years at Clinton, Mr. Goodrich accepted a call to Concord, Mass., and was pastor of the church there until March, 1851, when

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failing health compelled him to resign his charge. His next settlement was at Eddington, Me., and while there he married Miss Nancy Downs, of Chelsea, Mass., in Sept., 1851. In June, 1854, he accepted a call of the society in Kenduskeag, where he remained two years. In 1855 he made an extended missionary tour through Aroostook Co., involving great labor and sacrifice, but yielding abundant fruits in that wilderness. He removed with his family, in 1856, to Minnesota, and in 1857 occupied a homestead in the Big-woods on Silver Creek, Wright Co., where by hard work he started a farm. In 1862, the Indian troubles necessitated the removal of his family to a place of greater safety, but he remained until 1863, when he sold his farm, and joining his family, moved to Richfield. In 1864, he bought a farm near Anoka, on which he lived three years, during the last preaching part of the time at Anoka. In 1867, he was invited to lead a movement to build a church, and removed to Anoka, where he resided until his death. As the result of his undertaking, a beautiful church edifice was erected there in 1872, and remains a fitting monument of his life and labors.

During the last ten years he was County Superintendent of Schools, and this work, added to his pastoral duties, required an excess of mental labor, which in 1874 induced a disease of the brain, attended by nervous prostration, from which he never fully recovered. The last months of his life were full of suffering, but he bore it without a murmur, preserving to the end the patient, trusting, genial spirit which through life endeared him to his friends. A widow and three children mourn the loss of a Christian gentleman, husband and father.

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