

[Corbin, Edwin Sawyer]

THE DEATH OF REV. E. S. CORBIN.

Rev. E. S. Corbin, formerly of this city, but recently of Clifton Springs, died quite suddenly last Tuesday afternoon. He had been prostrated with congestion of the lungs for six weeks, and his condition was latterly regarded as serious, but nevertheless his death came quite unexpectedly. Deceased was born in this city, September 19, 1849, where his parents still reside. For many years he was in the employ of Pancost, Sage & Co., but having an inclination for the ministry, and at the advice of friends, he attended Canton University, graduating in 1872. Shortly afterward he became pastor of the Universalist Church in Clifton Springs, and continued as such until about six weeks ago when he preached his last sermon. For many years he was an active member of the Universalist Church in this city. He was married in January, 1874, to a young lady of Canton, N.Y., who survives him. There are no children. Deceased was connected with the order of Free Masons in Phelps and Geneva, filling the office of Prelate in Geneva Commandery for the past two years. The remains are to be brought to this city for interment, and will be accompanied by members of Sincerity Lodge No. 200, of Phelps and of Newark Chapter, on Saturday.

Union and Advertiser, Rochester NY, Thu. 3 Jul 1879

REV. E. S. CORBIN
MEMORIAL SERMON BY A. TITUS, JR.
Loving and Appropriate Commemoration

On Sunday evening the Rev. Anson Titus, Jr., of Weymouth, Mass., son of our esteemed friend Anson Titus of Phelps, preached a sermon in the Geneva Universalist church, commemorative of the late Rev. E. S. Corbin. Having been a room-mate in college and an intimate friend of Mr. Corbin for years, Mr. Titus was perfectly fitted to discharge the duties of so sad yet so fertile a theme.

Taking as his text Tim. 3:6, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," he first spoke of the various analogies in the Bible in reference to those dying at different stages of life. First the little child is taken away even as a withered bud, and then, the aged pass away in the fullness of years, but the young men and women are like the flowers

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which come forth and are cut down in all their beauty and perfection. So Mr. Corbin in the fullness of his young manhood was cut down. But, asw farmers cut the grass when fullest of strength, to get the best hay, so may not God have some such purpose in removing many of the best spirits early in years unto himself.

Said Mr. Titus, "keen was the sadness of my heart when the news of the death of brother Corbin came. Long had I known him. Intimate were our relations from the first of our acquaintance. And now that he has faithfully finished his service in the earth, it gives a certain pleasure to be able to testify of the worth and value of his character."

Edwin Sawyer Corbin was born in Rochester, Sept. 19, 1849, and passed his early days in that city, for a number of years in the employ of Pancoast, Sage & Co. From early youth an attendant upon the Universalist Church and Sunday school in that city, he became imbued with the desire to preach the Gospel, and leaving his lucrative position, in Sept. 1870 he entered the Canton Theological School, whence he was graduated in June 1873. Immediately thereafter he received a call from the Clifton Springs parish. In Jan. 1875 he was married to Miss Estella Barber of Danton [Canton]. He died July 1, 1879, aged nearly 30 years. In his call he clearly saw his line of duty. The events which hemmed him in made him to know that his labor was here. Upon graduation in June 1873 he assumed the pastorate. At once by the genuine goodness of his life; by the entire sincerity of his words; by the thoughtfulness and Christian spirit manifest, people began to love him. He had no pretentious manners; about him was no bluster. From among his own people his beneficent influence daily enlarged. His acquaintance was extended. People meeting him once were desirous of meeting him again. People hearing him utter words of hope and cheer were anxious to listen to him. Rarely do we find one so young having the large grasp of mind; a heart attuned with Christian sympathy and withal a flow of language with which to express the deepest thoughts and tenderest emotion of the soul.

His first duty was in his pulpit to his parish, but outside of this work he did a great work in the temperance cause and was also largely interested in the cause of Masonry in its purest form. His first duties were as a Christian minister. He was a Universalist. He loved his church. He was reared in it. He loved his faith. He delighted to dwell upon the tenderness of Jesus and the beneficent influence he shed abroad over the world. The saving grace of Jesus Christ was a reality to him and he felt the world needed the preaching of that thought. He was first a christian, afterward a Universalist. And it was because of this that many listened to his words of hope and consolation.

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In his own denomination he was an honored minister and occupied at the time of his death a position upon the committee on fellowship, ordination and discipline.

Lest the views of the speaker might be considered partial, he cited extracts written by various persons of his own and other denominations of which we can only quote one, that of Rev. Almon Gunnison, who says: "Among our younger men, none gave better promise. Modest in demeanor, thoroughly furnished for his work, he fulfilled the complete ideal of a christian minister. Few men have in a shorter time, more thoroughly won men's hearts, and he did it not by his brilliancy of mind nor outward graces of manner but by his real worth. His work at Clifton Springs has been thoroughly genuine and but few men of his years have more impressed themselves upon the convictions and lives of their people than did he."

We close our notice of this excellent sermon with an extract from Mr. Corbin's diary, read on this occasion, and which was written by him on learning of the death of Dr. [Ebenezer] Fisher of the Canton Theological Seminary. It will give a more vivid idea of his conception of the future life, upon the enjoyment of which he has now entered.

"But I cannot think of the good old Dr. as dead. No, he lives yet and will live forever and his work will continue. Who shall say that in the spirit realm he shall not still be the minister, teacher and counselor of others? I can readily believe that he will be. Still again we may gather around him when we, like him, have put off the earthly part, and receive his kindly instruction."

The sermon was listened to attentively throughout, and as a just tribute to the worth and character of a Christian minister and a noble friend was appreciated by the many friends present.

Geneva Courier, Geneva NY, Wed. 27 Aug 1879

Transcribed on 13 Jan 2010 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

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THE LATE REV. E. S. CORBIN.

The Clifton Springs *Press* contains a column article, written by an orthodox minister, upon the life and character of the Rev. E. S. Corbin. We have not room to publish it entire, but select the following extracts:

"It is not often that death can remove from a village like this, one of such rare gifts and endowments as those were which distinguished the late Mr. Corbin. He was, if we mistake not, a man of remarkable qualities and abilities. Any—even the slightest—acquaintance was sufficient to persuade one of the sweetness and courtesy of his disposition. This, it is true, does not seem high praise, but when it is considered through what difficulties and adversities he made his way to eminence and usefulness, it *is* much to say that these natural and amiable qualities were left in all their original freshness and power."

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"Often and often I think he presented in his sermons such views of the Christian life and character as made it most obvious to those even not of his order, that his life was lived deeply in Christ. The death of such a man is a great loss. Indeed, I have always felt that the death of a good man joins a public calamity to private bereavement. It is not simply that friends mourn; that a few hearts bleed. But it is that an ornament and support of public virtue is removed; that the tower on which so many leaned, the one to whom so many looked for support, is cast down in the dust. Such is our feeling in regard to the man to whom we have tried to pay this imperfect tribute. Had our powers been greater, our knowledge of him better, it would have been more worthy of him. But such as it is it expresses the true feeling and admiration of our heart."

St. Lawrence Plaindealer, Canton NY, Thu. 31 Jul 1879

Transcribed on 13 Jan 2010 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DECEASED CLERGYMEN

XVI. Rev. EDWIN SAWYER CORBIN, son of Joseph and Mary Corbin, was born in Rochester, N.Y., Sept. 19, 1849, and died at Clifton Springs, N.Y., July 1, 1879 [age 29].

Endowed with a sensitive and delicate organization, an earnest love for the truth, and a reverence for all that is highest and holiest in life, Mr. Corbin from childhood was peculiarly susceptible to religious influences, and in his early boyhood he felt himself called of God, and resolved to devote himself to spreading the Gospel of the dear Saviour he loved, and in whose footsteps he diligently sought to walk. He had a kind and judicious adviser in his pastor, Rev. Dr. [Asa] Saxe, who appreciated his faithfulness and integrity, his rare intellectual powers and pure moral sense, and, stimulated by his hearty encouragement, he entered Canton Theological School in 1870, and was graduated, June, 1873, with the reputation of superior scholarship and of great moral and Christian excellence.

Immediately after his graduation, he was settled at Clifton Springs, which was his only pastorate. He was ordained to the ministry Oct. 8, 1873, and with him ordination was an entire consecration of his rich gifts and powers, his strength and life, to the work which he believed was divinely appointed for him. His warm, tender and loving heart won the affections of his people, his indomitable courage and energy, his enthusiasm, his fine intellectual gifts, his integrity and tolerance, commanded their respect and esteem, and his self-devotion, his strong faith, the eloquence of his pure life, his fervent piety and Christian humility claimed their reverence, and aided them to bring the religion of the Divine Master into their hearts and lives. He was with his people six years, and the work he accomplished was great indeed. His influence was not limited to his own parish, but the lustre of his character was as a bright and shining light, attracting attention and winning admiration from all with whom he associated. From the brilliant promise of the morning, all looked forward to a glorious noon, and though the golden chains which bound him to earth have been broken, "the soft memory of his virtues yet lingers like twilight hues, though the bright sun is set."

Mr. Corbin was married Jan. 6, 1875, to Miss Estella H. Barber, of Canton, N.Y., who survives him.

The Universalist Register, Boston MA, 1880, pp. 91-2

Transcribed on 25 Jul 2011 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY