

[Marshall, Albert H.]

REV. A. H. MARSHALL

It was with feelings of the most poignant regret that a large body of people in Central New York heard, last week, of the death of Rev. A. H. Marshall, at his home in Madison. While I would not wish to, in any sense, become his biographer or his critic, I would at the same time, in behalf of his many friends and admirers, add a small branch of laurel to the garlands of love that bedeck his tomb. He was born in the town of Cazenovia in 1825, and the whole of his life was spent in his native county, 34 years at Madison, as pastor of the Universalist church. As a clergyman he was zealous without being a fanatic, liberal without being loud, and just without being harsh. As a man and a citizen his character was stainless and his probity unquestioned. In the village where he had lived and labored so long he was regarded with singular respect and veneration, while in the county at large, where he was constantly called on errands grave or gay, he was no less loved and venerated.

Although he was pastor of the Universalist church in Madison, that church by no means formed the horizon of his usefulness. Wherever in Madison county there were Universalists he was a welcome and oft-invited visitor and guest. Miles upon miles he has traveled about his native county to unite the young in matrimony or to speak the final words of condolence over the aged. Never once, in any word I ever heard him utter, was he unfair, prejudiced, bitter or malevolent. While his sermons were never what may be termed flowing, they had deeper qualities that were all the better. Though they were shorn of oratorical brilliancy they contained food for the soul. Plain, direct, unadorned doctrine was the essence of all his sermons, and that his words were heard and pondered is evident if "by their fruits ye shall know them."

In my own immediate circle of relatives and friends it was often my privilege to hear him speak, and never once did I hear an unsound or questionable precept fall from his lips. Another great thing about the man, which emphasized what he said to a remarkable degree, was his living exactly up to what he preached and taught. His life was one of severe simplicity and unobtrusive, quiet goodness. In his charities he was liberal, but his right hand never knew what the left gave. In his counsels to the afflicted and distressed he was quiet and unassuming and took no credit to himself for a godly life. As an exponent of Universalism he was fearless, frank and candid. Believing implicitly in that faith, he never wavered in his public support of it, yet he never was offensive in declaring his faith, nor was he constantly and obtrusively always seeking to proselytize. Because he believed in Universalism and its teachings and lived as he did, he may be

[Marshall, Albert H.]

called a model Universalist. He believed, as many in these enlightened days are coming to believe and as all must eventually believe, that no man is so sunk in sin but that there is in his nature that kernel of good which entitles him to a share in Paradise; that in no man's nature, beneath the ashes, there lurks no spark that the burning righteousness of Divinity cannot rekindle. God is love and unless we love our fellow men, even as this good man did, who shall say that we are good, even if we pray long and give with much flourish of trumpets? But he has gone to the reward of the faithful and that places that so long have known him will know him no more forever. For us is left the bright example of a noble life nobly used and a death met unshrinkingly and with faith in the brightness of the beyond.

His funeral was held on the afternoon of Thursday, the 18th inst. After a short prayer at his late home the body was conveyed to the Universalist church, where the public services took place. Addresses were made by Rev. Mr. Fuller, pastor of the Universalist church at Hubbardsville, and by his fellow clergy of the village of Madison. Rev. Daniel Ballou, of Utica, a life long friend of the deceased, made some touching closing remarks. A great crowd of sorrowing friends, representing Waterville, Hubbardsville, Oriskany Falls, Poolville, Hamilton and other places, gathered around the silent form of him who, on many a sorrowful scene, had been their comforter and friend. The remains were laid to rest in Madison's beautiful cemetery and there shall he lie, remembered and regretted by many, till time shall be no more.

A. W. R.

*Brookfield Courier*, Brookfield NY, Wed. 2 Mar 1892

Transcribed on 17 Sep 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY