

[Butler, Ami R. R.]

Extracts from a Funeral Discourse

BY REV. W. B. COOK

*The Opening and Closing Remarks offered at the Funeral of Dr. A. R. R. Butler, of Alexander, Genesee Co., N.Y., who died April 15, 1858.*

BR. AUSTIN:—Enclosed is a portion of the MSS. used on the occasion of the funeral above noticed. Much more than is written was said at the time, but we cannot write it out at present. Dr. Butler was father-in-law to Rev. Wm. McNeal, and also to Dr. Chambers of Buffalo. He has two sons in the practice of law in Milwaukee, Wis., all of whom were present. The Dr. was one of the very best of men, and a devoted christian Universalist. From the position which he occupied he will be missed far more than any other man in the town where he lived could have been. He was a devoted husband, a kind father, an obliging neighbor, and a sincere friend.

On the 18th a vast concourse of people of all sects from the adjoining towns assembled [for the funeral]... Peace to his ashes.

[Compiler's note: An abridged version of the Closing Remarks only is included below.]

CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. A.R.R. Butler, whose death we now deplore, was born in the town of Fairfield, Vt., Aug. 10, 1795, and was therefore 62½ year of age. He was the youngest of a family of seven children, three brothers and three sisters. Two of his older brothers were physicians before him. He received his academical education at St. Albans, Vermont, and commenced reading medicine with his oldest brother at the age of about 17, and entered upon the practice of a physician at the age of 22 years, which he continued up to the time of his death, a period of more than 41 years. The first five years of this time was spent in Lower Canada—one year in Stafford in this county, and the remaining thirty-five years has been spent in this town.

He was married at the age of twenty two, and together with his companion has raised a family of six children, viz: two sons and four daughters, all of whom are married and settled in life...

He has followed his profession with some brief interruptions occasioned by sickness, ever since. With his sympathies enlisted in behalf of the afflicted, with a stern and unbending integrity, he has gone forth on his mission of mercy... He has been called from his slumbers and gone out in the cold and storm, in sunshine and rain, and in the howling tempest to minister to the sick. He has proved himself to be not only a skillful and eminent, but a careful and patient physician.

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In his social habits he was familiar and easy.—With a mind well stored with useful knowledge, he was instructive and interesting in conversation. I have myself enjoyed his society much in the quiet of his home. He ever greeted me with a kindly welcome and proved himself a friend and brother.

In his religious sentiments he was a Universalist. He believed this sentiment was plainly taught in both nature and Revelation. And he rejoiced in prospect of its glorious consummation. I am told that he has always been a believer in Universal Salvation from the time he was old enough to have a religious opinion of his own, and long before he ever heard it preached. Although he was brought up under the influence of Presbyterian parentage, those familiar with him in his every day walk, or in the worshipping assembly, could not but observe that he was swayed continually by deep devotional feelings, by a pervading religious life. His eyes were often moistened with tears of joy while listening to the proclamation of the Gospel of peace. It was his meat and his drink, his continual consolation... And when he came up to this house, together with his companion and daughter, and was admitted into the church by the right hand of fellowship, he seemed to rejoice with a new joy. It was a source of great satisfaction to me, and will never be forgotten.

And now what shall I say to this church and Society, while one who was so devoted to its interests has fallen...—one who manifested so much interest in its behalf. Upon whom has his mantle fallen? Who will fill his place? Brethren, it behooves you individually to redouble your zeal and energy in the cause of Christ. The seat of one whom you all respected, whom you all loved, has been left vacant.—You will miss his presence from your Sabbath worship. His counsel and his cheering words, his sympathy in your trials, have all ceased here below. But he being dead yet speaketh. He speaks by his precept and example, saying be faithful to the interests of the cause of Christ. Live his precepts. Practice his example... May you heed that voice as it comes from the confines of eternity.

*Christian Ambassador*, Auburn NY, Sat. 1 May 1858

Transcribed on 9 Sep 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY