

**MEMORIAL OF
SAMUEL EELLS**

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Memorial of Samuel Eells by Samuel Eells

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Eells, Samuel

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P R E F A C E .

It will be asked why a Memorial Volume is published when he whom it honors has been dead more than thirty years, and these few words of explanation are given in answer.

At the time of his death none of the family of Mr. Eells were fitted to attempt the work now undertaken, nor did they really know to whom to entrust it, since they were personally acquainted with but few of his intimate friends, and he made choice of no one for such a service.

After conference, however, with those who were interested in the publication of some tribute to his memory, the material necessary was placed in the hands of a very able gentleman, who was a warm personal friend; and he expected to prepare a book for which many were anxiously waiting. The pressure of business engagements obliged him to delay this labor of love for some time, and before he had made much progress in it, though having had the papers two or three years, he was himself removed by death.

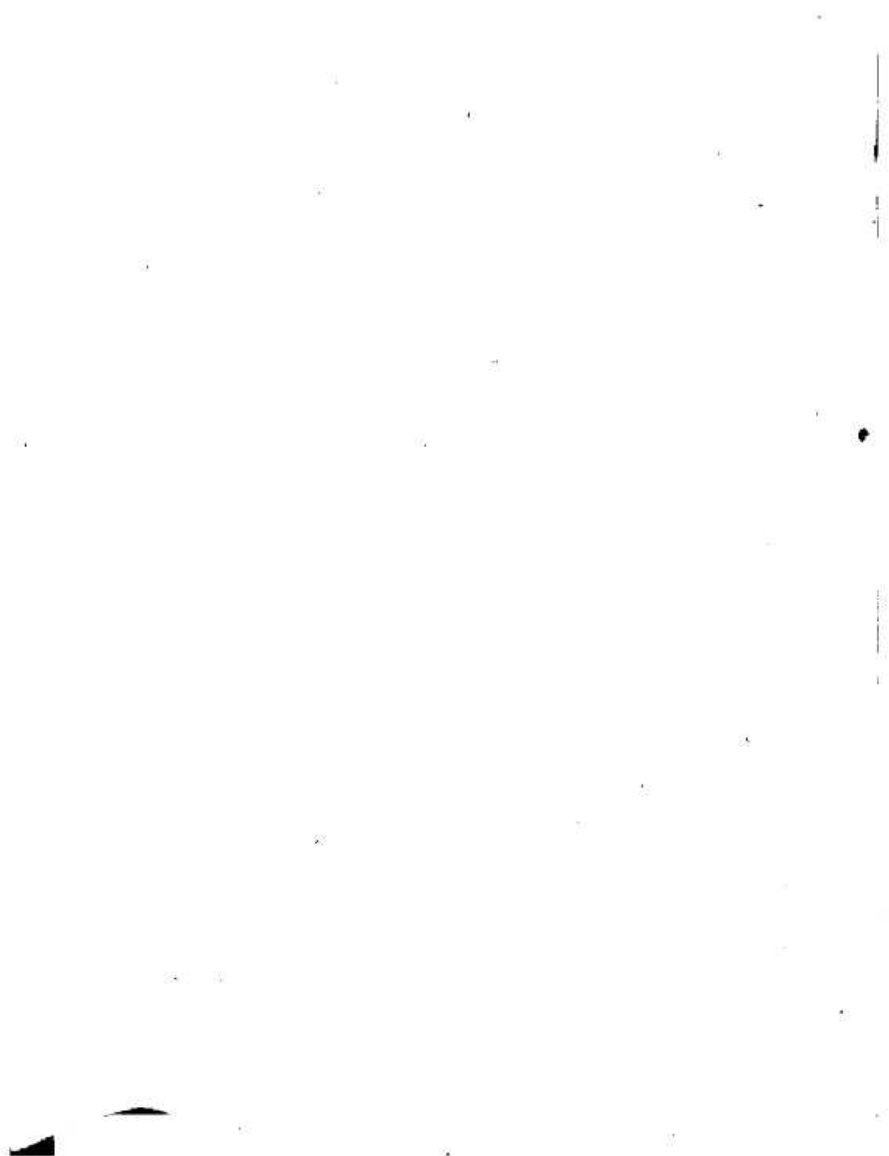
The brother who now offers this volume to those who still cherish the name with interest, then obtained the materials which could be gathered, more for his own satisfaction than with any thought of ever compiling them in this manner; supposing that most of those who had respected and loved their author, had during so long an interval lost the desire for such a memorial of him. Of late, a large number of those especially who have become familiar with his name and learned something of his spirit through their connection with the Alpha Delta Phi Society, have urged that even at so late a day an effort should be made to embody what remain of his writings and history.

It is in obedience to this solicitation and as a token of a brother's still-glowing affection that this work is completed. There is no other attempt than that in it the man of whom it speaks, as far as possible, may write his own memoir; the grateful task of the compiler being to arrange the matter and so connect the parts as to render the whole intelligible and attractive. Respecting the articles and addresses which are inserted, it should be said that they were selected not merely because of their intrinsic merit, but also as adapted to present their author's sentiments and feelings at the different eras of his life where they are introduced, and as furnishing a pleasing variety of subjects and composition. Regret may well be expressed that with the lapse of years so much has been lost that might have added interest to the book at an earlier day; yet it is believed to those who will welcome it, there will be enough presented to reward the desire that even so much be rescued from oblivion.

Prepared amidst the exhausting cares and duties of professional life, the work is offered to those who knew, and to those who honor him, to whose memory it is devoted.

JAMES EELLS.

284156



IN MEMORIAM.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY LIFE.

SAMUEL EELLS was born in Westmoreland, Oneida county, New York, on the 18th of May, 1810. His father was Rev. James Eells, for many years pastor of the Congregational Church in that town, and he was third in a family of seven children. The culture and habits of his home were eminently adapted to his peculiarities of mind and heart during the opening years of his life, and he was wont to refer to the influences that affected his childhood as having determined his whole career. Because of the pleasures and restraints, attended by the judicious instructions, of the domestic fireside, he grew up without any of those vicious habits to which many are addicted while they are boys, and he was ever devotedly attached to his kindred by blood. This was the more remarkable on account of his natural self-reliance and independence, and affords proof in his boyhood of that union of an affectionate disposition with a vigorous intellect, which was so pleasing in his mature years. He was admirably qualified to be a leader, in whatever circle he might be, winning by the kindness that always was prominent,

exciting interest by his wit and genius, and swaying by the acknowledged force of his character and mind; so that being chief among the young persons of his native village he furnished occasion to not a few of the prophets who cast his horoscope, to predict a brilliant career for one who so often delighted and surprised them by his exhibition of rare gifts.

When he reached his fifteenth year, however, there seemed to be danger that all these predictions of rustic admirers, and the more rational hopes of his parents and friends would be disappointed. Though quick in all his mental action, and learning with ease when giving himself to study, he was not fond of severe application to books. This was owing partly to the mercurial structure of his mind, and partly to the fact that he had been confined strictly to study since he was four years of age, and he had not yet begun to feel the pressure of that ambition which afterwards wrought so mightily upon him. In accordance with his inclination to form his own plans and reach his own conclusions, while always respectful toward others, he suddenly announced his desire to leave school, abandon the prospect of a liberal education, and devote himself to some more ordinary pursuit in life. Had his father been less wise in his manner of receiving this announcement, there would have been no occasion for this sketch of his life. Well aware, however, of his nature, and judging that absence from books for a time, and the lapse of a year or two would be likely to teach him what would be taught with difficulty by either precept or authority, he adopted a course which resulted most favorably. Selecting a farmer with whom he could trust his son, he placed him under his care in the spring season, Samuel being well pleased with the coveted change

from school to work. The effect of the change was most happy in several particulars. His constitution, which had never been firm, was rendered much more robust by his new mode of life; he acquired habits of industry which never left him, and although not until he had persevered through two summers of farming, he was at last entirely willing to recommence his studies with the purpose to enter college.

In the spring of 1826 he entered the Clinton Academy, then under the care of Mr. — Wilmarth. This teacher succeeded in firing him with new interest in all departments of education, and while with him his young pupil became fully possessed of that spirit which heeded no difficulties and hesitated before no task. Especially did he discover at this time an unusual talent for declamation and creditable facility in composition, quite surprising himself by his success. The first production of his own which he exhibited in public was a eulogy on Henry Kirke White, which in its style both of rhetoric and elocution, was regarded by those who heard it as indicative of great promise. The fact that on the threshold of his own short career, he should have been in such sympathy with that brilliant young poet whose genius really destroyed the frail body by which it was represented, may almost be considered prophetic of what would be true of himself.

In August, 1827, he became a member of the Freshman class in Hamilton College, but in a few months his health failed, and it was doubtful whether he could continue his studies. About the same time some difficulty occurred respecting a portion of the college officers which somewhat affected his interest in the institution, and with the hope that a change would take place within the year, he decided, by the