

**IN MEMORY OF THOMAS  
EBENEZER THOMAS, DELIVERED  
SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 1875, IN  
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH, DAYTON, OHIO**

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In Memory of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas, Delivered Sunday, March 14, 1875, in the First  
presbyterian church, Dayton, Ohio by Nathaniel West

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**NATHANIEL WEST**

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IN MEMORY

OF

Thomas Ebenezer Thomas,

DELIVERED

*Sunday, March 14, 1875, in the First Presbyterian  
Church, Dayton, Ohio.*

BY

NATHANIEL WEST,

OF CINCINNATI.

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*Ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ λύχνος ὁ καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων.*—John v. 35.

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1875

~~Wife of  
John H. Thomas,  
of Dayton, O.~~



AND is he gone, who brightly shone?  
Oh gloomy, gloomy night,  
Here, left alone, we deeply moan  
His lost lamented light!  
The Hero gone? the Prophet, too?  
Why does he cease to cry?  
Oh, will not heaven the lamp renew?  
Say, did the Prophet die?



## Miscellaneous.

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“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah; David also, and Samuel, and the prophets; who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”—Hebrews xi. 32-34.

CHOSEN to pronounce a commemorative address over those whose valor had made them victims in the first Peloponnesian war, and around whose public tomb the cypress had begun to wave, Pericles thus spoke to the assembled Athenians: “I deem it sufficient for men who have approved their virtue in action, by action to be honored for it. Difficult it is judiciously to handle a subject where even probable truth may not gain assent in the minds of those who, through envy of deeds which are beyond their own achievement, pronounce all that is spoken to be exaggeration and false. For the praises bestowed upon men are only to be endured when others imagine they can do, them-

selves, those feats they hear to have already been done.”

By such words did the great orator express his judgment that “action,” and not “oration,” should signalize the tribute of a people’s gratitude to those whose lives had been made an offering for the public welfare and glory. By such words did he give precedence to the long-drawn and solemnly-moving procession, the measured step, the trailing spears, the drooping standards, the sumptuous funeral-car empty in memory of the slain, the torch-light, the banquet, and proud material monument, rather than to lamentations of mourners, orations pronounced, and elegaic honors to the dead.

Reversely to this Pagan conception does the religion of Jesus teach us, that all mere outward and material demonstrations of regard for the meritorious dead, are inferior to that better tribute which seeks to perpetuate their virtues in lives conformed to their example, and in the enforcement and commendation of the principles by which their actions were inspired and adorned. “The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.” “The memory of the just is blessed.” “Remember them who have rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow; considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.” “The teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.” Better than material monument of Doric strength or Corinthian beauty, than sarcophagus or mausoleum, where lie the ashes of the dead inurned with funeral pomp, is that sublime chapter of inspiration from which the words of the



text are taken. More than a Westminster Abbey, it is a Temple of Eternal Fame, wherein the names and deeds of heroes of the faith are recorded, and a niche left for the spiritual bust of every true successor in the line of their valor. To this Temple of Remembrance, built by the breath of the Holy Spirit, we come today. Its portals we enter. Here would we place our image, imperfect though it be, of him who was worthy, on earth, to stand beside "the elders" who, ages ago, "obtained a good report through faith," and who, now in heaven, stands crowned in their ranks, for ages to come, around the throne.

I am directed to the text because it presents an appropriate category wherein to class the name of one who so long was your honored pastor, lent of God not to you alone, but given to the whole Church, one who so long was a hero of the faith, a true soldier of Christ. Nor Gideon, nor Barak, nor Samson, nor Jephthah, nor David, nor Samuel, nor the prophets, held in higher regard the word of God, nor trusted with more unswerving fidelity to Him who had made it their absolute guide. Here lay the secret of his life and labors, trials and reproaches, courage, victories and un murmuring death. Let the name of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas be inscribed upon the same tablet with the names of the judges, the prophets, the heroes, of Israel. To him, as to them, it was given, in high moral conflict, to subdue kingdoms, work righteousness, obtain promises, stop the mouths of lions, quench the violence of fire, escape the edge of the sword, out of weakness become strong, wax valiant in fight, turn to flight the armies of the aliens.

Shortly before his death it was my privilege, in company with another, to whom he was attached, to

visit him just when his strength began to wane, and the tide of life to ebb slowly away. We found the soldier, wounded on the battlement, calmly reposing on his shield—"the shield of faith." Buckled tight to his head, and gleaming as ever, he still wore his helmet—"the helmet of salvation." Stretched on his shield, his hand supporting his weary head, his front glittered all over with "the breastplate of righteousness." Unsheathed by his side lay his well-tried sword, tested in many a conflict—"the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Armed, *cap-a-pie*, with sandals on his feet, ready, faint as he was, either to walk "in the way of peace," or, if needs be, shout "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," he seemed a very soldier, born and bred alike to the fortunes of holy war and the experience of rest that comes from victory. The pallor of his face and fading light in his eyes foreboded that the joy of his Lord, his eternal crown, was near. It was during the afternoon of Tuesday, February 2d, the winds from the hills moaned over the city of Cincinnati "Dr. Thomas is dying!" Pleuropneumonia was doing its fatal work. It was on the following morning of February 3d, the same winds moaned again, "Dr. Thomas is dead!" He had fallen asleep in Jesus. "And the voice said cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" And it said, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people are grass! The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever!" "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, *Write*, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: *Yea, saith the Spirit*, that they

may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Doctor Thomas Ebenezer Thomas, eldest son of Rev. Thomas Thomas and Elizabeth Robinson, was of Welsh and English descent. The blood that flowed in the veins of a Christmas Evans, a John Elias, and a Howell Harris, gentle, fiery, chariot-like, and mounting, coursed in his own. The Puritan spirit that could welcome either martyrdom or exile, for righteousness' sake, and write a Smithfield, an Amsterdam, a Plymouth Rock, in its annals, was his. He was born in Chelmsford, England, December 23, 1812. While yet a child, but six years old, the decree of Him who led Israel through the sea wafted him across the Atlantic to find, in the New World, a theater of action for his boyhood, his manhood, his maturer age. With his parents he reached the shores of the United States, and landed at Baltimore in the year 1818. Together they journeyed to the city of Pittsburg, thence down the Ohio to Cincinnati. Prepared for college by his father, who himself was a graduate of Hoxton College, London, and a minister of the Independent Church, and whose "boarding-school" in the Miami country was the pride of its patrons, he was matriculated in Miami University in the fall of 1829, then under the supervision of President Bishop and Professors McGuffey, Scott, and Armstrong, and was graduated four years later, in the spring of 1834. Among his classmates and intimate friends were Rev. Dr. J. G. Monfort, Gov. Charles Anderson, Hon. W. S. Groesbeck, and others of eminent distinction.

Impressive incidents of his college life are still vivid in the memories of surviving companions. I pass by his reputation in debate and proficiency in scholar-