

**IN MEMORIAM: A
DISCOURSE ON THE LIFE AND
CHARACTER OF THE LATE
REV. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D. D.**

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In Memoriam: A Discourse on the Life and Character of the Late Rev. George Duffield, D. D. by
William A. McCorkle

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WILLIAM A. MCCORKLE

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REV. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D. D.**

IN MEMORIAM.

A DISCOURSE

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF THE LATE

Rev. George Auffield, D.D.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM A. McCORKLE,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DETROIT.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only but unto all them also that love His appearing."—II TIMOTHY, IV, 7-8.

DETROIT:

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CORRESPONDENCE.

DETROIT, August 24, 1868.

Rev. Wm. A. McCORKLE :

Dear Sir — The undersigned, having listened with great pleasure to your Memorial Discourse upon the Life and Character of the late GEORGE DUFFIELD, D.D., Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of this city, respectfully ask a copy of the same for publication.

Very truly yours,

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| J. S. FARRAND, | Rev. WM. HOGARTH, |
| GEORGE S. FROST, | Rev. J. P. SCOTT, |
| CHARLES W. NOBLE, | JOHN C. BROWN, |
| A. SHELLEY, | IRA WORCESTER, |
| W. S. PENFIELD, | D. O. PENFIELD, |
| DAVID COOPER, | E. BINGHAM, |
| GEORGE B. PEASE, | J. L. WHITING, |
| Rev. ADDISON BALLARD, | H. C. CLARK, |
| O. S. GULLEY, | EDWIN JEROME, |
| DAVID W. BROOKS, | A. SINCLAIR, |
| J. M. STANLEY, | IRA SLADE, |
| JAMES HOUGH, | THOS. S. HILL, |
| JAMES BEEDZLER, | D. B. McRAE, |
| JAMES W. FARRELL. | |

To J. S. FARRAND, W. S. PENFIELD, G. S. FROST, A. SHELLEY, WM. HOGARTH, D.D., CHAS. W. NOBLE, GEO. B. PEASE, O. S. GULLEY, and others :

Gentlemen — Yielding to your judgment, as to the propriety of publishing the Memorial Discourse delivered in the First Presbyterian Church of this city on last Sabbath afternoon, it is herewith placed at your disposal. Anything that may have been said commemorative of the Life and Character of the late Rev. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D.D., belongs, not exclusively to me, but to this community and his many personal friends.

May his memory long be fresh among us, inciting us to earnest endeavor in the work to which he gave his life.

Very truly yours,

August 24, 1868.

Wm. A. McCORKLE.

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A. S.

DISCOURSE.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—II TIMOTHY, IV, 7-8.

In this passage of Scripture we have the language of one, than whom no more eminent servant of God ever lived — uttered when standing in the near presence of death. Once a persecutor, he had, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, been made an Apostle. And, when called, without waiting to confer with "flesh and blood," he began the work of his Apostleship just where he ended the work of a persecutor. His matchless mind, disciplined and refined by the most careful and thorough culture of his day, would make him a man of power, under whatsoever circumstances, and in whatsoever capacity called into exercise. Not, however, until, in the light that shone upon him near Damascus, he had received his commission from Jesus Christ, had the powers of Saul of Tarsus found a service worthy of them. However wonderful when in a state of nature, they were to be immeasurably more wonderful when he had been made a new man in Christ Jesus, and brought to walk in the light and strength given him by the Holy Ghost. The deep mysteries and precious truths, so logically and marvelously unfolded in his Epistles, give evidence that, in the service of Christ, his powers found their true sphere, and that he was chosen

and honored of God as an inspired teacher. His was a life of devotion and faithfulness, never surpassed, and seldom witnessed. From the beginning at Damascus, to the ending at Rome, he was moved by the one purpose which took possession of him when he said, "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?" There was no faltering, nor was there abatement of his zeal. Neither malice of men, nor device of devils could turn him aside. He put away all weights; brought the flesh into subjection; recognized his indebtedness to all men; and sought to know only Christ and Him crucified. Conflict and persecution are common to the experience of Christ's followers, but Paul, because of his greatness and ceaseless earnestness, endured a double portion. Scourging, imprisonment, and stoning failed to intimidate him, and with equal resolution he endured toil, weariness, destitution, and perils by land and by sea. Moved by the great purpose that had filled his soul, he walked in the strength of his Master, and sought only the promotion of His glory. It was but putting the spirit of his life into words, when, in the face of new dangers, he said: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." And, when the end of that course was near, and that ministry had reached its fulfillment, who can wonder that, in writing to Timothy, his own spiritual son, from the prison which was the opening door to his death, he should exclaim, in the exultation of a faith undimmed and unflinching, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a

crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

It might be immodest for any one to appropriate these words to himself. For there are very few who would be warranted in speaking of themselves, as the Apostle Paul could speak, when his work was done and he was ready to be offered. Neither is the number large, when speaking of whom, we would venture to select this passage as a foundation of remark. All of Christ's followers finish their course, keep the faith, and have before them a crown of righteousness, but remembering who said it, and the life too at the close of which it was said, there are many with reference to whom we should hesitate to take the words of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, and say, they have fought a good fight. Called upon, however, in the providence of God, to speak of one who, by more than a half century of faithful service, made himself a veteran soldier of the cross, no words have suggested themselves as so appropriate for the occasion, as these of the Apostle Paul.

The Rev. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D. D., was born in Strasburg, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, on the fourth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four. The christian name of his father was GEORGE — that of his mother was FAITHFUL. His father was a merchant, and for nine years held the office of Controller General of Pennsylvania, under Governor McKEAN. His grand-father was the celebrated Dr. GEORGE DUFFIELD, of revolutionary memory, who, in conjunction with Bishop WHITE, was Chaplain of the First Congress of the United States. At that time he was Pastor of the Pine street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and manifested that

devotion to liberty, and heroism in its defense, of which his grand-son — the late departed — was so eminent an example.

The subject of the present discourse was, by his pious parents, made a participant in the Abrahamic covenant, and taught the truths of christianity, as they are clearly and logically unfolded in the system of doctrine usually termed Calvinistic. His father was able, without interruption, to afford him the very best educational advantages. His aptitude for study was early evinced, and, when a youth of but sixteen years, he graduated, with honor, at the University of Pennsylvania, then under the Provostship of Dr. JOHN McDOWELL. Of the time and circumstances of his conversion to a practical spiritual life, we cannot speak with definiteness. It was in June, of the year 1811, that he graduated, and in the autumn of the same year he entered the Theological Seminary in the city of New York, under the care of the celebrated Dr. JOHN M. MASON; and about the same time, or soon after, he made a public profession of his faith in Christ, uniting himself to the Church under the pastoral care of Dr. J. B. ROMEYN. The four succeeding years were spent in theological study, and on the twentieth day of April, 1815, lacking, as yet, a few months of his twenty-first year, he was licensed, by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, to preach the everlasting gospel. In December after, he received a call to become the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Carlisle, Pennsylvania; a church of which his grand-father had once been Pastor, and in which he was to be the immediate successor of Dr. ROBERT DAVINSON. This call, after six weeks' labor, he thought best to accept, but his ordination and installation did not occur until

the following autumn, on the twenty-fifth day of September. In this Church, and in the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit, his ministerial life was chiefly spent. He never, to his last day, lost his tender solicitude and warm sympathy for the Church of his early charge. It was the scene of many trials, and it was, too, the place where blessings, many and rich, were enjoyed. There he made him a home by consummating a union with Miss ISABELLA GRAHAM BETHUNE, the young bride of his choice, who, having shared with him the changing vicissitudes of fifty years, still remains, stricken because he is taken, yet resigned, and shedding upon her children, and her children's children, the golden richness of her setting sun. There sons and daughters were born to him in the flesh; and there, too, were born to him spiritual sons and daughters. There some of those sons and daughters, after the flesh, slept the sleep from which only He, who broke the bars of the grave, can awake them; and there, too, many of those spiritual sons and daughters preceded him to that country, whence there is never a return. After a pastorate, mingled as all pastorates are with joy and sorrow, of a little more than nineteen years, if we include the months of labor preceeding his installation, he accepted a call from the Fifth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, where he was the successor of the Rev. THOS. H. SKINNER, D.D. His connection with this church lasted but two years, at the end of which time he was called to the Broadway Tabernacle, in the city of New York. His field of permanent labor, however, was not there. At the end of a single year the Providence of God indicated that his services were needed elsewhere, and, in response to a call, he became the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church