

**IN MEMORIAM, REV.
SYLVAN S. HUNTING,
1826-1894; PP. 5-47**

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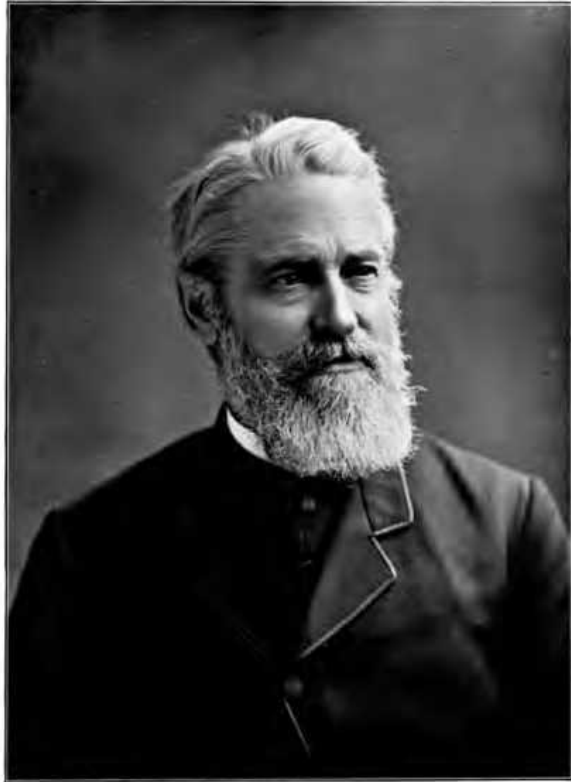
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VARIOUS

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SYLVAN S. HUNTING.

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In Memoriam.

Stanly
REV. SYLVAN S. HUNTING.

1826 - 1894.

"In all God's disdem
No star shines brighter than the kingly man,
Who nobly earns whatever crown he wears,
Who grandly conquers or as grandly dies;
And the white banner of his manhood bears,
Through all the years, uplifted to the skies."

DES MOINES:
F. C. KENYON, PRINTER,
1894.

MAR 26 1898

*Gift of
W. B. ...
of ...
(381)*

"We must work for this generation, and have faith."



SYLVAN S. HUNTING was born March 22, 1826, in a farmhouse, in the town of New London, Merrimac County, New Hampshire. He was the ninth child of Israel and Lucinda Everett Hunting, and was a descendant of John Hunting, who came to America from the county of Suffolk, England, in the year 1633, and settled in Dedham, Mass., where he was admitted a freeman the next year and became one of the founders and a "ruling elder," of the Dedham church. The subject of our sketch, as a young boy, attended the district school and Colby Academy at New London.

In November, 1842, at the age of sixteen, he was considered "competent to teach a common district school," and began that fall in the neighboring town. In September, 1847, he went to teach a "select school," at Contoocookville, N. H., and November 29th of the same year, he was placed over the school at West Acton, Mass., as "teacher, governor and example." The following spring he went to Haverhill and attended school at Bradford. In the fall he returned to West Acton to teach the High School, and again went to Haverhill where he continued his studies until the fall of that year, 1849, when he was admitted to the Harvard Divinity School, at Cambridge.

Wherever he went, Mr. Hunting found many true friends who testify by their letters to their deep affection for him, and to their high appreciation of his talents and the sincerity of his Christian life. His journal of these years bears witness to his deep religious fervor. He was accustomed to go out into the woods and the sunshine to listen to the birds, to study the plants and flowers, and to pray to his God. July, 1849, he writes:

“Why do I go into the woods to pray, if there is no God, as some say? Why have I within me those aspirations of soul for the pure and holy, the true and beautiful, unless there is a fountain of purity, of holiness and truth? If there is nothing higher than mere matter, why does my soul rise in reverence of something of a higher principle? This were an inconsistency. 'Twould be an absurdity for me to have a veneration for that which does not exist, and this veneration a natural sentiment of the soul. It would be an anomaly unlike anything else I know. Then let my faith in a God be immovable. It is so. I have no doubts.”

After graduating from the Divinity School, in 1852, he had two calls, one to Dedham and one to Brookfield, Mass., and under the advice of his old professor, Dr. Noyes, he accepted the latter, as offering greater opportunities for work. In October, 1855, he was married to Carrie E. Stowell, and in September, 1856, their son Stanley was born. His wife was not strong, failed through the winter, and in February, 1857, she passed away.

In October, 1858, Mr. Hunting left Brookfield and went to Manchester, New Hampshire, to become pastor of the Unitarian church there. In November of that year he was married to Julia M. Stevens, of North Andover, Mass. On April 3, 1861, a son, Charles S., was born. After three years stay in Manchester,

in November, 1861, another move was made to Detroit, Mich., and there a third son, Nathaniel S., was born February 18, 1863.

In 1863, Mr. Hunting resigned his position to enter the army as chaplain of the Twenty-seventh Regiment, Michigan Infantry, Volunteers. He was with the Ninth Army Corps, which served in Kentucky, Mississippi, East Tennessee and Virginia, being used as a corps to fight any and everywhere. His work was mostly in the Sanitary Commission and hospitals, caring for the sick and comforting the dying. He was mustered out August 4, 1865, and after preaching two months and a half in several places in Michigan, accepted the pastorate of the Second Congregational (Unitarian) Church of Quincy, Illinois, where he remained until January 1, 1871. Then he received the appointment of the American Unitarian Association to the place of Western Secretary, and served in that office till June, 1874. In that capacity he traveled much over the West, spent one year in Indianapolis, Ind., and went to Davenport, Iowa, November 1, 1873. In the fall of 1880 he moved to Des Moines, to take up the work begun there by the Rev. Mr. Effinger, and continued in the pastorate of the church until March, 1886. After that, he founded churches at Luverne, Minn., Rock Rapids, Sioux City and Decorah, Iowa.

He was a man of great activity, both mental and physical. Although his life work was as a minister of the gospel, yet he found time and energy for many outside interests. On the 5th of May, 1848, he joined the Sons of Temperance, at Haverhill, Mass., and ever since has been a strong and willing advocate of everything pertaining to that reform. He early sympathized with the Anti-Slavery cause. On July 4, 1849, he wrote, "Shame on those slave-holding states that they celebrate this day (Fourth

of July), while they hold their fellow men in bondage." In his later years, he became much interested in the cause of released convicts, and was for a time president of the Iowa Prisoners' Aid Association, and a member of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections.

He continued his early interest in all educational matters, serving on the school-boards of Brookfield and Davenport. In the latter place, he was for one year president of the Academy of Natural Sciences.

At times, he grew dissatisfied with the amount and quality of the work which he was doing, or impatient at the slowness of achieving results; then would he recall the line which he early took for a motto:

"Learn to *labor* and to *wait*."

In the fall of 1892, the disease which had been insidiously fastening upon his system, began to assert itself and he sought medical advice. He received some relief but no cure, and finally, after months of terrible suffering, passed quietly away, early in the morning of the 2nd of June, 1894, at his home in Des Moines.