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MEMOIR OF DR. H. M. KNIGHT.

By DR. GEO. BROWN, of Barre, Massachusetts.

AMID the pleasant salutations of to-day, as we have met for our annual association, we miss the hearty greeting, with its peculiar musical vocal tone, of our friend Dr. H. M. Knight, elected at our last meeting at Lincoln to act as our president to-day. He is not here, but has passed on to the great Beyond, and I bring this paper as a tribute to some of the pleasant recollections of his life. When good and useful men die with whom we have been intimately associated in any way, we are more than ordinarily inclined to stop and ponder thereupon, as to the what and where and who next; and I therefore ask your attention while I read my own impression of him whom I have been happy to claim as a friend for many years.

He was the son of a clergyman, and was born in Stafford, Connecticut; his youth and early life present no very special features out of the ordinary course of New England youth worth the mention here. After academic and medical studies he commenced the practice of medicine in the town of Salisbury, Connecticut, which practice he faithfully and earnestly pursued for a few years. At or near the year 1855 he came to Barre with two others as commissioners of the State to see our Institution, then just beginning to prove to the doubting world that it could live and be a success in the training and educating of the unfortunate class of Feeble-Minded Youth.

His earnest inquiries, his benevolent sympathy, led him to feel that his future calling and endeavor should be in that special direction, and he soon took measures to receive into his own family the nucleus of a class which was the beginning of the now large and well-known Institution at Lakeville, which he so long and ably managed. He endeavored to enlist the public interest and aid of the State. It came slowly and reluctantly, as such questions are apt to be crowded out of administrative attention by others, not at all stronger but more specious, of parallel misfortune. After many discouragements and rebuffs, which would have led most men to give up the project, the public sympathy and interest caused the enactment of law giving aid and support to a limited number of children, the State's sad and helpless ones, who had in him found a friend and advocate.



Yours very truly
H. M. Stanley



Yours very truly
H. W. Dwight

He died when his Institution had just entered its period of established usefulness ; when the heavy work of arguing, urging, pleading, was mainly over and an assured support seemed a fact accomplished ; but the good work he began will be carried on now by others, giving its blessings to many.

He was a man of consecrated heart, and did his work not merely as a secular business, but from purest and highest motives, and he loved it. It enlisted his soul and whole being in a religious sense.

He had large sympathy and large hope, and like a painting duly proportioned and colored, his character appears the more interesting and instructive the more minute and protracted the scrutiny of it.

He was courteous and polished as a gentleman, simple in manners, and kind and amiable in his feelings. He was active in doing good, and fruitful in good works in his Institution,—home, and in his community. He had practical wisdom and good sense for public affairs, and the church and Sabbath-school with which he was connected were largely aided and benefited by his work.

He had a nicely-balanced proportion between the various excellences of his character, which though it made each one perhaps a less conspicuous object of notice, yet gave the whole a far higher value.

His firmness, his decision, his independence of spirit, with his real gentleness and kindness, were in happy combination, making a marked man. His mind was not rapid and sparkling, but it was sagacious, patient, and sure. Whatever he saw he saw clearly in its just proportions and its proper place, and he had the strength and will to climb for it. Like that something which we call effect in architecture, his character comes to my mind with pleasant and inspiring influences.

Physically, as you all well know, he was well-proportioned, large, and manly, his countenance denoting native independence, firmness, energy, candor, frankness, simplicity, and benevolence, with mental vision that intuitively saw the relations and bearings of objects ; regulated and controlled by that sound common sense which rightly apprehends circumstances and adapts means to ends. All these attributes were chastened and ennobled by a Christian piety, living, in a word, not unto himself, but *for* others, as his highest homage to God.

“To have true respect for ourselves guides our morals ; to have deference for others governs our manners ;” thus was he,—a Christian gentleman.

Some six or seven years ago he suffered from spinal irritation, in fact, meningitis, I suppose, and for many months was an invalid ; and after rest and travel in this country and Europe, he was mainly restored to practical

business ability, although I am confident never fully recovered, as some of you may know.

The latter part of December last he left his home to spend the winter in Florida, hoping for a comfortable winter, but was taken with severe symptoms at Fernandina, and died on the 22d of January, 1880, of rupture of the gall-duct.

The funeral, a few days after at Lakeville, was attended by a large concourse of people who had known, respected, and loved him, including representatives of the medical profession and members from both branches of the Legislature of the State.

As his sincere friend I draw near his grave and pay homage to the memory of your and my associate, whose goodness of heart is at once an object of our sorrow, of our consolation, and of our example, and sadly say *Vale! Vale!*