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*Fr. Joseph F. Tuttle*  
*Wabash College*

TRUE GREATNESS.

A S E R M O N

Preached at Belleville, N. J., June 27, 1869,

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

DR. SAMUEL L. WARD. ✕

BY  
REV. WILLIAM W. HALLOWAY,  
PASTOR OF THE REFORMED CHURCH.

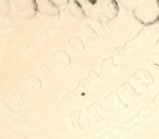
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*My maternal Uncle.*  
*J. F. T.*

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TRUE GREATNESS.

A SERMON.

By the Rev. J. J. ...

Preached at Balliol College, Oxford, on the 21st of June, 1847.

Two of the most illustrious and successful of the English statesmen of the last century have been distinguished for their wisdom and integrity, and their labours in the public service have been the source of the greatest benefit to the nation.

X

It is a common error to suppose that the true greatness of a man consists in the possession of power and wealth. In fact, the true greatness of a man consists in the possession of wisdom and integrity, and in the labours of the public service.

At one time the English came to terms with the French, and the English people were the victors of the day. Then our forefathers a little while after their death and told their "Wives of what kind of men they were." But as the same is granted in the life of the English, so the same is granted in the life of the French, so the same is granted in the life of the world of wisdom, so the same is granted in the life of the world of wisdom, and in the life of the world of wisdom.

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*Handwritten notes at the bottom of the page, including the name "J. J. ..."*

## TRUE GREATNESS.

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“Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.—*Matt. xx : 26, 27.*”

Humility in the service of love was ever taught by our Saviour. Two or three instances are recorded by the Gospel writers in which the Disciples seem to have contended for rank and position, and in every case Christ enforced the truth upon them that superiority in his kingdom rested not upon the foundations on which men generally build for greatness, but upon humble and loving ministrations. He was greatest who considered himself least. He would be first who made himself last. He would be highest who stooped lowest in his efforts to accomplish good. Condescension would be the measure of exaltation.

At one time the Disciples came to Christ with the direct question: “Who is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven?” Then our Lord placed a little child in their midst and told them, “Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven.” That is, he who will seek for the modesty of childhood, its trusting disposition, its want of pretense, and its perfect contentment while under complete dependence, he will enter upon the path of true greatness.

At another time, after the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the Master having girded himself, and filled a basin with water, washed the feet of the Disciples, drying them also with the towel with which he was girded. This probably took place after a similar discussion concerning the greatness of the Disciples. The menial service performed by the Saviour

was his answer, showing them thus that as he their Master had ministered to them, they should minister to one another, and let all questions of pre-eminence be swallowed up in voluntary subordination and mutual ministering.

In the instance from which the text is taken, the mother of two of the Disciples, instigated by a false earnestness and pride, asked of the Saviour permission for her sons to sit the one on His right hand and the other on His left, in the establishment of His kingdom. First telling them that they could not expect to be partakers with Him in all his work and sufferings, He adds: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

At first this seems like the announcement of a doctrine altogether contrary to the received notions of men. Yet if we recall two or three things in connection with it, we will find that the general idea is not so far different after all.

*In the first place*, it is not true that they who make the most pretensions, and put themselves in the most prominent positions, are those whom the world looks upon as great. We know that men, from a very superficial view of things, often think this to be so, and act accordingly. Doubtless there are cases in which some, by persistent pushing of themselves forward, and by constant claims upon the attention of the world, have for a while been held in higher esteem than they by any merit deserved. But time and history remedy this; falsity of the judgment is after a while acknowledged. On the other hand, he of an unassuming manner, of a gentle but sweet character, is winning his way evermore into the affections of the world. And though he has exacted no homage, though he has asked for no high place, when he comes to die, the

world feels the void which his loss has made, and can speak no words too lofty in his praise. How often it is the case that the worth of men is not fully acknowledged till after they are gone from us. They held a high place perhaps, they were generally known, they were appreciated by a few for their superior goodness and capacities. But they bore their honors so meekly, they went in and out among men so unassumingly, they possessed so few of the showy characteristics, that the world really did not know how necessary they were to it. But when death took them, then the land was filled with mourning, and every household felt that it had met with a loss, even though the one for whom they wept had never crossed their sill, had never even been seen by them.

Men are not so easily deceived after all. Swagger, flourish, noise, show may attract for awhile, and they who use them may think that they are building upon them a firm superstructure of greatness. But the world sees through it all, though it does appear to have its hands before its eyes. The world *is* capable of distinguishing between the true and the false, between the substantial and the superficial. And as it knows that it is affection that makes a home, and not its framework however lofty, nor its furniture however costly; that it is perfume that gives preciousness to the flower, and not its color however gaudy, nor its size however great; that it is its light which makes the star beautiful, and not its nearness, nor its roundness, nor its flashing brilliancy: so it recognizes the fact that merit and goodness constitute greatness, however humble, however unassuming, and not pomp, nor power, nor possessions. Many a Jewish Priest, many a Roman potentate who lived in the time of Christ, and had their little time of notoriety then, are unknown now even by name; while Dorcas, whose name was probably never spoken by any of these dignitaries, "the woman full of good works, and alms deeds," is enshrined in that book which shall outlive all time, and is read of and loved and followed by many of

every age and every class, in every country under the sun. Many captains and generals who trod a brilliant but destructive path in the war of the Crimea, have already been permitted to sink into obscurity. But the services of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE amid the same bloody scenes, have been, and so long as the world stands, will be, warmly, ungrudgingly and gratefully remembered, "with a unanimity only accorded to such rare, unostentatious, and truly heroic conduct."

*Secondly*, we must remember that every great life is made up of small things. The most common ministrations, the seemingly most trifling acts, go to form the grandest sum total of existence.

The blotting-out of one distant star in yon spangled heavens would not mar the beauty of the magnificent canopy over us. Its absence would not be noticed save by some astronomer whose glass is nightly turned upon the revolving panorama of the worlds. Yet the heavens are made up of just such bodies scattered in brilliant profusion over its tasseled walls.

The hills in the airy distance are beautiful to the eye gazing upon them, not because of some giant oak or stately cedar outstanding from their rising surface, but by reason of the mingling verdure of their slopes, composed of innumerable blades of grass, and intertwining branches of hundreds of trees clothed in full dress of Summer's furnishing. So men's lives are beautiful from the accretion of unimportant things, from the mingling of trifling outgoes of influence, from the intertwining of humble services of love. Very few become great by some one bold or brilliant deed, by some single specimen of genius or goodness. Even if this be so, the little lessons, the almost unrecognized influences brought to bear upon them from within and without, that were preparing them for the decisive hour, must be taken into the account. Generally our lives, the noblest, the greatest lives, stand out prominently thus, because of careful painstaking with every duty, because of attention given to every demand upon the

heart and mind, because of little plans of kindness for others, because of constant seeking of opportunities to minister to the wants of fellow man, because of unseen self-denials for this purpose, because of trifling looks, words, acts, that grow together from one common soil, and reach out together to one common height, making the harmonious, beautiful whole upon which the Sun of Righteousness sheds glorious rays of light, and from the vision of which men rise up to call them blessed.

*But still again,* it is acknowledged that that is the greatest life which is the most useful. And this is the same as saying that he is greatest who does most for men, who is a servant in the broadest sense, that the chief among men must be virtually their minister.

In our Republican form of Government we have an illustration of this. By our suffrages we put some over us as our Legislators, Judges, Governors and Presidents. But they are made our chiefs only to be our servants, only to do our will. Although the popular will is often derided and set aside by our rulers, yet as a general rule its power is felt and acknowledged by them all. No one, however high, dare resist it any length of time. Like a giant who knows his power, and does not care always to exercise it, the people sometimes allow a ruler to act contrary to their wishes. But when their anger is once aroused, when their power is once exerted, the most eminent, the most exalted, the most strongly entrenched, are but as babes in their mighty grip to be overthrown and to be crushed to powder. They who are wise recognize this latent force. When our President accepted the nomination of his party to the highest office in the gift of the people, he announced that he would have no policy of his own contrary to the expressed will of the people. The same principle at work renders it necessary for our Senators and Representatives to explain their action to their constituents by letter and speech.

But we have other illustrations. The teacher who gains

the most eminence is that one whose services are given most lovingly and earnestly—like Dr. Arnold of Rugby; the philosopher who becomes the most distinguished is not that one whose genius leads him to dazzling but futile endeavors, but the one who applies his fine mind and fertile resources to the increasing of agencies which may be usefully employed in life; to the discovering and publishing of hitherto unknown truths; to the application of new principles to old rules of action, and to the general enlargement of the sphere of human knowledge. He is the greatest physician who is most indefatigable in ministering to men, and the most successful in healing their many diseases. He is the true patriot who overthrows the tightly riven chains of tyranny and gives the boon of freedom to a country trodden under foot by despotism; as William of Orange was great because he tore Holland from the iron grasp of Spain, and established civil and religious liberty among the dykes of his native land; as Lincoln was great because he seized the opportunity of signing the death-warrant to American Slavery. In philanthropy and religion too, they hold the highest place who devote most of their time, and means and talents to the lifting up of the fallen, to the relief of the distressed, to the deliverance of the bound, to the feeding of the hungry, to the lightening of the burdens of the wretched, and to the salyation of the lost.

And in all this are not the teacher, the statesman, the philosopher, the physician, the philanthropist and the christian acting as the servants of their fellow men? It may not be their impelling motive always to bear this relationship. There may be, nay, there often is, selfishness at the bottom of it all. But even their selfishness has to be subservient to the wants of the world. While they are advocating their own interests, while they are raising themselves, they necessarily become champions of those upon whose shoulders they rise, and inevitably advance the general good of humanity. And so in whatever way we look, the argument holds good that,

“Whosoever will be great must be a minister; whosoever will be chief among men must be their servant.”

I have chosen these words and followed this line of thought as a most appropriate commentary upon the life of our departed friend and father, the senior Elder of this Church, DR. SAMUEL L. WARD. Measured by this standard of Christ he was truly great. I know of no more fitting and beautiful epitaph to be inscribed upon his tomb than the words which were written over John Howard: “HE LIVED FOR OTHERS.” I know not how better to describe his whole life, beautiful as it was in good deeds, and loving kindness to men, than by saying he acted upon the rule, “Whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant.”

It is true that he made no demands upon men for their homage. He asked for no high place among them. He never made himself prominent. If there was any one trait eminently peculiar to him, it was his humility. Those who knew him best, who saw the most of him, bear this testimony. He never thought more highly of himself than he ought to think. Rather he deprecated any importance given to his work. He erred, if at all, in depreciating himself and underestimating his tasks. His constant lament to me, as well as to all his other pastors was, that he had been able to do so little for his fellow men, and for his Master. Forgetting what he could and did do, he grieved for what he could not have, and had not, accomplished.

It is also true that his life was distinguished by no dazzling work of genius, no one magnificent deed of benevolence. He had not the opportunity, nor the desire probably, to startle the world into admiration because of some wonderful thought developed, or some heroic act performed. His life however was made up of daily kindnesses, of constant ministrations, of innumerable plans for the benefit of others.

His every thought seemed to be perfumed with the goodness

of his heart. His every word seemed to be toned to sympathy for the distressed, to advice for the erring, to love for all. His every act was courtesy, gentleness, benignity incarnate. In this he was great—great in the ordering of the duties and ministrations of every day, great in the grand total of little, almost unrecognized acts of love, that made up his career. He was great according to our Saviour's rule of usefulness, for in that did he stand head and shoulders above his fellows.

The profession which he followed, that of medicine, affords opportunities second to none for doing good. The pastoral office is one in which noble occasions offer themselves for becoming acquainted with and relieving the ills of humanity; one upon which great responsibilities rest for the right discharge of heaven-given means for lifting up the debased and ministering to the wretched both in body and soul.

But the physician's opportunities and responsibilities are not second even to those of the minister of the Gospel. It is a noble, a grand profession. The body needs attention, careful and loving, as well as the spiritual part. Christ, the Great Physician as well as the Great Preacher, first cured the lame, the sick, the blind, the deaf of their bodily diseases, before he spake the gracious words, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And the Christian physician of to-day, while he administers that which will heal the body of its sickness, has the privilege of probing the malady of the soul also, and of bringing to it the balm of Gilead which alone is efficacious for making it pure and whole in the sight of Heaven. He may go where no one else can. His is the grand power, under God, of relieving the body racked with pain, of quieting the mind crazed with the delirium of fever, of raising the sick, of bringing back from the very gates of death those dear to us, and giving them to us again in a new covenant of love.

Our venerated friend neglected none of the opportunities which his calling afforded. The poor, and the afflicted and the weary, ever found in him a willing, loving friend. No

labor was too hard for him to undertake in their behalf, no sacrifice was too great for him to make. At all hours of the day or night he might be found going his rounds of duty. My acquaintance with him was but a short one. Yet during these two years I learned that his greatest delight was in his profession, not as a profession, not in the mere mechanical routine, but as a means of reaching and curing some of the ills which sin has brought. And if the convictions of this community, with whom he has mingled for fifty years as a physician, could be spoken, it would be to bear witness to the fact that he never shrank from a single duty in his life-work, no matter what its sacrifices; that he never refused to give his aid in a single case however hopeless; that he was all heart and soul in his desire to bring what relief was in his power to every class and condition; that he was instant, in season and out of season, doing good. And in all he asked for scarcely any remuneration but the thanks and love of those to whom he gave so much, and the approbation of Him whose disciple he was.

And *both* were undoubtedly his.

The stores closed, the wheels of the manufactory stopped, the flags hung at half mast, the large congregation which assembled here a few days ago to pay the last sad rites to his memory, proved the respect in which he was held, and showed that in the estimation of this community a great and good man had fallen. And as I stood in this pulpit, while so many passed by to take the last look of the cofined form, and as I saw the tears of the poor and of those who had no claim upon him, nor relation to him, save that of the professional attention which he had bestowed upon them, as I saw the kisses of aged friends who are fast ripening for the same glory which is already his, as I saw the fondly stroking of those white hairs and those feeble hands, by all classes and ages, I thought that no purer, nor nobler, nor more touching tribute could have been paid to him; and that it was worth more, and more to be

sought after, than marble monument or storied urn, or massive mausoleum, or stately-flowing verses of panegyric. Yea, I thought his to be the loftiest throne and the noblest heritage which man could obtain—the love and the prayers and the tears of every rank and condition.

And from all that scene there comes to us a fresh and strong witness to the truth of the text, "Whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant."

This life so humble yet so exalted, so unassuming yet so great, has closed. His death was like his life. There was no great demonstration of any kind; there was no ecstasy, there was no vision of the "horsemen of Israel and the chariots thereof," in that darkened room. It was a gentle falling asleep in the arms of Jesus. It was a quiet stoppage of the beating of a kind heart. It was a peaceful passing away from the noise and care and bustle of earth to the rest of Heaven.

" So fades a summer cloud away,  
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er,  
So gently shuts the eye of day,  
So dies a wave along the shore."

If in thought now, we follow him on his new career, what are his state and condition? Are not the recompenses of the other world given according to the same rule? Shall not they gain the highest rank *there*, and move most intimately in the clear shining and warm effulgence of the King upon the throne, who *here* have been most like Christ in lowliness of spirit, and in earnestness and love in serving God and man?

We even think so. We even dare to think that our departed father in Christ, according to this law, will hold no low place among the ascending ranks of blood-washed, triumphant celestial beings. There are but two thoughts that connect themselves with him now, and they are—Rest and Reward.

His was a laborious life. Up to the last moment almost, the call of duty would not remain unanswered. His last

sickness was occasioned probably by over-exertion in attending to those who looked to him always for advice. Only a week or two before he passed away, he went to the bedside of a poor patient, thoughtful only for others and not for himself. Now he has entered into his Rest. He has made his home where "the inhabitant never says I am sick," and where his services will no longer be needed for those in pain and distress. He has gone where "there is no more night," and he will never again be awakened from refreshing slumber to brave the dangers and damps of night in the performance of his especial work. So he has been brought to his desired haven.

"No sickness there—

No weary wasting of the frame away,  
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,  
No dread of Summer's bright and fervid ray.

"Care has no home

Within that realm of ceaseless praise and song;  
Its tossing billows break and melt in foam,  
Far from the mansions of the spirit throng."

His too was a useful life. And now he has gone to his Reward. He thought himself unworthy. He deemed his work of no importance. Perhaps he appeared before the enthroned Saviour abashed and humble because of the little he thought that he had done for Him. But I can see that Saviour's reception of the glorified spirit. It is no word of rebuke that I hear spoken. It is no cold greeting extended to him. Smiles wreath that Saviour's face; welcome looks from that Saviour's eyes. I see Him call to His side one and another from the bright hosts of redeemed ones, choosing those who were on earth poor and afflicted, and naked and sick and despised; and these at the King's bidding tell how this newly risen, timid saint ministered unto them; feeding them when hungry, nursing them when sick, clothing them when naked, visiting them when in affliction. And then amid glad greetings and joyful songs from all the assembled throng, I hear the

Saviour say: "Inasmuch as you did it unto these my little ones, you did it unto me. Enter into the joy of your reward."

And down through the pearly gates swung open for the purpose, down from the crystal throne on which sits the exalted King, come the cheering words to you, my mourning friends, and to us, my beloved brethren, "go ye and do likewise;" for "whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, but whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted;" and "whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief, let him be your servant."