

PREDIKNINGAR

in the cause for which he died!" And in the name of God they went forward, some to death indeed, but all to victory.

To-day we hear the cry again. "The charger's saddle is empty. The pulpit he has filled during a quarter of a century, the president's office, the rostrum, the editor's chair, all alike, await in vain his return! Our leader has fallen!"

Friends, let us rally around the noble cause of our dead leader and joining hands and our strength carry it forward! You children of Bethany who are here assembled surely feel this as one of your most sacred duties. This congregation and community will surely exert themselves to the utmost for an institution which has brought them so manifold blessings. This Kansas Conference in whose midst is located an institution of rank will yield the deepest concern and care to its perpetuation. And you shall find that friends shall everywhere rejoice and join you in this noble work.

Eminent as Dr. Swensson was as an educator and orator, many love most to think of him as a pastor. In his personal intercourse with his flock, with those who came to him for religious guidance, there was a deep insight, a warmth of heart, a power to comfort, to elevate, to strengthen which made him a spiritual father indeed. Many of you who are present here to-day think with gratitude of the sick he cheered, of the dying he has comforted, remember the instruction you yourselves have received not only as catechumens and hearers, but also and perhaps especially in private and intimate conversation, on the highest needs and aspirations of your soul. Perhaps he has asked you, as I remember he once in a holy hour asked me: "My friend, have you found place with God?" Perhaps, yea, surely, in many an hour of doubt and tribulation he has directed you to the source of our salvation, to the Lord Jesus, in whom he believed and whose servant he was. To-day his lips are silent, but the memory of the words they have spoken shall ever live among us as long as hearts are grateful and as long as God gives his people grace to obey the injunction we read at the beginning of our memorial, to appreciate them that labor among us and are over us in the Lord and to esteem them exceedingly highly for their work's sake. Amen.

Address, Dr. R. F. Weidner.

I will not detain you long. I will be very brief. St. Paul has given the following description of his life and character

when he said in I. Corinthians, 9:22—"I am become all things to all men that I may by all means save some." There were guests and companions in the Corinthian church who had found fault with him in certain things, and then he had spoken these words, that he "had become all things to all men" in order that he may save them to Jesus Christ. No man ever had such a gift to the walks of man and differences of people as St. Paul in that same chapter of I. Corinthians: "To the Jew I became as a Jew, that I may gain Jews; to them without law I became as without law that I may gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might by all means save some." These words of St. Paul turn our thoughts to one subject, to one character, to one person, to one name, which here for us today has a first place in every heart. These words indeed describe very forcibly the character of our dear brother who lies dead before me. But he is still living, and of all the men I have ever known he has reminded me most forcibly of St. Paul. He was peculiarly like St. Paul in his character, in his tenderness, in great humanity, that he "might become all things to all men." He was at home with the religious, and was also at home with those who were not religious. He was the friend of intelligent students, and with those who were intensely practical. With the young men he was one of them; sympathizing with the sick and trying to alleviate their sorrows. You who know him so well in this parish will think of him as your sympathetic pastor, a friend to all who have studied here at this institution, a friend who has always tried to encourage. In his pulpit how our hearts were uplifted by his elevating and inspiring words. On the next day he would be at some great church festival where many hearts would respond, thanking God that they had heard such a message. The next day at a social festival, and so on, "becoming all things to all men that he might by all means save some one."

There are a few characteristics to which I would refer, as one who comes from the outside somewhat. We all know and love you Swedish-Americans, and I bring you a tribute from the Lutheran church itself, because we are not mourning one who has been one of you, but one who has preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. First of all, I regard him as a model for all young men, all clergymen, all men, because he was such an immense personality,—he was charged with the power of God. When you came in touch with him, you felt it; when you came in his presence, you knew it. That power was partly inherited, partly by the grace of God. No man in these days can exert any influence unless he is a man of strong personality. Again,

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he was not only a loyal son of Swedish-Americans, but a loyal son of his country. Today in Stockholm, at the Swedish Legation, the Swedish flag has been at half mast, showing his importance even there. He was a man of sympathetic heart, a dear husband and father, a true lover of home, of the poor,—which are the elements of a true friend. I remember the letter I received from my beloved friend twenty-two years ago. The manner in which he laid forth the cause of the West to my heart was the reason why I have been working the West to this day. There was no man I respected or loved more than our departed friend. In time of trial and struggle we would correspond, and I have often thought what a blessing it is to have a faithful friend. Every one who has come to him for sympathy has felt he was such a friend.

Another characteristic,—He was open hearted, he was true, he was loyal, he was not a double minded man,—one thing today another tomorrow,—but open hearted as the sun. We all need that,—to have that faith, not to be distrustful, not to deceive men. Such was his character.

One of his great characteristics was his influence over the young. You who have been students know what this means. Those who have been under his care and under my care—the loyalty and esteem they felt for dear Swensson,—I knew what it meant. Another remarkable characteristic, and one which rises above all others, was this,—that he was a man of strong convictions. Many of you know how faithful he has been to your institution, and 'though he has been offered high positions, he has always been faithful. If there was anything God wanted him to do, he would remain faithful. He was one of the foremost men of the Lutheran church of this country. There is no one who has wielded a greater influence especially in the west, and in the whole church, as Dr. Swensson. God has raised up great men in a great crisis. He raised up Moses; when the day came for the New Testament, he raised up St. Paul; when the time came to fight against the errors of science, he raised up Newton; in Scotland a Knox; in this country a Muhl-enberg; in the development of the church, he raised up his Gregory; in the early history of your church, he raised up the honored Dr. Hasselquist and Dr. Carlson, and some that still live; And so, in this special work which he had to do, he raised up Dr. Swensson. He has proved a man of strong character, a man who has never been afraid to give out testimony, and the last time he ever preached was on "The Glory of the Redemption." We can thank God that He has raised up such a man, and may

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it teach us the lesson to stand by our post, faithful to the word of God, faithful to our institutions, to our church. This is the lesson He wishes to teach us. God has promised that those who look to Him, will be guided and strengthened and comforted, and in our sorrows and trials He shall lead us. Even in our sorrow we give thanks to God that He raises up men of such strength and virtue.

There was one thing more I would refer to,—his enthusiasm. We are playing too much with the things of this life. We are not enthusiastic enough. Let us thank God for all these privileges, and that there have been men in our midst who have made use of the privileges and the blessings of God.