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A Simple Service at Grace Church

Zanesville Times Recorder

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A Simple Service at Grace Church

Honored the Memory of the Rev.
Thomas S. Armstrong Sunday
Afternoon

Simple and unostentatious as the man himself were the funeral services of the Rev. Thomas S. Armstrong, which were conducted Sunday afternoon at the Grace Methodist Episcopal church. The very atmosphere of the place seemed mellowed and hallowed by the influence of this sainted man—who for a time rested there—while a brief service honored his memory. The rays of the setting sun were subdued as they fell athwart the chancel, and the soft tones of the organ added to the beauty and impressiveness.

Two hymns—"Jesus Lover of My Soul" and "One Sweetly Solemn Thought"—were softly chanted by the church quartet—hymns dear to the heart of every Methodist, but especially dear to this man who had served the church in a ministerial capacity for so many years.

The services were in charge of the Rev. Dr. Courtenay, who read the 23d Psalm and a part of the 15th chapter of the First Corinthians. This reading was followed by a brief prayer—then it rested with Dr. Courtenay to perform that labor of love which so often fell to the lot of Mr. Armstrong—to bring cheer and comfort to the hearts of the fatherless.

Dr. Courtenay briefly referred to the time when the Rev. Mr. Armstrong was a comrade in Co. B, 78th Ohio regiment, from which he was honorably discharged at the end of a year because of illness; however, upon his recovery, with characteristic energy, he assisted in organizing the 122d regiment, and returned to the front as a commissioner officer of the regiment. He was later captured by the rebels and was compelled to spend 22 months in prison, Libby and others. After the close of the war he enlisted in a nobler warfare—and became a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He was admitted to the Ohio conference in 1871, where he was regularly ordained to preach the gospel. Continuing, Dr. Courtenay said that he had known Mr. Armstrong but a little while; however, he was at the Ohio conference, which is now in session at Jackson, and he noted the expressions of reverent regard which were called forth by the announcement of the death of this honored member. Mr. Armstrong was a scholar, and all his life long maintained the habit of careful study; he was a gentleman of fine mind—and he was a Christian, kind, humble, gentle, brave, blameless. He was a Christian scholar and a gentleman—need anything more be added? Such a life makes Heaven quite sure—where else could he go save into the company of good men made perfect? He has entered into the fullness of that life found in Christ Jesus. Our ideas of death are pagan. Jesus said of the child "She sleepeth," and of Lazarus, "Our brother sleepeth." Death is a natural process, and is not clothed with the mystery that enshrouds birth. The ties of human affection, snapped so rudely here, will be reunited. The influence of such a life goes on and on. "In olden times Methodists were wont to sing hymns of victory at the death of the saints—and so might we here today."

Interment was made in Woodlawn cemetery, where, upon a knoll under the shade of a forest tree for more than a quarter of a century has slept the wife of his youth, and where he, too, will sleep "until the day break and the shadows flee away."

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The Zanesville Times Recorder

September 20, 1909

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