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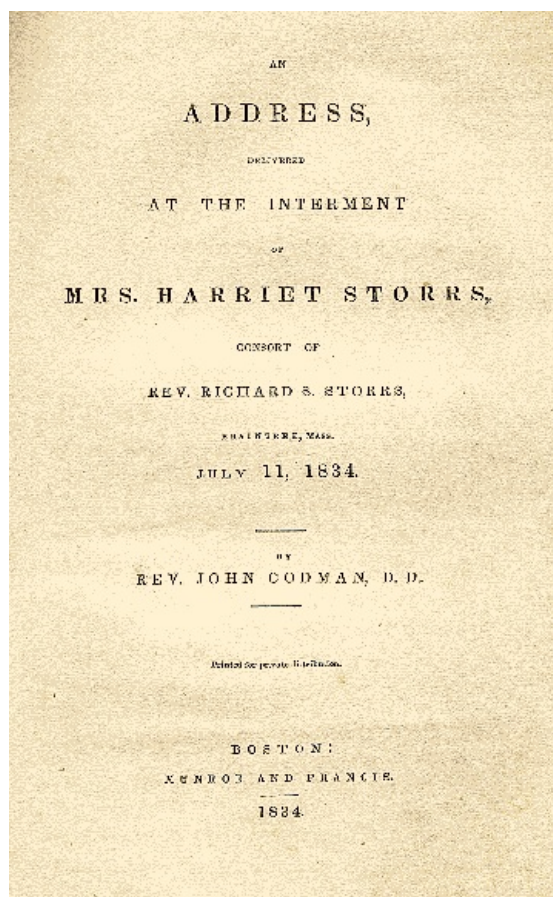
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE INTERMENT OF MRS. HARRIET STORRS, CONSORT OF REV. RICHARD S. STORRS, BRAINTREE, MASS., JULY 11, 1834 ***



**AN
ADDRESS,
DELIVERED
AT THE INTERMENT
OF**

**MRS. HARRIET STORRS,
CONSORT OF
REV. RICHARD S. STORRS,
BRAINTREE, MASS.
JULY 11, 1834.**

**BY
REV. JOHN CODMAN, D. D.**

Printed for private distribution.

**BOSTON:
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1834.**

ADDRESS.

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There are some events, in the providence of God, so completely overwhelming as to render it extremely difficult, almost impossible, to give utterance to the full feelings of the soul through the medium of words. Language refuses its aid to relieve the burdened heart; and the oppressed spirit finds itself more inclined to the deep silence of grief, than to the expression of its sorrows by the human voice.

When the heart-rending intelligence reached us of the event that has filled our souls with grief and dismay, we felt that no language could relieve our distress or mitigate our sorrow. We were dumb: we opened not our mouth. Our hearts bled—and they bled most freely in silence. But the solemnities of the occasion await us, and the usages of society demand, that we should attempt to give utterance, in the presence of our fellow creatures, to those feelings, which we can pour out before our compassionate God and Saviour in sighs and tears, without the intervention of set forms of speech.

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But where shall we find words to express the depth of our affliction? Where shall we find language to depict the character of the dear departed—or to administer comfort and support to the beloved survivors?

Mysterious Heaven! how unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out! We bow before that holy and righteous Being, whose inspiration gave us *understanding*, and who has the undoubted right to resume the gift which he bestowed. We know that all his ways are just and equal, and that he will not hold us accountable for any act, committed in the absence of that mental and moral power by which we are enabled to distinguish between right and wrong.

On the painful and distressing circumstances, by which our ever lamented and beloved friend is numbered among the silent dead, we will dwell no longer than to express an entire and unwavering conviction, that her character and present condition cannot in the least degree be affected by the manner of her removal from this sublunary state. We have not the shadow of a doubt, that the spiritual intelligence, which once beamed upon us with such mild and gentle lustre, and which was, for a short season, shrouded in darkness, is now rekindled by the same gracious hand that so mysteriously overshadowed it, to burn, with increasing and never-ending brightness, with seraphs that surround the throne of God.

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It is utterly impossible for the speaker to do justice to the character of our much loved friend, though it has been his privilege to have known her worth for nearly thirty years. The circle of christians which, at the time of his first acquaintance with her, then resided in our metropolis, many of whom are now in heaven, were distinguished for deep and ardent piety. Surrounded as they were by fashionable and increasing errors, they maintained their integrity and held fast their attachment to the doctrines of grace. The precious names of Mrs. Waters, and Mrs. Mason, and other aged saints, are embalmed in the memory of many a child of God. With these venerable pilgrims was associated a young disciple, who, with all the loveliness of youthful attractions, separated herself from the world, and consecrated herself to the service of her God and Saviour. From the prayers and conversation of these aged saints, through the blessing of God, she seemed

to receive a peculiar unction of spirit, which was strikingly characteristic of her future course. In all plans of usefulness, which, though small and few when compared with those which distinguish this stirring age, no one took a more decided and active part. Her peculiarly affectionate manner ingratiated her with many, who were won by her mild and lovely spirit to congeniality of sentiment and effort. Her usefulness at that period, in the sphere in which she moved, was by no means inconsiderable; but the great Head of the church had still more important and interesting duties for her to perform.

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There are few situations in life that present more promising fields of usefulness to a pious, devoted female, than that of the wife of a minister of a united parish. Even the pastor himself, with his additional opportunities of affording instruction from the sacred desk, can scarcely exert a greater or a happier influence upon the minds and hearts of his congregation, than is often produced by the more humble, but not less important labours of his devoted companion. Her influence is not unfrequently greater than his, especially upon her own sex, and upon the tender, opening minds of the lambs of the flock. In the promotion of benevolent enterprise, by female associations, and in maternal counsels and prayers for the children of the church, she finds her appropriate and successful sphere, though upon the whole congregation, in their varied seasons of prosperity and adversity, her silent but benign influence is felt like the dew of Hermon, like the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion.

From the more diversified and exciting scenes of usefulness in a city our departed friend was called to the more arduous and self-denying labours that devolve upon the conscientious wife of the pastor of a country parish. With what untiring zeal, with what scrupulous fidelity, she discharged these duties, I need only appeal to this crowded, this weeping, this afflicted assembly! From lisping infancy to hoary age, the testimony is one and the same. The children of affliction remember with affectionate gratitude her tender sympathy and her active benevolence. With the spirit of her divine Master, it may be truly said, that "in all their afflictions she was afflicted." Mothers, with their youthful charge, will never forget her wise counsels and her fervent prayers. The aged and infirm will pour out their benedictions upon her memory, and even babes and sucklings will lisp the praises of one, who watched with maternal solicitude over their cradles, and taught them to pronounce the name of Jesus.

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But, great and painful as this bereavement is to this afflicted people,—their griefs are almost forgotten, when we turn to the chief mourner in this scene of deep and heart-rending calamity. God help thee, my brother!—The God of Jacob, the Angel of the Covenant sustain thee! That your brethren, your people, the church of Christ, your numerous and attached friends, feel for you, you cannot doubt. Could they have averted the dreadful blow, how readily would they have hastened to your relief. But no human precaution could turn aside the fatal stroke. Dethroned reason will find opportunity to escape the most vigilant eye, and to elude the most watchful care. But dwell not, my brother, on circumstances which were beyond human control, and which affect not in the least degree the accountability of the dear departed. Bury in the grave, to which we are soon to assign these precious relics, as far as possible, the memory of the awful circumstances that attended their dissolution, and think only of the bright and happy spirit, of what she *was*, and what she *is*. O! she was every thing which a fond husband could desire in a companion of his life and labours; truly a help-mate for him in his temporal and spiritual concerns, in his family, and in his parish; in the social circle, and in the widely extended plans of usefulness in which the devoted servant of Christ is sometimes engaged beyond the limits of his congregation.

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My brother, in the repeated domestic bereavements which you have sustained, you have indeed been greatly afflicted, but you have also been greatly blessed. To the lot of but few does it fall to have been united to two such companions to cheer them in their pilgrimage through this vale of tears.^[A] Their sainted spirits are waiting to receive you to those blessed mansions where reason holds her unclouded empire, where sighing and sorrow can never come, where death can never enter, and where sin can never defile.

But not yet, my brother. The Lord hath need of you to work in his vineyard. From your repeated and heart-rending trials you will be better qualified, than ever for that important work which the Lord has assigned you in his American Israel. Go on then, my brother, and spend and be spent for Christ; and when you shall have performed your appointed service, you shall be welcomed by those whom you have loved on earth to the society of the redeemed—to the vision of Jesus—to the presence of God.

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And you, the dear and only child of the lamented dead! My heart bleeds for you. Your loss is indeed irreparable; but a mother's prayers are your legacy, and they are better than thousands of gold and silver. How much she loved you, and how closely you were entwined about the fibres of her heart, is abundantly evident from the affecting fact, that maternal solicitude, struggling with departing reason, directed her to the bed of her sleeping child to bid him a last and long farewell. Although the affecting circumstances of her removal can never be obliterated from your memory, think less of them than of the pious counsels, the holy example, the fervent prayers of your much-loved mother. Let these dwell on your mind, and they will be a restraint, a comfort, and a support to you under all the various trials of life to which you may be called. God bless you, my dear child! May your life be spared to your surviving parent, to console him in his deep affliction, and to be the prop of his declining years.

The near relatives of our departed friend claim and receive our tender and affectionate sympathy. More especially do we feel for that afflicted sister, who, while she mourns with us on this

affecting occasion, has the additional trial of watching around the sick bed of a beloved husband, deprived also of the exercise of his reason. May she be supported, in this season of her deep affliction, by the consolations of that holy religion, which are neither few nor small.

And may all the relatives and the numerous christian friends of the deceased, whether present or absent, be graciously sustained under this painful bereavement, and bow, with humble submission, to the will of God.

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Friends of this Church and Congregation, with you too we heartily sympathize.

You have been called in divine providence to repeated trials. We bear record to your disinterested regard to the cause of evangelical religion in our growing country, in consenting to the arrangement by which, for a definite period, you have been deprived of the immediate services of your beloved pastor. You have hitherto had the consolation, and it has been one of no small importance, of the presence and laborious efforts for your good of the partner of his life. With what exemplary patience, with what admirable self-denial, she sustained the peculiar trials of her situation, watching around the couch of a dying brother,^[B] administering to the comfort of your late youthful pastor,^[C] adopting into her family the orphan and the fatherless,^[D] while her best earthly friend was laboriously employed in the service of the church, are well known to you all, and ought to be suitably appreciated. How far she fell a sacrifice to these painful deprivations—to this uncommon self-denial, is known only to Him, who is best acquainted with the intimate connection between the body and the mind.^[E] That she died in your service—in the service of her family—and in the service of her God and Saviour, cannot admit of a doubt. You will delight, I know, to cherish her memory, to dwell upon her virtues, and to imitate her example.

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And now, my respected hearers and friends, it only remains, that we deposit these precious relics in yonder receptacle of the dead! there to rest, till the trump of the archangel awake the sleeping dust. Then, when the millions of the dead shall burst the cerements of the grave, we doubt not that the bright form of our departed friend, arrayed in immortal youth and vigour, will ascend to meet the Lord in the air, and enter with him into his glory.

FOOTNOTES:

[A] Mrs. Sarah Strong Storrs, the first wife of the bereaved husband, was the daughter of Rev. Nathan Woodhull, of Newtown, Long Island; married April 2, 1812—died April 6, 1818, aged 25 years. Eminently devoted to the service of her Lord in life, and sweetly cheered by his presence in death.

[B] Rev. Charles B. Storrs, President of the Western Reserve College, who left the world for heaven, after five weeks sickness at Braintree, Sept. 15, 1833.

[C] Rev. Edwards A. Park.

[D] The two little sons of Rev. C. B. Storrs.

[E] Her feelings on this subject are briefly noticed in her diary. After alluding to the circumstances of the case, and to what she believed to be the ruling motives of her husband in his request to his people for liberty to engage in the service of Home Missions, she says:—

"I think in no instance of my life have I felt more entirely willing to be in God's hands, and to have him dispose of us as he pleases. My trembling head at times anticipates evil to my dear husband—and my selfish heart, in anticipating the days and nights of loneliness that await me, is ready to say,—'How can I give thee up?' But I would not dare to cherish these feelings. God has an entire right to do with us as he pleases—and I would love him for doing just as he does. But O! strengthen us for our coming trials!"

NOTE.

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Mrs. Storrs had been for months declining in health—a fact more evident to herself than to others, because she still continued to discharge her usual domestic duties with alacrity and cheerfulness. But often, the conviction of her mind on this subject extorted from her the remark—"my constitution is breaking up—I cannot long live." Though the remark had never fallen from her lips in other years, it was too little heeded by her friends.

It was on the evening of March 5th, 1834, that she was suddenly seized with a delirium that indicated inflammation on the brain. A physician was immediately called, and his skilful applications seemed to be blessed; the disease yielded; and after a few days, Reason resumed its seat; not however to hold it as formerly, but only to sway a broken sceptre, and fill the minds of friends with constant alarms. From this time till the first of June, the struggle between disease and nature was constant, and the issue doubtful; but on the whole, it was evident that the *mind* was losing its power of judgment, and submitting to the control of a bewildered imagination.

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Her most judicious friends judged it expedient to change the scene, and try the effect of new objects and the revival of old friendships on her disordered system. She herself, having been often benefitted by the fatigues and various occurrences of journeying, consented to the measure

with some cheerfulness. And on the 12th of June, we left our home, and leisurely pursued our way to the western part of the State, calling freely on those friends she had long known and loved, and sharing largely in their kind attentions. But nothing could restore to her mind its balance. Occasionally cheerful for an hour—but habitually brooding over some imagined impropriety of conduct, or deficiency of faith and love, she fancied herself a burden to the world, a curse to the church, and an alien from God. It was July 7th when we reached home. And by this time, the disease had advanced so far, as to leave but short intervals between the ravings of delirium. Her agonies, in her oft repeated language, were "inexpressible." Her bodings were fearful. And it was on the morning of the 10th instant, between the hours of five and six o'clock, that she eluded the long continued vigilance of her family, and secured time enough to execute a deed, which of all others she most abhorred when of sane mind—a deed, which she believed to be *right*, because dethroned reason left her a prey to the imagination that the honor of God, and the interests of Zion demanded it.

Inscrutable mystery! A more devoted friend of Jesus—a more humble and self-denying disciple—a more laborious and consistent co-worker with the saints—a more prayerful and active promoter of the great Cause of Benevolence—is rarely to be met with in any age, or in any land.

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Aside of all the fond partialities of one who for fifteen years has known the blessedness of the most intimate companionship with so eminent a child of God, I deem it duty to say, in present circumstances, that her duties were always her pleasures—her religious privileges, her sweetest delights—her grand aim, in all things, the glory of God;—her trust was reposed in his promises alone—her hopes were founded on Christ—and her only desired reward was, the consciousness of honoring the religion she professed.

She rests with prophets and apostles. So saith the Spirit, and her works do follow her.

R. S. STORRS.

Braintree, July 15, 1834.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

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WRITTEN BY REV. B. B. EDWARDS, AND PUBLISHED IN THE BOSTON RECORDER.

Died at Braintree, Mass. on Thursday morning, July 10, MRS. HARRIET STORRS, wife of the Rev. Richard S. Storrs, in the 48th year of her age. She was a daughter of the late Mr. Samuel Moore of Charlestown. Her mind was first deeply convinced of the importance of personal piety in listening to the sermons of the Rev. Dr. Griffin then minister of the Park street church. She became a member of the Old South church, when the Rev. Joshua Huntington was its pastor. The depth of the loss sustained by her friends and by the church of Christ, cannot easily be estimated. In her character was that rare union of lovely natural qualities with intelligent, elevated piety, which sweetens domestic life; throws such charms over the intercourse of friendship as all persons can feel but none describe; and which exhibits in a most striking manner what that state was from which man fell, and to which the grace of the Holy Spirit can restore him. The path of her life was covered over with evidences of her kindness. Every where she lived for the happiness of those around her. Her benign inquiries, her cheerful footsteps, her sweet smiles, the same in joy and grief, those mysterious lines on the countenance, which almost ally the sympathies of humanity to the purity of angels, seemed to say to all whom she met, that she was their servant for Jesus's sake. She was truly the light and joy of her domestic circle, shedding the calm and steady lustre of true piety; in her humility apparently unconscious of the blessings which her presence afforded; and always prompt to give all the glory of any goodness in herself and others, to her Lord and Redeemer. She discharged the interesting obligations, which devolve on the wife of a clergyman, with singular readiness, kind feeling and success. She was aware of the responsible and delicate nature of many of her duties, and habitually looked for guidance to the great Head of the church. He was graciously pleased to hear her prayers, and to bless her labors. Her name will long be like precious balm in the hearts of multitudes, who testify, with entire unanimity, to the value of her labors of love.

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For several months past, "her soul has been full of trouble," for she thought that God had "laid her in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps, that his wrath was lying hard upon her," "that she was cast out of his sight, and should never again be permitted to look towards his holy temple." "She longed for death" and it has come; and we doubt not that her glorified spirit is in that land where the inhabitant shall not say "I am sick," where they "hunger no more, neither thirst any more; and where God shall wipe away tears from off all faces."

The funeral of Mrs. Storrs was attended on Friday afternoon in the meetinghouse of the first church in Braintree. We never saw evidences of more unaffected and heartfelt grief, than were exhibited by the large congregation convened on this occasion. Prayers were offered by the Rev. Messrs. Gile of Milton, and Perkins of Weymouth, two appropriate funeral anthems were sung, and a very interesting and affecting address was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. Codman of Dorchester.

Transcriber's Notes

[Page 7](#): Changed hasiened to hastened
(how readily would they have hasiened to your relief.)

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE
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