

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Review & Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_rande_01.php

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE LATE
EDWARD JUDSON, D.D.

WM. M. LAWRENCE, D.D., Hamilton, N. Y.

The death of Dr. Judson was so sudden that it was with difficulty that the sad event could be realized, or that an estimate of his personality and services to his church and to the denomination could be made. As one who has known him since 1869, and in a somewhat intimate way, I comply gladly with the request of the Editor of this journal to offer a small contribution to his memory.

In the article which I prepared at the request of the family, and which has appeared in one of our denominational papers, the main facts of his life were stated briefly. It would be well for us, however, to recall that the date of his birth was December 27, 1844, and that the place of his birth was Maulmein, Burma. His mother was the widow of Dr. Boardman, who laid down his life in the missionary cause, so that Edward Judson was the half-brother of the late Rev. George Dana Boardman, D.D., and there were many traits of character common to both, which were apparent to those who, like the writer, had the privilege of knowing both. When a boy, Dr. Judson lived in the village and in the house where his step-mother, Fanny Forrester, died. Afterwards his home was with the late President Ebenezer Dodge, D.D., LL. D., on the hill. In Hamilton everybody knew him from his boyhood up, and the last words that he said to me, when he left our house to take the train to New York, the Saturday night before he died, were, "Hamilton, with its friends, will always be very dear to me."

Very wisely, President Dodge sent him to Brown University, where he was graduated in 1865. He received his degree of doctor of divinity from Colgate in 1861. He was principal of the seminary in Townsend, Vermont, from 1865 to 1867. He was often mistaken for a student

at the seminary, and I very well remember his glee when he related as an incident showing how young he appeared, the request of a farmer who said to him, "Come, bub, help me to unload." Most characteristically he made no demur but put the sack upon his shoulder and delivered it as requested.

He was professor of Latin and modern languages at Colgate from 1867 to 1874. The following year he spent abroad and, while away, was called to be the pastor of the North Orange Baptist Church, Orange, New Jersey. In 1881 he accepted the invitation to the Berean Church, afterwards the Judson Memorial Church of New York, of which he was pastor at the time of his death. He was lecturer on theology in the University of Chicago from 1904 to 1906, and from 1906 to 1908 he was lecturer on Baptist principles and polity in the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He was also Fellow of Brown University and trustee at Vassar College. For the last ten years of his life he was professor of pastoral theology in the Theological Seminary of Colgate University.

His chief literary works were the life of his father and, what he is pleased to call, a primer on pastoral theology, which he named, "The Institutional Church." The life of his father is most valuable, as might naturally be expected from the fact that it was written by Edward Judson, and "The Institutional Church" is one of the most valuable books on pastoral theology which I have ever read. It has fallen to me to undertake, as a temporary matter, to occupy the chair made vacant by his death, and in the preparation for this work I have consulted the principal works on this important subject, and I have been amazed at the vast amount of suggestion which Dr. Judson has packed into so small a compass. It is not applicable only to the institutional church but to any church of which a man may be a pastor.

The great charm of Dr. Judson's life was his gentleness. He made it his business to be kind to people. Oftentimes he felt, as I know from his conversations, that the work that he was doing was, to say the least, not understood, and oftentimes I felt that he had good ground for regretting the solitude of his life, so far as not receiving the recognition and support that his work warranted. But in all the years that I knew him as a friend, a fellow pastor, and an intimate neighbor, I never heard him offer one word of complaint or criticism, and this silence has oftentimes been the subject of comment in our household. He would go out of his way to say a fine thing to a brother pastor, and he was not only gentle but he was modest. I never knew until one evening a year ago the variety of his acquirements. He was at home in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French and German; he was a systematic and wide reader and carefully garnered the results of his reading. The advice that he gives to ministers about the use of their time was that which he himself followed. I remember his deploring on one occasion the fact that he had been so busy that he was unable to arrange his late reading in his scrap book. Many and many a half hour in the summer time, as he has seated himself upon our little porch, has he fascinated me by his quotations of poetry, which his marvelous memory enabled him to produce.

As a gentleman he was most charming, witty, full of good stories and observant. He was much sought after by those who appreciated bright, healthy humor; in fact, I think his love of humor saved the situation for him many, many times. He was a thoroughly human man. His sympathy was not maudlin, but it was an intelligent expression of the share which he wished to take in another's sorrow or in another's joy. He wished to be a burden-bearer. He was a man also of great firmness of purpose. He did not take up things quickly, but when once he had made up his mind that a thing ought to be

done he never swerved from his intention to accomplish it. He did not announce beforehand his plans, as he once said to me, "There is great virtue in an honest surprise." He was not impulsive although sometimes it might have appeared, from the fact that no one knew his plans until he began them himself, that he was not quite as deliberate as occasion warranted. I think in the records of ministerial life, there will be none that will surpass in self-sacrifice his relinquishment of the delightful pastorate where years afterwards I became his successor to assume the burdens of a down-town church and a down-town church in New York. Recall the changes always taking place in lower New York, and the appeals which he had to make to keep the work properly financed—a man of less consecration and courage and love would have given up long ago; and this leads me to the last thing which I wish to say:

Dr. Judson was a religious man. We were talking one day about the reason that a certain minister failed, and, in that connection, of the great danger that imperiled the ministry to-day. I never saw him more earnest, or more solemn, than when he said that the man failed because he did not know his Bible. Ministers read the Bible to-day for homiletic material and not for personal soul culture. Dr. Judson knew his Bible. A mutual friend told me how, on a fishing trip some years ago, Dr. Judson took with him a box of books. On a Sunday morning he handed his friend the English Bible while he translated the Hebrew, and afterwards turned his attention to Browning. Dr. Judson read his Old Testament through once a year and his New Testament through twice a year, and he read it not to furnish himself with sermons but because he needed it and loved it.

I can hardly realize that he has gone, and that he is lying to-day upon the hill in the college cemetery, but I am sure of one thing, that as men come to know of his work and of his character they will feel that the Lord has taken home one of his own prophets.