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WILLIAM SALTER—PHILOMETHIAN¹

BY PHILIP D. JORDAN

The college literary society of the nineteenth century was a far more important activity in the lives of undergraduates than such organizations are at present. The United States was young enough, in its middle period, to furnish endless questions, social, economic, and political for debate, and was youthful enough still to be developing its early literature. It is little wonder then that any wideawake student of the 30's would be orating, declaiming, and debating in the fever of his time.

William Salter (Nov. 17, 1821-Aug. 15, 1910), Iowa clergyman, author, and historiographer, entered New York University for his higher education when the literary society was one of the most ambitious of all undergraduate interests.² At this time he had just passed his fifteenth birthday. Possessing a remarkably alert intellect, it is not surprising that he should have been elected to membership, November 7, 1836, in the Philomethian Society of his university.³ He was the eighty-fifth⁴ man to be elected to the group which had been founded and organized on Monday evening, October 29, 1832, with twelve students present.⁵ The first president of the Society was Samuel A. Hammet, New York City, who was expelled April 4, 1834, by action of the Society and notice sent not only to him, but also to Samuel A.

¹I am much indebted to Messrs. George and Sumner Salter, of Burlington, Iowa, and New York City, for their generous aid and courteous assistance; to Dr. T. F. Jones, of the library of New York University, for permitting me to examine the original records of the Philomethian Society and for the photostat and permission to reproduce the program of the Seventh Anniversary of the Society; and to Mr. Louis Fox, of the newspaper research department of the New York Public Library, for the innumerable courtesies he has extended me. I have also to thank Mr. Edgar R. Harlan and his associates of the ANNALS of Iowa for their interest in Salter material and their willingness to publish such manuscripts for the future use of those scholars interested in the members of the "Iowa Band" and in the history of the commonwealth of Iowa.

²See the *Dictionary of American Biography* for a short sketch of William Salter's life and for a select Salter bibliography. This volume, at the moment, is still in the hands of the editors.

³The source material for this and the following facts is to be found in two unpublished volumes, the *Record Book* of the Philomethian Literary Society of the University of the City of New York from 1832 "to the end of time," and the *Minute Book* of the Philomethian Society of the University of the City of New York. Hereafter the *Record Book* will be cited in the footnotes as *R. B.* and the *Minute Book* as *M. B.* The date of Salter's admission into the Society is found in *R. B.* p. 4.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*M. B.* p. 1.

Hammet, Senior.⁶ The rival group to which Salter belonged was the Eucleian Society, and the records of the Philomethians show ample evidence of cunning and treason on the part of some of its members.

At the organization meeting a series of resolutions was adopted and these later became the constitution to which candidates must pledge allegiance before becoming a member.⁷ Some of the resolutions to which Dr. Salter pledged his support follow:

- I. No person shall be admitted a member of this Society without the votes of three-fourths of the members.
- III. Each member shall pay three dollars a year for the support of the Society and for the formation of a Library.
- IV. The payment of said fee shall be in monthly payments of 25 cts. in advance.
- V. Each member on subscribing to the Constitution shall pay the initiation fee of 50 cts., for those who join within one month from this time, and \$1 for those who join after that time.
- X. If a member be absent without good excuse he shall be fined 25 cts.
- XIV. The President shall have the power of fining for disorderly conduct at the meetings, the maximum of that fine being 25 cts. and the minimum being 6¼ cts. except in extraordinary cases when it shall be put to the vote of the Society.
- XXV. This Society shall be known by the name of "The Philomethian Society."
- XXVI. The objects of this Society shall be exercises in Debating, Oratory, and Composition.⁸

These provisions form the nuclei of the Society of which Dr. Salter was a most active participant, was president, and twice secretary during his years at New York University.⁹ It may be truly said that he labored diligently to realize the motto of the Society: "The noblest ends by honest means are our delight."¹⁰

It is seldom that the literary productions of a man destined to become prominent in his sphere of life are preserved in their original; it is even more unusual to have such productions preserved when they were penned in the years before twenty.

⁶*Ibid.* p. 51; *R. B.* p. 1.

⁷These primary resolutions were revised in part and later were printed as a twelve-page pamphlet: *Constitution and By-Laws of the Philomethian Society of the University of the City of New York*. Founded October 29th, 1932. Published by Order of the Society. New York: Printed at the University Press, 1935.

⁸*M. B.* pp. 1-3.

⁹*R. B.* p. 4.

¹⁰*M. B.* Title page.

Yet Dr. Salter carefully saved a part of the manuscripts which he presented to the Philomethian Society,¹¹ and recently these have been located. They consist of five items, all delivered in the years 1838, 1839, and 1840.

Arranged and classified as to form there are three essays, "Influence of One Man, Republicanism, and Duty"; one narrative, "Record of Summer Travel During Vacation"; and one poem, "Eloise." The "Eloise" was delivered upon the occasion, March 11, 1840, of the eighth annual program to celebrate the anniversary of the Society.¹² The other manuscripts were probably delivered at the regular meetings of the Society.¹³ On November 23, 1838, Dr. Salter read his little essay, "Influence of One Man"; on March 22, 1839, the "Records of Summer Travels During Vacation"; and on November 9, 1839, the "Duty."

This collection of five manuscripts is being reprinted here, not because of their high literary quality, for, in truth, they are redundant, pompous, and grandiloquent in many instances, but because they represent the earliest known literary efforts of a man who was to play a most important part in the history of the far west as teacher, preacher, author, and historian. As the years advance the importance of Dr. Salter's contributions will be increasingly recognized, and the day will sometime come when every fragment of his work will be eagerly sought. On the other hand, the literary quality of these essays is far above that displayed by the average eighteen-year-old boy, and shows a maturity of thought, a sense of balance and organization, a knowledge of unity and coherence, and an appreciation of the

¹¹We know, for instance, that he presented a paper as a part of the Sixth Anniversary program, for there is preserved in the library of New York University a printed program which reads: "Sixth Anniversary/ of the Philomethian Society/ of the/ University of the City of New-York./ on/ Wednesday Evening, Dec. 5th, 1838./ Windt, printer. 152 Chambers street./ Nine orations and declamations, each followed by music, are listed on this bill. No. six is "The South" by William Salter.

¹²A printed program for the occasion (which is reproduced as a part of this article) is on file in the library of New York University and reads: "Seventh Anniversary/ of the/ Philomethian Society./ in the University Chapel./ on/ Wednesday Evening, March 11, 1840./ at seven o'clock."/ Dr. Salter was fifth upon the program. I have examined the newspapers carefully for mention of this anniversary celebration and find nothing except the following in *The Evening Post* (New York) under date of Tuesday, March 10, 1840: "The Philomethian Society of the University, held their seventh anniversary in the University Chapel on Wednesday evening at 7 o'clock."

¹³Both the *Minute Book* and the *Record Book* are incomplete for the years between 1836 and 1840 when Dr. Salter was a member, so it is impossible to have a complete record, from the minutes and records, of his appearances upon programs. Had it not been for the manuscripts here reprinted knowledge of Philomethian activities for the years mentioned would be meager indeed.

written word. Their youthful rawness is only a part of their charm.

The five manuscripts are reprinted here and then follows a short conclusion. In so far as possible I have followed the original spelling and punctuation of the author.

INFLUENCE OF ONE MAN¹⁴

A consideration of the influence for weal or woe which one man may exert over his fellows should induce us so to live that our example may be as beneficial as it may be impressive. The power of one mighty mind cannot be overrated, for who can set bounds to the ever active impulses of genius? What can imagination, even in its brightest visions, devise so stupendous as the results which the genius of one man may effect. The New World was never dreamt of until the close of the fifteenth century. And what we are we owe, under, God, to one man. Homer made Greece the home of poesy and art and eloquence. Without her Homer we should not have had her Sophocles, her Pericles, or her Demosthenes; and the marble of Phidias were still dumb in the quarry. Homer still lives, for the influence of his spirit is not yet dead from the earth.

Peter made Russia. Everything in that extensive country bears marks of his character. One master spirit may do anything. He may make his people a nation of lore and song, a nation of music and gay delight; or he may mould them to his will as a wild and warlike race delighting in feats of blood. The mass of mankind are weak and easily led by a skillful hand. There is no barrier which such a man may not overcome. No thought of his soul which he may not execute. Our duty, taught by the monitor within, of endeavoring to make our influence felt in time to come, is a noble and sublime, no less than pleasing, duty. The thought of the influence of our actions and of the good name which awaits us after death, and the recollections of having promoted the plans of liberty and happiness will alleviate the pains of the hour when the hand of death presses heavy on the breast. These thoughts on "the influence of one man" were suggested by reading some account of the distinguished Lord Chatham. England was in the most disastrous condition—despected abroad, misrule at home (when "both parties seemed actuated by the one only passion, the thirst for power and gain") (besieged France). In such a state was the British Empire when Chatham took the helm; and what a change did this master mind effect. His country was victorious by land and sea. The Canadas and many of the W. Indies were captured. France was besieged and humbled and success crowned every effort of Pitt. "These," said Walpole, "are the doings of Mr. Pitt and they are wondrous in our eyes." It's a noble example of the influence of one great genius. Pitt is known the world

¹⁴The manuscript carries no title, but the sheet is folded lengthwise and on the outside is written, in Dr. Salter's hand, the following: "Influence of one Man." Then follows: "Philomethian Society, Nov. 23rd. 1838. W. S."

over. Every state in our Union has her towns derived from his name. There are Pittsburghs and Pittsfields, but not till long after they have crumbled into their native dust shall the name of Pitt be forgotten. Above all may we imitate his goodness ever more than his greatness.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON REPUBLICANISM WITH A WORD ON MONARCHY¹⁵

In our day there is no more interesting subject than the question of government. This is well; and we mark the fact as evidence of the advancement of mankind in the pursuits calculated to cause that perfectibility, the attainment of which should be the first grand object of our existence. We think our institutions best adapted to this end, as their foundation stone like that of the Kingdom of God is laid on the eternal principle of Freedom. For in our day dreams of the better world above we have fancied all its inhabitants as living in unison in like situation.

We are sorry we cannot at this time bestow upon the subject the attention it deserves; we will however, though hastily, look at it a moment because we deem it a question not to be irreverently or unjustly disputed. And when we mark the prevalence of opinions false to our Father and to Posterity we should feel ill at ease did we not look well to the business.

God has sent us into this world with powers to know the right, to love for their own sake justice and freedom and every virtue. Reason is indeed God's voice within, and if we prevent its teachings and disobey the still small whisper we wrong our Great Father and we wrong ourselves. Selfishness is not a principle of our nature. He, whose mental vision is not large enough to take in the whole family of mankind, who cannot forget himself, knowing that he is but an atom of one stupendous whole, has derived his wisdom not from the Book of Nature, not from converse with his Maker in Heaven, or with good men upon earth, but in some narrow dwelling where he has grown up ignorant of the fact that the sun shines for all, that the rain falleth in the remotest isles of the sea as plenteously as at his own door. The wind bloweth where it listeth; the bird wingeth her way or midst the blue expanse, or over the deep, amid the haunts of men, or in the wildwood.

The soul of man may ascend highest heaven, or dive deep in the dread below, building his castles and giving to nothingness a local habitation and a name. While forsooth this divine frame made after the image of its Creator must bend and cringe to forms as frail and evanescent. No, tis a glaring absurdity. We know better. There is nothing mortal worthy of our veneration. The undying part alone of a great man we love and adore. God is no respecter of persons and why should we set upon arbitrary distinction among children of one common household. All else is free. Our chances of life are equal.

¹⁵Presented January 25, 1839.

God's offers of pardon are free to all. Death distinguishes not the palace from the hovel. Each shall alike moulder into dust.

Thus we see that Freedom is natural to us. We also find that a free government is best adopted for selfish purposes. Be the object power—what state so mighty as the Roman Republic. The Historian tells us that all her great battles were fought and won while she was a free government. Be the end in view honor, wealth, science, letters, poetry and philosophy what state so preeminent as Athens. Be the object all these, united with virtue and religion, where a nobler example than these United States. True there are evils in our system. But shall we at this day look for perfection? As well might we expect the median sun at morning. Did we not err, we would not be men. Our country needs not eulogies. The history of her rise will sooner arouse the nobler emotions of the soul, will sooner call the tear, than the mightiest tales which are told of the great songsters of the olden time.

Turn our glance across the ocean to our Fatherland. She is indeed our Fatherland. Her men of might are peculiarly our Fathers as they all with prophetic eyes beheld the vision of a people struggling to be free. Shakespeare's every page is marked with evidence that the Spirit of Liberty exerted her potent sway over his mind. Milton sings to us the praises of

"The Mountain Nymph, Sweet Liberty."

Goldsmith once left the paternal roof determined to spend his days in the new world. Cowper tells us

"All constraint
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil; hurts the faculties, impedes
Their progress in the road of science; blinds
The eyesight of discovery; and begets
In those that suffer it, a sordid mind
Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
To be the tenant of man's noble form."

Byron respected our institutions. Coleridge and Southey in early manhood made their plans to abandon the evils of the old world, and live in perfect freedom in the new. Look at her great statesmen. Chatham and Burke and Burghas have ever maintained the most generous sentiments in favor of human Liberty: and to this hour the laugh has not ceased at the mock heorical coronation of a young woman. Is England in a happy condition? Look at bleeding Ireland, at suffering Canada, at dissatisfaction at home, at her miserable paupers disgorged upon our shores. None but the rich and the bigoted are admitted into her Universities. A tax is paid for every ray of light that illumines their dwellings.

Let no one then praise England to the disparagement of these United States. If so inclined, let him not again obtrude obnoxious sentiments

upon an audience of peers. Let him read the New York Review less, and let him study the history of *our own dear land* more. Nor again let him make the absurd statement that because a thing is old, it is therefore good. China is the oldest government. The worship of the sun of the old Persians remains to this day. Time and circumstances change, and shall we stand still. No, the fire of Freedom must spread. Despotism's towers must be overthrown. For virtue and justice and pure undefiled religion cannot prevail until the altar of Liberty is reared fast by the throne of God to which the only access may be with hearts free and generous as the light of Heaven. If we have expressed ourselves warmly and homely, Mr. Editor, tis in a worthy cause.

DUTY¹⁶

We are of those who in all God's universe find nothing so awful, so beautiful, so sublime as the mind of man. The blue sky and the green fields are lovely, but they are passing away. The sun at noon and at set of day is splendid and beautiful, but 'ere long his fires shall go out. The ocean calm and the hushed wind are sweet as the thoughts of infancy; the mighty waves and the wild tempest are grand; but the sea shall be dried up, and the dead both small and great which are in it shall come forth.

Not Chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest
Nor ought of blinded vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our minds, into the mind of man.

Our capabilities are hedged in by the foul circumstances and conditions of this life, and the glories of the ocean deep are covered from view by the ripples and commotions of the surface. But even here we find an opportunity for the exercise of some part of the immortal within us; its fetters and clogs may be somewhat resisted and cast off. There is attainable even here a higher and purer state, a loftier field of action than that on which most of us move. A contemplation of this state and of the means by which it is to be arrived at, may have an ennobling effect on the mind. To this end let us consider during the moment allotted us a part of this great subject.

Duty is our theme, Duty the word, the feeling we would impress upon every man. God formed man in his own image, and he breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul. In that soul God placed desires and emotions, he placed the sentiment that we ought to do right and that we ought not to do wrong. Though neglected and forgotten he has not permitted it to go out from the soul of man,

¹⁶On the outside of the manuscript, itself folded lengthwise, appears "Duty—Nov. 9, 1839—University Chapel. W. S." I do not know whether this means that the Society met, in regular session, in the University Chapel, or whether this particular manuscript was read before the student body convened in the University Chapel.

but claims for it the same regard, the same attention, and the same obedience required from our first parents; and the question with us is—shall we give it heed?

It is the purest, the noblest impulse of our being. "The angelic nature," says Coleridge, "would act from impulse alone"; they enjoy perfect bliss in doing right, in living and obeying God. Their souls smile within them, and God smiles upon them.

As well being is intimately connected with well doing he who does his duty enjoys the consequences, but these were nothing and less than nothing in comparison with the peace of his own bosom which is not to be estimated by silver or gold, or judged of by this week day world.

But it may be interesting to look at the consequences. We shall see that the highest endeavors have been made and the most beneficial actions performed, by those who have acted from the impulse of duty.

Socrates, when before the tribunal of The Five Hundred, accused of having corrupted the Athenian youth and of having done impiety to the Gods, declared that his wish was to make his fellow citizens happy, and it was a *duty* commanded by the Gods, whose authority, said he, turning to his judges, "I regard more than yours." Martin Luther opposed the sale of indulgences because he thought it his duty, and guided by this feeling, rescued the mind of man from the thick ignorance and darkness of Romish Superstition. Before the Diet of Worms he declared that his *Conscience* would not permit him to do otherwise than he had done; and when reproached for the boldness and austerity of his conduct, answered, "If I must necessarily have some failing let me rather speak the truth with too great severity, than once to act the hypocrite and conceal the truth." Who can estimate how great the debt we, who love pure and undefiled Religion, owe Martin Luther?

Yearly we celebrate with orations and poems and great joy the birth of our nation. This is well. Our Fathers, knowing their rights, declared it to be their *duty* to defend those rights. He, who, resigning the attractions of a delightful home, and fair domains, and even turning not back to receive the parting embrace of a much loved wife, led them on to Liberty, was actuated by no other impulse than that of duty. They who have read his correspondence upon his acceptance of his appointment as Major General of the Continental Armies and at the time of his inauguration as President will remember this. In his Farewell Address he says that his acceptance of office has been "a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty".

Thus we have given these glorious examples of men who have acted from an exalted sense of *duty*—Socrates, Luther, and Washington. I need not allude to the results which have followed from their high endeavors. For all that is true and beautiful in Philosophy, for all that is pure and holy in Religion, for all that is dear to the heart of man in Freedom we are beyond measure indebted to these high-thoughted men. And now for the future shall we give good heed to the calls of Duty? Shall she be our guide and our mistress, conducting us safely through our way of life?

How brightly will the sun shine on the day when all men shall acknowledge Duty as the principle of their life, when each man shall be true, true to his own soul, true to his fellows, true to his God. Then shall Beauty and Peace be all prevading spirits. Love and Truth will descend into every bosom. Interest, lost sight of, will wither and die; and the Spirit of Evil, unable to find a resting place, will hie away to the mountains and bury itself beneath the rocks.

RECORDS OF SUMMER TRAVEL DURING VACATION, JULY-
SEPTEMBER 1838¹⁷

Twas the last of July. The season was uncommonly warm. Our great cities were almost deserted; and men, and women too, roamed to the forest North in quest of cool shades and lofty eminences, as retreats from the heat and disagreeableness of more sunny places. They who sought the hills of New Hampshire sought not in vain; for though the heat of the sun there was intense, yet the genial breezes and the mountain chill formed the delightful *medias res* of climate, which, as in all things else, is the most pleasing and in accordance to Nature. There are other attractions beside the fine climate. But, as in the motherland, the Highlands of Scotland are forgotten by the tourists of our day, who in crowds may flock to mere fashionable places; so with us, the romantic scenery of New Hampshire and other states gives way to Saratoga and spots of as paltry and sickly consideration. *Odi vulgum*. We mean as Horace meant, for though some vulgar things may be good in themselves, yet we loathe them because so many small people seem to love them. We have no faith in the dictum than a king can do no wrong, and the majority is our king, and we see it too plainly manifested, to doubt, that our king is as fallible as his Royal Highness himself.

We were one of a small party eager to see a little of the Granite State. It is the home of our Fathers, and we have some proud feelings about us in knowing for ourselves that the land is a fit muse of manly thought and high elevation of soul. She has produced some of the noblest names in our Union. Not to speak of living worthies she has her Starke, her Dearborn, her Langdon, and her Sullivan. Her sons were "the full blooded Yankees" of the Revolution. She abounds too in the legends of the early time. She has the singular fortune of having produced the only native resident of this continent knighted by the British Crown. Honest Sir William Pepperall was no mean man in his generation, but of him perhaps hereafter.

The most beautiful part of New Hampshire is decidedly that on the Connecticut River, but for the present we speak of Lake Winnipicogee and the neighboring region. The guide post had proclaimed the bay two miles farther on, the sun had set most gorgeously behind the hills, when the grandeur of the scene, which defies description, burst upon

¹⁷Presented to the Society March 22, 1839. I have searched the files of the *New York Post* for mention of the articles referring to the missing Indian, but did not find it. However, it probably appeared in another of the New York papers.

us. We could not see the waters of the Lake but as reflected in the low Heavens which surrounded the Hills. Some of our party thought the reflection the real waters. But the appearance was too grand and extensive long to deceive us. The islands dotting the wide expanse seemed like the fairy regions of the blessed. We drove on briskly and soon saw our illusion dispelled. The dark Hills before us, the still waters and the dim twilight formed a most romantic scene. About a mile from the lake we tarried for the night. The next morning at 8 we were on board the little steamboat "Belknap" named after the historian of the state. We need not add our testimony to the sketches which romantic travelers have given of the beauties of Lake Winnepiaukee. The Red Man thought them "the Beautiful Waters". Here perchance was the scene of his early lives and affections. Here as his bark glided by moonlight "the witchery of the soft blue sky would melt into his heart." Here the reflections of departed spirits, the stories of his fathers' deeds, the bright anticipations of the grand hunting grounds and big waters through which those fathers roamed in eternal peace, and the warnings which every breeze seemed to bear in his soul would rouse his slumbering energies and call to exercise his every faculty. Here he would vow eternal hatred to his fathers' foe, here pledge eternal friendship to that fathers' friend. On some of these islands he often would tell his offspring of the Great Spirit, of his thunder and lightning, and of his goodness and kindness. Here, as the victor returned from the war, went up the shout, the revel and the dance. These waters once echoed the death sound that the paleface had come. They were once stained with the deep dye of human blood. Such reflections steal over the soul and engross our whole attention so that we neglect the sublime view of the mountains rearing their awful heads in the distance.

One practical observation however we made, if the hearer will pardon its introduction at this time, showing the power of early association—that a great many of those living in the neighborhood follow the sea as a profession. On board our boat was one who had just returned from a whaling voyage, and he told me that many of his fellows in childhood spent half their days on the lake, and from this arose an invincible desire of seeing, the fathomless sea, the ever fresh and ever free.

But the lake is crossed and we bend our steps to the pleasant inn at Centre Harbor. We finish this most delightful day in friendly talk with mine hostess, in trout fishing at the lake, and in preparation for an ascent on the morrow to the summit of The Red Hill. Sad dreams of time and change and desolation steal over us and with the rosy morn we gladly rise. Two hundred years since, O Sun, with what devotion was't thou welcomed! The young warrior blessed thy earliest beam and by thy light kindled the council fire. Perchance at the latter day thou wilt be nigh to blind and overpower us all: and the bad man shall flee for purification to thy fires, but to linger out in endless misery the recollections of the deeds to which thou was't a witness.

About 8 o'clock we set out with all suitable preparations on our proposed excursion. We rode within three quarters of a mile of the summit. The rest of the way was more difficult. Here the nature of every one of our party was developed. I know not that I have made mention of her who was the soul and originator of the ramble. She was a resident of one of those beautiful towns which deck the coast of New England from New Haven to Portland. Her father had in early life amassed by dint of enterprise and labor an honourable fortune, and was in every way worthy his daughter. She was Mehitable R., named in respect to the good grandame who yet survives a pattern of meekness and patience though oppressed with grievous bodily ills. Mehitable, above all the ladies I have ever met with, had a beautiful mind, nor do I mean accomplishments and finery or even mere knowledge. She was above them all. If a beautiful mind is a Spirit pervading a whole frame, humble and contented, being its own delight, goodness its pre-eminent quality—then had Mehitable a beautiful mind indeed. Well was she designated, by one of our party a young officer of The Army lately from the far West, on the language of one of the Indian tribes He-e-ladee, The Pure Fountain. Her influence was universal. I said above that in the ascent the nature of each of us was developed. One bold as an eagle. Another timid and calculating. The active however were always the most successful. Having gained the eminence we were well repaid for the little difficulty—had there been no other pleasure than the view. [Here five lines are torn from the manuscript.] This is supposed to have given rise to the name.

On a rock we spread our luncheon and were engaged in an interesting discussion concerning the mysterious fate of the red Lords of the soil when we were suddenly startled by the noise of some one approaching from below. Imagine our feelings when the face of an Indian, bearing deep traces of a rough journey through life, was discerned. Middle aged he appeared, but his activity plainly showed that the fire of his soul was not yet dim. Being well clad, his head bent, unarmed and of noble mein a thousand fancies presented themselves to us before he noticed us. When he discovered us he hesitated a moment but as though occupied with other thoughts kept due on. The young Officer whom we have casually mentioned made bold, and notwithstanding the entreaties and arguments of most of us to the contrary, saluted him in English first, and then in the dialect of one of the Western tribes. To the latter he replied. After the customary remarks of recognition he motioned to move on, but paused a moment to reply to the question: "How far was the end of his journey?"

"I go," says he, "to the graves of my fathers at yonder eminence."

"Oh, let us go," spoke Mehitable in the gushing forth of a warm heart, which the Army Officer interpretating, the red man looked to Heaven and answered "well".

With anxious step we followed. Not a word broke upon the solemn silence. Soon we reached the eminence. The Red man's heart then burst. O the anguish of that soul! The thoughts of that bosom who can


tell! He who knew not fear, whose life had been as those fabled seas which experience no calm was no prostrate as a child moaning in very distraction of spirit at the grave of his ancestors. The tie which connected him with them was long, and it may be that some of the links were forgotten. But here were his fathers. Mighty and resistless had they been, numerous and happy. Nor want nor ill had o'er them e'en spreadith blighting cloud. We cross the big waters and wander a stranger in distant lands and sigh o'er the remains of those to whom we are connected only by the page of the historian or the poet; of when gray haired tradition fails, tis all the mere matter of fact—they were and this remains. Yet the bard has at such scenes lighted up a flame which the world will not let die, and the traveler at the ruins of a people to whom he is connected only in fancie's wizard wand pays willing homage. How more affecting, how more natural the visit of the poor degraded Indian to the tombs of his great and renowned Fathers. O, it seems to me that were Homer among us, he would choose as his theme some legend of this people.

Our orators but speak of Maratt and Themopylae and the fire of patriotism burns brighter in our breasts. The Mussulman yearly goes up to the shrine of the prophet. A few centuries since all Europe were on the march to the Holy Sepulchre; and we raise a monument to Heaven at Bunker Hill. But how mean and insignificant and nothing all these feelings and offerings appear when compared with the journey of the Red Man to the graves of his renowned Fathers. To the child the holloch where rests a Mother is sacred, and he prays that the wind that blows and the storm that beats may not harm her holy resting place. But how different thy feelings, O man of the wild wood! Thou thinkest of thy fathers' glory and might, and thy littleness. Thou fearest lest they, from their long home, look down upon thee as unworthy.

I have seen a people forsaking their avocations and accompanying to the tomb the corpse of one who had been their idol: I have heard the solemn step, and the minute gun, and the melancholy toll of the bell, yet in my heart I thanked God that this mighty mind had been so long preserved to the country, and that the people had not proved ungrateful. I have sorrowed at the grave of beauty and worth, yet in time I forgot myself and thought only of her the memory of whose virtues was as the evening twilight pleasing to my soul. But the wretchedness of the Red Man can never to my mind be as a dream that is past.

We merely state the facts. We can attempt no description. However willing, we may not obtrude our sentiments and fancies. Let each hearer have his own imaginings and tell us if midst all the horrible which he has ever conjured up in the depths of earth, on sea, or in mid air, aught more terrible to the feelings has ever presented itself.

But hark! did'st thou hear the report of a gun and the cry of the eagle? Some cruel sportsmen have fallen in with one of these birds. And yet another gun! Look, there flutters and falls the monarch of the air. He falls within a few feet of The Red Man. In a moment the joyous sportsmen are at hand and soon extinguish the remaining spark


 Seventh Anniversary
 OF THE
PHILOMATHEAN SOCIETY,
 IN THE
UNIVERSITY CHAPEL,
 ON
WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 11, 1840,
 AT SEVEN O'CLOCK.

- | | | |
|--|--------|------------------------------|
| | MUSIC. | |
| 1. Presidential Addresses. | | <i>C. H. A. Bulkeley.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 2. Destiny of the West. | | <i>Wm. Van Wyck.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 3. Enthusiasm. | | <i>Wm. E. Trask.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 4. Ceylon. | | <i>Henry M. Scudder.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 5. Poem—Eloise. | | <i>William Salter.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 6. Genius. | | <i>Alfred Wheeler.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 7. Powerful Impulse. | | <i>Thos. H. Skinner, Jr.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 8. Judah. | | <i>A. G. Vermilye.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |
| 9. Life, Character and Genius of L. L. Da Ponte. | | <i>D. E. Sickles.</i> |
| | MUSIC. | |


 W. Salter

WINDT.

PRINT.

Facsimile of the program of the Philomathian Society for its meeting of March 11, 1840, on which William Salter's name appears.

of life. "Ah! Cruel!" exclaimed the Red Man, "the omen of my own doom." He fled swift as the thought, nor ever again heard we the rough utterance of that tongue.

Sadly we descended. The shades of evening were fast falling round us when we reached our hotel. The story of our excursion was soon made known through the neighborhood. There were a thousand surmises. But on the next day at sunset we heard that the body of the Indian had been discovered at the foot of a very steep precipice near the base of the Hill. The next morning early we went forth with a few farmers and having found the body and clad it becomingly bore it in a rough coffin to a spot where rested his ancestors. We buried him, and over his grave heaped a pile of stones and at his feet planted a young [here the author left a space to later fill in the correct name of the tree, but this was never done]. While thus engaged a flock of eagles floated over our heads uttering a melancholy cry. Whether the Red Man slipped in descending the precipice, or in madness threw himself headlong down is left to conjecture. The next day we bent our faces homeward. About the close of the month we noticed in the newspapers that one of the chiefs of the Canada Indians was missing. The form and stature and appearance mentioned clearly proved that he whose sad fate we have recorded was sangaquamany the last of the descendants of those Indians who during the French War which preceded the Revolution were taken captives by a force of French and Indians who penetrated into New Hampshire at that time with the intention of attacking the coast settlements, but being distressed by want of provisions were compelled to retreat. These prisoners, as is the custom with some tribes, intermarried with their captors.

ELOISE¹⁸

Your bard, though young and all untried his wing,
 And knowing not the mysteries of song,
 Whose hope is not Apollo's lyre to string,
 Who would not, for his life, do Poesy wrong;
 Yet called by friends, inspired by the throng
 Of Beauty, and the thought of Love divine,
 Would dare essay in words, nor loud nor long,
 To speak of *Eloise*, and rear a shrine
 Where Love and Truth like her's for aye might purely shine.

¹⁸Presented at the anniversary program, held in the University Chapel, on the evening of March 11, 1840. *Vid.* the program which is here reproduced and also the page of manuscript reproduced. As near as can be determined this is the only poetry which Dr. Salter ever wrote. For that reason alone the "*Eloise*" is important. The back of the original manuscript is covered with notes relating to *Eloise* and *Abelard*, and citations to *Bayle's Dictionary* and *The Westminster Review*. In the body of the manuscript there are two lines of a stanza reading: "Her loveliness increased as years went by. Each summer showing riper bloom of"—and here it beaks abruptly. A note beneath says: "Omitted in speaking." The rest of the poem I have reprinted with no intentional emendations.

Eloise

You bard, though young & all untried his wing,
And knowing not the mysteries of Song,
Whose life is not Apollo's lyre to string,
Who would not, for his life, do Poesy wrong,
Yet call'd by friends, inspired by the thing
Of Beauty, & the thought of Love divine,
Woud dare & pry in words, you could not long,
To speak of Eloise, & rear a shrine
Where Love & Truth like her for aye might shine.

Who doth not joy to Contemplate the just,
To call his Brains for their serene rest
To learn if he lie near the explicit east,
And how their home & land in them were blest!
How pure such thoughts, how pleasing for the breast
When Beauty's tale of woe awakes the heart.
Oh change my soul, be thou not undesign'd,
No fail thy deep felt sorrow to impart
When Virtue, Truth, & Beauty grieves, who's in
thou art -

Who doth not joy to contemplate the past,
 To call its Beings from their solemn rest,
 To learn of noble men the exploit's vast,
 And how their home and land in them were blest?
 How from such thoughts, how fleating from the breast,
 When Beauty's tale of wrong awakens the heart!
 Oh thou, my soul, be thou not undistrest,
 No fail thy deep felt sorrow to impart
 When Virtue, Truth, or Beauty grieves, whereen than out.

When Knowledge had no home but cloistered cell,
 When Peace had left this warring world awhile,
 When *Moslem* in the Holy Land did dwell,
 Which *He* with rites most cursed dared defile,
 Whom, in an honest fight, a treacherous wile,
 The Christian sought to vanquish; in that time
 When Joy and Hope shed out their angel smile,
 When Poesy hied to her heights sublime
 Leaving the world in night of ignorance and crime.

Then as a single star amod cloud and storm,
 Or dream of Peace in gloomy night of woe
 Lived Eloise—whose fair and noble form
 Enclosed a soul surpassing human show,
 Whose greatest sin was this world not to know.
 I may not speak her Beauty, though it was
 The homage of all hearts, both high and low,
 For we, of wiser days, such thoughts must shun,
 Though in the heads of youth they will forever run.

But I will speak the beauty of her soul,
 Which doth not sleep with her in silent tomb,
 But is a spirit, free, above control
 Of this mean world where so much woe finds room,
 Where if a moment's joy dispels the gloom
 We bless the years of life and call them good,
 Nor think how fast we haste to meet our doom,
 Judging the while that it may be withstood,
 Though all the Past are gone—our own similitude.

His is the Beauty which the Poet loves,
 And her's the spirit that attends his dreams,
 Fit only to be sung in sacred groves,
 Or still retreats, by gentle murm'ing streams,
 Or where the Light of Love sheds round its beams.
 In Youth she learned the lore of ancient days,
 Which howe'er strange to modern time it seems,
 Methinks was wise and worthy noblest praise,
 Say, why should ye neglect to seek for Wisdom's ways?

The wonder of his age was Abelard,
 Great fame had he for philosophic lore
 And deep research: withal a gentle Bard
 Whose verses maidens sung on every shore.
 Crowds hung upon his lips—oh he could soar
 In Eagle's flight above the sross of earth,
 As wooing Plato, in the days of yore,
 Neath groves of Academie, gave beauteous birth
 To Truths, compared with which all else were nothing worth.

The years roll on—but ah—what change is this!
 Where is the Joy, the brightness of her prime?
 Doth fade so fast the hope of earthly bliss?
 And thus doth die the bloom of summer time?
 And is it so in every age and clime?
 Lo—Eloise—how sorrowful and pale!
 How sad thine eyes—thy majesty sublime
 How changed—why doth thou hie to secret vale,
 Why blew then so wild Misfortune's bitter gale?

The tale is often told, and told so well
 That words of mine would take its charm away,
 And though I live in themes like this to dwell,
 And long had hoped to build a better lay
 Worthy my theme, and all this bright array
 Of Beauty—yet—ye know, in College Halls
 Stern Wisdom holds an undisputed sway,
 The song of luckless Bard her form appals,
 And hard she frowns at him if he neglect her calls.

As two concordant bells give one sweet chime,
 So Eloise and Abelard—one fame
 Have they, undimmed up flight of wasting time,
 Not till shall pass away the glorious name
 Of strong tried Love, and Constancy the same
 Through Woe and Death, till maids forget their love
 And men their youth, and Bard his hope of fame,
 Shall human hearts in sorrow fail to move,
 Though e'en in sympathy they may not all approve.

So dies the very best of earthly things.
 Who would not have a more enduring Joy?
 Who doth not cry—Good angels, give me wings
 To soar above this mass of dust, this this try,
 All hail you Heav'n—hail bliss without alloy.
 Thenceforth I'm not content to starve my soul,
 And eat of husks, though other men enjoy.
 I'd gain no lower good than God, the goal
 Of all things, whom to love, be of my life the whole.

These, then, are all the known manuscripts of Dr. Salter's undergraduate days at New York University. There remains but little more to be said, and this concerns one invitation upon which Dr. Salter's name appears, and the date of his resignation from the Society.

An undated invitation addressed to the Council of the University of the City of New York asks the council members to attend the annual oration of the Philomethian and Eucleian societies on the evening of the sixteenth at eight o'clock.¹⁹ The year was 1837. The invitation is signed by the Committee on Invitation, of which Dr. Salter was one.

On May 29, 1840, the records show that Dr. Salter resigned from the Society.²⁰ This date was just in advance of his graduation from the university. The resignation was not due, in my judgment, to any difficulties which occurred within the Society, but was occasioned by the fact that Salter left the university before his commencement in order to accept a teaching position in the Norwalk Academy at South Norwalk, Connecticut. Here he remained for six months and then he entered the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. From this point his history is rather well known—his graduation from Andover September 5, 1843, his instructions from the Home Missionary Society to take up his work in the Territory of Iowa, his first sermon, preached October 29, 1843, in a little room over the blacksmith shop in Keosauqua, his parish duties in Maquoketa during the years 1844-1846, and his pastorate of the First Congregational Church of Burlington from March 15, 1846, until his death sixty-four years later.²¹

Long Island University.
Brooklyn, New York.

¹⁹This letter is on file in the library of New York University. The oration was to be delivered by Charles Eames.

²⁰*R. B.* p. 4.

²¹See *Dictionary of American Biography* for summary of his life. The ANNALS OF IOWA (Third Series) are most helpful containing, as they do, a wealth of Salter material.

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