

In Memoriam
Fratris Carissimi, graviusque desiderati,

J. DE KOVEN, D.D.

COLLEGII RADICENSIS PRÆSIDIS,
ET PRESB. CLARI IN ECCL. DEI.
IN ISRAEL CECEDIT VIR. MAG. ET PRINCEPS.
QUÆ DOCUIT, SECUTUS IPSE.
PROBUS, VERAX, MITIS, FORTIS,
PERELOQUENS,
PRO FIDE SEMEL TRADITA
SEMPER HABENDA
STRENUE AD EXTREMUM
NISUS EST.
NATUS DIE XIX. SEPT. MDCCCXXXI.
TRANSLATUS XIX. MAR. MDCCCLXXIX.
Requiescat in Pace.

The Church Militant mourns to-day with a sorrow was deep and genuine as she ever felt at the loss of an eminent son. The blow is such as to make all attempts at expression incoherent. Blinding tears and faltering voices surrounded our altars on that memorable "Refreshment Sunday," though its blessed comfort was not wholly lost as we thought of the Communion of Saints, and felt, as we never felt before, "How grows in Paradise our store."

Dr. De Koven needed no honors from the Church which spotless purity of character, eminent sanctity of life, and towering gifts of intellect could not command. We glory in behalf of that order of Priesthood which has more than once in history been charged with the keeping of the Church's faith. It was from a heathen King that Israel once learned that she possessed a man of God, and it is to a better day than this that the promise was given, "Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy Teachers."

Letters are pouring in upon us, leaving us unable to choose. Among the noblest are those of Dr. Dix and Dr. Locke. But his monument will be in the admiring remembrance of all schools of the Church, as of a man who possessed the most glorious gifts, united with the truest humility unsullied with a trace of self-seeking. His declension of such commanding positions as those in Trinity, New York, and S. Mark's, Philadelphia, was simple due to his preference of the interests of the Church to his own. We could not help telling him at our last visit with him in October, that while plenty of candidates could be found for such positions, not another man in a million could do the work he had done and was doing at Racine. What a home was that! Where Bishops themselves could go and find rest and peace and heavenly counsel—a home full of the very aroma of sanctity and culture,—the flower and fruit of all the ages of devotion and learning, and sacrifice! We cannot help thanking Dr. Locke for his testimony that "few men ever lived so perfect a life, or showed so completely rounded a character, not only brilliant intellectually, but as good as he was great, and a beautiful example of what the Christian can attain to by constant communion with his Lord." Dr. Locke, who was his classmate, and intimate with him for twenty five years, says in his noble tribute:

Dr. De Koven was not only one of the most brilliant orators, one of the finest scholars, one of the most clear debaters in the Church, but he was one of the holiest, one of the saintliest of all her sons. His life was lived upon a very lofty plane, far above the ordinary level. He was not an ascetic; he was not gloomy; but he conveyed to even the chance observer the impression of great personal holiness. He spent hours upon his knees, and from his childhood to his grave he was singularly free, as far as the keenest observation could know, from even what are called venial sins. But with this very holy and pure life there was no spiritual pride, no assumption of superior worthiness; ever a sweet humility, ever a low estimate of his own attainments, either in grace or in the learning of the schools.

When you add to all this a thoroughly charming manner, a perfect culture, an intimate knowledge of all the graces of polite society, and a personal magnetism which gave him wonderful power over the young men under his care, who without exception idolized him, the greatness of the loss is overpowering.

Dr. De Koven was born at Middletown, Conn., Sept. 19, 1831, graduated at Columbia College 1851, and at the General Seminary, 1854, made deacon the same year, and priest the year following. Was rector of the Church at Delafield, Wis., five years, with a Professorship at Nashotah, and became Warden of Racine College in 1859, raising that Institution in twenty years, by a spending example of financial ability and consummate skill of administration, to its present position of the Church University of the Northwest. In 1874 he was elected by the clergy Bishop of Wisconsin, but defeated through a singular and unprecedented combination of inside and outside elements of misunderstanding, which led to a subsequent better explanation and perception of his real position. In 1875 he was elected Bishop of Illinois, but not enough of the Standing Committees had recovered from the influence of hazy rumors and suspicions to ratify his election. In Massachusetts he came but a few votes short of an election to the Episcopate of that diocese. He has departed at an early age, but left an impress that will never be effaced, and if he had lived, we cannot doubt that the Church would have learned more thoroughly his worth, and done him ample justice. Some, indeed, will as usual, garnish the sepulchre of the righteous, who did their best to blast his prospects while living. The best monument we can raise to him, is to endow and sustain beyond the risk of failure his cherished foundation of the University of the Northwest.