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## ARTICLE V.

## PROFESSOR ALBERT HOPKINS.

BY REV. JOHN BASCOM, LL.D., PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

Professor Albert Hopkins, for forty years and more, was, in a very unusual way, the centre of the religious life of Williams College. Many in that period received from him the most efficient and controlling spiritual impulses of their lives; and many are ready to testify that when in search of a perfect and upright man their thoughts most immediately revert to him. This real excellence of character, this glory of a Christian manhood, this extended and benign influence, exerted with no peculiar vantage-ground of position, entitle him to our remembrance, and make every tribute a blessing to him whose soul prompts him to render it. I am confident that the graduates of Williams College for these many years gladly unite in every word of honest recognition, and find them all too few to express their obligations or measure their esteem. It was on a throne of goodness that he sat, and ruled by a sense of righteousness those who came near him.

Albert Hopkins was born in Stockbridge, Mass., July 14, 1807. He was graduated at Williams College in 1826; became a tutor in the college in 1827; and a professor, in 1829, of mathematics and natural philosophy. This position he held till his death, May 24, 1872. In 1838, his professorship was changed to that of natural philosophy and astronomy. The events of his life were of a wholly ordinary grade, and leave no record behind them. His character only was extraordinary. This made his years excellent, as the perfume of flowers the days of spring.

If we understand by faith the mind's hold of invisible things, the vigor with which it realizes them, the constancy

with which it spreads them before its inner vision, the steadiness and clearness with which it shapes daily action under them and for them, then faith was the pre-eminent characteristic of Professor Hopkins. His changes of religious life seemed to be but the modified expression of one absorbing conviction—expression suited to the changing sympathies and external conditions which he found about him. When the revival came, it did not appear to be to him so much a revival, as the breathing in of fresh hopes to an anxious and waiting spirit—the giving air to fires that had been suppressed, but not smothered, by the heavy, sluggish atmosphere about them. In 1832, he established in college a noon prayer-meeting, of a half hour, held on four days of the week. This was maintained by him for about forty years. It was the most firm, persistent, and steadily influential means of religious life that I have ever had occasion to observe. Its conception and execution were possible only to a spiritual temper and light that never burned dim. Upheld by sheer strength of will, such meetings would become wearisome, painful, and utterly unfruitful; as the offspring of life, they gave life. Any new accession of religious feeling was always heralded by an increase in numbers in the noon meeting, by clearer and more flashing light in the deep-set eye of the professor, and more trumpet tones in his commanding voice. We felt at once that an earnest soul, the soul of a watchman, was being awakened and emboldened by the promise of a coming good. This steadfastness of faith, this belief of the soul in its own, this holding on to the invisible ways of holiness,—travelling them in solitude, or with a joyful multitude, as he was able,—this was the first and great fact in the religious life and character of Professor Hopkins.

The doctrines held by Professor Hopkins were those of the Congregational church; with no peculiar emphasis, so far as we are aware, laid upon any of them. He was liberal in spirit, not disposed to insist upon dogma, and, with quiet appreciation, termed the flock which he himself had gathered,

"The Church of Christ in the White Oaks."<sup>1</sup> There came, however, from his unusually vivid realization of spiritual facts, an appreciable character, a distinct and peculiar glow, to his words, which separated him from other men. He was a revivalist, not of the demonstrative, but of the earnest and direct kind. The supernatural—meaning thereby the immediate, manifest, and sudden intervention of the Spirit—had large possession of his thoughts and language. A tinge of belief—which hardly took the form of explicit statement, and was none the less effective for that reason—pertaining to the early second coming of Christ would flash over his speech, and light it up with a sudden intensity, as if a little rent in the future had disclosed itself to him, and he felt at liberty to announce that great things were at hand. He had the power, in a very unusual degree, of imparting a tendency and temper to what he said quite beyond the statement contained in the words themselves. Thus attention was never

<sup>1</sup> Notice the preliminary statements to the creed and covenant of this church which were prepared by him during his last sickness: "The following statements are believed to be both scriptural, and of vital interest. As such, they are commended to the prayerful consideration of Christians of whatever name. 1. A church is a body of believers, voluntarily associated in the name of Christ, to show forth his praise, and to increase their own power both of receiving and doing good. 2. Love to Christ is the only essential prerequisite to an acceptable public profession of faith in him. 'If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.' 3. Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost admits the believer to the Christian church, and entitles him to all its privileges and blessings. 'He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.' 4. Church-fellowship may not be abridged by local churches within limits narrower than those sanctioned by Christ and the example of the apostles. 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?' 5. A regard to the above precepts would recommend great simplicity in our forms of admission to the church, and caution in the multiplication of technical and doctrinal tests. 'Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.' Under the impression of the above truths, the church in the White Oaks was formed, and its covenant adopted. The church was organized December 20, 1868, and is now enjoying special tokens of the divine presence and favor. Should the form of the subjoined Covenant be generally adopted, or some equivalent form, not much more or less inclusive, it is believed that sectarianism and denominational differences would gradually subside, and, in the end, quite disappear. 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism,' would not be an unmeaning ideal, but would express, as it did for a time, the happy experience of a church, one in name, one in aim, one in the experience of its inward life, and substantially one in its outward form."

turned to this dogma, as a probable or improbable belief; yet, by language which hardly amounted to an affirmation, an intense, vivid, portentous coloring was given to the relations we hold with the spiritual world about us and before us. A sudden and great work ceased to be strange and unexpected under his clear anticipation; and the mind fell easily under the influence and guidance of one who seemed to have such a spiritual affinity with invisible and forthcoming events.

It was this pre-occupation of the imagination, even more than the thoughts, with the things of the kingdom, which made him a revivalist, and capable of creating impressions which it was difficult to translate into words, and not always easy to turn into rational, well-advised action. Indeed, the word rational bore no very frequent or very large burden in the religious experience or instruction of Professor Hopkins. While utterly free from all superficial and fictitious practice, while thoroughly and forever permeated with one living impulse, he took but a secondary hold on natural law, and went straight and constantly to divine grace for his motives, means, and supplies.

There is here room for diversity of experience and diversity of belief. Some may be profoundly impressed only as Sinai is ablaze; others, bearing this divine power and being deeply in their hearts, may stand at the foot of the mount with equal comfort and faith when it is bathed in serene sunshine and outlined in the blue sky. We confess to a heart that turns yearningly and hopefully to the natural, to the enduring laws of mind and society, to the framework alike of order and growth which God has established in and about us. We expect him, for the most part, to work in and under these methods of his ordination; and we find our own work in a steady development of the natural forces just at hand. The sanctified heart is not one denuded of nature, but restored to nature; and we wait patiently and hopefully on a long work of restoration — more properly of spiritual development — in man and society. The word "development" has no alarms

for us, if it be the creative grace of Christ that is at work in and through it. The supernatural is ever lapsing into the natural; it awakens us to the natural,—God's constant, habitual work,—and then makes way for it. The soul, stirred by a new sense or a new outburst of spiritual powers, needs to be turned at once in the expenditure of its strength to the natural, to the low grade of duties that gather just about it. Israel marches from Sinai into the desert, and there in daily camp-life shows the temper which the divine presence has begotten. The overflowing impression of the supernatural which belongs to the revivalist may be initiatory of the truest life, but hardly by abiding in its first character. It must calm itself down into distinct, common-place duties; it must take up the burdens of nature; it must find life and salvation everywhere, till here as there, and now as then, it shall live and move and have its being—its daily being—in God. I can distinctly recall whirlwinds of impression, in my early religious life, which were not in this way husbanded, which did little more than fill the air with dust. Forty days of delay and wonder were too much for the Israelites; they made a golden calf to consume time and feeling. Professor Hopkins's supernaturalism was wholesome to his own mind, for he abounded in plain daily work; it was healthy to many other minds, for a like patient, fruitful spirit has been again and again called out by it; still, it gave little place to a type of Christian character which will increase as the glory of God shines forth more and more through his creation. The kingdom is not to come so much by rejection as by incorporation, not so much by creation as redemption.

Professor Hopkins was always liberal, more than usually so, in the support of stated benevolences. Foreign missions were much to him, directly and indirectly. The student contemplating this labor found peculiarly warm sympathy and counsel in him; the missionary returning from it, tarried with him, and was by him introduced to the college. But, like all positive Christians, he sought opportunities for more

personal and direct effort — for the best expenditure of his own power in its living, lively form. This led him early in life to a wide range of missionary labor in neighboring districts, and later to the establishment and maintenance of a chapel in White Oaks. The success of this project affords an excellent illustration of the power stored up in one life, which a system of general benevolence often overlooks. The nearer one's work is to him, the more efficient and blessed is it; and if remote, organized, missionary labors are to be to the church a substitute for private, direct effort, they will be an injury. Yet this is a mere form of admonition. There is no such tendency in missionary labor. He who is earnest in giving will be earnest in doing; and the doing is his most direct stewardship. For a like reason Professor Hopkins was greatly interested in efforts to be made for the establishment of a direct mission in South America. This form of private effort has especially prospered in Germany, and acquires an apostolic character which is too liable to be lost in a great organization. Frederick Hicks, under the encouragement and aid of Professor Hopkins, spent some years in Panama and the neighboring region in an effort to plant such a mission; but his health early failed him, and the results were not permanent.

Professor Hopkins, by his acknowledged zeal and power, became the centre of revival influence in the town as well as in the college. He came to the front as a matter of course, whenever there was an earnest, working mood. Yet this leadership was tacit, quiet, without friction or observation. It fell to him because it was in and of him; and no one felt in a religious meeting that they knew the finality — what was to be hoped — till he had spoken.

In exhortation and preaching, his chief characteristic was positiveness of feeling, sustained by clear realization and vivid imagination. This produced sudden outbursts of assertion that at once swept away all indifference and opposition. For spasmodic power, that shot out instantly from the depths of conviction, he was unsurpassed by any whom I have ever

met. It was not sustained argument, it was not proportionate, prepared eloquence; it was a sudden leap of the soul toward truth, startling and awakening all who beheld it, that made him a prophet from another world. He was at one time in the habit of holding a Thursday evening lecture, or exposition, in his study. His choice of books often disclosed his predominant tendencies. Among these was the Revelation. Its bold imagery, its indefinite suggestiveness, the free range it offers to the purely religious and supernatural impulse, seem all to have drawn him toward it. It is full of that secure prophetic element he delighted in, that strong, undefined influence with which the spiritual world in its disclosure overshadows the mind. He came, in his exposition, to the fourteenth chapter, in which a new song is spoken of, belonging to the redeemed of the earth, and which cannot be sung by another. This fact laid instant hold of his heart. He raised his voice, lifted his hand, and put the inquiry, in the most startling way: "And why couldn't they sing that song?" Waiting for a moment, for the difficulties of the question to get possession of our minds, he dropped his hand, and lowered his voice in solemn, final affirmation, making answer: "Because they couldn't." By the mere force of his own feeling he carried over an answer bordering on the ridiculous into the sublime. No reason could have so convinced us of the folly of any unredeemed spirits meddling with that song. We felt at once, as the speaker felt, that it was and could be only the outgush of a purified, regenerated soul. Professor Hopkins did not argue much with men; but swept them on by the visions of his spirit and his tide of conviction.

The Old Testament, and Old Testament characters, had strong possession of his mind. He loved the concrete more than the abstract; and these early events and persons — the scripture narrative turning so exclusively on the religious impulse — gave free play to his sentiment and imagination. Shortly before his death he gave a protracted series of evening discourses on the history of David, wonderful for



their life-like effects. He seemed to move in those remote, dark regions, in reference to which our impressions are often made only the more vague and unreal by early and constant familiarity, as one who held a powerful light, casting its pure beam before him. He had only to direct it to this and that person, and instantly they rose out of the shadow, the lineaments and passions of life full upon them. Doeg, Joab, Asahel, Abner, David himself, took new possession of the mind, calling forth fresh feelings of like or dislike. There were no scholarly deductions, no learned exegesis, but a quick seeing and lively sympathy, by which we felt and saw as for the first time. The personifying power, by which the shadowy becomes real and substantial, — a new adjustment of lenses, casting a bold, clear image on the canvas, — belonged in a high degree to Professor Hopkins. David was an intimate friend of his — one with whom he had gone through many a hard struggle, — and so he became to us, as long as he spoke of him.

There was something in the personal appearance of Professor Hopkins, especially later in life, which served to heighten this impression. He had a prophet's face and bearing, with a sharp, overshadowed eye, bold features, inclined in expression to strength and serenity, and a flowing white beard; tall, erect, and firmly knit, — in my college days there were fabulous stories in circulation among us of his physical strength, — he seemed no inferior image of Elijah, able, like him, to rebuke kings, or gird himself, and run before their swiftest chariots.

The imaginative element in Professor Hopkins was of a dramatic cast, it took hold on action and terse speech. It was never effeminate or merely pictorial. His characters were in earnest, and came before us in their striking attitudes. Connected with this, there was a peculiar relish for proper names. The hard words of the Old Testament seemed to have a certain flavor in his mouth, and he delighted to give them an emphatic utterance, as if he marshalled thereby so many men and places before us. This seems due to an easy

power of personification, by which a name, partly through direct association, still more by an acquired representative power, comes to stand for a person, and readily restores the familiar image. Thus Dickens is ever playing in fancy with his proper names, and they had for him, and come to have for the reader, a symbolic force. The richness of a proper name to us, at least of one on which either the historic or creative imagination has had any opportunity to work, is often a test of our powers of realization.

Professor Hopkins's force sprang so purely from within, that his delivery was often sluggish when the inner vision was not before him. His composition was always concise, and his words chosen with unusual skill, but he proceeded in speaking very slowly, till the prophetic gift came upon him. His discourses, therefore, though well composed, were very unequal in their practical effects. He did not seem to address himself to audiences and external circumstances; but as he was musing the fire burned. He was not the orator of occasions and large assemblies, unless the topic was surcharged with spiritual power.

In his department of instruction, and in natural history generally, he was warmly interested, though his endowments as a teacher and a scholar fall into the shadow of his personal religious influence. Though he possessed thoroughly good intellectual powers, he owed more to his spiritual endowments than to these. We should hardly have dwelt long on the form of the cloud, had it not been suffused with so heavenly a light.

Perfect as he was in Christian character, he was not less complete, or, rather, he was therefore complete, in manly qualities. Few men ever command the same universal respect and regard. His integrity was affirmed with an oath in the lowest circles. Nobody was willing to acknowledge that he had dropped so far as to distrust Professor Hopkins. It became a passion to praise him. He owed this regard of the poor to his constant regard for them. He was Christian and democratic—and the two things are inseparable—by

his settled instincts and cherished purposes. There was neither cold seclusion nor diffidence in his intercourse with any. He passed from one grade of society to another with the utmost freedom. With quiet composure, as a matter of course, he conversed with the most intelligent, or led the least intelligent. He was not embarrassed by any, neither did he embarrass any. His dignity was always present, and never disclosed itself. He thought not of himself, but only, in the simplest, most direct way, of the work before him. Of a truly democratic, yet always elevating influence, no better example has ever been presented to me. He owed this quiet, constant, and universal control to several causes.

In the first place his influence and labor were primarily and consistently Christian. Whatever may be thought of the human heart, it soon gives way to pure Christian love, more quickly than to any other aggressive agent. Such love provokes less passion, and calls forth more affection, than any other thoroughly militant sentiment. With Professor Hopkins this leading purpose enclosed all others; and those who warred with him must war with the tenderness and constancy of a Christian's life. No man did it long. He was also liberal. The poor received much sympathy and aid from him. He gave without instituting a too close inquiry into the past history which made giving necessary. He was thus able to do more for the redemption of a life to whose immediate demands he had not lent a deaf ear. Plain in dress, simple in his manner of living, and with active, outdoor habits, there was very little, either in his appearance or action, to estrange him from any class of citizens.

He sympathized with the social reformatory spirit, in many of its bearings, warmly so; yet he did not give special effort to any of these secondary agencies. He seemed rather to feel that he had found his labor elsewhere, and must cling closely to the chief interests of the kingdom. This one line of action, assumed under his own conviction, diminished opposition; the asperity begotten of new views and special reforms did not attach to him. His efforts, in kind, com-

manded general approval, and, in degree, general admiration. In manners he held an even and nice balance. He was hardly reserved; yet there was never in word or action any abandon — he did not commit himself to men. However gay and pleasant the society in which he was moving, his spirits were only enlivened, and not made giddy. Few, indeed, have had so little occasion to regret words, that, evading the oversight of reason, had escaped them unawares. He always preserved the same earnest, quiet, appreciative temper, that without checking hilarity was not itself hilarious.

He would at this point have fallen off a little from lovability and good fellowship, had it not been for some compensating and exceedingly graceful endowments. There was frequently a sly humor in his words, which at once assured you of his thorough relish of innocent mirth, and set you at rest on that point. His nature was also enriched by a decided poetic vein, and aesthetic culture. The college grounds owed most of their adornments to him, and his own home became a nook of secluded beauty. He instituted an Alpine club, more especially for young women, and delighted to traverse with it the mountains, seek out their picturesque points, and give their leading summits names of historic or poetic interest. It was a pleasure to him to own some of the rough soil of White Oaks, amuse his thoughts with its possible development, and give the salient features designations quite in anticipation of results. His poetic fancies and dreams brought but little embarrassment to his common-place labors, and only flashed out of him now and then in a few suggestive words, for the delight of those to whom he entrusted these visions. So we gather violets in the nooks of a field just broken for grain. An imaginative sentiment danced gayly in and out among his sober thoughts, as a sombre day is cheered and lightened by streaks of sunshine. This was in some respects one of the best victories of his faith; that religion, though it might become terribly earnest with him, united itself always to a cheerful, enjoyable life. His Steep Acres — the charity of a name hiding those flinty, precipitous flanks — were made

merry from time to time by a band at work in his missionary potato field ; or lathing a new tenement ; or by his Sabbath-school teachers gathered for a " sugar-off."

Rarely has Christian character been so purely, harmoniously, and beautifully knit together ; rarely has it been able so directly and persuasively and convincingly to commend itself to every beholder. The problem of Christian life found in Professor Hopkins a full and happy solution. He was more remarkable for what he was, than for anything which he said or did. He was very little indebted to external circumstances for his influence. A thousand lives of equal opportunity and exterior interest are lapsing, almost fruitless, about us. One controlling Christian impulse pushed forward, and held in check, all his powers ; and the symmetry and beauty and strength of character became, obviously to all, the fruit of this interior spiritual life. He thus was one through whom Christ brings life and immortality to light ; one through whom he speaks to the world, and offers it the most immediate guidance, the brightest, most consolatory hopes. It is in looking with clear vision on such a character that we are able to see redemption possible, — redemption from the perplexities, futilities, wretched failures, wretched successes, of ordinary living. Annoyed by no petty ambitions, distressed by no transient discouragements, he enclosed his own life in the spiritual life of the world, and waited in quiet hopefulness in the kingdom of his Heavenly Father. Men, some brilliant in action, some daring in thought, but with blood full of the fretful fever of the world, may well seek correction, repose, encouragement under the shadow of this calm, serene spirit. The flow of his daily action, like quiet, clear waters, was good, and carried good wherever it went ; beauty was in it, and it ministered to the beauty and life of the world. The peace of his spirit was not apathy ; it was victory. Strong passions nestled in him, and great trials overtook him, — as the early loss of his only child, Lieutenant Hopkins, in the war of the rebellion, — but the even tenor of his action was never disturbed by them. In an intimacy of many years, I recall but

one instance in which I thought an unjust sentiment found expression in him, and, as my own feelings were then decidedly adverse to the conclusion reached, I may have partially misjudged him.

There is nothing in human history more profoundly interesting than these victories of love, this rendering into life of the precepts of life. When God sends an apostle, we crave the wisdom to see him, the power to be inspired by him. How large a chapter in Grecian history is illumed by Socrates ; in Roman history, by Marcus Aurelius. Though Christianity has made the philosophy of living far more familiar to us, no place or time can well spare one of its clear lights. Such a light to many college generations was Professor Albert Hopkins. Wherever else the alumni of Williams College may wander for great men, their eyes will turn lovingly to him as their type of Christian manhood.

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## ARTICLE VI.

### THE POWER OF ISLAM.

BY REV. GEORGE F. HERRICK, MISSIONARY OF THE A. B. C. F. M.,  
CONSTANTINOPLE.

It has often been asserted that the religion of Mohammed is losing power over its votaries ; that, before the civilization and religion or infidelity of Western nations, Mohammedan power, both civil and religious, is giving way ; and that the downfall of the whole system, especially in Turkey and in India, cannot be distant. The crescent is thought to be no longer a fit symbol for a waning faith ; and there is the expectation, how general the writer does not presume to say, of the end of Islam, both as a temporal and a spiritual power, by some sudden movement near at hand, like the putting out of a candle or the crash of a falling wall.

Doubtless, the recent progress of the religion of the Arabian prophet among certain African tribes is a disturbing