

tion to the past is now broken for ever. The following sketch, from an American publication, will interest your readers; and the remarks which I venture to append to it, may not, perhaps, lessen its interest:—

Archibald Alexander was born April 17, 1772, in Virginia. In the midst of the sublimest scenery of that part of the state, where the Blue Ridge on the one hand, and the more Western Alleghenies on the other, form the valley of Virginia, he first saw the light.

Just sixty years and one month ago, he was commissioned to preach the Gospel of Christ. Even in his youth he was famed as an eloquent preacher, in the region of country where the eloquence of Patrick Henry had often been heard, and Samuel Davies, and Waddell, and others, had made the pulpit illustrious as the source of "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn."

But the power as a preacher, and the reputation for genius, piety and learning which he acquired at a period of life when most men begin to preach, may be learned from the fact, that at the extraordinary early age of twenty-five, he was called to the Presidency of Hampden Sidney College. This was in 1797.

In the midst of the forest, on the old post road that leads off from the Eastern counties to the Blue Ridge, stands a weather beaten building, in which a blind "old man eloquent" was wont to melt his hearers with his words of tenderness and power. His name was Waddell, and William Wirt has drawn his portrait, and told us of his wondrous eloquence in his graceful sketches under the name of the British Spy. That "old man's daughter," became the wife of the young President, and is now his mourning widow, the mother of one daughter and six sons, all living, her pride and solace in her sorrow, and the support of her declining age. What a life is crowded in that brief record! Her father's name is perpetuated in her son James Waddell Alexander, D. D., pastor of the Duane street Church, New York. Joseph Addison Alexander, D. D., Professor of Biblical Criticism, another eminent divine: Samuel Miller Alexander; a young pastor at Freehold, N. J.; two are in the legal and one in the medical profession; inheriting by father and mother's side, the genius of their sires.

In 1806 Dr. Alexander accepted a call to the pastoral charge of the Third Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. Here he was an eminently useful preacher and pastor, and here he might have remained till he died, an able, learned and persuasive minister of Jesus. But the Presbyterian Church had felt the need of a Seminary for the systematic instruction of her sons. She looked around among all her pastors and men of learning and wisdom, for the man to be a guide to her youth, to mould their minds and form their views in the great science of divine truth. There were giants in those days, and among them all, the mantle was thrown on the shoulders of Archibald Alexander. Single-handed and alone he was sent to Princeton in 1812, to lay the foundation of that school of the prophets, from which has now been taken its "minister and head." In 1813 he was joined by Dr. Miller, who was called to the Seminary from the First Presbyterian Church, New York; together they labored, with mutual respect, confidence, affection and harmony, until they were parted like the two prophets Elijah and Elisha, by the ascension of one to his reward and joy, in the month of January, 1850.

Almost forty years have passed since Dr. Alexander came to Princeton. In the calmness of his well balanced mind, and the beauty of a character more symmetrically developed than we often are permitted to look on, he there spent the noon and autumn of his life, in the bosom of his family, and surrounded by the young men who regarded him always as their father and personal friend.

A few months ago he told us in private con-

versation that he was doing the same amount of labor in the Seminary, and in his study, that he had always done. The weight of eighty years he bore with his harness on, and when the Master came he was found "so doing."

How did he die? He died as he lived. Until about five weeks ago, he continued to perform full duty in the Seminary, and to maintain his usual amount of labor in the study. Old age had long been on him. The three score years and ten were numbered, and by reason of strength they were even four score. "But his bow abode in strength."

He was attacked with dysentery, which had been prevailing to some extent in that region, and the fears of his many friends were at once awakened that the blow would be fatal. Ripe fruit falls readily, when smitten, and he was like a shock of corn fully ripe. He continued to sink gradually, conscious that his days were numbered, and that the time of his departure was at hand. One son (the Rev. J. W. A.) was upon the ocean, and the father earnestly desired that he might see him ere he died. The desire was granted, and more, for the son returned just one week before the father fell asleep.

Calling to his bedside the Professor, on whom his mantle falls, he gave him the most minute expression of his views respecting the interests of the Seminary, dearer to him in death than in life, and having committed it to him who is the head over all things for the Church, he was ready to depart.

Into the scenes of domestic sorrow it is not our design to intrude. But it is right to say that the grief of those dearest to him was calmed when they sat by the bedside of the dying saint, and saw the serenity of perfect peace reposing in his eye.

He called the pastor of the church in Princeton to his chamber, and gave him his parting counsel, with assurance of his strong affection, sent messages of love to his family, and then bade him receive his blessing. The young man knelt by the couch, and the patriarch laid his trembling hands upon his head, and lifted up his voice and prayed for the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob to bless him with the richest of heaven's grace.

By a remarkable, but deeply interesting direction of divine Providence, the Synod of New Jersey one year ago, adjourned to meet in Princeton on the Third Tuesday in October, 1851. It came, and it was the day before the one upon which their venerable father expired. He was looking forward to their meeting with great pleasure, and a few days before, with a power of memory rare, perhaps unparalleled, in perfect health, he repeated over the names of one hundred and fifteen of the ministers of that body who had been his pupils! A sweet thought to each of them that they were thus recalled in the dying hours and prayers of one they so revered. His memory of his pupils has always been remarked as extraordinary. He had a distinct recollection of each one of them, their location and progress, watching them in all their ways like as a father watcheth the children of his love.

"Death never appeared to me so delightful as now, when it is near," he said to those around him, and often as strength allowed, he spoke of the peace that dwelt in his soul. The records of these last hours will be precious to the Church, and they will be found to illustrate and confirm the experience he has written in his letters and sermons, as the fitting close to a life of faith.

The great THEOLOGIAN who had preached theology sixty years, who had taught theology to other preachers forty years, who was known in two hemispheres as one of the most learned and distinguished Professors of theology of the age, is now on his deathbed, and he made this observation in the hearing of his friends, and we are permitted to repeat it for the first time, but it will never be forgotten; it will be written and rewritten, and repeated a hundred years hence: it was a casual remark, but a transcript of the great

man's mind and heart; he said: "*All my theology is reduced to this narrow compass, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*"

For three days prior to his departure, the lamp of life was burning so low in the socket that he was able to converse but little, and few besides his immediate members of the family were permitted to go in to "the chamber where the good man met his fate, privileged" as it was "beyond the common walks of life, quite on the verge of heaven." Gradually, almost imperceptibly, the silver cord was loosed, and at six o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, October 22nd, 1851, the "wheel at the cistern" stood still. He fell asleep in Jesus; so peacefully, that the moment of his spirit's flight was scarcely to be detected by the anxious watcher's eye.

In February and March, 1844, I paid two visits to Princeton—the first in company with Principal Cunningham of the New College, Edinburgh; and on both occasions most of my time was spent in the house and in the class-room of the venerable Dr. Alexander. He was in perfect health. His sharp eye glistened brightly, and his attentive, pointed, knocky remarks on all subjects in conversation, lighted up and cheered inexpressibly the social circle. His portrait, as appended to the Philadelphia edition of his work on "Religious Experience," is to the life. I heard him lecture on Theology; and it so happened that the subject for the day turned on what to me was intensely interesting—the rise, character and effects of the "new Theology." In one lecture of moderate length, he put us in possession of all the leading features of the subject—discussing and analysing with exactness, order and effect—"redding the marches" between truth and error with most beautiful perspicuity—and vindicating God's cause and honor by the skillful application of the touch-stone of truth. An examination of the pupils on "imputed righteousness" was conducted by his colleague and successor, Dr. Charles Hodge, to whom reference is above made; while at another hour the venerable Dr. Miller conducted a catechetical prelection in conversational style on pulpit eloquence and the pastoral care. The Princeton Divines we found to be noble men.

Two sons of Dr. Alexander were with us; Dr. Joseph A., the learned and pious translator of Isaiah, and Dr. James W. A., then a Professor in the College of Princeton, and now pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Duane Street, New York. This last excellent minister was lately in Scotland, and I am sure that our friends there, in seeing him, and another respected friend, Dr. Murray, of Elizabethtown (Kirwan), have been brought into contact with two men who would be an honor to any church.

Till 1812, the President of Princeton College taught a class of Theology, and under Wither- spoon and his successors many of the American pastors were taught, and Bishops Hobart and Doane and Moore are a specimen of classes distinct from Presbyterian who breathed the classic air of Nassau Hall. In 1805 Dr. Green, then President of the College, along with Dr. Janeway and other fathers of the Church, drew out the plan of a distinct seminary for a full course of Theology, and the American Presbyterian Church wisely located it at Princeton, and thereby united