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The Church Guardian.

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"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."—Eph. vi. 24.
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

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THE EARTHQUAKE AT CHARLESTON, S. C.

The Venerable Rev. Dr. A. Toomer Porter, one of the leading clergy of Charleston, gives in the N. Y. *Churchman* of the 18th inst., a vivid description of the terrible results of this dire visitation. The Dr. with his family was at the time in his summer residence, Twin Mountain, near Asheville, N. C., where on the evening of 31st August, the earthquake was alarmingly felt. On receiving intelligence of the Charleston disaster he started for his home in that city, on Friday 3rd Sept., and on arriving there after a slow and exciting journey, owing to the state of the railway track, in consequence of the movement of the earth—he says:—

"I immediately came to the Porter Academy grounds, and then began to hear the awful details of the night and day before. My grounds eleven and one-quarter acres, were filled with extemporized tents, table cloths, sheets, and coverlets; while women and children, old and young, were sitting desolate, with beating, anxious hearts on the grass or on a mattress, nearly all taken from my dormitories. Nearly all were my own flock. Loved, familiar faces, but, oh, how sad! The first word I heard was that an invalid aged cousin of mine had been brought, at 11 o'clock Tuesday night, to the grounds without covering all night for her head. She had dined at my table with my mother and Aunt and niece on Wednesday, but this Friday night was lying insensible, in a small wooden house on the grounds. She died that night, aged 80. I buried her on Saturday. My own aged and infirm mother, 84, was taken out of bed and shoeless and stockingless was brought out on the wet grass, placed in a chair, wrapped up and sat there all the night with hundreds of others. What will be the effect remains to be seen. It can be anticipated. My family had all returned for the day to the brick house where I live, and knowing I was coming, they waited to give me tea before going out on the grounds for the night, where some shelter had been extemporized as best they could. About 11.30 p.m. my niece exclaimed: "There, uncle, it is coming again!" The words were scarcely uttered when this large brick house swayed like a ship in a storm and then trembled from foundation to roof. The sound was as though each brick was grating against the other. It was blood curdling. The impulse was to run, but we all of course, staid and with great difficulty got my mother out of the house. A dear little great-grandson of hers, just seven, had dashed for the door but remembering his grandmother, ran back and took hold of a part of her dress to help get her out. This same little boy, the night before, had jumped out of bed in his room and ran to his grandmother and helped pull her out of bed, and would not leave though it took nearly ten minutes to get her down stairs and out of the house. We passed all night on the grounds. Having been up all of the night before, I threw myself on a pallet on the grass and slept till six. Painful remembrances of the days from 1861 to 1865. How different! Then it was man against man, strategy against strategy, force of either kind alike. Now an unseen

force—an almost infinite power—a something beneath us we could not see, nor meet, nor provide against,—helpless in the hands of the terrific energies of disorganized nature. All around me a quiet, patient crowd—no sound, no cry—the quiet agony of well bred people. In one tent—so called—a birth, in another a child desperately ill with croup, in another a paralytic, and so on poor humanity from extreme age to extreme infancy in all its manifoldness, all of us waiting as God was fit to order. The screeching and screaming of the negroes in so called prayer and song from all parts of the city, made the night hideous and sleep impossible to all, save those like myself physically exhausted.

Early in the morning I inspected first the building in the Arsenal or Porter Academy grounds. My own house, chimneys down, walls slightly cracked, plastering and mantle-piece down, book case tumbled over, and books scattered everywhere; Bishop Howe Hall, Bishop Davis Hall, Alumni and Hampton Hall, and Butler Hall perfectly intact, marvellous to say. But my hospital and gymnasium slightly injured, St. Timothy's Chapel, one entire wall so much settled and cracked, and the roof protruding so much that the building will have to come down. It cost me only three years ago \$8,000. This is a great blow, I trust in God and my fellow men that it will be rebuilt. I then went to the Church of the Holy Communion, the damage to that may be twenty-five hundred to three thousand dollars. Thirty-three years ago, I found that lot a corn-field, I built the church, I have been its rector all these years, a part of my life work. It would be as impossible now for my people to repair that church as it would be for them to build a road to the moon, but I have asked the vestry to have it thoroughly repaired at once, so that we may gather the people before the September rains and early fall weather disperse them. God has been too good to me to let me doubt that some will come to my help. Next my three story parish school room, alas that must come down to the foundation. That cost me \$12,000, the gift of Mrs G. A. Trenholm and Mr. Theo. D. Wagner, both in Paradise. Will the man who built at twenty-six be able to rebuild at fifty-nine? A working parish must have such a place. Then I visited the Caroline Wilkemann Home, named for my dear departed friend, the wife of the Bishop of Truro, England, a retreat for ladies—six or seven hundred dollars damage there. Then to the House of Rest, where some thirty orphan girls are sheltered, \$300 to \$400 there. Then I went to look at my own little private property, and it will cost some \$2,500 to put that in order again. Sad enough to an old man after a life's struggle creeping out of a war, and the desolation of a cyclone not yet overcome. But what have I not seen in that life-time—and mostly in this city—pestilence in the shape of yellow fever, again and again fire burning the best part of the city up. The sword and blood from bursting shells, building after building battered and torn, society convulsed and the bottom on top—extreme riches to absolute poverty. The cyclone in a half a moment thrusting as it were the city into ruins—and now the earthquake shaking down the best residences, nearly all

the public buildings—or so ruining them that the most of them must come down—I know of nothing else for me to meet. I have seen death in every conceivable manner, save famine, but I have been with a crowd for forty-eight hours without a morsel—in railroad smash ups, and steamship given up for lost, and never in all this a limb touched or a bruise received. While the heart and the mind has experienced every emotion that humanity is capable of, God has enabled me and many others to keep going on, and in His strength I am going on until he bids me come, where none of these things are.

From my last round I went to my other charge, St. Mark's colored church, which has had so eventful a history, and now occupies so peculiar a position in this diocese. Just one year and six days before it had been torn to pieces by the cyclone, and it has cost them \$4,500 to repair it. They have only gotten into it since the middle of April. They still owe \$2,100 on it, for which I have given my personal notes endorsed by their vestry, and which they were paying off every ninety days; but now with their own houses, many of them partially destroyed, with little or no work for them in prospect, how they are to meet these notes I know not. I feared to go—but now full of gratitude I am to God—not \$50 damages so far to it. It is one of the few churches comparatively untouched. Under all the circumstances, the coincidence is striking. After this I went through every street in the city, and as the papers have been so full, I will not repeat. Each additional jar has only developed damage where none was thought, and increased that which was first apparent—St. Philip's, St. Michael's, St. Paul's. It makes the heart sick to look at them. Unless the Church at large comes to their help they cannot be rebuilt for many a day, if ever in this generation. The congregations of these churches will have so much to carry themselves—the majority are homeless—that they will not be able to do it. St. Luke's I have not yet seen, but it is badly damaged I hear, and they, too, will have more than they can do to restore it. Grace church is damaged, though not very seriously, I learn. I do not like to prognosticate; it is bad enough and sad enough as it is, but, as said one of our most prominent physicians to me: "The old it will kill, and the young it will make old." The nervous tension upon all has been and is intense. for the sickening apprehensiveness makes the boldest timid, and connects any noises with the approach of the dreaded thing. The uncertainty in the presence of so much desolation, the exposure and discomfort at this, the most critical season of the year—if we escape much and fatal sickness, it will only be by the merciful overruling of Providence, who remembers whereof we are made. The future is dark, indeed. The spontaneous munificence of the whole land will save us from present want; but where are those people to get the six millions of dollars, at a low estimate only, to rehabilitate themselves, and winter coming on, and they—eleven-twelfths of them—must meet their daily wants by daily labor? How are they to repair their homes?

Mr. J. Pierrepont Morgan has sent me a most munificent donation. I expended over \$1,000