

In Memoriam.

GEORGE PAXTON YOUNG.

In the midst of the general sorrow which has followed the death of Dr. Young, words can do little to express the real feeling of all those who have been in any way connected with him. It is useless to put in writing what all feel; the sorrow of all, professors and students, cannot be expressed on paper. It was no formal grief that moved that crowded company on Tuesday morning last; it was no conventional respect that hushed every heart as the President's voice, trembling with emotion, announced the sad news. The band of students that followed the funeral procession to the grave testified not alone their admiration for the brilliant scholar; they had assembled to honour, as much as the last poor tokens of respect can ever honour, the memory of one whose love of truth; whose clearness of view; above all, whose wide-hearted sympathy, had endeared him personally to each among them as earnest teacher; as trusted guide; as loving friend.

Gifts such as his are rare. In any department of study he would have shown himself the peer of its most distinguished exponents. Unequaled as a teacher, he might have filled almost any chair in the college to which he might have been called, with credit to himself and with honour to the University. The range of his scholarship was marvellous: marvellous no less was the retiring, gentle nature of so great a man. For he was great; great in mind, great in those qualities of heart which constitute the truest nobility of manhood. We cannot speak of him too highly. When we heard of his victories—and brilliant victories they were—in the field of that study in which, perhaps, America best knew him, we rejoiced; and we felt that we had among us a man of whom we might indeed be proud. When we heard him—those of us whom fortune had placed under his teaching—dealing with philosophical difficulties; encouraging the bright among us; aiding with kindly words the less highly favoured; showing in all his clearness of vision; his firmness of grasp; above all, his intense love for that living truth in pursuit of which he spent his life, we admired, and mingled wonder with our admiration. But, after all, we felt that our appreciation of him did not rest alone on that; we loved and admired not so much the scholar as the man.

Perhaps no man has exercised, or will continue to exercise, so great an influence as he upon the minds and consciences of men in Ontario. Out from our College halls have gone hundreds whose lives have been influenced for all time by the power of his kindly, truth-loving nature. The loss—how great a loss!—is not to his classes alone; it is a loss to us of all classes and of all years; a loss to the whole student-body of graduates and undergraduates, and through them to the Province—to the Dominion. For no man could leave these halls uninfluenced for good by him for whose death each student now mourns as for that of a dear and intimate friend.

So we of other courses may unite in heartfelt sorrow with those, his students, upon whom the unexpected blow will fall most heavily. To those of his own blood, who feel the sudden grief as peculiarly their own, we, who too have known his worth, extend our deep and respectful sympathy. While we mourn the loss to ourselves and to our College, we cannot but be grateful for what in the course of a long and busy and useful life he has been permitted to accomplish; in the midst of our sorrow for his death, we cannot but thank God for such a life.

We are indebted to the President, Sir Daniel Wilson, for the accompanying outline of the career of an intimate friend and earnest fellow-worker; others, too, who had more than common opportunities of learning to know and honour him, have added their words of high esteem and of unfeigned sorrow.

HIS LIFE AND WORK.

The death of Professor George Paxton Young deprives the University of Toronto of one of its most gifted teachers; and his colleagues in the University of one who commanded the esteem and confidence of all. To the President, Sir Daniel Wilson, it must now be a singularly gratifying, yet tender memorial of the long and intimate relations that had subsisted between them, that in his very last public utterance, given forth a very few days only before the fatal shock that brought his life to an end, he referred to "the unbroken friendship of more than thirty years' standing which had existed between them."

Professor Young was the son of a clergyman of the Presbyterian Church; and was born at Berwick-on-Tweed in the year 1819. He early manifested a studious disposition, and great aptitude for very diverse branches of learning. His later course of preparatory studies before entering the University of Edinburgh was pursued at the High School there. He referred more than once, with manifest pleasure, in recent years, to a gathering of old school and college-mates which took place in Toronto, at the house of Dr. Wilson, in 1870. An unexpected coincidence of travellers on a visit to Canada brought together Sir Andrew Ramsay, the head of the Geological Survey of Great Britain; Alexander Sprunt, British Consul, North Carolina; William Nelson, the eminent Scottish publisher; and with them the Hon. George Brown; the Hon. David Christie, Speaker of the Senate; Professor Young; and Dr. Wilson. Our own university men are only now entering heartily into the spirit of university life, with its true *esprit de corps*, and are forming themselves into class societies of their graduating years. Here was a meeting of old school-mates gathering after more than a quarter of a century, from both sides of the Atlantic, to live again, once moreover, those happy student years. It was a meeting of old friends and rivals. William Nelson passed from the High School as its classical gold medalist, to contend with George Paxton Young, at the University, for pre-eminence as a classical student, under the guidance of Professor Pillans, an eminent Etonian, who is described, in Sir Alexander Grant's History of the University, in words that would apply with equal fitness to his old pupil, as "a born teacher." In the Humanity Class, as in Scottish University parlance it is called, the future professor of Metaphysics distinguished himself, especially in Latin prose composition, in which his most successful rival was William Nelson. The retiring modesty, and the instinctive distaste for all public display, which so eminently characterized Professor Young, prevented any but his most intimate friends knowing the varied range of his tastes and studies. His sympathies in these respects had, indeed, very definite limitations; and he frankly avowed his utter indifference to some of the favourite pursuits of his friends and colleagues. He had a quiet sense of humour which at times found play in his undisguised indication of the unattractive elements of the studies he repudiated. Nevertheless, his intellectual sympathies were large; and he sometimes surprised those who had fancied him the mere metaphysician, by the evidence of his critical appreciation of the poets, and his taste in Belles Lettres.

But it is as the teacher of Philosophy, and the singularly popular and attractive lecturer in the Chair of Metaphysics and Ethics, that he will be long held in remembrance among those who year by year have crowded his lecture room in University College. His style of teaching was alike peculiar and effective. He took under review the system of some leader of thought; or the work which aimed at its interpretation. He assumed for the time the position of advocate, maintaining his cause against all objectors; and anticipating the arguments by which the thoughtful student might be supposed to challenge the text. Having thus thoroughly cleared the way, by the overthrow of all unsound criticism, and enabled the student to master the views of the author in question; he then, with trenchant critical acumen, exposed any weak point in the system; and turned to ridicule the fallacies on which every false reasoning was based. His training for this important department of academic instruction had been peculiar; for it was as a theologian that he first encountered the fallacies of metaphysical speculation, and dealt with the essential principles on which Ethics must be based. He was trained in the Scottish school of metaphysics; but the principles taught