

OBITUARY  
5-21-1909

JULIA D. BRAINERD.

Julia D. Brainerd was born in Londberry, New Hampshire, November 24, 1843. In her early childhood the family home was transferred to Halifax, Massachusetts, not far from Plymouth, where they lived for about twelve years. Her education was at an academy in Meriden, New Hampshire, and later at Mount Holyoke Seminary, South Hadley, Massachusetts. Her health did not permit her to complete the course here, but later, like many other students of that school, she entered the profession of teaching. She followed this vocation in New England and later in Colorado, until 1876, when she joined her family who in 1866 had moved to Grinnell, and from that time her home was here.

Miss Brainerd's life was largely devoted to the work of the Woman's Board of Missions. There is a devotion in the lives and service of those who stay at home and sustain the work abroad no less truly "missionary" than that of those who are able to go and carry the blessings of Christian civilization to other nations. The one could not be without the other, and it is sometimes a greater sacrifice of personal desires to stay than to go. In this service her life was brought into vital touch with the greatest, most heroic movement of modern times; and her gentle courage and consecrated common sense made themselves felt for good, all around the world. A special phase of this activity was her connection with the "Busy Bees," an organization of children for education and service in support of foreign missionary work. Miss Brainerd served with this organization, first in association with Mrs. Magoun, and later in entire charge, for more than twenty years. A whole generation of young people have thus felt the impulse of her example and received the advantages of her teaching in this society.

But Miss Brainerd was not one of those perhaps mythical persons, who are supposed to sacrifice immediate interests and home claims to that which is far away. She was a minister of help and cheer in the home, in the social circle, to all her friends. She was

"A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food," to use Wordsworth's words. Or even more perfectly is she described in Lowell's lines:

"She doeth little kindnesses  
Which most leave undone, or despise:  
For naught that sets one heart at ease  
Is low esteemed in her eyes."

Throughout her life, and increasingly in recent years, her work was done under the handicap of bodily weakness and suffering. When she fell asleep, in the night, Saturday, May 15, 1909, her friends could not but give thanks for the rest and peace into which she had entered, even while they "sorrowed because they should see her face no more."