

8-19- IN MEMORIAM, 1892

Died, in this city, at the residence of her son-in-law, R. M. Haines, on Wednesday, August 17th, 1892, Mrs. Mary A. Harris, aged eighty-six years, eight months and seven days. Her funeral was attended from her late residence on Thursday, the 18th, at four o'clock P. M., the services being conducted by Dr. T. O. Douglass, assisted by Rev. Thomas Blando.

The deceased was the daughter of Judge Thomas McKee, and was born at Clintonville, Venango county, Penn., on the 10th of December, 1805. She came of a long-lived family and inherited an excellent constitution. On Sept. 14th, 1826, she was married to James Harris, Harrisville, Penn., and settled on the family homestead at the latter place. Ten children were born of this marriage, five sons and five daughters, all of whom survive her, excepting her second son who died a few years ago in California. Four of her daughters and two of her sons were present at her death. Those not present were a son and a daughter who reside in California, and another who resides in Denver, Colorado.

In 1852 she removed with her husband and family to Warren, Lee county, Va., and in the spring of 1855 they removed to Grinnell and settled on a small farm northwest of the city. When the war broke out one of the sons had already removed to California. Three of the other sons entered the army and served for four years. Later her husband, who was nearly sixty years old, enlisted in the Gray beard Regiment and served for three years in the company of Captain Lamb, of Newton. While her husband and sons were in the army a part of the time, the three wives of the three sons made their home with her on the farm, the farm being carried on and managed by the youngest son. Her husband and sons all returned at the end of the war, but some of them with health greatly

H
impaired. In October, 1870, Mr. and Mrs. Harris came to reside in this city, with their married daughter, Mrs. R. M. Haines, where, in January, 1872, Mr. Harris died, and when up to the day of her death Mrs. Harris continued to make her home.

Mrs. Harris was a woman of unusual strength of character and well-balanced mind. She despised shame, but was very kind to the poor and unfortunate. Her sympathy was not shown in tears or words only, but in deeds. She believed in good works, and was energetic and persistent in carrying out what she undertook. She was one of the most unselfish of persons and most thoughtful of the comfort of others. Though a

great sufferer for many years, she never spoke of her own suffering, unless in response to enquiries from others. Her sympathy went out especially to the oppressed, and she and her husband were of those who early opposed slavery and were outspoken against it at a time and under circumstances when to be so cost more than it did later. She became a Christian early in life and united with the Presbyterian church. After their removal to Grinnell, she and her husband, for a time, were members of the church at Wittenburg in Jasper county, but later they united with the Congregational church of this city, of which she continued a consistent member until her death.

Mrs. Harris retained her faculties to a remarkable degree. She read with interest and eagerness the daily paper so long as she could sit up, and then asked others to read to her. She read with great interest of the progress of Christianity in the world and especially of missionary enterprises. On the last Sunday of her life, when she could with the greatest difficulty make herself understood and when she could not see to recognize her children, she asked to have the columns of her religious paper treating of missions read to her. When this was done and she was asked whether she understood it, she replied by signs that she did.

If true religion consists of trust and unselfish service, she certainly had it. In a meeting of the church some three years ago for testimony, she was not able to be present, but sent her testimony in writing saying: "He has led me and taught me to look upwards for strength and happiness, and he will lead me to my journey's end," quoting also the scripture, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Very near her last, when she could only speak in a whisper, she charged her son in law to see that her usual contribution for the support of the church for the current year was paid. She spoke freely of her death and longed to go, but bore her sickness so patiently as almost to surprise those who had known how patient she always had been, no weakness or pain surprising her into expression of discontent or impatience. For the greater part of the last twenty years she has been unable to be much from home. She was greatly loved by the circle of friends who knew her well, and she has left a fragrant memory. Her children and her children's children rise up and call her blessed. She leaves surviving her nine children, 11 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren, making 81 of her descendants, all still living.