

Chapter 1 : Memoir of Rufus Ellis

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Memoir of the Hon. Samuel Howe, by Rev. IT is the object of these pages to recommend a manly Christian life to young and active minds, to warm and earnest hearts, by presenting a picture of a truly wise and good man, who found great joy and much success in pursuing such a life as an end. An example is the best of arguments. No other plea can be so eloquent as that of a great moral achievement; it makes virtue real, it rescues goodness from the dream-regions of theory, and gives to truth a habitation upon our solid earth. And although the example of Christ is of infinite value, we need besides the quickening influence of lives purely human, - of lives of men wholly like ourselves, -of men who wrought no miracles, and who were joined to God only as we are joined to him. If those who shall read these pages are not quickened by the story inscribed Twenty-one years have elapsed since the Hon. Samuel Howe, one of the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas for Massachusetts, was taken from us by the hand of death. His loss was widely and deeply felt, not only by the members of the profession which he honored and adorned, but by the community at large. The sad event called forth from every quarter eloquent and affectionate tributes to his memory, in which the high sense so generally entertained of his singular worth was fitly expressed. And he has not been forgotten. The name of such a man does not soon cease from human lips. The many who knew him well, the many who were made wiser and better through his influence, still speak with unfeigned sorrow of our loss, and feel that we are all the poorer because he was taken. He did not live, neither did he die, unto himself. But the story of his life has never been put within the reach of all who might be profited by it. It has not been told to the children who have come on to the stage since he left it. We who were born into the views of religious truth which he laboriously sought, and found with so much joy, have not all heard of his spiritual experience of what was to him a happy emancipation. And in a world so full of evil, goodness should be saved, like treasure, not indeed to be hoarded, but to be scattered far and wide. Let the just live in blessed remembrance. Estes Howe, of Belchertown, Massachusetts, and was born on the 20th day of June, The maiden name of his mother was Susan Dwight. Howe was a surgeon in the army of the Revolution; he was an exceedingly laborious man in an exceedingly laborious sphere of duty, and though he did not become rich, he acquired enough for the suitable education of his children, and for his own support in the time of old age. The fruits of his labor were cheerfully bestowed upon his children, and he was especially desirous to secure for them that liberal culture, the want of which he himself sorely felt. Howe was called to part with his wife. She died of consumption at West Springfield, on her return from New Haven, whither she had journeyed in the hope of regaining her health. For ten years the children were motherless and the household desolate. After the expiration of this time, Dr. Howe was again married; but as the second wife was already the mother of eight children, the domestic privileges of his family were not much increased. There was another pressure, which could not have been light upon a mind like that of young Howe. We mean the want of books. It is hard for us, in our day, suffering as most of us do from the opposite evil, to realize what a want this was. There were then no institutes or lyceums, with their collections of books; no social, and scarcely a private, library could be found. He repeatedly rode miles to borrow a book, and the loan of Robinson Crusoe and of The Fool of Quality from a kind friend in Amherst was always gratefully remembered. The use which was made of books, when they were so hard to be obtained, may help the young student to employ them aright now that they so abound. There is an unspeakable advantage in the thorough and oft-repeated perusal of a standard work, well selected for some specific purpose. In process of time, a book so read becomes almost literally our own. We could almost construct such a one ourselves. The appetite for intellectual food is kept very keen by the constant exercise to which the mind is subjected, and the little nourishment that can be obtained is well digested. Some of the hardiest intellects that the world has ever known have been nurtured under such circumstances. The public school of Belchertown afforded very tolerable instruction during the winter, but in the summer it was necessary for the young student to go elsewhere. One of these summers was passed by young Howe with a private teacher at

Palmer, another at the New Salem Academy, and two or three others at Deerfield, which has long enjoyed a well-endowed institution of learning. The beautiful scenery and simple village life of Deerfield made a deep impression upon him. It is indeed a sweet spot, its hospitable trees welcoming to their cool shade the weary traveller, while his eyes are refreshed by the deep, rich, outspreading meadow, here green with herbage and there golden with grain, a great park for the whole village, the pleasant stream which takes its name from the town glistening here and there through the foliage. He joined the Sophomore class of that institution when sixteen years of age, carrying with him correct moral principles, a vigorous, healthy mind, and an ardent love of learning. The fondness for exact thought, by which in after life he was so much distinguished, had already appeared in his love of the mathematics. What is only a stumbling-block to so many, was for him a stepping-stone to truth. Of his college life we have only scanty memorials; and although there is abundant evidence of his character and scholarship, it would seem that much of the benefit which ought to have accrued to him from his position as a scholar was neutralized by mismanagement, to use no harsher word, on the part of the college government. It is pleasant to find the following record of the impression made by Mr. Howe at this time upon one whose fine and well-directed gifts have secured for her a wide reputation at home and abroad. She writes, - "My acquaintance with and friendship for Mr. Howe began in my childhood. He was as a young man distinguished for truth, integrity, unaffectedness, and simplicity. I remember that my desire for improvement was greatly stimulated by my intercourse with him, and once, when he drove from our door, going to the book-case and taking down the first volume of a heavy history, with the earnest purpose to deserve better his esteem. Howe, with characteristic promptness, entered the law office of Jabez Upham, Esq. Leaving this situation at the expiration of a year, he went, in October, , to Litchfield, and connected himself with the law school at that place, which then so justly attracted attention under the auspices of Chief-Justice Reeves and Judge Gould. It was a very happy step. The law school was filled with hard-working students, who maintained a high standard of scholarship, and earnestly seconded in every way the efforts of accomplished and devoted instructors. He writes on the 21st of June, , as follows: The horse carried me extremely well, and will, I believe, answer my purpose much better than the one I left; yet I cannot but regret the inconveniences you will suffer in consequence of it. Indeed, Sir, when I reflect upon what you have done, and the sacrifices you are every day making to increase the means of my enjoyment, to make me respectable and happy, my heart swells with gratitude, and I find myself unable to express to you what I feel upon the subject. I hope by a long course of duty to convince you that I am not guilty of the sin of ingratitude. I ought to be peculiarly grateful to you, for I devolved upon you in my infancy, and have required your continued attentions ever since. Yesterday completed my twenty-first year. On such an occasion as this what ought to be my reflections! By parental assistance, I have been enabled to enjoy many of the pleasures of life, and have had an opportunity to lay a foundation for future usefulness. But above all, I have been enabled, by your precepts and your example, to imbibe correct notions of religion and of morality; you have taught me the vanity of the pursuits of this world, in competition with an interest in our Lord and Saviour. Howe could remain only a year in Connecticut; and at the expiration of this time, in the autumn of , he removed to Stockbridge, and gained admission into the office, the library, and the family of Judge Sedgwick, who kindly presented him with his tuition. The last year of preparation for his profession was passed under these highly propitious circumstances, and many rich opportunities were afforded him for storing his mind with much that lay beyond the immediate circle of his pursuits. It was a season of pure and profitable pleasure. In August of the following year, Mr. Howe was admitted to the bar. He had passed through the time of preparation with singular fidelity and success. I was then struck with the simplicity and strength of his character, his frankness, zeal, and ardor, his kind and benevolent feelings, the manly independence of his mind; and I marked him as one of the promising young men of the profession. Howe commenced business at Stockbridge. He had been engaged for a little more than a year to Miss Susan Tracy, daughter of General Tracy, Senator from the State of Connecticut, and the death of this gentleman at Washington having produced an unfavorable change in the circumstances of his family, an immediate marriage was decided upon. In February of the year , a removal from Stockbridge to Worthington seemed desirable, and was carried out. It is still a long way off from any of our cities, and the way was longer far at that time, when the stage-coach and the saddle were the dependence of the traveller. It

was a quiet place for a man of great promise to seek; but books could be conveyed there, and leisure could be secured for reading them, and a home could be established which would be all the more prized for occasional difficulties of access. Indeed, the situation afforded a fine opportunity for that continued and systematic intellectual labor which Mr. Howe so much coveted and prized. The years of his residence at Worthington were years of hard mental toil. No moment was lost. Nobody could say that he was becoming rusty. His position did not demand much effort, but his mind could not rest. The inward impulse made outward stimulus unnecessary. He read, he conversed, he reflected, and the whole family could not choose but catch the spirit, and read, conversed, and reflected with him. The time that was not given to his profession was quickly absorbed by general studies and by social duties, which were always cheerfully and thoroughly performed. Students of law repaired to Worthington for instruction, and lived in Mr. Howe did not deny himself to his family, or grudgingly give them a little of his time. To his household and to his friends he devoted through life a large portion of his valuable hours as their due, maintaining with the absent a frequent and regular correspondence, and sharing with the family circle, so far as practicable, his intellectual enjoyments. He writes, -" We shall not be inclined to complain of solitude while we can enjoy together the society of Shakspeare and Milton and Johnson and Burke. A little outward variety was secured by occasional journeys, one of which extended into Canada. A journey at that day was an event. These long journeys were often fatiguing enough, and weary indeed must have been the days and weeks which the traveller to some scene of affliction must spend upon the heavy road. And yet there is a vast deal which attracts one in the way of life now become obsolete through the rapid changes of these last few years. As is always the case, we know little about it save what is pleasant. The steam-ship and the locomotive are highly poetical, and their mad speed harmonizes well with the hurry of our times; but all our pleasant images cluster about the good bark with snowy sails, and the fleet horse, whose shoes, like those of the animal ridden by the fugitive Charles Stuart, had been set, as the stanch Puritan smith discovered, in four several counties! Howe entered at once into a comfortable livelihood, and saw no reason to regret his early marriage.

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Chapter 3 : Who is George Ware?

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Chapter 4 : George Edward Ellis - Wikipedia

Letters from Mr. Ellis which she had saved. Letters to the late Dr. Diman, of Providence, which were received through the kindness of Mrs. Diman, are quite noteworthy. The late James Russell Lowell sent a few words, which are of much interest as a tribute from a col lege classmate. Miss Maria G.

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