

In Memoriam.

ISAAC H. BROMLEY.

Isaac Hill Bromley died at Backus Hospital, Norwich, Conn., on August 11, of neuritis, after an illness of 16 weeks. He was 65 years old.

It was an unusual scene, on a mid-summer afternoon, when Isaac Bromley was laid to rest in the burying ground at Norwich. He was born in that beautiful city on the Thames, and, while his busy life had taken him far away from his birthplace, and the companions of his boyhood, he went back there at last, to the hill which overlooked the cemetery, to watch for a few weeks the green fields of his childhood. The officiating clergyman was a Yale man, friend of Bromley, and brother of one of his distinguished classmates. The honorary bearers were six of his classmates, who met him on the College Green almost fifty years before. Two of them were Norwich

of the Democratic National Convention of 1860, he used as a contribution to the "Lotos Club" book. His reports of political conventions were most entertaining and absolutely *sui generis*.

In his college career, Bromley was the wit of the Class. It is a pity that so many clever things, done by undergraduates, are lost in the echoes of their voices. Bromley was the life and soul of the Class "Wooden Spoon" exhibition, but his clever sayings and droll appearance upon the stage are only a memory, and a memory of only a few. In College he preferred sociality and conviviality to the routine of study, but his failure to improve his College opportunities for classical study was afterwards made up. None who have heard his verses at Yale dinners can doubt for a moment that he was a wide student of classical learning. He was an intense lover of Yale. He loved Yale for her educational usefulness, for her athletic triumphs, and more than all for her manly sociality.

As an orator Bromley was quiet and conversational, but never failed to make effective points in fitting phrase. His talk at the Bob Cook dinners—if I am right in my memory of the occasion—upon the "girls in blue" was a gem. His speech at the New England Society dinner, some twelve years ago, in which, among other striking things, he pronounced the epigram that "while Connecticut was making history, Massachusetts was writing it," was the hit of the evening. His address at the dedication of the statue of Capt. John Mason is one of the historical treasures of the State.

We have said that his wit was his own. If the definitions are accurate, he was witty rather than humorous. While full of anecdote, he had no ambition to be a professional story-teller. He probably never told a long story in his life, or one that called for much action. But his wit was larger than anecdote, it was put in play by his creative faculties rather than by his memory. Should his literary efforts be preserved in a volume, he will be long remembered as a forcible, brilliant, and exceptionally witty writer; but, while his companions live, he will be remembered in a more tender way by the several circles of friends in whose fellowship his conversation was conspicuous and sparkling, and no circle will more keenly mourn his loss than the surviving associates of his intimate friendship who, for nearly a half century, were bound to him by the strong ties of Yale love and Class affection.

HENRY C. ROBINSON.

Below are printed in whole or part the tributes to which Mr. Robinson refers in the sketch which he prepared for the WEEKLY.

From Fellow Editors.

[From the New York Tribune.]

boys: One has reached the highest rank as a soldier, and the other the highest degree in the world of letters, but both of them were always "Ned" to "Brom," as they still are to those of us who yet greet them. Witnessing the coffin as it descended to Mother Earth, burdened with its wreaths of flowers, were many strong men, eminent in journalism and public life. The tribute was a sincere and impressive one.

Mr. Bromley's life was one of varied activity and usefulness. Beginning as a lawyer, he was soon chosen to the clerkship of both the Connecticut Houses of legislation, and in 1858 entered upon his career as an editor. He was interrupted in his business by a call to the war, in which he won honorable distinction. At the close of the war, he returned to the profession of his choice, and continued in it to the time of his death, excepting for the short time when he was employed as confidential clerk to the Hon. Charles Francis Adams, in the management of the Union Pacific Railroad Company.

It was as an editor that he reached the extreme of his usefulness. The discriminating notices which have appeared in the press have been justly eulogistic of his professional attainments. The masterly obituary estimate of him in the editorial columns of the *New York Tribune*, written by a distinguished associate of Mr. Bromley in that journal, and the tender and graceful tribute to him by the genial and accomplished editor of the *New Haven Register*, and the graphic portrait of him from the brilliant pen of the principal editor of the *Hartford Courant*, and the graceful verses of Mr. Winter, another associate editor, are memorials which would reflect honor upon any American editor.

As a writer, his style was peculiarly his own. He was a master of wit and its kindred quality, pathos. His keen perceptions of men and things fitted him for the composition of leading editorials in leading journals. He had no hesitation in using the colloquial style, even when it carried him into language which ultra fastidiousness might call slang. He was relentless in his attack upon shams, but seldom failed to charm his readers with bits of honest and sweet sentiment. His striking series of articles upon the reconstruction of the Union Pacific Railroad Company elicited the admiration of the business world. His interesting sketch

The death of Isaac H. Bromley after a long and painful illness, from which even in its earlier stages he had no confident expectation of recovery, but which he bore with cheerful composure, will deeply afflict a large circle of faithful friends and bring to a multitude of admirers who never saw him a sense of personal grief. We do not need to say, and yet there is a mournful satisfaction in saying, that to his comrades on the staff of this paper the loss seems irreparable. He came to the *Tribune* more than a quarter of a century ago, and as an editorial writer at once confirmed beyond dispute the reputation for humor of a unique quality which he kept unimpaired until his death. After a service of nearly fifteen years he was attracted to a different field and kind of activity, but after a four years' absence he returned to us in 1891, and no one who has been familiar with his work during this later period can doubt that in variety and force and felicity it has equalled, if it has not surpassed, the productions which established his repute. He came back to find that most of his former companions were gone, but it is significant of the sweetness of his nature and the hospitality of his mind that he was eager to develop intimacies out of the mere acquaintanceships of bygone years, to be the comrade of all his colleagues, to encourage aptness for every department of newspaper work, including that which was peculiarly his own, and to reward the efforts of the novice with a veteran's praise.

We have described Mr. Bromley as a humorist, but the designation is vague and somewhat misleading. He had extraordinary resources for the production of amusement, but he was rarely satisfied merely to make his readers laugh. His purpose was to make them think. The treatment was very often fantastic, but the substance was clear common-sense. He had a remarkable faculty for detecting the essential inanity which may be hidden in a plausible proposition and the selfishness which often masquerades as generosity, as well as the useful purpose which does not know how to declare itself. But while he has dissected a thousand pretences he was not unmerciful to the pretenders. Those who had good reasons to know that they were his victims seldom or never cherished the least resentment against him on that account. There was no bitterness in his own heart, and therefore there was no venom in the wounds which he inflicted.

Mr. Bromley was not only unique in the quality of his humor, as is proved by the fact that, though the great bulk of his work was anonymous, it nevertheless made his name familiar in every part of the country, but he was exceptional in the manner of its production. Fun is often, perhaps usually, laborious. Mr. Bromley, when he had found a topic that attracted him, wrote with great facility and with hearty enjoyment of the process. His copy was not plain to strangers, but it was singularly free from evidences of effort, and often as many as a thousand words followed each other without an erasure or need of any subsequent correction. This was one of many proofs, familiar to all who knew him, of the clearness of his mind, as well as of the positiveness of his opinions. And this leads us to say that in his later life, with more extended observation of affairs and a wider reading of history, Mr. Bromley's understanding had been strengthened and his judgment refined, so that he was frequently drawn to the strictly serious discussion of questions which in earlier years would have been less likely to engage his interest and attention. This mental and spiritual growth was obvious to all who knew him, and its manifestations are now among their grateful and consoling recollections. He has entered into the peace for which those who loved him are sure that he has longed, and his memory is dear and delightful.

[From the New Haven Register.]

We have known few men like this one. We never knew one better. The world found out the power there was in his pen, which flashed wit and satire to-day and dipped itself to-morrow in the liquid of profound thought. The world did not know the tenderness and sweetness of his real temperament, which like a shy girl he concealed from it. He was frequently satirical and sharp when his heart was bursting with its plenty of loving kindness. He was uniformly courteous, though a man of moods. There was no bitterness in his

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