

days Lincoln and this district went to sleep every night on the edge of irretrievable ruin. The precipice was still there in the morning and the situation was the same because a few men kept watch by day and by night. Without Mr. C. E. Perkin's money and willingness to sacrifice himself, Mr. Harwood's devotion would have been fruitless. And to Mr. Perkins the city owes a debt of gratitude which has never been acknowledged.

In the Harwood memorial service which was offered last Sunday, at All Souls Church, Dr. Marsh, Mr. Tuttle, Mr. H. W. Brown, Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Henry E. Lewis acknowledged the beauty, strength and heroic devotion of Mr. Harwood's character. Mr. Lewis' appreciation is printed here-with:

"I speak here today of Nathan S. Harwood because for many years he has been my warm and steadfast friend. From my first acquaintance with him I was greatly attracted by many qualities, one of the most striking of which was his kindly, genial nature. His judgments of men were neither hasty nor severe, but deliberate and generous. He seemed to me a lover of mankind. He had a bountiful fund of good will toward men. His nature was essentially sweet and wholesome and he was grieved rather than embittered by the baseness of ingratitude of others. His love of man was shown in a general way by his public spirit which was never lacking. There was no enterprise undertaken in the city that had the good of its people at heart that did not receive his earnest support.

And at the base of all this was that element which we call character, an element or combination of elements that we all feel and recognize, but find it difficult to define. It was in him a subtle, latent power, larger and completer than anything he said or did, and in intimate acquaintance with him, one felt that anything he might attempt to do was well within his power. There was a dignity, a serenity and a poise in his bearing that could not fail to impress themselves on those who were in his presence, and whether he spoke or were silent, you readily recognized him as one who governs rather than one who serves.

Our estimates of men are apt to be superficial, capricious and vain, based as they are on the lesser essentials of being, but in the life that is beyond life I cannot doubt that there will be some divine administration of equity that will reverse the incongruities and inconsistencies and insufficiencies of human judgments, and that character will be as the balance weight that shall adjust the scales. Within the past few years it fell to Mr. Harwood's lot to be a leader in a great struggle, wherein but little of praise could come to the victor and immeasurable condemnation to the vanquished. He could have avoided it, but cowardice was not an element of his nature.

He gained a losing victory, he saved his city and state from infinite disaster, but he sacrificed his health and eventually his life in the effort. It was a brave fight but it left him wounded to death.

I honor him for it. I honor him no less than I would honor the gallant general who gives up his life on the battle field for a good cause. His city and his state owe him an enduring meed of gratitude.

In the gathering shadows of not unforeseen and impending death, he took up his daily walk with a serene gravity, a cheerful imperturbability that was admirable, but not the less

pathetic. He seemed to face death without fear and with as ready a will as did that noble servant of an ingrate royal master who on the scaffold said, 'I thank God that I am not afraid of death, but I do as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to my bed.' So Harwood died, a conspicuous example of courage and devotion.

I offer this small and unworthy tribute to the memory of a brave and courteous gentleman whom I esteem it a gracious privilege to have known and to have called my friend."

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Taxes and the Fire Department.

The four extra firemen asked for by the fire chief are doubtless needed but Mayor Winnett's veto was nevertheless commendable. Various plans of raising money for this and other necessities have been suggested. If the men who held or are holding county and city offices would but pay the personal taxes they have ignored for ten years or more these firemen might be hired and other improvements made that the city needs. There are over sixty thousand dollars on the city treasurer's books against men who, although not wealthy, enjoy the comforts of life and among them men who, periodically ask for the votes of the citizens of Lincoln in order that they may continue to make a living from the taxes paid by their neighbors and friends. If this sixty thousand dollars could be collected and if the city could be allowed to accept the sixty-five thousand dollars offered by the street car company the money would take us out of the slough into which we have been plunged by successive corrupt city administrations and extravagant councils, by the panic and by crop failures. The \$20,000 means more to us now than double the sum in five years.

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Mr. John Murray Forbes, Life and Recollections.

We had forgotten until this biography of Mr. Forbes how large an interest, and how large a share he had in the affairs of the civil war. His participation in the war was not that of an officer or of an official but as a trusted adviser of the different branches of the administration. He was a brilliant, sound financier. While still a penniless young man of only eighteen years he was sent to China ostensibly as a clerk in the firm of Russell & Co., but with private instructions from the head of the firm that he should be admitted to the firm if he proved competent. Mr. Houqua was the chief of the "Hong" or company which then managed all the foreign trade of China. This shrewd, honest old Chinese exporter immediately perceived the genius for finance possessed by this stripling of eighteen and gave him his entire confidence. Mr. Forbes says: "All his foreign letters, some of which were of almost national importance were banded me to read and to prepare such answers as he dictated, which after being dictated were usually signed and sent without alteration. It was his habit when he could not sell his tea or silks at satisfactory prices to ship them to Europe or America and before I was eighteen years old, it was not uncommon for him to order me to charter one or more entire ships at a time, and load them. The invoices were made out in my name, and the instructions as to sales and returns given just as if the shipments were my own property, and at one time I had as much as half a million dollars thus afloat, bringing me into close correspondence with

Baring Bros. & Co., and other great houses."

Mr. Forbes does not say so, but, I think the early recognition of his genius of good judgment, by men who were conducting the business of two continents, surprised him. He sailed for China a boy, who had been an obedient son, a faithful student, a conscientious clerk. After three years of responsibility he returned to America, twenty-one years old, a man of forty-five in confidence in his own powers, for his experience in China taught him the dynamic force of his own character and the instant respect men of years, wealth and position paid to it.

Soon after his return young Forbes was married and after about a month he returned to China. On arriving in China he found that he had been a partner in the firm of Russell & Co. since January First, 1834. He stayed in China three years and established connections and a correspondence with Baring Bros., and with European and Oriental bankers that he maintained throughout life.

Mr. Forbes' knowledge of ships and values was of great use to the country in the first years of the civil war, when he was commissioned by the secretary of war to buy ships for the navy. In 1863 he and Mr. Aspinwall were sent to England by the secretary of the navy Mr. Gideon Welles to buy ships and if possible dissuade England or convince her that it was impolitic to furnish the confederacy with the two rams she had contracted to deliver. From the beginning to the end of the war Mr. Forbes wrote letters of sound advice to Wm. E. Seward, to Governor Andrews, to the members of President Lincoln's cabinet, to the President himself, to senators and representatives, to editors of New York papers, to every man who had a hand on the rudder.

And there is convincing evidence that these letters were not the idle thoughts of an idle fellow but distillations of wisdom from a life of intense activity lived by a gifted man of rare judgment. His letters were the inspiration of many acts of the administration. He gave his son, his time, and large donations of money to his country. He was a true, constant patriot.

In 1884, disgusted with bossism and the spoils system, which neither his remonstrances, nor his influence affected he retired from politics, and thereafter voted for the best man, irrespective of party.

At his summer home on Naushon island he gathered about him all his friends. Among them were writers, statesmen, everybody who was creatively great and who recognized in Mr. Forbes an equal. Mr. Emerson said of him: "How little this man suspects, with his sympathy for men, and his respect for lettered and scientific people, that he is not likely in any company to meet a man superior to himself. And I think this is a good country, to bear such a creature as he is."

The Letters and Recollections are edited by Mr. Forbes' daughter, Mrs. Sarah Forbes Hughes. In obliterating herself and presenting this truly great man as he was in the light of day Mrs. Hughes has written the biography of a decade. I know of no other in which the style is so transparent, so unobtrusive, so convincing. Mrs. Hughes' work is so effortless. In this respect it is even better than the admirable life of Lord Tennyson, by his son, and it has more color. Everyone who has begun to suspect that life is not worth living should read this life of a man who was never strong, who was born comparatively

poor, yet by force of will, pure goodness of heart and love of his kind shed happiness and blessing wherever he went. He was never satisfied unless he was giving to, or sharing something with somebody.

His direction of the C. B. & Q. railroad was so successful that it is often quoted as the only railroad company in which New Englanders consider it is perfectly safe to invest the inheritance of minor heirs. To Mr. Forbes' insistence upon the application of his own principles in the development of the system, its present prosperity is largely due. He served as a director of the road from 1857 to 1898. He was president of the company from 1878 to 1881, when he was succeeded by his cousin, Mr. Chas. Elliot Perkins.

LINCOLN, NEBR., Jan. 18, 1900.

Our attention being called to a proposition of locating the new city library at the intersection of Eleventh and J streets, the location seems to us most admirable, being the highest elevation in the city. A building erected there would receive such prominence as no other locality could possibly furnish, and would be a credit to the city, state and to Mr. Carnegie, the donor, ranking in prominence with the state capitol and the state university: being located between the two, central and convenient to all parts of the city.

F. M. HALL,
E. E. BROWN,
A. W. FIELD,
E. P. HOLMES,
L. W. BILLINGSLEY,
SAM'L J. TUTTLE,
A. E. HARVEY,
N. C. ABBOTT,
JOHN B. WRIGHT,
JOHN T. DORGAN.

LINCOLN, NEBR., January 18, 1900.

Editor Courier: The suggestion to locate the city library building at the intersection of J and Eleventh streets, each one hundred and twenty feet wide, has much to commend it. It would be a very sightly location. It would be the best direct view of the capitol building, university and court house, and in close proximity to the business and affairs of two of these public institutions. While not remote, yet not in the immediate vicinity of the center of the business district, and relieved of the noise, dust and confusion of traffic. The serious objection of corner lot locations, with the close adjunct of a stable and outbuildings, would be eliminated. Probably ten feet off of the adjacent corner lots along Eleventh street would be donated; so there would be a passageway twenty feet wide on each side of the building and the plat of ground one hundred by two hundred feet for the building, with a lawn around it, would be ample.

By the time the building would be completed, Eleventh street will have completed several blocks of asphalt pavement, making the best wide driveway in the city, relieved of street cars. This place would probably not be over three blocks from the center of population, yet the center of population should not be congested with all the desirable public buildings.

While this location might seriously interfere with many speculative hopes, it would relieve our people of the burden of raising thousands to pay for lots at some of the places mentioned. It will be difficult to suggest a place with as few substantial objections. Respectfully,

L. W. BILLINGSLEY.

At work on your biography? Why, no one knows you.

True. But when I am known I will not have time.—Town Topics.