

## WENDELL PHILLIPS.

The death of Wendell Phillips is so comparatively recent that the animosities and bitterness that he provoked have not entirely passed away. Partisan spirit survives the issue that gave it birth. Men hated him, because he ran counter to their prejudices, and shattered their idols. But in spite of their sarcasm, the bitterness, the vindictiveness of his expressions, the truth, of which he was the shining and terrible exponent, has humanized us all. When he has been dead long enough to give students of history sufficient perspective to estimate his greatness, compared to the other men of the age, they will do justice to his memory.

He inherited a strong intellect which was developed and strengthened by college training. Acute in his moral feelings, he was the true "child of six generations of Puritans." Earnestness and confidence were his distinguishing traits as a speaker. So firm were his convictions, so plain to him the truth, that he never shifted his position. If the federal constitution countenanced slavery, he condemned the constitution. In one of his speeches, he said, "When I look upon these crowded thousands and see them trample on their consciences, and the rights of their fellow men at the bidding of a piece of parchment, I say, 'my curse be upon the Constitution of the United States.'" If wounds needed probing he unflinchingly probed them.

No selfish motive impelled Phillips to the career of a public speaker. The murder of Elijah Lovejoy furnished the occasion. After the speech of the Attorney General of Massachusetts, in Faneuil Hall, in defense of slavery, Phillips, then a young man of twenty-six, sprang to his feet, and sternly and eloquently rebuked the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead. From that moment he was famous as the eloquent, fearless, uncompromising advocate of "immediate emancipation." At a time when the cry of "fanatic" was the mildest kind of an opprobrious epithet, when the State of Georgia offered \$5,000 for Garrison's head, when gag-rule was introduced into the Congress of the United States, it took no little courage to champion the cause of the slave. But his inborn love of justice would permit nothing less. He was a New Englander to the core—without fear and without reproach. When a Boston mob, with the mayor at its head, broke up a anti-slavery meeting, and attempted to frighten him into silence, Phillips, with scathing words, held up the participants in the affair to public execration. By all that was sacred to him in the past, or in the present, he felt called upon to defend freedom of speech.

Cold conventionality frowned upon him as it frowned upon Emerson, but it could not frown down his message. He declared, "I mean a protest—claim my rights, and denounce those who assail them, whether they listen or not." "Agitate" was his watchword. He asserted, "The age of bullets is over, the age of thinking men has come. With the help of God, I will set every man, woman and child thinking on this subject." Those that spoke in whispers of slavery as the "peculiar institution," and refused to lay hands upon it, turned white at the words. Only through silence could slavery be allowed to exist. More than any other one man, Phillips dared to break that silence. ;

His oratory was a mean between Webster's and Choate's. Webster was ponderous in style as in argument. Choate was polished and ornate and considered the form of expression, rather than the thought expressed. Phillips was earnest, natural, intent only on driving home his arguments. His was a confidence springing from a clear conscience, and an earnestness born of the truth. Direct address, severity, biting sarcasm, were the means he employed. The man himself was forgotten in the truth he set forth. There was no escaping his well directed shafts. When he wished to bring their inhumanity home to Christians, he said, "I will not have for mine the Christianity of this land, with its negro pew in the corner of every church and its negro hate in the corner of every heart."

His severity of language, as he himself said, resulted from his position. The mass of the people could not be made to see the truth. It was necessary to make them feel it through the "hides of their idols." His perception of political, social, and economic truth was almost prophetic. Gradually the nation is coming to see the truth as he saw it. The slave has been emancipated. National and state legislatures, at every session, enact laws for securing the rights of the laboring classes. The question how best to abate the evils of the liquor traffic has been exalted into a national issue.

The political rights of woman are being recognized. In most of the states and territories, women vote on some questions, and will yet vote on all. These reforms were avocated by Phillips at a time when he had to advocate them alone. Time is bringing his vindication.

Miss Clark spoke slowly, clearly, and distinctly, giving every word its due force. Her voice and appearance were perfectly natural and full of personality. She wore a black lace dress, made in the empire style. A bunch of dark red roses was the only touch of color in the costume.

After a selection by the cadet band, Acting-chancellor Bessey proceeded to confer the degrees. The class formed quite an imposing array. Miss Edna Bullock wore a dress of cream serge, made in the directoire style, with surah sash and cream silk mitts. Pink flowers were worn. Miss Laura Haggard was attired in white mull, empire style, with surah sash, and she wore white roses. Miss Jennie Bonnell wore a dress of black lace over black silk, empire style, with pink sash and pink roses. Miss May Tower was dressed in white India linen, and wore pink flowers. The gentlemen wore the class suit—black prince albert and dark trousers. The degree of B. L. was conferred on T. S. Allen, G. H. Baughman, Miss Jennie Bonnell, Miss Edna Bullock, O. W. Fifer, Miss Myra Clark, Miss May Tower, W. N. Fletcher, D. D. Forsyth, C. M. French, C. W. Bigelow, Alfred Pizey. The degree of B. S. was received by Miss Helen Aughey, M. I. Bigelow, E. R. Tingley, H. J. Webber, T. A. Williams. The degree of A. B. was conferred on F. W. Collins, G. W. Gerwig, Miss Laura Haggard, and W. L. Stephens. The degree of B. C. E. was received by E. G. Eagleson and F. A. Manley. Two of the members of the class, R. D. Church and A. E. Wagner, have not quite completed their work, but will probably receive their degree soon.

Governor John M. Thayer presented, on behalf of the state, commissions as officers in the University cadets, to the following: Captains, G. H. Baughman, W. N. Fletcher, G. W. Gerwig, and H. J. Webber; 1st Lieutenants, E. G. Eagleson, C. B. Newcomer, W. L. Stephens, and O. W. Fifer; 2d Lieutenant, F. W. Collins.

The orchestra then rendered a "Fantasia—Ein Maerchen," and benediction was pronounced. As the audience dispersed, the cadet band played a "Grand March." So closed a successful and enjoyable Commencement.

## NOTES.

Eagleson denies point blank that he fainted in the back after the Palladian program.

The class of '89 has kept up its organization better than any other class ever graduating.

D. D. Forsyth will combine the occupations of bookstore clerk and law student at Kearney, this summer.

The Senior invitations were fine, but they cost money. It was amusing to see the Seniors try to scrape up \$260 to get them from the express office.

The University must now wait to see what kind of a Senior class '90 will make. They have been rather kept down by the enterprising '89ers this year.

Considerable artistic and poetic ability, in the persons of Mr. Manley, Miss Tower, and Miss Bullock, leaves the University with '89. Who will step into their places?

The delivery of all the Seniors was marked by the desire to say what they had to say, with no bombast or extended flights of elocution. This is due to the training of Prof. Hunt in the department of English. It is a theory of delivery rather original with the University, and forms a pleasing contrast to the usual spread-eagle style.