

JOS. H. EARLE NO MORE

Death Claims the Distinguished South Carolinian.

CONSCIOUS TO THE LAST.

The Sufferer Awaits the End Calmly and Peacefully, Surrounded by the Members of His Family—Committee of United States Senators Appointed to attend the Funeral.

Greenville, S. C., May 20.—Senator Earle died this afternoon at twenty minutes after 5 o'clock.

The immediate cause of death was Bright's disease, which rapidly developed in the past few days. Yesterday morning symptoms were not more serious than for the past week, and there was no fear of immediate death. At 4 o'clock this morning there was a marked change for the worse and he was supposed to be dying. He rallied later, and although no hope of recovery was entertained, yet there was hope that he would hold out for a day or two. All through the day he had gradually been sinking, and it was only a question of a few hours when the end would come. His strong will power asserted itself and he rallied this morning.

During the day there was a hush over the city, as it was known that the favorite son of this county was in the shadow of death.

All through the day there was giving away and a rally following, but each hour the Senator was weaker. Never for a moment did he lose consciousness, but retained his clearness of mind and accepted the condition that he would live only a few hours.

All the members of his family were wit him this afternoon. Gradually he grew weaker, but he calmly awaited the end, never evincing any nervousness or fear of his impending fate. The low sobs of wife and children who stood around his bedside echoed the short breathing of the sufferer. His breathing grew slower, and with his gaze resting on his loved wife, at 20 minutes after 5 o'clock, the weary, patient sufferer was at rest.

The solemn tolling of the city alarm bell announced the death of Senator Earle. In a short time all the stores of the city were closed and citizens were mourning the death of the most distinguished citizen of Greenville. No arrangements have yet been made for the funeral. The time will probably be made to meet the convenience of the usual Congressional committee.

Washington, May 20.—On receipt of the news of the death of Senator Earle, Senator Tillman called on the Vice-President in regard to the appointment of a committee to represent the Senate at the funeral as that body will not be in session to-morrow. Mr. Hobart named the following as a committee: Messrs. Tillman, Clay of Georgia, Chandler of New Hampshire, McEnery of Louisiana and Harris of Kansas. Speaker Reed will to-morrow appoint a committee to represent the House. The Congressional committees will leave this city to-morrow night, reaching Greenville about 1 o'clock Saturday afternoon.

Judge Earle was born of highly honorable parents in Greenville County on April 30, 1847. His father, Elias D. Earle of Greenville, was a prominent lawyer, and at one time held the office of superintendent of public works of the State. Judge Earle's father married Susan C. Haynesworth, of Sumter County, in 1836. They had eight children, of whom Judge Earle was the youngest. His early education was received in the academy of Sumter.

Immediately upon leaving the academy, he hastened to join the ranks of the Confederate army. In July, 1864, at the age of 17 he enlisted as a private in Charles's battery of light artillery, at the close of the war a part of Kemper's artillery. Though a mere lad Judge Earle did his whole duty as a soldier.

At the close of the war Judge Earle returned home and entered Furman University, where he graduated in '67. Like most Southern people, the family of Judge Earle were impoverished by the war, so young Earle had to make his own way in life. He chose law as his profession, but being too poor to study it independently he taught school by day and studied law at night. In April, 1870, he was examined for the bar by Judge James L. Orr, afterwards minister to Russia. His examination being highly satisfactory he was admitted, and began the practice of his profession at Anderson, where he remained until 1875. He then removed to Sumter, S. C. As a lawyer Judge Earle soon distinguished himself, and had few superiors in South Carolina; of striking appearance, great eloquence and convincing reasoning he was almost invincible. Add to this a character without a blemish, and one can readily see that he deserved success. His sterling qualities soon attracted attention and marked him as a leader of men.

In 1878 he was called by the people to represent them in the Legislature, and for four years he was a useful and able member of that body. His lofty principles, his fearless discharge of duty, his great sincerity won for him a host of friends and admirers. He declined re-election to the House in 1880, but was elected Senator from Sumter County in 1882. He at once became the foremost champion of many reforms. Completing his term as Senator in 1876, he was elected Attorney General, and for two terms filled that responsible position with signal ability. South Carolina has had many eminent men in every sense of the word as Attorney Generals, but Judge Earle won more cases than any Attorney General South Carolina has ever had. When he accepted the office he knew the duties were arduous. The labors of an Attorney General have never been light, but Judge Earle, sacrificing his private practice, devoted his time to his office, believing that as he took the position and accepted the remuneration he was in duty bound to give his personal attention to every case that came in his office.

With that delicate sense of honor which has been his chief characteristic throughout life he regarded his contingent fund as a trust fund, returning the most of it to the State Treasurer. No expenditures were made by him except warranted by law, and then only in cases of great necessity. He invoked no strained construction of the law to save his own money and expend the money of the people. To him office meant

a public trust. He retired from the office of Attorney General covered with new laurels and justified to the fullest extent the estimation placed upon him by his most partial friends. In 1880 he had the honor of representing his party in the national Democratic convention at Cincinnati. Again, in 1884, he went as a delegate to the national convention, and was selected as a member of the committee to notify Mr. Cleveland of his nomination as President.

In 1888 Judge Earle declined the nomination of Governor. He was committed to the support of Governor Richardson, who was a candidate for re-election. It was indeed a high honor and a terrible temptation, but Judge Earle preferred to keep his character untarnished, so he kept his word and declined to accept the nomination. Few men have had such a temptation, and fewer still have resisted it.

In 1890 Captain Tillman assailed with great bitterness the administration of which General Earle was a member, and though he had scant hope of success he thought it was his duty to go before the people and refute the grave charges made by Captain Tillman, so he canvassed the State, and in turn Tillman found a foeman worthy of his steel. He was unsuccessful, but his able speeches and manly bearing won him many friends. Though defeated he accepted it cheerfully, and acquiesced gracefully in the will of the majority of the people of his State. Judge Earle then returned to Greenville, the home of his boyhood, and opened his law office, determining to devote his entire attention to the practice of his profession. When he was asked to advise the people he told them to cease their quarrel, end their bitter contentions and obliterate factional lines.

For this advice he was much criticised. However, he was a man of convictions, and he had the courage to stand for what he thought was the good of his State. His broad patriotism and good judgment was appreciated, and in 1892 he was elected Judge of the Eighth Circuit by a Reform Legislature. As a Judge he added new lustre to the bench of South Carolina. His profound knowledge of law, his great courtesy, his impartiality and rigid adherence to the law as he found it written won for him the reputation of being one of the greatest Judges South Carolina ever had.

Nothing is so fickle as mankind—nothing so unstable. The man who was defeated for Governor of South Carolina in 1890 by the people of South Carolina was nominated by a general Democratic primary election in August, 1896, after a heated canvass, to represent them in the Senate chamber in Washington. His opponents in the race were Governor John Gary Evans and Mr. John T. Duncan. He was duly elected by the Legislature at its ensuing session, without opposition.

In early life Judge Earle accepted the Baptist creed as the standard of his life. He honestly endeavored to measure up to it. He took his religion in his every walk of life. Free from foul, coarse speech his conversations would never give offense to a woman or a word he might say cause a blush. His manners, while courteous, were rather austere. His ideas of manhood were high and he lived up to them.

Judge Earle was married May 19, 1869, to his cousin, Miss Anna M. Earle, a most attractive and interesting woman. To them have been born nine children. The Christian names of those surviving are Baylis H., John H., Eleanor M., Lucia P., Anna C., Joseph H., Lillian and Wilton. His domestic life was exemplary. He was a devoted husband and a kind, indulgent father.

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