

A MEMOIR OF DONALDSON BODINE.

H. W. ANDERSON

To those of us who knew Professor Donaldson Bodine the news last August of his sudden death was a terrible shock. We knew him as a man of great activity and rugged constitution, one who never seemed to be troubled with physical weakness. His taking was so sudden that the shock seemed all the greater, yet those who knew him best realized that it was as he wished, for he had often expressed a desire to have life end suddenly, without pain, prolonged illness, or weakening of mental faculties. So all was well with him.

Donaldson Bodine was born in Richboro, Pennsylvania on December 13, 1866. His father, a Presbyterian minister, died at an early age, leaving the young son to support his widowed mother and a sister. After graduating from a preparatory academy, he entered Cornell University and received his A. B. degree from this institution in 1887. For several years following graduation he was principal of the Academy at Gouverneur, New York. Returning to Cornell on a Fellowship he secured a Doctor of Science degree in the spring of 1895. His major was in the subject of Entomology, his first minor in Zoology and second minor in Botany. His thesis, presented in the spring of 1895, was entitled, "The Taxonomic Value of the Antennae of Lepidoptera".

Professor Bodine came to Wabash in the fall of 1895 to fill the chair of Zoology and Geology which was established at that time. This chair he occupied during the remainder of his life. Thus he had given, at the time of his death, twenty years of loyal and efficient service to this Institution.

As a student of Professor Bodine's I can speak with some authority when I say he was a wonderfully inspiring teacher. He had a very clear and interesting manner of presenting his subject and this, combined with an unusually pleasant voice, made the presentation of his lectures all that could be desired. It was a real pleasure to listen to him. The students were always loyal to him and they were especially impressed with his perfect fairness. He did not make his subject difficult but he expected his students to make an earnest effort to get that which was presented.

As a man, I cannot better express the opinion of all who knew him than give you the words of appreciation of one of his former students, "Professor Bodine was a man among men, a teacher among teachers seldom, if ever, equalled. He was a true gentleman who would be classified as 'One who carefully avoided whatever may have caused a jar or jolt in the minds of those with whom he was cast; who avoided all clashings of opinion or collision of feeling or restraint, or suspicion of gloom, or resentment, his great concern being to make everyone at his ease and at home. He was tender toward the bashful, gentle towards the distant and merciful towards the absurd; he guarded against unseasonable allusions or topics which irritated and was seldom prominent in conversation—and never wearisome. He made light of favors while he did them and seemed to be receiving when conferring. He never spoke of himself except when compelled, had no ear for slander or gossip, was scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfered with him and interpreted everything for the best.'"

Professor Bodine published little—not from lack of ability to do research work or unfamiliarity with his subject, but because he was primarily a teacher and believed in giving all there was in him to his students. He was unusually well informed on all subjects whether or not connected with his work. His sense of fairness and his desire for accuracy and truth were so acute that to those who were given to the expression of opinions hastily formed, he seemed at times over critical; but he was equally sincere in his enthusiastic praise of work well done.

Professor Bodine was a lover of music and always took an active interest in the development of this art in the college and in the community. He also interested himself in the civic welfare of the city of Crawfordsville and stood for everything that was best regardless of political or other affiliations. Although for many years an officer in the Presbyterian church he was not "orthodox" in the narrower sense of the term. In this as in other affairs of life he followed the apostolic injunction, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." He believed thoroughly in the rule of Reason and would not accept any statement unless supported by and based upon facts, scientifically established. He was especially desirous of eliminating from religious teaching all superstitions and traditions. At the same time he was deeply religious by nature and was a thorough believer in the Church as an institution.

The members of this Society will remember with what great pleasure Professor Bodine attended the spring meeting. He was a lover of nature and delighted in the open air meeting held by the Society, not only because of the long tramps over the hills, but also because of the chance for companionship and discussion with his fellow scientists. He has often told me that his chief interest in the Society was the fellowship it afforded and his cordial hearty greetings are well remembered by all the older members of this Society.

As a scientist and a student of science he was recognized throughout the country. He was a Fellow both of the American Association and of the Indiana Academy and served as the president of the latter organization during the year 1913. His presidential address was one of unusual interest.

In 1914 Professor Bodine was married to Mrs. Emma Clugston of Crawfordsville. In the early days of August of the past summer they went to northern Michigan to plan a summer home. They selected a site for their cottage and on the day when the fatal end came had been busily engaged with their final plans. In the evening while visiting some friends and in the midst of a lively conversation death came without the slightest warning.

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