

DEATH OF A USEFUL MAN.

Elsewhere we have given a brief biographical sketch of Johns Hopkins, the distinguished and honored citizen, whose death we mourn. No obituary notice, however, would be complete without some comment upon the public loss sustained by the extinction of such an active force in the business community. And in this we shall chiefly comment upon the death of Mr. Hopkins in its public relations. The life of man is two-fold—his life to himself and that to the world. Mr. Hopkins, no doubt, had his failings and weaknesses, in connection with many sterling virtues, but these all belong to his personal life. We know him by his works, and these are enough to gain for him an opulence of honor and esteem. Whatever his religious experiences were, he had no church connections that gave him prominence, and whether his faith was great or small, it was only exhibited in the rectitude of a quiet and unostentatious life. He contemplated death without fear, and in his last years took much care in arranging his worldly affairs for his final departure. When the fatal stroke came he yielded to it with calm resignation, and passed away without a murmur.

The most conspicuous traits of Mr. Hopkins' character were his far-sightedness and energy in commercial affairs, and the public spirit he brought to the prosecution of his business enterprises. Many and various are the monuments which his foresight, zeal and means have reared, fostered and upheld, through good as well as evil report, till now they stand forth our treasures and our pride. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, one of the noblest works of Maryland enterprise, had no more unswerving friend and supporter than Mr. Hopkins. Deservedly high as stands its credit now, not only here, but in the markets of the world, times were when its insolvency and abandonment might well have been possible had they not been warded off by the interposition of Mr. Hopkins' individual credit and that of a few others who followed his lead, and were influenced by his example. And in estimating the value of this obligation, it must be borne in mind that in those times Mr. Hopkins was not the millionaire he was at the time of his death, and that a mistake made then would have been seriously felt. No man that ever lived among us, or is still living, has done as much to build up our city as he did. The acquirement of fortune in the pursuit of trade was not the halting place of his activity. In all his investments he had a purpose beyond that of enriching himself. Streets and districts, solidly built and teeming with the vehicles of trade, have been made so solely by his untiring enterprise, while thousands upon thousands of our mechanics have found steady work upon the substantial structures he was constantly building. These were the evidences of his worth, which could be seen of all men. But not so the silent and steady good worked by his money and the credit of his name.

It is impossible to form a just estimate of the incalculable benefits thus conferred and the vastness of their extent. Many an honorable merchant who now treads our marts an independent man has been saved from bankruptcy by his timely aid. His wealth and his high commercial credit made it possible for him at all times, but especially in seasons of mercantile distress, to save a struggling merchant from ruin. He has enabled hundreds of business men to weather a storm which, unaided, they could not have done. He estimated industry, sobriety and intelligent application to business at their true value, and these were the passports to his good will and

assistance. When the late financial panic burst upon us, its first fury would have been very disastrous had it not been for the nerve and quick resolution of Mr. Hopkins, who held all his great resources subject to the demands of the railroad corporation with which his name has been identified, and of the reputable merchants in whose integrity and solvency he had confidence. By such action as this a single man has added more to the commercial credit of the city than the outdoings of half a dozen banks.

Although Mr. Hopkins was always too greatly engrossed in business to pay much attention to politics, he had strong political convictions. He was an anti-slavery man all his life. His great wealth and high position saved him from the reproach that would otherwise have fallen upon him in a community that had but little toleration for the views which he entertained upon this subject. Many years ago he purchased a slave to make him free. The man whom he emancipated remained in his service to the day of his death, and it is supposed that Mr. Hopkins provided for him handsomely in his will. We shall only allude to the late civil war to say that Mr. Hopkins was a firm supporter of the Government. In founding the charitable institution with which his name is inseparably connected, he took pains to have the charters framed in accordance with his humane and liberal views concerning the common brotherhood of man. There can be no discrimination on account of color in the Johns Hopkins Hospital. In compelling assent to this feature of his all-embracing charity, he achieved one of the greatest triumphs of his life. Perhaps it is the one which will hand down his name from age to age, as one of the courageous benefactors who encountered a mighty prejudice and conquered it.