

A
BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

OF
LANCASTER COUNTY:

BEING A HISTORY OF
EARLY SETTLERS AND EMINENT MEN
OF THE COUNTY;

AS ALSO MUCH OTHER
UNPUBLISHED HISTORICAL INFORMATION, CHIEFLY
OF A LOCAL CHARACTER.

BY
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HALDEMAN, S. S., was born at Locust Grove Mills in 1812; the oldest son of Henry Haldeman (1787-1849) and his wife Frances Steman, (1794-1826). The house of his parents was well supplied with books, a pair of globes, &c., which afforded indoor occupation. He went to the local schools until the age of thirteen, and as there was little or nothing required of him in the way of employment, his time in the vacations was spent in the use of tools, in the shops on the premises, in shooting, fishing, boating, trapping, riding and swimming, thereby securing a good constitution and founding habits of observation which were afterwards applied to the study of the sciences. Scott's beautiful map of Lancaster county (published about the year 1824), had great attractions for him, and taught him the local geography; and as a boy he studied natural history, wading in the Susquehanna for shells, collecting plants, and traversing the river shore for minerals, Indian arrowheads and stone axes. He formed a little museum on the loft of the carriage house, where among other things, he had rude anatomical preparations made from rabbits, possums, muskrats, and other animals; and a traveling Methodist preacher taught him how to stuff birds. From his father's house an eagle's nest was visible, upon a large buttonwood, on an island a mile distant, and it was easy to observe the eagle chasing and robbing the fish-hawk, and to ascertain that when he cannot thus get fish, he will dive for them himself—a fact first put on record by Mr. Haldeman, who also published the fact that the peregrine falcon nests in rocks, as in Europe, and not in trees, as Wilson and others had supposed. He had in reality procured young ones from a nest in the cliff (Chickies Rock) which rises behind his present residence.

In the spring of 1826, when nearly fourteen years of age, Prof. Haldeman was sent to the Classical Academy of Dr.

John M. Keagy,¹ at Harrisburg, where he remained for two years, and then went to Dickinson College, Carlisle, where he was a student for two years more. Here he took lessons in French as an extra study, a language to which his attention had been turned by the grammar used by his mother when a pupil at Litiz; and his taste for natural science was encouraged under Prof. H. D. Rogers, subsequently the distinguished geologist. Preferring to direct his own studies, he returned home at the age of eighteen, and while occasionally assisting his father in the saw-milling business at Chickies, he continued his studies and gradually accumulated cabinets of geology, conchology and entomology, and a scientific and linguistic library.

In 1835 he published his first communication of a scientific character in the *Lancaster Journal*, being a refutation of Locke's "Moon Hoax," in which it was pretended that with a telescope twenty-four feet in diameter, animals had been observed in the moon.² At this period he was interested in education, and was ready to lecture before lyceums, which came into vogue about that time; and subsequently before educational conventions, on scientific and linguistic subjects, taking care to expose the scientific errors which are so often present in educational literature. To one of these books he devoted an entire pamphlet, ('Notes on Wilson's Readers'), of which the revised edition has the date of 1870. When editing the '*Farm Journal*,' (1851, p. 2 and 66,) he ridiculed the 'Paine Light;' and when 'spirit rappings'

¹ See Mombert's History of Lancaster county, 1869, p. 398.

² The following paragraph will give an idea of this refutation: "The magnifying power of the new telescope is said to be 42,000 times, and capable of distinguishing objects of a few inches in diameter on the lunar surface. Now this power is much too great for an instrument twenty-four feet in diameter, and still not great enough to distinguish objects of *eighteen* inches. The unassisted eye, when viewing the moon, can distinguish a spot of about seventy miles, and of course with a telescope magnifying seventy times, one mile of lunar surface would just be visible. According to the rule for calculating the power of telescopes, it would require a magnifying power of 37,000 to distinguish *ten feet* of lunar surface, and a lens to produce this power could not be less than *sixty feet* in diameter, with a focal distance of three hundred feet. From this, we may judge to what an extent the powers of a twenty-four foot diameter telescope have been overrated."

came up, they received like attention. On one occasion a speaker spoke of the sciences as leading to skepticism, when he replied, that if it had not been for physical science we would probably have been executing witches to this day.

In 1835 Prof. Haldeman married Miss Mary A. Hough, and removed to the residence which they still occupy, at Chickies, where he was subsequently joined by his brothers, Dr. Edwin Haldeman and Paris Haldeman, in the iron business. In this connection he published a paper, in 1848, on the construction of blast furnaces; in 1855 he edited the second edition of Taylor's "Statistics of Coal," and for many years he has been an officer of the State Agricultural Society. In 1841 his "Freshwater Univalve Mollusca" of the United States was commenced, a work which had no superior in the style and finish of its plates.¹ About the period of 1855-8 he was professor of agricultural chemistry and geology in Delaware College, confining his course to several months of each year, without residing permanently at the college. His paper "On Species and their Distribution," (1851), opened a question which has been more recently developed into what is now called Darwinism, and Darwin himself makes favorable mention of this article in his later editions.

As language is a characteristic of mankind, his attention was drawn to it as an aid to ethnology; he studied it as a natural science, and the first result was his "Elements of Latin Pronunciation," (1851), in which the attempt is made to ascertain the ancient pronunciation.² Professor Haldeman subsequently lectured on the "Mechanism of Speech"

¹The original shells figured have been presented to the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia; and those of the continuation, published in Paris, were given to the celebrated Delessert-Lamarck collection in that city.

²That philosophical talent and tact so essential for investigations in natural science, which he is well known eminently to possess, he has here brought to bear on the elements of the Latin language with peculiar success. His conclusions, we fancy, are generally, if not always, correct, as they are founded on philosophical principles, having been drawn from various reliable materials, both ancient and modern, in a manner almost as satisfactory and as safely to be trusted as the deductions of mathematics.—*Mercersburg Review*, March, 1852.

before the Smithsonian Institution, and in 1858 his "Trevelyan Prize Essay" was successful in England, against sixteen competitors. This essay was published in 1860, by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, under the title of "Analytic Orthography," and it contains specimens of about seventy languages and dialects, as heard from the lips of the natives themselves. In 1865 his 'Affixes to English Words' appeared, which claims to be the key to the analysis of 100,000 words;¹ and in the *Southern Review* (Baltimore, July, 1869), he has an article on American Dictionaries.²

Of late years the advance of learning has required an increase of professors in the large colleges, and among these the University of Pennsylvania stands in the front rank, its location in a large city like Philadelphia affording facilities for getting instructors in the various sciences. The last professorship added to the list in this institution, was that of Comparative Philology, in 1870, to which Prof. Haldeman was elected. Studying language as a natural science, and simultaneously with it, he often gives definite information upon points which his predecessors had attributed to 'accident' or 'euphony;' and studying the vocal elements of many languages by ear, he ascertained, for example, that a certain sound of Arabic and Hebrew occurs in Wyandot, another in Esquimaux, while another is common to Cherokee and Welsh. It is obvious that to ascertain such facts, the same person must *hear* the sounds compared, and from native speakers. Comanche was thus heard in Washington, Hawaiian at Liverpool, and from Queen Emma in London, Guderati from a Parsee in Paris, and the language of the Tonga Islands, and Coordish, at the missionary college of the Propaganda at Rome, at which many languages are spoken.

At school and in college the subject of this notice was an

¹ Mr Haldeman has compressed in an elegantly printed octavo volume, * * a collection more rational, complete, and exhaustive of the component parts of our language, than we have had any good right to hope for within the present century; * * a most practical, useful work, * * absolutely indispensable to systematic and thorough students of language.—*Contemporary Review*, London, July, 1867.

² It is a learned and exhaustive examination of the respective merits and demerits of Worcester's and Webster's dictionaries.—*Trubner's Literary Record*, London, September, 1869.

average student, acquiring knowledge slowly; and had he remained to graduate, he would probably not have taken any of the honors. His success is to be attributed to facility in determining the proper line of inquiry, caution in adopting results, and persistent industry in research; traveling to observe, but living the life of a hermit when working up his materials, and thus producing a series of from eighty to one hundred communications in the scientific journals, causing Dr. Hitchcock, the distinguished geologist, to express surprise that he should "find time to make and bring out so many new discoveries." As work produces fatigue, rest is required, and as rest may be secured in a change of study, the "Tours of a Chess Knight," (1864, illustrated with 114 figures) was the result of such a change.

Acknowledgments for his aid, or for suggestions, are given in various American works of science, such as Lynch's Dead Sea Expedition; and he has been honored with membership in a number of learned societies, American and foreign. One of his latest labors has been an essay on that curious dialect of German spoken among us, and called "Pennsylvania Dutch," which he was requested to prepare for the Philological Society of London, and which is now in their hands.