

REV. GEORGE PETRIE DUNCAN, D.D.

There passed away on July 23, 1949, at his home in Toronto, after a brief illness, one of the Church's best-loved ministers in the person of the Rev. George Petrie Duncan, D.D., in his eighty-second year.

Dr. Duncan was born in the village of Charleston, County of Angus, Scotland, on April 5, 1867. As a boy he expressed the wish to be a minister. This ambition was fulfilled when he entered Knox College, Toronto, in 1890, a few years after coming to Canada. He was graduated in 1897, and that year he began his first pastorate at Unionville, Ontario, where he served for nine years. For two and one-half years he ministered to the congregations at Whitechurch and Langside in the Presbytery of Huron-Maitland. Port Credit was his next sphere of labour for some sixteen years. In 1925 he was called to St. Andrew's Church, Stratford, and he rendered sterling service both to that congregation and to the city. It is said that he knew every child in St. Andrew's large Sunday School by his or her first name. He loved children and was singularly successful in winning their affection and trust. Whilst in Stratford he was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Knox College. In 1937 he retired, having completed forty years of active service in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

During his long and faithful ministry Dr. Duncan served on various committees of the Church, and latterly on the Pension Board. In 1916 he went overseas as Chaplain of the 126th Peel Battalion, and later went to France as a Chaplain with the First Canadian Division. He and his three sons all served in the armed forces; Captain George Gordon and Captain Alan Barrie Duncan, M.C., were killed in action.

Dr. Duncan was a great Scotsman, and an ardent Britisher. He loved the Presbyterian Church with unstinted affection and served her with true devotion. He had laid himself upon God's altar and everything was placed at the service of his Lord. He was always and everywhere a minister of the Gospel, and could truly have taken as his own the words of St. Paul to the Ephesian elders: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." As a minister and as a citizen he seemed to live continually under the constraint of the searching words of The Preacher: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy

might." He will be remembered for his noble character, the earnestness which filled his soul, his kindly disposition, his fine optimism, his literary culture, and his courageous faithfulness to what he believed was right and true. His heart and mind kept ever young.

For the last twelve years Dr. Duncan lived in Toronto, where he was a member of Rosedale Church, and was always in his place on the Lord's Day unless he was engaged in preaching, always and to the last his dearest work.

The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. J. B. Paulin, D.D., minister of Rosedale Church, who gave the address, assisted by the Rev. James McNeill, D.D., who read the Scripture and offered prayer. Interment was in Dixie Presbyterian Cemetery.

Dr. Duncan is survived by his widow, formerly Kate Westman, a daughter Muriel of Toronto, and a son Dr. Wallace Duncan of Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.

This Presbytery commends the bereaved family to the Eternal God who is our refuge, and whose everlasting arms are always underneath.