

DEATH OF A TYNESIDE MERCHANT AND AUTHOR.

We regret to record the death of Mr. George Roberts Hedley, which sad event took place at his residence, No. 2 Bellgrove Terrace, Spital Tongues, Newcastle, at a late hour on Friday night. The deceased gentleman, who was a native of the village of Ovington, on the banks of the Tyne, where his father carried on the business of farmer and butcher, was born in January, 1828, and came to Newcastle whilst yet in his teens. In this city he entered the cattle trade, and possessed as he was of more than an ordinary degree of intelligence and tact, he was not long in establishing an extensive connection. He took an active interest in all matters appertaining to his calling. It was principally this desire to do what he could to improve the trade with which he was connected, that led him to seek election in the city council. He was returned in November, 1881, as one of the representatives for St. Andrew's South Ward. Appointed a member of the Watch Committee of the Council, Mr. Hedley found further scope for his energy and ability. In or about the year 1884 he resigned his seat in the Council. His was a familiar figure in the cattle market, where, as already stated, he carried on an important business, and whilst so well known he was also respected and esteemed by his fellow-tradersmen. Some four or five years ago he retired from business, which is now in the hands of Messrs. G. Hedley & Co. In addition to being a cattle salesman and merchant, the deceased gentleman was a farmer, Thistlebottom, near Wigton, Cumberland, being in his possession. He devoted the land to grazing purposes. A more picturesque district than that in which Thistlebottom is situated, would be, indeed, difficult to find. Mr. Hedley was also a land agent, the Killingworth, estate, we understand, being for some time under his care.

• But apart from those who knew the deceased as a man of business, there were, perhaps, as many more who knew him as a writer of poetry, which he frequently published. His first volume appeared in 1885, and in the following year he composed a political satire entitled "Four years of mis-rule." Specimens from his pen, together with a criticism of his poems, are to be found in a book edited by Mr. W. Andrews, F.R.H.S., published in 1889, and entitled "North Country Poets, Poems and Biographies." This gentleman says: "Of all the northern poets George Roberts Hedley is perhaps the nearest akin to that species of versifier which comes under the designation of bard. Hedley is the Herrick of the 19th century. He has been compared with Burns, and there are points of likeness, it must be admitted. Not that he is like Burns less, but Herrick more. He is happy in lines where satire reigns." Mr. Hedley was a staunch Conservative, and rendered his party considerable service with his pen. [He was for years a contributor to, and we believe at one time connected editorially with the Newcastle Chronicle.] He leaves a widow to mourn his death. It may be added that the deceased was a scion of the Border family of Hedley of Reedwater, North Tyne. The funeral takes place to-day at Ovingham.—*Newcastle Daily Journal*, 12th June.

A FAMOUS AUCTIONEER.

The death is announced early in June, at his residence, Scaynes Hill, Lindfield, of a veteran Sussex auctioneer. Mr. Edward Drawbridge was the son of Mr. William Drawbridge, auctioneer, valuer, and shopkeeper, of Scaynes Hill, and was born on February 28th, 1808, at the house still serving as the village grocery stores. Mr. Drawbridge was apprenticed at Ringmer, and afterwards went to Rodmell as a shopkeeper's assistant. For a short time he was in partnership with "Lawyer Burt," at the East Grinstead Brewery, but between 50 and 60 years ago he returned home and joined his father in his business, the firm being then known as Messrs. Drawbridge & Son. Mr. William Drawbridge died about 40 years ago, and his son carried on the business with great success in his own name until 1884, when Mr. Ansell, who had been associated with Mr. Drawbridge in the business since 1877, entered the firm as a partner.

With the elder generation of the present day Mr. Drawbridge was most popular. He possessed a rare fund of humor and quaint old

sayings, and people would flock to his sales to hear his jocular remarks. Mr. Drawbridge fully believing, as a method of business, in keeping his company in good humor. When in his prime he was the leading agricultural auctioneer of the county. Younger men have known him as the senior partner of a successful and much respected firm, and regarded him as an excellent representative of the "good old times." Some men change with the age, but in manners, mode of living and style of dress, Mr. Drawbridge did not alter. He was straightforward and a man of the strictest integrity, a capital valuer of farming property, and second to none as a judge of horses. In the "Fifties," Mr. Drawbridge looked after the estate of Mr. Morgan Treherne, of Isehurst, Mayfield, who was then a prominent Sussex gentleman. On the coming of age of Mr. Treherne's eldest son the rejoicings were on a very large scale, two barons of beef being roasted to feast the rural folk, and Mr. Drawbridge acting as carver of one of the ponderous "barons." As an auctioneer he became noted for having obtained £84 an acre for the produce of some larch plantations, such a price being then unheard of; and he finally valued and sold the Gate House Estate for Mr. Treherne for £80,000. So pleased was Mr. T. with the result that he gave Mr. Drawbridge a present of £1,000 for this transaction, the auctioneer declining, modestly, to send in any formal charge for his services.

The deceased was deeply attached to old customs and habits. He welcomed visitors to his house at Scaynes Hill with cordial hospitality and old-fashioned grace. In his younger days he was a famous "whip." He drove horses that no one else could manage, and was the hero of innumerable spills. His favorite mode of driving was tandem. His "old black mare" became as well known as himself. She was bought of Sir Alexander Cockburn—afterwards Lord Chief Justice—then of Wakehurst, Ardingly, who found it required two pairs of reins to hold her in with the assistance of a groom, and it was two or three years before even Mr. Drawbridge could drive her. This he is said to have accomplished more by speaking to the mare than by using the reins. He drove home after a sale once from Hastings to Scaynes Hill, about 47 miles, remarking at the finish that he thought "he had given his old mare a twister." A much talked-of incident was his driving through, or over, Offham pay-gate. He was driving his father at the time and the horse bolted. Finding he could not pull up at the closed gate, he whipped the animal and dashed at the obstruction, smashing it in two and getting through. He remarked to his father, "That's the way to save the toll," but the reply he got was, "That's all very well, but I'll thank you never to try that experiment again with me, Ned." He drove so fast and fearlessly that people were afraid to ride with him, and nothing pleased him better than to get a nervous passenger by his side in his cart. One man, who unwittingly accepted his offer of a ride, remarked that he had never been overturned in his life. "Oh, that's easily managed," said Mr. Drawbridge, and driving over a heap of flints both he and his friend were soon sprawling across the highway. On one occasion Mr. Drawbridge knocked over the pump on Newick Green, which has not been erected since. He broke his collar bone in that spill. One dark and stormy night he drove up to the Five Bells, at Chailey, his old sale manager, Mr. James Brooker, being in the cart with him. He drove so close to the house that his man's head and the rods of the cart went through the windows. He backed out and said, "Well, Brooker, I don't think we'll stop now; they won't know who it was," and drove home. Next day, however, he found the people at the inn well knew who it was.—*Grocer's Review*.

FAITHFUL BANK CLERKS.

Occasionally the public is startled by the defalcation of a bank clerk, and a good deal is made of the circumstance in the press and in social circles. Usually the one who has gone wrong stood well in the community, was respectably connected, with family ties, a member of some orthodox church, a leader of the choir, or superintendent of a Sunday school. People wonder how one with such environment could go astray. The fact that so many of those who do wander in these forbidden paths sustained such respectable affiliations is no reflection on these conditions, but rather confirms

the view of their necessity in order to gain access to places of trust and responsibility. The superficial observer at once condemns the whole system of ethics and morals as a safeguard to wrong-doing, but those who stop to take the second sober thought do not lay the blame for the evil course upon the standard of right living so generally conceded and so generally demanded as necessary to the procurement of these places of opportunity. They trace the cause to its proper source, namely, the failure to live up to the standard by which the position was secured.

After all, the number of bank clerks who go astray, compared with the number who do not, is an infinitesimal percentage of the number employed in these positions, all of whom have the same temptations and the same opportunities to appropriate funds not their own as the few who do that sort of thing. Take the savings banks of this State as a limited illustration in this particular. There are now fifty-seven of these institutions in active operation here. They are the custodians of many millions of dollars. Each bank employs from two to twenty clerks. There are probably 500 of these employees in these banks. All do not have the same access to the money on hand. The tellers handle all that comes in or goes out. In 1892, over \$200,000,000 in money went over the counters of these banks in the form of deposits or withdrawals. That was the largest sum ever handled by these institutions. So far as the public knows, every cent of that vast sum was faithfully accounted for. What is true of the clerks in the savings banks is equally true of the clerks in the commercial banks of the State, where the amount of money handled last year was much larger.—*San. Fran. Bulletin*.

Dealing with this subject, Rhodes' *Journal of Banking* says: "It is undoubtedly true that no class of men in commercial pursuits are so uniformly honest and trustworthy as bank clerks. This can be accounted for by the fact that they are, as a rule, well-bred, educated, and possessed of gentlemanly instincts. In the *Journal's* opinion the wrongdoing of the few bank clerks who fall can in a majority of cases be traced to poor pay and to extraordinary temptations when under pressure. Pay the bank clerk a fair salary, and under proper safeguards peculation will rarely be heard of."

—Aluminum horseshoes have been tried with remarkably successful results, it is said, by the Russian government. As an experiment, a few horses of the Finland Dragoons were shod with one aluminum shoe and three iron shoes each. The result showed that the aluminum shoes preserved the foot better than the iron ones. None of the aluminum shoes broke and they were used over again for re-shoeing.

—There is an occasional protest against the excessive investment in electric adventures. At present there is what may be called an electric boom, but some of the "boomers" will be considerably shocked if things go on as at present. Electric lines of railway are being pushed in Massachusetts in places in which they will never pay. In various small towns in that State over one million of dollars have been invested in electric lighting, and the investment is now paying one per cent., to say nothing of the future of renewals and repairs.—*Boston Globe*.

—A meeting of journalists resident in Dundee, was held lately, in connection with a proposal to form a branch of the Institute of Journalists. It was ultimately agreed that it was desirable to have a branch of the Institute formed for Dundee and the east of Scotland. In the event of the necessary number of journalists being found willing to co-operate, it was decided that Mr. Charles Russell, editor of the *Glasgow Herald* and president of the Institute, should be invited to preside at next meeting, and that Mr. Herbert S. Cornish, secretary of the Institute, should be asked to attend.

—In a criticism of the art features of the Chicago World's Fair in the *Review of Reviews* for June, Mr. Knauff says: "The technical standard of the Canadian exhibit is not far behind the English, though, of course, its small size practically precludes its containing a single masterpiece; but a uniform excellence like this is an earnest of the formation of a school in future, just as the uniform quality of the Swedish exhibit is more to be honored for its promise than its realization."