

## OBITUARIES.

### REV. EZRA ADAMS STAFFORD, D.D., LL.D.

Dr. Stafford was born in the County of Elgin, Province of Ontario, in the year 1839. He was educated in that county, and after teaching school for a time, was received on probation for the ministry of the Methodist Church, in the year 1860. His first appointments were the Warwick, Arkona and Ingersoll Circuits. In 1863 he entered Victoria College as a student; was ordained in 1864, and was stationed at Mooretown. His subsequent appointments in that region were at Newbury, Kingsville and Petrolia. In 1874 he was transferred to the Montreal Conference, where he remained nine years, for the first three years as pastor of the Dominion Square Church, Montreal, the next three at the Dominion Methodist Church, Ottawa, and then for a second term at his former church in Montreal. During this period he was for several years elected chairman of these two districts respectively, and in 1882 was appointed President of the Montreal Conference. In 1883 he went to Winnipeg as pastor of Grace Church, and in 1884, when the Manitoba and North-West Conference was organized, was made its first president. After a stay of two years in Winnipeg, he came to Toronto, and was stationed for three years at the Metropolitan Church, and three years at Sherbourne Street Church. While at the latter, he was in 1888, elected President of the Toronto Conference. In June, 1891, having been transferred to the Niagara Conference, he was placed in charge of Centenary Church, Hamilton, where after a short period of service in which he drew many to his ministry, he passed to his reward above. His eminent ability was fully recognized by his brethren. He was a member of the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada in 1878, 1882, 1883, 1886 and 1890. In 1880, he took the degree of B.A., at Victoria University; in 1883, the degree of LL.B. was conferred upon him, and in 1886, after examination, he became an LL.D. In 1888, he represented the Canadian Church at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and gave a noble, memorable address before that august body at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York.

Dr. Stafford was a close and diligent student all through the years of his active ministry. His mind was of a keen inquiring character, eagerly entering into all fields of knowledge open to him. Early learning to think for himself, he was kept from blindly bowing to any idol the world of philosophy or theology might set up. He would not accept any creed or dogma, simply because his text-books taught it. Having a hatred of shams and an inveterate dislike to ruts, he aimed at originality; and to this perhaps were largely owing the interest and suggestiveness of his public discourses and private conversations. His teaching was the delight of students, and yet many who were not students heard him gladly because of the freshness of his thoughts and the quaintness of his illustrations. His largeness and kindness of heart were known to many, and his views of Christian liberty were broad and generous. His sympathy overleaped denominational barriers, and he longed for the union of Christian bodies under the standard of Christian charity and liberty. "It has always been my ambition," he said, a few hours before his death, "to have the same love in my heart as brought the Saviour from such a distance to die for me. I have had a measure of that love, and consequently I feel enmity to no one. That love has made everything pure to me."

His last illness was comparatively short, and his end came unexpectedly. Though feeling somewhat feeble when he arrived in Hamilton last July, he faithfully attended to his pulpit work until within five weeks of his death.