

Obituary

SUBDEN DEATH—LITTLE YORK, P. E. I.

In this lovely death of a sudden and startling character have been very prevalent lately.

Not long since, one person rose in the morning, and feeling rather unwell, lay down again upon her bed, fell asleep, and awoke no more!

While speaking at her funeral, we said it is possible that some one here will die as suddenly, and very soon—in a few days afterwards, a man from that congregation was suddenly surprised by the unwelcome visitor, and was hurried into eternity!

Soon after that an aged mother became suddenly ill, and being put to bed, died without speaking again!

More recently Mrs. Cook, feeling rather unwell, went to market, intending to see the doctor—felt better on the road; but on reaching town, was suddenly seized with death!

She was taken to a friends home, and after a few utterances of prayer and praise, she died in the arms of her friends, and children's children, and a large circle of friends to mourn her departure.

Other deaths quite as sudden have also occurred, striking home the truth—"In the midst of life we are in death," and speaking these admonitory words to each, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh," and yet—

"How unaccounted we go,
Upon the brink of death."

To these solemn events must be added another.

MRS. VESSEY, LITTLE YORK, P. E. I. Elizabeth, the beloved wife of Robert Vessey, senior, was born in Yorkshire, England, in the year 1804, and emigrated to this Island when about the age of thirteen years.

It is a pleasure to find her name upon the Church roll for a period of twenty years. The tickets of her membership have been carefully preserved, and her signatures, and many faithful ministrations who have labored on the circuit, December, 1848, is the date of the first ticket received "on trial" from the Rev. E. Butterell.

Her Christian course appears to have been steady and consistent. To the cause of Christ she was devoted and liberal—to the Ministers her house was ever open, and her table kindly spread.

Her last illness was short, but very severe—On the Sabbath before she died, the writer had the pleasure of visiting her for conversation and prayer. She said, "I have had a close fight with the enemy; but to-day, during the time of service, my soul came off victorious, and now I am happy." She certainly appeared unusually calm and cheerful. Smiling upon us, she rejoiced aloud, saying "I love the Lord, I love his people, and I love his ways." Shortly after this her sufferings returned; but in the interval of ease she sweetly sang—

"My Father's house is built on high," &c.
A few hours before she expired she said—"I'm happy—I'm going home to heaven"—and so died our beloved sister, on the 5th of August, 1868—aged 64; leaving an aged partner, and a large circle of relatives and friends, who sorrow, not without hope of meeting her in the skies.
J. WINTERBOTHAM,
Charlotteleaven, P. E. I., Aug. 1868.

Provincial Ecclesian.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 9, 1868.

Support of the Gospel.

The estimates made by the Ministers and Stewards of our Connexion, in the several Financial District Meetings just held, have doubtless confirmed the anticipations entertained at the Fredericton Conference of heavy losses to be borne by the Ministers on the dependent circuits during the current year.

The aggregate amount of unpaid circuit deficiencies for last year was upwards of \$8000; and how to prevent so heavy a burden being endured year after year is worthy of the serious and prayerful consideration of all our people.

It must be admitted that the rates of Ministerial allowance sanctioned by our Conference are exceedingly moderate; indeed quite too much so, considering the present cost of living. Every claim according to the recognized scale were fully met, the wants of our brethren would be, even then, but scantily supplied. Methodism has never at any time afforded facilities to her ministers for the acquisition of wealth. She has under the most favorable circumstances barely ensured to them a competence. But with the altered circumstances of the times, and the increased cost of many articles for domestic use, the Minister who receives all his claims paid according to the recognized scale, when he is not willing to run the risk of getting your pay, though the means are in your own hands, it would seem, you are willing that your pastor should take the risk on him, without any means of relief. Perhaps you say, "We would borrow it," but nobody will trust us, in behalf of the society? Then it appears, when you can borrow it of nobody else, you will borrow of your pastor, at all events, even without consent, which is done, by keeping it back from him, when he cannot help himself.

"The fact is, if the stewards are awake to this business, and begin in season, and pursue the subject with system and energy, the work will always be done. At least, let them not be afraid of responsibility. This might be a sacrifice, but God would not let them suffer for their noble devotedness to his cause. Hear what the apostle says to those who administered to his wants: 'I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God; but my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.'"

"After all, there will be but little difficulty in paying the preacher, where the steward and other officers do their duty. The following words of an English preacher may seem severe; but are they not true? 'I know of no spirit, but that everything depends on the spirit of the steward. One narrow-minded man among them, will often prevent all the rest, and the whole people, from doing their duty towards their minister. I know of no way by which that man can escape the condemnation of Christ, for robbing the minister, not only of what he himself owed to his support, but also of what he prevented others from giving, except by retiring from an office, for which the soul of a niggard is unfit, or of obtaining from Christ a generous heart, or like the steward's own, that the laborer is worthy of his support. If the word be preferred, which is to common promptly, should be regularly continued through the year. And at the close of the Conference year, all his allowance should be made up. In this way, the preacher would be kept from needless anxiety, his family would be comfortable, and the people happy. And in this way only, shall we be able to obtain and keep a talented, holy, and useful ministry among us."

"I shall now consider the second question submitted to me—'What is the duty of Methodist travelling preachers, in view of their scanty support, &c.'?"

I suppose the meaning of this question to be—'Should a Methodist travelling preacher, in view of the miserable support which he is likely to receive while he lives, and with the prospect of little or nothing for his family when he is dead, continue to travel? or shall he leave the active ministry, and, by other means, make provision for those who are dependent upon him for his support?' With this understanding of the question, I answer, He should not leave the ministry.

"value received," signed by a number of persons, "jointly and severally," each one, in case of the failure of the rest, would be held responsible for the whole amount, both in law and justice. How far does the present case differ from what it would be if a note of hand were given? It is true, the members of a religious community do not put their names to an obligation generally, though that is sometimes the case. But what then? If they are not bound in law, are they not upon moral principles? Is not each one bound to see the moral contract with the preacher, fulfilled? And does not each man, who regularly attends his ministry, say as much, by his presence? Each man knows, or ought to know, that so long as he encourages the minister to proceed with his part of the contract, he himself is bound to meet the other part, or to see that it is met by the whole society. "Will a man rob God?" To this we perhaps, say, No. But do we not forget that Jesus will say, in his day of reckoning, "In as much as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me?" Is it not as wrong in the sight of God, to withhold from a man his just rights, when we are slayers in the benefits of the contract, and when we publicly and constantly consent to it, as it would be if we had put our names to it, with pen and paper?

"I am aware that many do not take the same view of this subject. But why should they not? Ought there not to be responsibility somewhere? Shall the preacher stand with a people, and labor faithfully, while his family suffers for the necessities of life? Or shall he get in debt without a prospect of paying for what he buys? Will it support him, or pay his debts, to have his hearers, for whom he has been laboring, say to him, at the end of the year, 'My brother, I am really sorry we have not been able to raise more for you. We meant to do it, but we did not. It has been very hard times all round. I hope you will fare better where you go next year?' And how many years can a preacher live on such sympathy as this, while he does not receive more than half, or at most, two thirds of his support?

"The very persons who will make such remarks as the above, will consider themselves abused if they do not have a man stationed with them of the first talents in the conference. Talents that would do honor to any profession; the highest reward. Is all this as it should be? How does it appear to Him who has said, 'Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth?'"

On the necessity of advance payment to Ministers, the following is apposite:—The stewards should furnish the preacher with a portion of his allowance, for immediate use. It is both impolitic and unjust to neglect it, because it is always more difficult to raise these supplies, the longer they are delayed. Begin in season and everything will go on easily. Let every one know, and feel, that something must be done at once, and all will be ready as a thing of course. The difficulty in raising a preacher's support is, generally, because it is delayed, which the belief it will do, if he is only paid at the end of the year. But when the end comes, many are unable to pay, who might have paid before. And many will think that their individual position is a heavy one; and content themselves with paying, perhaps, one half, when they would have paid the whole without complaint, if they had paid a quarter at a time, and that in advance.

"The stewards need to work by system, and one part of that system should be, to have the payments in advance quarterly, monthly, or weekly, and to verify one claim that this is expected."

"Perhaps the stewards will say—'We would make early advances to the preacher, but we have not circuit funds.' Then collect some. But they say—'We cannot collect any at present.' Then advance your own. 'But we have none of our own.' Then borrow some. 'Who has security that we should get our pay again?' The same persons that would be the preacher's security, if he had to borrow, for the want of his pay, if there is security for him, there is the same for you; and if there be none for you, there is of course none for him. And while you are not willing to run the risk of getting your pay, though the means are in your own hands, it would seem, you are willing that your pastor should take the risk on him, without any means of relief. Perhaps you say, 'We would borrow it,' but nobody will trust us, in behalf of the society? Then it appears, when you can borrow it of nobody else, you will borrow of your pastor, at all events, even without consent, which is done, by keeping it back from him, when he cannot help himself.

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1. Because, if God has called him to the gospel ministry, who is unto him if he do not attend to it.

2. The ruin of souls may be the consequence of his giving up the ministry. Paul in addressing himself to one engaged in the ministry, says, "continue therein, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

3. He has by the solemn imposition of hands, and was always considered to be a true reformer. We would not be guilty of speaking a word against Mr. Bell, for as far as we know, he is of blameless reputation, but we are glad that Mr. W. carried the election; we know him to be a good man, and whilst he is a Methodist, and there are too few of the class to which he belongs, that in some instances which have come under our observation, some of our people, by the manner in which they have voted both at Municipal and Parliamentary elections, have acted unwisely, and have added in putting men into office, who have done their utmost to injure the church to which we belong. We therefore rejoice when we see a gentleman returned to Parliament whom we know to be a true Methodist, because we are sure that he will be, "the friend of all and the enemy of none."

In the mercantile community there has been great excitement respecting what is called "the silver question." In regard to Toronto, where the merchants entered into an agreement that they would take no silver but at a discount: 10 per cent. on large coin, and 10 per cent. on small pieces. Other cities and towns have followed in the wake, and various articles, pro and con have appeared in our daily journals, and the subject. Doubtless great inconvenience has been experienced at the abundance of silver have had to suspend their additional price, and the merchants entered into an agreement that they would take no silver but at a discount: 10 per cent. on large coin, and 10 per cent. on small pieces. Other cities and towns have followed in the wake, and various articles, pro and con have appeared in our daily journals, and the subject. 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