


In Memoriam.

N the evening of Saturday, October 12th, the Reverend GEORGE M. ARMSTRONG entered into rest, in the seventy-third year of his age, and the fiftieth of his ministry. With one exception (Rev. D. B. Parnter) he was the oldest Clergyman in the Diocese.

MR. ARMSTRONG was born July 24th, 1817, at Belize, Bay of Honduras, where his father, Rev. John Armstrong, was then stationed as British Chaplain. His education in early manhood was chiefly at King's College, London, and St. John's College, Cambridge.

At the age of twenty-three years he was ordained Deacon by Bishop Strachan, of Toronto. Two years later, in 1842, he was ordained Priest, and instituted Rector of Louth, Ontario. In November, 1844, he married Octavia, the eighth child of Charles Bowman, an English Barrister. Subsequently, MR. ARMSTRONG was appointed Rector of Christievillie, in the Diocese of Montreal, where he laboured very faithfully for five years.

In connection with his removal to St. John, the following paragraph, from the columns of a St. John newspaper, dated December 22nd, 1852, will be of interest:

"We learn that all that part of the city lying north of Union Street has been set off from Trinity Parish by the Rev. I. W. D. Gray, Rector, preparatory to its being erected by law into a new Parish for ecclesiastical purposes. The Rev. GEORGE M. ARMSTRONG, late of the Diocese of Montreal, who has been nominated to the District by Dr. Gray, and received the Bishop's license, entered upon his Pastoral duties on Sunday last. The reverend gentleman preached a most impressive Sermon from 2 Thess. iii. 1. After urging the duty and importance of prayer, and showing its manifold advantages to both minister and people, MR. ARMSTRONG alluded to his new relation to the congregation, his need of their prayers, his heartfelt desire to promote their spiritual welfare, and his earnest hope that the Word of God might have free course and be glorified among them and by them."

The first work undertaken by the newly appointed Rector of St. Mark was the construction of a stone Sunday School House. Owing to circumstances beyond his control he was not able to erect a building of any architectural pretensions. He once said with a smile: "They call my School House the 'root house!' I hope the 'root' of much good will always be found there." Surely it was even so. The doors of that little building have been freely opened to promote the interest of everything tending to the advancement of God's glory and the good of His Church. On various occasions the Synod and Church Society of the Diocese have there assembled, and what a host of

good works have been there originated and carried on during the past thirty-five years!

At the time of the terrible outbreak of cholera in 1854, MR. ARMSTRONG threw himself fearlessly into the midst of the infection. For three weeks he scarce removed his clothes, going in and out amidst the dead and dying, speaking words of comfort and consolation and good cheer. Frequently when others hesitated to expose themselves he assisted the undertaker in carrying the dead from the house. Tenderly did he sympathize with those who survived, relieving their temporal wants as well as ministering to their spiritual needs. The Protestant Orphan Asylum, in the establishing of which he was largely instrumental, grew out of the visit of the cholera, many children being left thereby orphans in destitute circumstances. Through no self-seeking, but in real humility of mind, animated by love for the Lord Jesus, his Master, and love for those for whom He died, MR. ARMSTRONG won the hearts of all.

About this time he began to hold cottage meetings in the eastern part of his Parish, and with the assistance of Mr. T. W. Daniel, Mr. S. D. Berton, and others, soon after established a large and flourishing Sunday School in the old Orange Hall on Brussels Street. Subsequently, the erection of St. Mary's Church, Waterloo Street, was commenced. It was consecrated in 1860.

In his work MR. ARMSTRONG did not confine his interest to his Parish alone, but was active in promoting the work of the Church in the Synod and Diocesan Church Society. In 1878, he was honoured by the Bishop appointing him to act as his Commissary during his absence in England.

The period covered by his ministry was one of the most eventful in the history of the Church, through the whole of which he clung most conscientiously and tenaciously to Evangelical principles. And while his earnest contention for "the faith" as he had received it led him at times to stand aloof from movements where he would have been heartily welcomed, yet his holiness of life, integrity of character, and power of his ministry, won for him the respect and esteem of all. It is worthy of note that at the time of the movement in favour of establishing a Reformed Episcopal Church in St. John, it was strongly opposed by MR. ARMSTRONG, and his influence did much to prevent the movement from assuming large proportions in the community.

Having been so long in the city he had become one of the most familiar figures at all religious as well as philanthropic and benevolent gatherings.