

THE LATE MR. WILLIAM R. SUTHERLAND.

Some time ago we were called to deplore the sudden death of Mr. William R. Sutherland of Ramsay. His loss left a great blank in his own immediate neighborhood. In very early manhood his heart was won over to the love and service of the Great Redeemer, and, ever since, he manifested a cordial interest in those things, whereby his Lord might be glorified, and His cause advanced. When the writer stood in the relation of his pastor, he has many a time, been indebted to him for kindly and efficient help in the discharge of ministerial duty. He did not grudge time and labor spent for such a purpose; winter and summer his conveyance was always ready to enable us to reach places where work was to be done. And then there was the cordial hospitality of his house, ever open to receive his minister with a ready welcome. He took a foremost place in his own neighborhood in the prosecution of every good work. In the Sabbath School he held the place of a teacher for many years. There is, and has been for long, a very efficient temperance organization in the region where he dwelt, which for years, has been the means of immense benefit to a wide district. Of this organization he was counted worthy, once and again to fill the first place. A few years ago he was elected to the office of the Eldership, and during all the time he was spared thereafter, fulfilled the duties belonging to that honorable position.

In all this we give but a few imperfect outlines of a Christian man's life. Such a life happily is not rare among those who confess Christ. There are many such to be found amongst the godly office-bearers and members of our Church. What a well-spring of blessing these quiet, useful, and godly lives prove to all within their influence. Sometimes it is only by the more luxuriant foliage, the greater abundance and beauty of the wild plants, and the fresher green of the herbage, that we detect the presence of the hidden fountain. And so should a Christian life beautify all within its sphere. So shall it indeed, for is it not written. "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass."

The subject of our sketch was happily married to one like-minded with himself. By the time that he had reached the prime of manhood, he saw growing up around him a fine family of sons and daughters. His course seemed to be opening out into a promise of larger fruitfulness, and his character to be endowed with a growing power, when in God's all-wise providence, he was suddenly stricken with fatal illness. Those about him could hardly realise the sudden danger. He himself though surprised was, not dismayed. It did not take long for him to hold himself ready. Within two days he was taken away, commending those dear to him to that care which he had found so sufficient for himself in the hour of need. He died 26th March, 1872. He was in his forty-second year.

We sometimes are in amaze before such a dispensation of Providence. How a life such as this of growing fruitfulness and power should be ended so suddenly, and as we are apt to say, so prematurely! In our view it is sometimes so; and we think of our great loss, and of all the unfulfilled promise now buried for ever. An *early* death may be the lot of God's children, but it cannot be *premature*, before they are ripe. When our Lord likens the kingdom of God to seed sown in a field, and growing up secretly, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," we find these significant words following. "But when the fruit is brought forth, or