

[Silver, Walter P.]

Death of Rev. W. P. Silver

BR. AUSTIN:—It becomes my painful duty to announce to the readers of our paper the departure from earth of another in our ministry. The spirit of our beloved brother, Walter P. Silver, has left its clayey tabernacle and soared away to its home in heaven.

The deceased was born in Brunswick, Rensselaer county, in this State, and at the tender age of three months, his father was torn from him by the ruthless hand of the fell destroyer [tuberculosis, then called consumption]. When but a small boy upon the marriage of his mother [Mary] to Mr. Henry H. Heydorn, he removed with her to Depeyster, in this (St. Lawrence) county, which the principal portion of the time since has been his residence.

In his youth he favored and I believe united with the Methodist denomination; but subsequently becoming satisfied that the Almighty has not given his creatures such an agency, knowing as he must, if such shall be the final result, as a portion of them will abuse to their endless ruin, while he at the same time desired the salvation of all, Br. S. joined the Congregationalists. Further investigation convinced him that a being of infinite power, wisdom and goodness had not created one of the human race, foreseeing or designing that his existence would prove to him an immortal curse, but that his goodness must desire the final blessedness of all, his wisdom devise the means for its promotion, and his power accomplish it. Thus was he led to rejoice that eventually the whole world shall be saved.

Rejecting the opinion that if this sentiment is true it ought not to be preached, but believing that it should be proclaimed to the utmost boundaries of the earth, he immediately commenced the work of preparing for its public dissemination. This was about four years since. Previous to the meeting of the St. Lawrence Association of Universalists in 1850, he had delivered his Master's message of salvation to good acceptance. He there exhibited such evidence of his intellectual attainments as are usually demanded, and satisfactory proof of his unexceptional moral and Christian character, and obtained fellowship at that time. He subsequently preached a year in Depeyster and vicinity, so far as I know, to general satisfaction. He then removed to Canada West [now Ontario province], where for a year he labored alternately in two places. Of the result of his exertions there, I have no particular information. During the past winter he taught school in Madrid, and at the commencement of his last sickness he was preaching half time in Massena, and a portion or the whole of the remainder in the surrounding regions. His efforts in that section were of so short duration that it would be difficult to form a correct opinion of their effect. Nor is it easy to justly

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estimate the value of his future exertions in our cause had his life and health been spared. Suffice it to say that in the opinion of not a few well qualified to judge, with continued industry and inflexible perseverance they would have been honorable to himself, creditable to christianity, and decidedly beneficial to the world.

In March or April last, his throat and lungs became somewhat affected, and his health impaired, by excessive labors in sometimes preaching three discourses upon the Sabbath; and from that cause, or others, or both, he was seized by a fever, which raged, I believe some weeks, and was then subdued. For a short time he slowly improved, but soon a gradual decline commenced and continued until his death. This occurred at his former residence in Depeyster, to which he had been removed but a few days previous, on the morning of the 6th of July. Surrounded by a fond mother and affectionate sisters and others near and dear to him, in full possession of his reason and firm in the faith he had preached of a happy immortality for all the human race beyond the grave, he calmly and quietly fell asleep in Jesus, and breathed his life out sweetly there. He was in the 29th year of his age.

On the following day an immense concourse of people assembled at his funeral, and in accordance with his desire, were addressed by the writer. Text, by request, Tim. iv: 6-8 inclusive. He was a member of the order of Odd Fellows, and their service was read at his grave. I enclose the resolutions of the Lodge to which he belonged, concerning his death, for publication with this notice [omitted here]. May God sanctify this afflictive dispensation of his providence to the good of his relations, the societies and friends with whom he labored, and our common cause.

J. T. Goodrich

*Christian Ambassador*, Auburn NY, Sat. 3 Sep 1853

Transcribed on 20 Dec 2012 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY