

[Remington, Seth Williston]

## THE LATE SETH W. REMINGTON

The recent demise of this worthy and esteemed citizen is the ending of an earthly career—a retrospect of which is due to the world—profitable for its life lessons, and will be appreciated most by those who knew his best.

He was born in Rupert, Bennington co. Vt., Jan. 1, 1807. Seven years later his father's family moved to Henrietta, Monroe co., N.Y. He was but fourteen years of age when his father died. At the age of 19 he married Maria Pickering of Hanover, Chautauqua co. N.Y., a descendant of the Pickering of Revolutionary fame. Seven children were the fruit of this marriage, three sons and two daughters of whom are living. One died in infancy. His son Co. S[eth] P. Remington served in the late war, and for a number of years was collector of the port of Ogdensburg, and died in Feb. 1880. His son William is postmaster at Canton. The youngest son, L. Z., holds an office of high trust in the department of public instruction at Albany.

At the age of 28 years, the subject of this sketch began preparations for the Universalist ministry. His first settlement as pastor was in Boston, Erie county. Here he established a strong society, built a church and saw it paid for, and remained there four years. His next location was Churchville, Monroe county. Here he remained six years, and by his energy succeeded in seeing the church freed from a large indebtedness. Leaving a large society in a prosperous condition, he removed to Geneva, in the county of Ontario, where he preached to good acceptance for four years, and then accepted a call to Binghamton, N.Y., where he saw the church repaired and decorated, and the society strengthened and prosperous. He then accepted a call to Canton, St. Lawrence county, one of the strongest societies of the denomination in Northern New York. He had labored there for two years when the strength of his personal magnetism and the geniality of his social nature were demanded in another direction.

In the founding of the St. Lawrence University, his services seemed indispensable. The legislature of the state had promised the institution an appropriation on condition that the denomination should furnish a given amount of funds. The experiment had been tried and the funds required were not forthcoming. Many had become disheartened, and a dark cloud hung over the enterprise. The prospect of securing the location at Canton had become decidedly dim. In this crisis, Mr. Remington came to the rescue. With untiring zeal he canvassed all the available portions of the state, and in an almost incredible short period raised \$90,000, the sum required. His subscription list was headed by the name of Stephen Johnson of Depauville, Jefferson county. The many young men who have completed their preparatory classical or theological education at that institution, and are now in the enjoyment of its fruits, may not be aware of how much of their prosperity they owe to the indomitable energy of this pioneer exerted in their behalf.

About this time, the denomination was making an effort to establish the "Christian Ambassador," a paper to be under the control of the state convention. After much solicitation, Mr. Remington consented to travel for a season for this paper. In one year he added 2,000 new subscribers. He afterwards preached for a season in the town of Theresa, but having spent the best of his life in denominational work, he drifted into

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business pursuits and interests, some of which were successful and some were not. During this period he wrote much for the secular press; and some of his articles on finance, etc. were copied into the leading journals of the state.

About two years ago, in the absence of the minister who failed to fulfill his appointment at Henderson, Mr. Remington supplied the desk. From that moment he grew in favor with the society worshipping there. They secured his services, and he continued to preach to them until laid low by his last sickness. The old relation of pastor and people seemed to him the best and most satisfactory. A strong attachment grew up on both sides, and at his funeral, all were mourners. The services were conducted in a most impressive and affecting manner by Rev. L. Rice of Watertown.

The wife of his youth departed this life some three years since, and in the family of Mrs. Aspinwall, where he boarded, he had become endeared, as he always was wherever he sojourned, and they mourn him as one of their number.

Mr. Remington was an original thinker. Logical in his reasoning, his premises were sound, and from them he reasoned direct to conclusions in a most convincing manner. Though he died at the age of 74, his last sermons were fully up to the spirit of the age, and the themes he chose on which to discourse were on the great line of progress and scientific research in the world's newest and freshest thought. He could not have died surrounded by truer and warmer friends. For nearly four months he had been a sufferer, but his victory over the pangs of disease and death was triumphant and complete. He chose for the text of his funeral discourse the passage, "O death, where is thy sting?" which in Mr. Rice's able manner was conclusively shown to be lost in victory. His youngest son remarked, "My father was the pleasantest companion I ever had..."

In his early youth Mr. Remington belonged to the Baptist church. His family connections were mostly of that persuasion. He reasoned himself into a change of belief, and in later years adopted the most advanced forms of doctrine of the denomination to which he attached himself, discarding all extremes. In the field of mental labor his life was a success, as improved conditions fully show. Contact with his hopeful and cheerful nature was a blessing everywhere. He seemed to have a method of getting out of life all the good there is in it, and of making others hopeful and happy. He was liberal and generous to a fault. He understood human nature, its wants and its needs, was in sympathy with it, and his genial warmth and friendship were not put on, but spontaneous. [illegible sentences] They are gems of thought and affection that can never grow dim.

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