

DEATH OF HON. WILLIAM REDDICK.

The joy-inspiring beams of the most genial sun March had yet given us had barely spread over the city last Sunday morning when they were chilled by the announcement that William Reddick had breathed his last. He had been sick for about a year. His illness commenced with a bad cold, which grew into a lung fever, complicated with Bright's disease of the kidneys. Then his heart became affected, and six months ago eczema was added to his afflictions—a painful skin disease, covering his whole body with little boils. Not all these accumulated disorders, however, could wholly quench his indomitable spirit, and Mr. Reddick spent comparatively little of his time in the sick room, taking almost daily drives in his carriage, and appearing frequently on the streets on foot. At one time last fall he felt so well that he attended a meeting of the board of trustees of the Insane Asylum at Kankakee, of which he was a member, but it gave him a set-back from which he never wholly rallied. Lately, however, he imagined himself so much improved that he had planned another visit to Kankakee on Monday, going thence to Springfield, and perhaps from there to the Arkansas springs. He had taken a severe cold, however, and his physician, on being told his plans, shook his head, Mr. Reddick remarking cheerfully, "we will see on Monday." This was on Saturday, his lungs being so affected that he breathed with difficulty. He passed a restless night, and rose as early as six o'clock next morning, dressing himself and coming down stairs. He went into the kitchen and washed, and then into his sitting room, dropping into his easy chair. About seven o'clock he was called to breakfast, but said he wanted none. At 8:10 a boy went into the room to look after the fire when he found Mr. Reddick leaning over in his chair, his hand touching the floor. Alarmed, the boy called for assistance, but when Mr. R. was raised gently back into the chair it was found that he was dead.

The news spread with lightning speed over the city,—the mayor and other prominent citizens hurried to the house,—the flags over the court house and other buildings were raised at half mast, and before 10 o'clock the entire city had put on the sombre hues of mourning.

A life of William Reddick could be made to fill an interesting and instructive volume, though our space will admit of but a very short sketch here. He was born in Ballymahack, county Down, Ireland, Oct. 31, 1812, and came to America with his parents in 1816. They settled first in New Jersey but soon afterwards moved to Zanesville, Ohio, where, in 1831, the father, James Reddick, died. In 1823 William went to Wheeling and learned to blow hollow ware. In 1827 he went to Brownsville, Pa., and learned the window glass trade, and in 1830 married Miss Ellen Jane Collins, of that city, who after 58 years of faithful widowhood was taken from

him July 5, 1888. In 1832 the pair went to Washington city, where Mr. Reddick blew glass until he had accumulated \$1000, with which, in 1835, he came to Illinois, "locating" on a farm in what is now Bruce township, in this county, and sustained by the help of a noble wife, the two made light of the hardships of the early settlers. In 1838 Mr. Reddick was elected to the honorable and responsible position of sheriff and collector of the county; and every two years thereafter, until 1846, he was re-elected. The office of collector in those days was of much more consequence than that of sheriff, and the times being "hard," Mr. R. no doubt laid the foundation of much of his large

the times being "hard," Mr. R. no doubt laid the foundation of much of his large personal popularity by his kindly advances he had made to hard-up taxpayers. In 1847 he was elected to the state senate, and again in 1870, and it was during this last term in that body that he introduced and succeeded in having adopted by both houses the noted temperance enactment which bears his name and is still in force in th's state, the salient features of which is that it holds the liquor seller responsible for the immediate injury inflicted by his trade. Other official positions held by Mr. R. were those of appraiser of canal lands in 1848 and trustee of the insane asylum at Kankakee as well as member of of the board of supervisors, to which he was frequently re-elected.

Having been all his life a consistant and active Democrat, his politics for the last 24 years were no doubt the chief bar to his higher political advancement, as he was often mentioned in connection with congress, the governorship, U. S. senator, &c., positions to which no doubt he would easily have attained but for the minority condition of the Democratic party.

As to his character, it may be said that he came from his Maker with a remarkable organisation both of body and mind. There was a sound, healthful, vigorous body, a marvelous piece of mechanism in itself and happily fitted for a peculiar mind. It was neither petted, pampered or fondled and indulged, but was allowed a natural development, and had wise, sober, rational care as the necessary means of activity and progress to the mind. To an uncommon degree this mind was controlled and governed by its reasoning powers. It was remarkably steady in its aim and purpose. There was great energy in its action. His thinking was intense and earnest on all practical matters, and with these he was chiefly conversant. There was in his mind a readiness for enterprise and adventure. He shifted about in his trade, learned merchant, and was always ready for any private or public station, always doing as he went along what he regarded as the fitting and right thing.

There was great will power. The thing he ought to do he would do, and do it successfully. In this marvelous characteristic note his abstinence, his abstemiousness, his practical and stern self-denial and self-control. Scarcely a tinge of self-indulgence of lower, baser (though possibly sinless) appetite and passion; no giving way to fashionable follies, no spasmodic devotee in popular conventions and proposed reforms, materialisms, spiritualisms. A philanthropist and humanitarian; he was not material for others' kindling wood, but chose wisely his own way to help others, and he did it with a hand no less generous than directed by sound judgment.

Equity was a feature of his mental make. He would do the right thing—wanted others should do it. He would not wrong men intentionally and was sorry to see them wrong themselves. It was a practical righteousness in him springing up in conscience and deriving vigor from his belief in God, for William Reddick was a reverent man. He had no respect for atheism and no patience with blatant infidelity. He respected all just law and all just compromise; yet he was no fanatic, wild enthusiast or devotee of any kind. All shams, hypocrisies, lies, impositions, falsehoods he repudiated with vehemence. But the great and time-honored verities of God and of righteous law and Christ's redemption and sabbath rest stood firm and immovable in his high regard.

He believed also in the family as a divinely righteous institution. The place of rest, the spring of influence and power in the state, the mold for children's character, the place for individual growth, planning of life's campaigns and the fruition of life's honors and successes, was to him the home.

It was, we believe, his sense of what the home needs and what it should and can be that made him so fixed and energetic in securing the far-famed Reddick Temperance Law. It was this, we believe that prompted him—how long ago we cannot tell—to make that most munificent provision for a public library in Ottawa; viz., that the home might have books—every home; the amplest resources, without cost, to make the home-life more intelligent and more attractive.

William Reddick, the poorest of poor boys, by what God made him to be, has prepared the way by a great provision to be a blessing to Ottawa and to the great county of LaSalle for all time to come.

Though classed as a Methodist, William Reddick was not, we believe, a member of any church organization in this city. In early life he met Alexander Campbell at Brownsville, where that celebrated divine had his school. By him Mr. Reddick was baptized and taken into full fellowship.