

## In Memoriam.

By the death of the Rev. James Simpson, LL.D., F.S.A., the Cumberland and Westmorland Archæological and Antiquarian Society has been deprived of its most valued and highly esteemed President. James Simpson was the son of Mr. William Simpson, of Lyth, in Westmorland, and was born there in August, 1819. He received his early education at Crosthwaite school, in the same county, and in 1839 he was appointed master of Shap school, erected and endowed in 1838, by William 1st Earl of Lonsdale, of the second creation ; whilst at Shap, he determined upon entering the ministry of the Church of England. With a view of his pursuit of the sacred calling he proceeded to University College, Durham, where in the year 1842 he was Junior Hebrew Prizeman, and in the following year he was Senior Prizeman for Hellenistic Greek and Greek Theology. In the same year he became Licentiate of Theology, and was appointed to the curacy of Chesterle-Street, in the county of Durham. After remaining there about two years he became curate of Morland, near Penrith, of which the Rev. W. Rice Markham, was vicar. In 1857, William the 2nd Earl of Lonsdale gave him the living of Shap, and subsequently, in 1863, his Lordship preferred him to Kirkby Stephen, where for nearly a quarter of a century he has been perhaps the most influential man in the district.

From an early period of his ministry Dr. Simpson entered heartily into educational work, and upon that

subject he became so eminent an authority that when Mr. W. E. Forster, M.P., was preparing his great measure dealing with elementary education, he frequently consulted the vicar of Kirkby Stephen, Dr. Simpson. It was as some acknowledgement of the valuable service that he had rendered in the cause of education that the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1872, conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. It may also be mentioned here that in 1874 he received the distinction of being appointed an honorary canon of Carlisle cathedral.

Dr. Simpson was so emphatically a many-sided man that it is hardly matter for surprise that he should have been deeply interested in the work of Poor Law administration. Since the establishment of the Poor Law Conferences at Gilsland he has seldom missed attending them and there his extensive experience of Poor Law administration, gave his opinions great weight.

Dr. Simpson was long connected with the Freemasons, and at one time held the post of Grand Chaplain of England, and in that capacity he officiated at the installation of the Prince of Wales as Grand Master, a few years ago. He also held civic office in connection with the Corporation of Appleby, of which he was several times Mayor.

Doctor Simpson became a magistrate for the county of Westmorland in 1859, and during the last twenty-five years he has been regular in his attendance at Petty Sessions. He was also seldom absent from the Quarter Sessions, where he took an active part in the transaction of county business, with almost every detail of which he became familiar. A year or two ago his brother magistrates appointed him Chairman of the Quarter Sessions in succession to the late Mr. Argles, and certainly they would have had some difficulty in finding amongst their number any one better qualified to discharge the duties of the office.

Notwithstanding Dr. Simpson's labours as a parochial clergyman, a Poor Law guardian, and a magistrate, he yet found opportunities to study antiquarian subjects, in some departments of which he enjoyed more than a British reputation. Canon Greenwell, in his work on "British Barrows," makes allusion to the labours of Dr. Simpson in that department, and gives the results of some of his investigations. Of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society, he was one of the founders, and was president of its council from the time of its formation in 1866, to his appointment in 1882 as President of the society, in succession to St. George Earl of Lonsdale, an office he retained up to the time of his death. He was present and took an active part in both its meetings of 1885. To his boundless energy the society owes much of its success: as an all round antiquary, and as an expositor and president at their meetings, his equal will be hard to find; while his shrewd common sense, great local knowledge, and keen sense of humour made him a genial check upon the eccentricities antiquaries are liable to fall into when they have imbibed a little too much learning. To his kindly supervision and criticism may be ascribed the comparative freedom of these Transactions from such blemishes.

For many years the doctor seemed to be possessed of a constitution of iron. In his prime he was capable of undergoing almost any amount of fatiguing work with impunity, and in such out-door exercises as walking over a fell he could leave younger men far in the rear. But some years ago his vigorous health became impaired, and it was only by the most resolute determination that, with a weakened frame, he was able, up to within a few weeks of his death, to discharge his many duties. About a fortnight before he died, he succumbed to repeated attacks of

weakness and rheumatic gout, since which each day found him gradually weaker. On Monday evening, March the 8th, 1886, he bade his friends good-bye, and about eight o'clock on Tuesday evening he quietly passed away, in his sixty-seventh year.

Long will it be before the members of this society cease to miss from their meetings that massive torso, that Whewell like head, and that genial presence.

The deceased gentleman was twice married—first, to Miss Potts, the only daughter of the late Mr. T. Potts, of Shap; and secondly, to Miss Carey, a sister of the lady of that name who has acquired some distinction in literature. He is survived by his wife, but leaves no family. To her, and to his father, Mr. William Simpson, the society would desire most sincerely to express its heartiest sympathy in their irreparable loss. His portrait is given with this issue of Transactions, and will form the frontispiece to this volume.

