

OBITUARY, 4/19/1894

Mr. Aaron Bell, one of our highly respected and esteemed farmers and citizens, died last Thursday night, April 12, 1894. His funeral took place in the Presbyterian church on Saturday, J. S. Butt officiating.

Mr. Bell was born in Washington, Mass., Sept. 12, 1820. When one year old his parents moved to Ohio, then called the far west. He was married to Miss Jane Collins, Oct. 20, 1842. They emigrated to Illinois in 1845—were pioneers in that country where they resided 25 years, after which they moved to Michigan, living there until May, 1889, when they took up their residence near Grotton.

He was converted when he was eighteen years old, having united with the church immediately. He has lived a good exemplary Christian life ever since. Nearly two years ago Mr. and Mrs. Bell celebrated their golden wedding, at which time a reunion of all their children took place.

In his last days of health, before his mental failure began, his greatest comfort was in reading his Bible and "Pilgrim's Progress." The poem following was the last thing he was able to read, and calling his daughter to his side he pointed to it with tearful eyes:

SWEET THOUGHTS OF THEE.

BY ANNA J. GRANNIS.

Give me sweet thoughts of thee,  
Savior, of thee,  
Through weary nights of pain,  
Comfort thou me.  
In midst of my distress,  
Come in thy tenderness,  
And let my soul possess  
Sweet thoughts of thee!  
While some in peaceful rest,  
Dream care away.

I, in my dreariness,  
Long for the day:  
Turn thou the dark to light,  
Put every doubt to flight,  
To trust thee day or night.  
Help me, I pray!

Thou too didst suffer pain,  
Know grief and loss;  
And thou who know no sin,  
Carried thy cross.  
Why should I shrink from mine?  
When I remember thine,  
My soul cannot repine.  
Ease seems but dross.

Give me sweet thoughts of thee,  
Savior, of thee!  
Through coming days and nights,  
Strengthen thou me;  
Till into endless day  
My spirit slips away,  
Oh, give me now I pray,  
Sweet thoughts of thee.

When asked two weeks ago how he felt; he said, "I am on my journey home, I am almost there."

His voice has ceased upon earth; is it not a praising voice above?

Can you imagine a voice speaking from heaven just after reaching there?

"And is this heaven? and am I here?  
How short the road! how swift the flight!  
I am all life! all eye! all ear!  
Jesus is here, my soul's delight."

Yes, how sweet, how inimitable, how perfect the rest yonder. A few days ago, sickness, trial, suffering; how exhausted! how weary!

But he speaks. Listen—

"I heard the voice of Jesus say;  
Come unto me and rest!  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down,  
Thy head upon my breast.  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
Weary, worn and sad;  
I found in him a resting place  
And he has made me glad."

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Mr. Bell leaves to mourn his loss, a wife, two sons and five daughters, two sons and one daughter having gone on before.