

The Covenanter Witness

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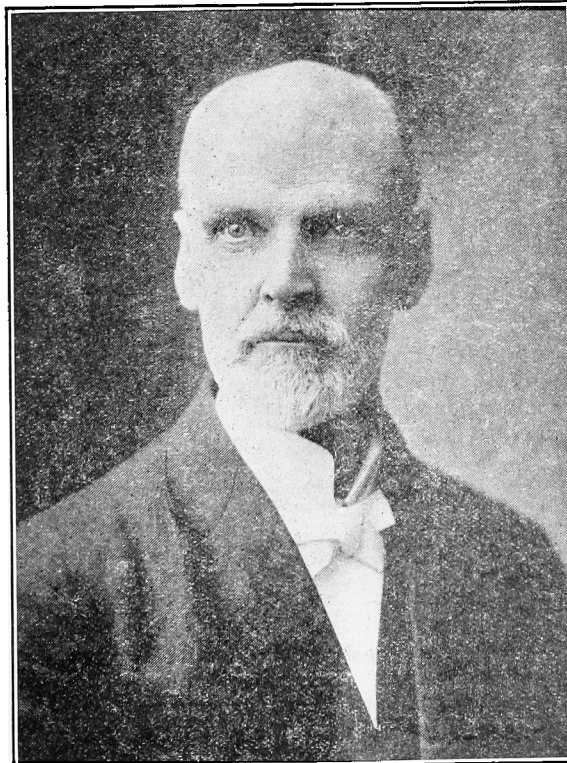
Volume I

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1928

Number 23

Rev. James Mitchell Foster

MR. FOSTER was born in Cedarville, Ohio, September 22, 1850. His education was received in the Cedarville public schools, Indiana University, and the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary. During his Seminary course, he was Superintendent of the Cedarville Schools for two years. He was licensed by Lakes Presbytery, April 12, 1876. He was ordained by the same Presbytery and installed pastor of the Cincinnati congregation December 27, 1877, where he continued for nine years. He was National Reform lecturer for five and one half years. Thereafter, he accepted a call to Second Boston where he continued for thirty-seven years, and until his death. His wife, Mrs. Laura Turner Foster, had preceded him home. Their seven children occupy important positions in life. Rev. S. Turner Foster, D.D., is pastor of a Presbyterian congregation (strongly Fundamental) in Carbondale, Pa. J. Paul is Secretary of the Boston Board of Trade. Harold is Head of Latin Department of Institution, Kansas City. Mrs. Emma Calderwood and Mrs. Edith Ellis are mothers training their children for Christ. Mrs. Hester Benner is wife of Professor Benner, President of Porto Rico University. Miss Rachel has important position in Martha Washington Institution, Washington, D. C. Their children rise up and call them blessed, for they received exceptional family, religious, and educational training, and in administration of a family purse



which required great watchfulness and self-denial. With some their works go before them, receiving wide publicity. "Verily they have their reward." With others, their works do follow them—their privations, their labors, their anxieties, their pleadings, their continual discouragements, their constant faith. It may justly be said, Mr. Foster was of the latter class. Passed by with little recognition,

he nevertheless toiled on in devotion to his Master and to his Master's cause. He made conscientious preparation for the pulpit and fed his congregation with the finest of the wheat. He was faithful in family visitation, which he sought to carry out every two years. For several years he preached one evening a week in Merrimac Mission where gather the poor, the lame, the halt, the blind. His great desire was to lift up Christ, and to entreat men to accept Him as their Saviour. He gave himself and all he had to the Redeemer's cause.

Mr. Foster was gifted as a writer. Many articles were in defence of truth. Many of a comforting character. If all were gathered, they

would fill several volumes. He loved his congregation. He loved his Church. He loved the people of God everywhere. He stood up in high places, as in Boston Ministers' meetings, and faithfully held forth the great unpopular principles and doctrines of the Word of God, and their application to the Nation and to private life. Many times he pleaded for God's Law before Committees of the Legislature.

Mr. Foster's work was not in building a large congregation; for however hard he labored and prayed, and however great his privations, he, as many others, fought a retreating battle until his congregation numbered but few. Some of the greatest failures are termed by the world "successes"; and some of the greatest successes are termed by the world and worldly Christians "failures." Not long before his departure the Pastor of Second Boston said: "I am content to leave the appraisal with God."

Through a long ministry of more than fifty years, sorely tried, but pressing forward, he labored and toiled in the heat of summer and the cold of winter. A few minutes before his death, he was holding forth the word of life, his last work, when God suddenly called, and he stepped out of the pulpit into heaven. The scarred and weather-beaten armor fell off as he was lifted out of the conflict to receive the crown of glory. "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore do they stand before the throne of God."

F. M. F.

The Funeral Service.

The funeral of Rev. James Mitchell Foster, pastor of the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church of Boston, Massachusetts, was held Wednesday afternoon, November 14, 1928, at 2:30 in the church, 40 Chambers Street, West End. Mr. Foster has been Pastor of that church for 37 years. The service was impressive, emphasizing the victory side of Mr. Foster's life and work. "To step directly from the pulpit into Heaven! What could be more glorious?" said Rev. Finley M. Foster, of New York City, in delivering the address.

The pallbearers were his three sons, Rev. S. Turner Foster, J. Paul Foster, and W. Harold Foster, and two sons-in-law, Mr. James Calderwood, of Somerville, and Mr. Howard Ellis, of Waltham, Massachusetts.

Rev. Mr. Foster was killed by an automobile Sabbath afternoon on Embankment Road, at 5:30 o'clock. He was crossing the road to reach the Esplanade to take his evening constitutional, not more than an hour after his afternoon service.

Mr. Foster was one of the best known clergymen in metropolitan Boston, and a leader in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of America. His work was of wide scope both within and outside his own denomination, carried on in such an unassuming, Christ-like way that probably his true worth will not be known extensively to men until God's record is made known.

He was born in Cedarville, Ohio, September 22, 1850. His ancestors were Scotch Covenanters who migrated to America and settled in Ohio. His grand-

father was Judge Samuel Kyle, Judge of the Court in Xenia, Ohio, for 33 years. His grandmother was the niece of President Andrew Jackson.

On September 24, 1878, he married Miss Laura Louise Turner, of Bloomington, Indiana, a classmate at Indiana University. She was one of the first women ever to graduate from that University, and was the daughter of Rev. Turner, pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, Indiana. Mrs. Foster died of heart disease in August, 1919, while riding in an automobile on her way to Boston from Hanson, where she had spent a month's vacation. While passing through the town of Whitman she fainted, and all efforts to revive her failed.

Rev. and Mrs. Foster are survived by seven children. Their first born, Roderick Foster, died in infancy. The other seven are living: Rev. S. Turner Foster, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Carbondale, Pennsylvania; Mrs. Emma Calderwood, Somerville, Massachusetts; Mrs. Edith Ellis, Waltham, Massachusetts; Miss Rachel Foster, Martha Washington Seminary, Washington, D. C.; Mr. J. Paul Foster, Boston Chamber of Commerce, Boston, Massachusetts; Mr. W. Harold Foster, Country Day School, Kansas City, Missouri, and Mrs. L. Hester Benner, University of Porto Rico, Porto Rico. These four daughters and three sons and twelve grandchildren survive Mr. Foster.

The service was in charge of Rev. Mr. Foster's brothers, Rev. Finley M. Foster, pastor of the Third Reformed Presbyterian Church, of New York City, and Rev. Henry G. Foster, pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church at Bellfontaine, Ohio. Rev. George S. Coleman, pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Cambridge, and Rev. W. J. McKnight, pastor of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church of Boston, also had parts in the service. The closing prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Foster's son, Rev. S. Turner Foster. Rev. Thomas R. Turner, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Quincy, Massachusetts, representing the Presbyterian Minister's Association of Greater Boston, read a letter from the Association and pronounced the Benediction. Rev. Mr. Foster had been President of that Association for two years.

The interment was in the family lot, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

R. F.

PRESBYTERY OF BOSTON

John A. McClelland, Stated Clerk

November 12, 1928.

Mr. J. Paul Foster,

187 Belmont Street, Wollleston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Foster:—

The Presbyterian ministers of Boston were deep-

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