

OBITUARY.

THE REV. DR. HENRY HIGHLAND GARNET.

The State Department at Washington received the intelligence by cable yesterday, by way of Madeira, of the death of the Rev. Dr. Henry Highland Garnet, Minister Resident and Consul General of the United States in Liberia, West Africa. He died at Monrovia on the 13th of February. He was born on the 23d of December, 1815, in New Market, Kent county, Md. His grandfather was brought from Congo and sold as a slave in Maryland. His gifts as an exhorter gave him the Christian name of Joseph, and his master gave him the surname of Trusty in testimony of his integrity of character. His son George was the father of Henry Highland Garnet.

George Trusty's master, a bachelor, died in 1824, devising his slaves to relatives, under whom Trusty resolved not to serve, and, under pretence of attending a funeral some miles distant from the estate, he fled at night with his wife and eight children for the North, where the underground railroad was already in operation. The family slept in the woods by day and travelled all night long until they reached Wilmington, Del. Thence they went to New Hope, Bucks county, Pa., and there Henry was put into a public school. The family came to New York in 1825, and here took the name of Garnet.

Henry became a pupil in the New York African Free School, No. 1, in Mulberry street, in 1826, and after two years as a student made two voyages to Cuba as a cabin boy. Then he returned to his school for a year, and in 1829 became cook and steward of a schooner plying between New York and Washington City. Later in the same year he apprenticed himself to Captain Epenetus Smith, of Smithtown, Long Island; but the youth soon lost the use of his right leg by an accident, and his indentures were cancelled. He returned to this city, and in 1831 entered the High School for Colored Youth, then just opened, and began to study Greek and Latin.

In 1833 the young student attached himself to the Sunday school of the First Colored Presbyterian Church, then at William and Frankfort streets. He was soon baptized into that Church. Two years later he entered the Academy in Canaan, N. H., and there met Miss Julia Williams, who subsequently became his wife.

At that time (1835) the abolition excitement ran high among the granite hills, and the opponents of the abolitionists were mobbing anti-slavery speakers. They singled out Canaan Academy to be mobbed, and with ninety-five yoke of oxen hauled the edifice away from other structures in the village and burned it. Some of the mob surrounded the house in which young Garnet boarded, and one fired into his room. On the next day the students started for their homes, and some of the rioters fired a salute upon their departure.

In 1835 young Garnet entered the Oneida Institute. Four years later, in this city, he delivered his maiden speech. It was before the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1840. He graduated with honors soon afterward and settled in Troy, N. Y., there teaching a district colored school and conducting religious meetings in the old lecture room of the First Presbyterian Church, which the colored Presbyterians had bought with a view to organizing a church. He was ordained a ruling elder in 1841, and then he married.

Having studied theology under the Rev. Dr. Beman young Garnet was licensed to preach in 1842, and in 1843 he was ordained and installed the first pastor of the Liberty Street Presbyterian Church in Troy. He held this post for ten years, publishing, meantime, a weekly newspaper, the *Clarion*, and becoming conspicuous also as a speaker in the Anti-Slavery Conventions.

In 1850, under the invitation of the friends of the Free Labor Movement in Great Britain, Henry Highland Garnet went to England. He was a delegate to the Peace Congress in Frankfort in 1851, and a year later, having connected himself with the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, was sent a missionary to Sterling, Grange Hill, Jamaica, West Indies. But there his ministry was cut short by a protracted prostration with fever and his physicians ordered him North. In 1855 Shiloh Church, then in Prince street, gave him a unanimous call, and he returned to this city and began to build up that church. As President of the African Civilization Society he made his second visit to England in 1861.

When the federal government began to accept colored volunteers Henry Highland Garnet volunteered as chaplain to the colored troops on Riker's Island, under the auspices of the Union League Club, and he served as chaplain for the Twentieth, Twenty-sixth and Thirty-first regiments of United States colored troops until those bodies marched to the field.

At the time of the draft riots, in July, 1863, Dr. Garnet narrowly escaped with his life. He was pursued down Thirtieth street, where he dwelt then, by a mob that howled for his blood. He dodged into a stable kept by a friend and was hastily hidden beneath the floor, and when his pursuers reached the spot they were led to suppose that he had escaped over the fences of the rear yard. They turned back to sack his home, but, with timely prescience, his daughter had wrenched off the door plate, and ere the rioters had time to find the house their attention was diverted.

In April, 1864, Dr. Garnet was called to the Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church, in the city of Washington. He entered upon his duties there in the June following. On the 12th of February, 1865, at the request of the Rev. William H. Channing, Chaplain of the House of Representatives, Dr. Garnet preached in Representatives' Hall, in the Capitol—the first colored man who was ever allowed to set his foot inside that hall except in a menial capacity. The sermon that he then preached has been widely printed and reprinted.

After a fruitful ministry in the federal city Dr. Garnet returned to New York and resumed his pastorate of Shiloh Presbyterian Church. He was now the acknowledged leader of his race in America. The colored men of all the South looked to him for guidance at the time of the great exodus in 1879-80. The esteem in which he was held was well illustrated when the poor refugees from Arkansas reached this city in the spring of 1880. They knew him alone of all New York's twelve hundred thousand inhabitants. His word was their law. For a time, until better quarters were found for them, the basement of his church was their home.

In the spring of 1880 Dr. Garnet, attacked with vertigo as he was coming out of Shiloh Presbyterian Church, fell, and injured his spinal column. There was for some time doubt of his life. At length he partially recovered, but his physician forbade mental labor, and his congregation gave him a vacation of six months. He continued, however, to make his home in the rooms attached to his library in the church, and on Sundays he went down and sat on the platform whence he had so long spoken. But he did not preach.

One of the first of the nominations made by President Garfield was that of Dr. Garnet to be Minister to the Republic of Liberia, and it is said that one of the last official acts of President Garfield was that of signing Dr. Garnet's commission. But for reasons known only in the city of Washington President Arthur chose to send Dr. Garnet's name again to the Senate. The nomination was promptly confirmed, and on the 12th of November, 1881, the first colored Minister and Consul General of the United States sailed on his mission. His daughter, Mary Highland Garnet Barbosa, had already preceded him by about a year, having been sent out under the auspices of a ladies' society in New York to found in the African Republic a school for native girls.

Dr. Garnet was of commanding presence. Tall, with a towering forehead, and fluent of speech, always in the purest English, he made himself respected wherever he was heard.

At a meeting of trustees of Shiloh Presbyterian Church last evening the announcement of Dr. Garnet's death was received with manifestations of sorrow, and it was voted immediately to drape the church with mourning and to hold a meeting in Garnet Hall this evening, at which the sense of the congregation will be expressed and preparations for a formal memorial meeting will be set on foot. The Rev. Solomon P. Hood, Dr. Garnet's successor as pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church, will speak of the deceased pastor's life and death to-morrow morning.