

Communications

Death of the Successor of Joanna Southcott, the "Prophetess of Exeter".

To the Editors of the New York Express:

The Rev. John Laden Bishop, for many years head of the Christian Israelite Church in America, is no more. He was called to his eternal rest on the 12th of June last (1866), while at Digby, Nova Scotia, on his annual missionary tour. His tall and graceful form, firm step, genial countenance and venerable appearance are familiar to many of your readers. He was a devoted husband, a tender parent, and an exemplary citizen. His discourses were profound and logical, his views humane and liberal, and his charities numerous and well directed. He was a wonderful man, and seemed to belong to the patriarchal rather than the present age. He was the chosen and venerated leader of the devoted band called Christian Israelites, who for many years past have communed in the sanctuary No. 108 1st Street in this city. His late wife, Margaret Bishop, was one of the most remarkable and talented women of her age. She was the successor of and taught the doctrines enunciated by Joanna Southcott, called the prophetess of Exeter, John W. Wroe and others of their denomination. After being almost deified by her numerous and devoted followers, she gently passed away, leaving a mysterious blank in the church which has not yet been filled. Her spiritual career seems like a beautiful dream. Her loving husband, who succeeded her as head of the church has joined her. He anticipated their reunion with intense pleasure – he also died the death of the righteous; may our end be like his. Their daughter Barbara, a pure and talented girl married one of their number named Daniel Milton, a devout but eccentric person who calls himself "Shiloh", and for several years past has spent nearly all his time and means in out-door preaching, and in publishing and circulating religious tracts. Probably Barbara will be elected to succeed her father as head of the Church. In consequence of the death of their beloved pastor an impenetrable gloom surrounds the sanctuary. The sheep are without a shepherd, and all are sad and desolate. Mr. Bishop was a native of Devonshire, England. Born on the 25th November, 1809 (age 57 upon death) baptized and educated in the Episcopal Faith, ordained on the 15th October, 1833. When he joined the Christian Israelite Church in England, he became a missionary for the Society, and after labouring for years in Great Britain and Ireland, he came to America in the year 1841. Here, as well as there he laboured faithfully in the cause of his Divine Master. He has been minister of the Christian Israelite Church in this city for the last twenty-five years and devoted a portion of each year in visiting the different States and British Provinces, earnestly proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, to all people. His health has been failing for the past year, but when urged by dear friends to forego his last annual tour and take some necessary recreation he refused and said, "I must do my duty. All will be well". At the time of his death he had been absent from home only thirteen days. His remains were brought to this city and interred beside those of his wife in Cypress Hills Cemetery.