

...with him, not suspected, came upon us by surprise. Most of our citizens hoped that his danger had been exaggerated. But the saddest anticipations of his friends have been realized. The death-angel has called and the dread summons has been obeyed. It is due to that station in which he moved, that something more than a brief obituary notice should be given, now that he has been removed from earth, and though in the small space allotted us, we may be unable to delineate his character as it deserves, yet we may do something towards placing the prominent points of that character on honorable record.

Judge Purple was of a modest and retiring disposition, never obtruding his claims, and very rarely his opinions, upon others. He had few intimates and fewer confidants, and hence not many persons had free and easy access to him. A man of strong mental powers; he seemed to know his strength, though he never vaunted it, and only by an exhibition of the power of his mind, was it known to the people that he possessed it. His mind was highly cultivated, and his public addresses were evidence of a refined and correct taste, and were always read with pleasure. They were finished productions, for it may be doubted whether he ever gave to the world a crude speech.

As a lawyer he held a high rank in the profession. His mind was clear and penetrating, grasping the strong points in a case, and on them depending for victory, and content to let the unimportant and irrelevant points which a smaller and less capacious intellect would have held as good ground for argument, pass unnoticed. Of course he was a clear as well as a strong reasoner, and those who have listened to his best efforts will be willing to admit that as an advocate he had few equals. In his clearest laid his strength, and though upon occasion he could clothe his thoughts in the garb of beauty, and though he was a lover of *blank* poetry, yet in his professional labors he preferred truth to beauty of diction, and fact to a well rounded period. He was grammatically correct even in the heat of debate, thus showing the well-trained mind.

As a politician he has acted with the democratic party, and has sustained their principles with all the strength of his active and powerful mind. Yet he could hardly be called a warm partisan, since he has refused to follow the lead of his party when personal preference or judgment has dictated that course. In fact, he was devoted to his profession, and all else was in his mind secondary to that. Then it is not strange that he should some times have forgotten party ties.

Judge Purple was born in Otsego county, New York, but removed at an early age to Tioga county, Pennsylvania. He there commenced active life in that profession of which he became so prominent a member. We have not been able to ascertain at what place he was educated, but it is probable that he was a graduate of a law school. Wherever he resided

ed his intellectual training, it must have been thorough and exact.

In the year 1836, in the month of October, he came to Peoria and commenced the practice of his profession. Since that time he has been more or less in public life, and has been one of the first lawyers at the bar in the State.

In the spring of 1839, he was appointed State Attorney for the Peoria District, which then comprised a great tract of country. Soon after this, he was appointed a commissioner to wind up the affairs of the old State Bank, and in both capacities he performed the arduous duties devolving upon him with care, fidelity and success.

In 1840 he was a candidate on the democratic ticket for representative in the State legislature, his competitor being Wm. J. Phelps, of Elmwood. Judge Purple was defeated by a majority of only seven votes.

In 1845 he was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois. The Judges of the Supreme Court were then *ex officio* Judges of the Circuit Courts, and Judge Purple was assigned to the 5th district, and took up his residence at Quincy, Adams county. He continued to discharge the duties of that important office until 1848, when the new constitution was adopted, which reduced the salary from \$1500 to \$1000, and made it necessary for him to seek a livelihood in some other manner. He accordingly resigned his office and returned to Peoria.

In 1849 he published his Real Estate Statutes, a very valuable work embracing all the laws bearing upon title, transfer, &c. of real estate, in force in Illinois at that time. In 1856 he published another very valuable legal work—a compilation of the laws of Illinois in force at that time. So correct were these works that the legislature, at its session next after their publication, adopted them as the laws of the State, and they are yet the legal code of the State up to the time to which the compilation extends.

In 1861, Judge Purple was a candidate for, and was elected to, the convention called to amend the constitution, and held a prominent place in that body. He was a determined opponent of banks, and the chapter in relation to them was from his powerful pen. In that convention he acted with his party on the important questions that came before it, and was regarded as one that did much toward shaping its legislation.

The Judge in addition to the compilation of the statutes of this State has bestowed great labor and care in the compilation of all the laws of this State passed since the session of the legislature of the year 1857, up to and including the session of 1863, and in addition to the compilation of the laws, he has been engaged in making a new and complete index to all the laws now in force in this State, the constitution and the index being *expedited* be ready for the press at an early day, only some clerical labor being necessary to their completion.

Judge Purple died in Chicago on Sunday morning, the 9th day of August, 1863, at 8 o'clock, aged 55 years. The body was brought down by the Peoria and Chicago Railroad, on the Rock Island Railroad.