

## Stephen James Atkinson

### Transcription of Obituary published in the Minutes of Conference by Samuel Brock

STEPHEN JAMES ATKINSON was born at Lancaster, February 22nd, 1861. At the age of three years he became a Sunday scholar, when about ten years old he gave his heart to God, and before he had reached his sixteenth birthday he commenced preaching the gospel. At the age of eighteen he entered the Theological Institute at Sunderland, and in 1880 commenced his ministry on the Pembroke Dock Mission. Here he remained two years, then travelled one year at Gloucester, and in July, 1883, removed to Silverdale. Here he laboured with much acceptance a little over seven months, when wasting consumption compelled him to cease his toil. He worked well till he was absolutely mastered, and during the few days he kept his bed he said to me, 'I should like to get well and labour with you two or three years.' He was intensely anxious to finish his probation creditably at the Conference, and looked forward to the services with much hope; but God had some 'better things' prepared for him. I saw him frequently during the last three weeks of life - he had previously been with friends at Gloucester for change of air, &c., some three months - and always found him with full confidence in God. On Saturday morning, June 14th, I spoke to him of the purifying from sin, quoting the words of John, ..... and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' He said, 'I know that. I have known it for years.' The same night, seeing the end nearing, we reminded him of the angels' welcome to the other shore. He said, 'Yes, I'm going; but I hope I shall go in peace.' I replied, 'You need have no fear. then said, 'We shall meet again.' 'Yes,' said he, 'I will watch for you there? And we sighed farewell ; and just as the light of that June Sabbath, calm and beautiful, was breaking upon us, the light of the eternal Sabbath broke upon him, The immortal morning dawned, and there is no night there.

As a preacher he was very acceptable. As a student he was diligent. As a colleague he was dutiful, as a friend, sociable, and always full of hope. Faults he may have had, Alas! who has not? But he was indeed a young man of much piety and promise, and was deservedly held in very high esteem. On the 18th instant four local brethren bore him to his last resting place, near that of the sainted Phillip Pugh and other 'Primitives,' in the Newcastle Cemetery. Six ministers acted as pall bearers, and many friends from every part of the Circuit came with tears of sorrow and wreaths of flowers testifying their love for the dear departed.

'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose  
Friends out of sight, in faith to muse,  
How grows in Paradise our store.'

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### References

*PM Minutes* 1884/15