

## DR. JAMES FIELDS.

By a paper received from Mr. John A. Fields, of Adrian, Michigan, we learned with sorrow the mournful intelligence of the death of his father, Dr. James Fields, who died on the 6th of May ultimo.

Dr. Fields was one of our oldest and dearest friends. He was born in the city of New York September 20th, 1805, where he resided until about fifteen years ago, when he removed to Toledo, Ohio, and from thence to Adrian. When about twelve or fourteen years of age he had the misfortune to lose a leg. It was caused by the maltreatment of a physician, who mistook a simple bruise for an ulcer, and by his injudicious treatment it ultimated into a white swelling, and when too late more competent medical advice was consulted and amputation was necessary to save his life.

Being thus maimed and incapacitated for arduous avocations, he became studious, and after having acquired all the education then imparted in the New York African Free School (where the writer hereof was a fellow classmate), he sought private tuition, and finally became a thorough English scholar, and also acquired considerable knowledge of the classics.

In 1830 he was one of the founders of the Philomathean Literary Society. We were seven. After a lapse of forty years four of us survive—Rev. John Peterson, Ransom F. Wake, of New York, Robert Banks, now of St. Paul's, Minnesota, and ourself. We have had to chronicle the deaths of three of our early associates in that institution—Dr. David Ruggles, Wm. L. Jeffers, and now James Fields. Of the others who became immediately connected with us, Dr. James McCune Smith, Rev. Isaiah G. Degrasse and Henry Nott are numbered with the dead. Robert McDougall and Theodore C. B. Vidal still survive.

At the time of the assassination of Elijah P. Lovejoy, at Alton, Ill., in November, 1837, James Fields pledged himself that he would never drink ardent spirits until slavery was abolished in America, and we believe he religiously kept his promise.

In 1842-3, in connection with Messrs. Peter Ogden, T. C. B. and U. B. Vidal, G. T. Downing, Henry Smith and a few others, he established the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, for which a charter was obtained from England, the Independent Order of America having refused to admit colored members, or grant a charter for opening a separate Lodge. The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows is now a flourishing institution, numbering perhaps twenty Lodges. In 1846 he went to Bermuda, W. I., and organized two Lodges of the Order on that island.

James Fields was a Calvinistic Presbyterian, a member and for many years clerk of Shiloh Church, of which Rev. Theodore S. Wright was pastor. He was a fine writer and a deep philosophical thinker. He contributed frequently to the *Colored American*, and the essays of "Uncle Ben" were always welcome to our columns.

He was always devoted to the study of medicine, and before leaving New York he became quite proficient in the Botanical practice. Believing he could find a larger field and a wider scope for the exercise of his talents, he emigrated to Ohio, where he was very successful, and became favorably known as the Indian Doctor.

Thus has gone to his long and silent home one whom we have known and loved for more than half a century. For over two-thirds of that long period we were almost daily companions. Since our separation we have maintained friendly correspondence, not frequent, but always loving and affectionate. He has lived to a good old age—long beyond our expectations. He was for many years afflicted with a disease of the heart, which at last terminated his existence. Far away in the boundless prairies of the Peninsula State, my heart is in the coffin with my friend.