

## DEATH OF CANON FOWLER

We regret to announce the death of the Rev. James T. Fowler, rector of East Hanningfield and Canon of St. Patrick's, Killala, Ireland, which took place at San Remo, on Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> inst. Canon Fowler and his family had been abroad for the winter, Mrs. Fowler and her daughters staying at San Remo, and Mr. Fowler in company with his brother, Mr. Robert Fowler of London, visiting Egypt and the Holy Land. From these countries he wrote descriptive letters of a very interesting nature to Mr. Joseph Ratcliff, of East Hanningfield, and in one of them, which was penned at Cairo, he said he had never felt better in his life. It is believed that he contracted his fatal illness, malarial typhoid fever, at Jerusalem, although it was not until 13<sup>th</sup> of April, when he had returned to Rome, that it showed itself. The attack at first appeared to be slight, and Mr. Fowler was fast recovering, when a relapse set in, and from this he never rallied. Sad to relate, his brother, who journeyed right on to London, instead of staying at Rome, was seized with the same complaint a few days after he reached home, and he succumbed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst. Two other brothers of the deceased Canon had died within the last 18 months, so within that brief period four brothers have passed away, each leaving a widow to mourn his loss. Mrs. Fowler also has two widowed sisters.

The news of Canon Fowler's death reached Hanningfield by telegraph on Friday, and plunged the whole village into mourning, for the deceased gentleman was beloved by all his parishioners. He had held the living since 1883, coming to Hanningfield from Whittle-le-Woods, in the Fyle of Lancashire, where he enjoyed the friendship of Bishop Fraser. A new church was one of the results of his work at Whittle-le-Woods, and it is a singular fact that the building of a new church was one of the first works he had to undertake in Essex, for he had only officiated in the old church at East Hanningfield once, when it was burnt down. With the hearty co-operation of his churchwardens, he immediately set about the work of collecting funds, and within a very few months the foundation stone of a new building was laid. The old church stood in an out of the way corner of the parish, but the new one was erected on a site in the centre of the village. The cost was £3,500, which has now been paid with the exception of about £160. Recently a new organ has been erected in the church, and it had been intended to formally open it, as we announced in the *Chronicle* a fortnight ago, upon the return of Canon and Mrs. Fowler from Italy. Canon Fowler was a decided, though not a narrow, adherent of the Evangelical School.

At the parish church, on Sunday, the Rev. E. T. Lewis, who has been acting as curate-in-charge during Canon Fowler's absence, made a touching allusion to the sad event. Special hymns were sung, and the "Dead March" in *Saul* was played on the organ, the congregation remaining standing. The funeral took place at San Remo on Monday, the officiating clergy being the Rev. R. E. Bartlett, of Chelmsford, who has lately been acting as British chaplain at San Remo, and the Rev. H. S. Verschoyle, a resident at San Remo. At the time fixed for the ceremony a memorial service was held in the Parish Church,

and a muffled bell “tolled in” a crowded congregation, including Bishop Claughton and Miss Dora Claughton. The hymns, “Now the labourer’s task is over,” “Christ will gather in his own,” and “On the resurrection morning,” were sung. The sad service ended with the “Dead March,” played by Mr. Baker the organist. The clergy officiating were the Rev. E. S. Tiddeman, who gave an impressive address; the Rev. C. P. Plumptre and the Rev. E. T. Lewis. Great sympathy is felt throughout the parish and neighbourhood for Mrs. Fowler and family.

The annual living of East Hanningfield is, according to the Essex Almanac, £450. The population of the parish in 1891 was 390.