

DEATH OF THE HEAD-CONSTABLE OF DEVONPORT.

General regret was expressed at Devonport yesterday, at the death of Mr. John Lynn, head constable of the police force, which took place early that morning at his residence, George-square. For many years Mr. Lynn had suffered from angina pectoris. There was nothing in his condition, however, during the past few weeks which gave rise to anxiety. He was at his office on Friday, attending to his duties. About half-past six on Saturday morning he was taken very ill, and the symptoms gave rise to great apprehension. Mr. F. Everard Row, the police surgeon was called in, and injected morphia. During the afternoon Mr. Lynn rallied. When seen by the doctor about half-past one yesterday morning, however, it was evident that he could not live much longer, and he passed away very peacefully about half-past eight. Mr. Lynn's career as a police officer was a most successful, and, in a sense, a remarkable one. Born at Stirling on 16th May, 1822, he was, therefore, 66 years of age, and for nearly half a century he has been a police officer. When a young man he joined the London police force, and was one of its number when it was first known as the "Metropolitan." From this body he retired with the rank of sergeant on a pension after 15 years' service. During this period he served, among other places, at Chatham and Woolwich. While stationed at Down, in Kent, he made the acquaintance of Charles Darwin, the eminent naturalist. The acquaintance ripened into a warm friendship, and Darwin presented him with several of his works, on which Mr. Lynn set great value. Mr. Lynn also numbered among his friends Sir John Millais, the well-known Royal Academician. His famous picture, "The Proscribed Royalist," was painted in a wood at Kent, and Mr. Lynn, while on police duty in the neighbourhood, often carried the artists' easel, and watched the progress of the picture with a keen appreciation of its merits. In this connection an interesting incident is recorded. One day whilst the artist was at work on his picture Mr. Lynn caught a Kingfisher butterfly and pinned it against one of the trees of the wood. Millais, it is said, was so struck with the butterfly that he introduced it into the painting. The artist showed his friendship for Mr. Lynn by painting the likenesses of his two daughters, and on these, like the gifts of Darwin, the deceased set a great value. On leaving the metropolitan force Mr. Lynn was appointed superintendent at Neath, and so popular did he make himself that on retiring from that position to take up a similar appointment at Cardiff in June, 1861, the Watch Committee presented him with a handsome gold watch "as a mark of their appreciation of his successful endeavours to promote sobriety, law, and order while superintendent of police in this borough." From Cardiff Mr. Lynn came to Devonport, succeeding to the position of chief constable, vacated by Mr. James Edwards, on his becoming governor of Devonport Prison. He was sworn in on the 17th September, 1862, and from that date until Friday last served the town zealously and faithfully. Shortly after his arrival at Devonport Mr. Lynn, who was a staunch teetotaler, shewed his zeal for duty and the promotion of the temperance cause in a very marked manner. At that time great complaints were made at the way in which certain public-houses of the town were conducted. Mr. Lynn lost no time in instituting prosecutions, which resulted in several of them being closed. At one time Devonport suffered a great deal more than it does at present from the ravages of fire, and at several large conflagrations Mr. Lynn's services were invaluable. During his twenty-six years' service at Devonport the police force has steadily grown to its present position. Much of that success is due to the tact and zeal exercised by its late chief constable, who worked in cordial relationship with the Watch Committee, his subordinate officers, and the members of the force generally. Mr. Lynn was a prominent and highly-esteemed member of the Masonic body, which he joined about twenty years since. He was a P.M. of Lodge Fidelity, and for many years was its treasurer, holding this office at the time of his death. On Wednesday next a banquet was to have been given by the lodge, and he was to have been presented with his portrait. Mr. Lynn was a P. Prov. G.S.B. of Devon. He leaves a widow, two sons, and one daughter. The funeral will take place on Thursday, and will no doubt be attended by the police forces of the Three Towns and members of the Masonic Order.