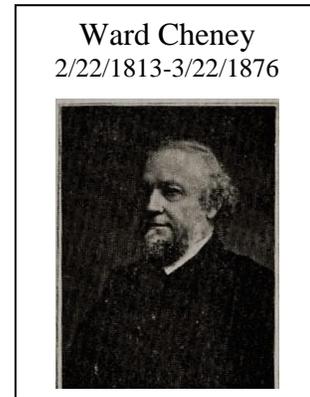


THE LATE MR. WARD CHENEY

published March 25, 1876, *The Hartford Daily Courant*.

Mr. Ward Cheney, who died in South Manchester on the morning of Wednesday, the 23rd of March, was perhaps the most widely known of the Cheney Brothers, having had business and social relations with a multitude of people in Boston, New York and Philadelphia, as well as in Hartford and his own little neighborhood of South Manchester. A heavy cold developed suddenly into an attack of rheumatism in the region of the heart, and, running into pneumonia, ended prematurely a life of great vigor and undiminished power – a life into which so much had been crowded that it seems now to have been not shorter than the lives of many older men. He has left a large place empty, which no one can ever fill. Few men have interwoven themselves and their personal life so closely into that of the people with whom they lived. He made an important part of life to many who really saw him but seldom, and his magnetic presence and strong power of cheering, helping, and comforting were felt to be as natural and necessary as the warmth of the sun. Sympathy radiated from him on all sides, and it was without effort that he freely gave himself away to all who turned to him for help or comfort. Everyone who loved him felt that they had an individual and vested right in him, and that the love which he gave them so bountifully was in a peculiar way theirs and theirs alone.



A busy man, full of natural impulse and energy, working away progressively all his life, and always with something beyond the work in view, he has always been a center of enterprise in all the business projects he has touched, and a hopeful leader to his family in all the affairs of life. His capacity in all directions was rich and strong and he was as good a nurse as he was a manufacturer; as broad in the regions of thought and sentiment as in the field of action.

In the family of eight brothers and one sister he was the sixth. Three of his elder brothers have gone before him into the other world, all having, however, lived and worked together through the best and busiest years of life. The early life of the family was a simple farming life of the old-fashioned, hard-working sort, and in its school were learned self-help and habits of unsparing work. Education was of the primitive New England type, and it was left for a subsequent experience of the many-sided world, travel, society, and the culture of natural refined tastes to supply the want of early advantages.

Ward Cheney went in early manhood to Providence, where he was in business with his brother Charles. About 1833 he came back for a time to Manchester, having lately married in Providence Miss Caroline Jackson, built a little home and began farming. The home was in due time brightened by the presence of children, two of whom died in the promise of early childhood, only one (Arthur Cheney of Boston) surviving his parents. A year or two after his return came up the mulberry speculation, in which he and several of his brothers became interested. A plantation of mulberry trees was started in Burlington, N.J., and another in Georgia, where the climate was thought to be favorable. Hopes of large success were at their height in 1836 and 1837, when it became at last apparent that the climate of the United States was unfit for silk culture, and the cost of production too great to admit of profits. The whole project died at once, and pecuniary losses were heavy.

Out of this failure, patience brought a length success in a different shape. A little silk mill had been started in South Manchester, which was run in a small way for a time and then relinquished. Not satisfied to give it up, Ward Cheney and some of his brothers resumed it, and, after the varying success and failure of years, placed the business at last on a firm basis. Little by little it grew, until at last it became a full and ensured success – a business success which was the foundation for many plans of social growth and improvement that after years have been in a measure fulfilled. How heartily Ward Cheney entered into these plans and how warmly his personal power was transfused into their accomplishment is known only to those who have lived near him and sunned themselves in the light of his broad and loving nature.

As evening closed on his last night of life he asked, “Are we going into the night or coming out of it?” “We are going in” was the answer. How brief the going in, how full and glorious the coming out, none of us now can know. The years of pressing, urgent work are over: the periods of full satisfying life are just begun.

Obituary as it appeared on the front page of the Hartford Daily Courant. [Webmaster’s notes: • The style of this obituary was typical for the time, with what we may consider flowery language and a lack of concrete information such as names of kin, dates of holding office, etc. • In transcribing the obituary, I did some guessing with blurred numbers and letters. – *Webmaster, Susan Barlow.*]

