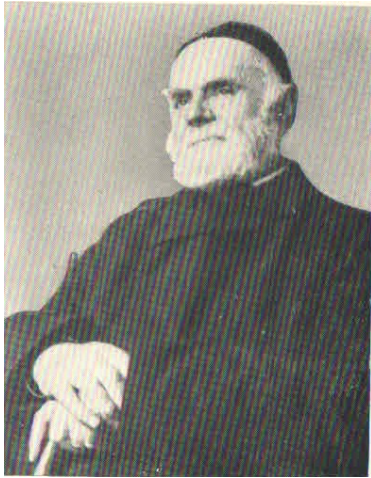


22 December

Br ARTHUR EVERARD

25 May 1833 – 22 December 1922



Arthur Everard spent just two months of his 89 years in the Zambezi Mission and wrote to Weld that ‘if I remain longer, I will go mad’. Weld sent him back to England where, for forty years, he could not be assigned to any set work though he helped around the house (St Mary’s Hall) in multiple ways.

Born in Ixworth, Suffolk, he joined the Society in 1853 and did a number of jobs in England before going to India in 1865. He served in Negapatan College where he was popular with the boys and friendly with the Indian scholastics. But he wanted a change and went to Tuticorin in 1872. But he was beginning to ‘suffer in the head’ and returned to Negapatan and then again, after a while, returned to Tuticorin – always searching for where he could settle. Fr Weld then decided South Africa might help and he had his two months in Dunbrody. When this did not work out, he returned to England.

His life a failure? So it might seem but fourteen pages are devoted to him in *Letters and Notices*. You don’t get that treatment if there is nothing to say. This writer feels quite inadequate to the task of describing him. But he can try.

First, his community at St Mary’s Hall clearly went out of their way to understand him and accept his foibles and eccentricities. He was sometimes alert and sometimes distraught but always happy. When he felt he was excommunicated and never dared enter the chapel, they went along with that and waited. When he felt he should get permission for this, that and the other, they patiently gave it to him.

Second, he loved to talk to people and share his life in the spirit with them and they soon realised there was something genuine and precious in what he said and they remembered his words. He would often say, ‘I am in God’s hands’ or simply ‘I’m Thine’ and his companions knew these words in his mouth carried weight. Sometimes he would go a bit further, ‘So many want to do great work; if only they would let God do the work with them!’

And third, he came to totally accept who he was; someone who wanted to work but who, for forty years, could not hold down a job. In the end he had a terrible passion: ‘a complete deprivation of all devotional sweetness, an entire darkness of desolation and a raging attack of terrible temptations.’