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BIOGRAPHY.

THE VENERABLE BEDE.

This venerable man, the ornament of his age and country, was born in 673. As the close of his "Ecclesiastical History" he gives the following simple, unaffected narrative of his life:—"Born in the territory of the same monastery," (of Weremouth, in the kingdom of Northumberland) "I was, by my relations, committed, at seven years of age, to the care of the reverend Abbot Benedict, in order to be educated, and afterwards to Colfrid. From that period I have resided constantly in that monastery, and have applied myself wholly to the study of the Holy Scriptures; and in the intervals of the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, have always found it sweet to be either learning, or teaching, or writing. In the 19th year of my life, I received the order of deacon, and in my thirtieth, that of priest, both by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John," (of Beverley, Bishop of Hexham), "and the command of Abbot Colfrid. From the time of my receiving the office of priest to the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have been engaged in either briefly noting from the works of the venerable fathers, for the necessities of me and mine, these things on the Scriptures, or in adding some new comment to their sense and interpretation."

It has been justly remarked, that "he never knew what it was to do nothing." He wrote on all the branches of knowledge then cultivated in Europe. In Greek and Hebrew he had a skill very uncommon in that barbarous age, and by his instructions and example he raised up many scholars. His letter to Egbert, archbishop of York, will show the high views which he entertained of the qualifications of a Christian minister; and his life of St. Cuthbert, the high opinion he had of such a man.

Bede died in the year 735, and the circumstances of his death are thus described by his pupil Cuthbert, afterwards of Abbot of Jarson:—

"About two weeks before Easter he began to be much troubled with shortness of breath, yet without pain; and thus continued, cheerful and rejoicing, giving thanks to Almighty God day and night, nay, even every hour, till the day of our Lord's Ascension. He daily read lessons to us, his scholars: the rest of the day he spent in singing psalms. The nights he passed without sleep, yet rejoicing and giving thanks, unless when a little slumber intervened. When he awoke he resumed his accustomed devotions, and with expanded hands never ceased returning thanks to God. Indeed, I never saw with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any one so diligent in his grateful devotions. O truly blessed man! He sang that sentence of St. Paul, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' and many other things from the Scriptures, in which he admonished us to arouse ourselves from the sleep of the mind. He also recited something in our English language, for he was very learned in our songs; and putting his thoughts into English verse, he repeated it with much feeling. For this necessary journey no one can be more prudent than he ought to be, to think before his going hence what of good or evil his spirit after death will be judged worthy of. He also sang anthems, according to his and our custom: one of which is, 'O glorious King, Lord of Hosts, who triumphing this day, didst ascend above all the heavens, leave us not orphans; but send the promise of the father, the Spirit of Truth upon us. Alleluia.' When he came to the words, leave us not, he burst into tears, and wept much. By turns we read, and by turns we wept; indeed, we always read in tears. In such solemn joy we passed the fifty days. But during these days, besides the daily lessons which he gave, and the singing of psalms, he endeavoured to compose two works; the one, a translation of St. John's Gospel into English; the other, a collection out of St. Isidore's book of notes. On Tuesday before Ascension-day his breathing be-

gan to be very strongly affected, and a little swelling appeared in his feet. All that day he departed cheerfully, and sometimes said, 'Make haste, I know not how long I shall hold out; my Maker may take me away very soon.' It seemed to us he knew well he was near his end. He passed the night awake in thanksgiving. On Wednesday morning he ordered us to write speedily what we had begun. This being done, we walked till the third hour, with the relics of the saints, as the custom of the day required. Then one of us said to him, 'Most dear master, there is yet one chapter wanting. Do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?' He answered, 'It is no trouble; take your pen, and write fast;' he did so. But at the ninth hour he said to me, 'I have some valuables in my little chest. Run quickly, and bring all the priests of the monastery to me.' When they came, he distributed his small presents to them, and exhorted each of them to attend to their masses and prayers. They all wept when he told them they would see him no more; but rejoiced to hear him say, 'It is now time for me to return to him who made me. The time of my dissolution draws near. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Yes, my soul desires to see Christ, my king, in his beauty.' In this manner he continued to converse cheerfully till the evening, when the pupil mentioned before, said to him, 'Dear master, one sentence is still wanting. He replied, 'Write quickly.' The young man said, 'It is finished.' He answered, 'Thou hast well said; all is now finished. Hold my head with thy hands, for I shall delight to sit on the opposite side of the room, on the holy spot at which I have been accustomed to pray, and where, whilst sitting, I can invoke my Father.' When he was placed on the pavement of his little place, he sang, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;' and expired as he uttered the last words."

Such was the happy, the glorious conclusion of life to this first of scholars! He was called the *wise Saxon*, by his contemporaries, and the *venerable Bede* by his posterity; and as long as great modesty, piety, and learning, united in one character, are the objects of veneration among mankind, the memory of Bede must be revered.—See *Cuthbert's Epist. in Bed. Hist. a Smith; Henry's Hist. of Great Britain*, iv. p. 30; *Toenley's Illust. Rib. Lit.* i. 242.

The following correspondence between the Rev. LEGN RICHMOND, (well known as the author of the *Druryman's Daughter*), and the Emperor of Russia, &c., is taken from the New-York Edition of Mr. Richmond's Memoir, published 1829. It exhibits the character, and christian spirit of the parties, in an advantageous and amiable point of view, and will, we trust, be found interesting to our readers.

During the Emperor Alexander's visit to this country, Mr. Richmond had the gratification of meeting him at Portsmouth. Mr. Richmond had ascended a lofty tower, in the dock-yard, and from its summit was viewing, through a telescope, the surrounding objects, when his Imperial Majesty and suite unexpectedly came to the spot. Mr. Richmond offered to withdraw; but the Emperor would not consent, saying—"Perhaps, sir, you are acquainted with the points of view before us?" Mr. Richmond assured him, he well knew every spot in the neighbourhood; and, drawing out his telescope, directed the eye of the Emperor to the different objects worthy of notice. After a long and interesting conversation with his Majesty, before they separated, Mr. Richmond said—"I avail myself of this opportunity to thank your Imperial Majesty, in my own name, and in that of all the friends of the Bible Society in England, for the distinguished patronage and support that your Majesty has shown to the same cause in Russia." The Emperor obligingly replied—"Sir, my thanks are rather due to your country, and to the friends of the cause: for, had it not been for your

example, we should have had no Bible Society in Russia."

Some months after this singular interview, Mr. Richmond enclosed a copy of his Tracts, with the following letter to his Imperial Majesty.

"May it please your Imperial Majesty,

"An offer has been made to me, by the Rev. Mr. Paterson, of conveying a copy of the book which accompanies this letter to your Imperial Majesty, through the kindness and condescension of His Excellency the Prince Galitzia.

"In presuming to take this liberty, I am influenced, not by the opinion which I myself entertain as to the value of the contents of the volumes, but by the firm persuasion which I hold, that the Christian sentiments which form the foundation of those simple narratives, are dear to your Majesty's heart.

"Your Majesty's public conduct and avowed principles, have tended to convince me, that neither the splendour of imperial dignity, nor the glory of military conquests, are, in your Majesty's estimation, comparable to the privileges and blessings which Christianity alone can confer on those who live under the influence of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"In the belief and hope that it is your Majesty's desire to promote the temporal and eternal interests of the people of Russia, by any instrument, however apparently small and unworthy, which God may see good to bless, I submit this little volume to your Majesty's candid acceptance.

"These short, 'Annals of the Poor' have been made very useful, through the mercy and power of God, to many in this country. England is now attached to Russia, not only by past political and friendly relations, but much more than ever, by your Majesty's dignified and condescending deportment, during your recent visit to this kingdom. May the King of kings, who is alike the Lord of Russia and of Britain, make use of even so feeble an instrument as this little volume, to convey some of the spiritual blessings which have attended its publication in Britain, to the utmost extent of your Majesty's dominions.

"When your Majesty shall be pleased to receive this book, may the author of it be permitted to remind your Majesty, that he is the same individual whom your Majesty saw at the summit of the lofty tower, in the dock-yard at Portsmouth, on Friday June 21st last; and who then had the unexpected honour of lending your Majesty the telescope with which your Majesty surveyed the surrounding prospect. The kind and condescending manner in which your Majesty was pleased to notice an English stranger on that occasion, is recollected with the sincerest satisfaction and gratitude, whilst I now present this volume to your Majesty's notice."

"Your Majesty will be pleased to allow me, as a minister of the Gospel, to conclude, by praying Almighty God, that His grace, peace, and mercy, may be abundantly poured down upon your Majesty, and upon the people of your extensive dominions, over whom He has given you the earthly sovereignty!

"May the Gospel of the blessed Jesus prosper among the subjects of all the Russias; and that it may be your Majesty's chief crown of rejoicing, in the great day of his appearance, is the supplication of

"Your Imperial Majesty's

Most obedient

and unworthyservant

"L. R."

The following reply was received by Mr. Richmond, from his Imperial Majesty, accompanied with a ring of considerable value:—

"Reverend Sir,

"The copy of your book, entitled 'Annals of the Poor', was, according to your desire, presented to his Imperial Majesty the Emperor Alexander, by