

NEW-BRUNSWICK

RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY JOURNAL.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men."

VOLUME I.

SAINT JOHN, SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 1829.

NO. 24.

BIOGRAPHY.

LEGH RICHMOND.

[CONTINUED.]

Mr. Richmond, who was no mean financier, was fully competent to determine the scale of subscription; and by his judicious arrangements to prevent the evils complained of, and effectually secure to the poor the benefits of a friendly society. It is greatly to be desired that his plans were universally known; and that all benefit societies were formed, or re-modelled on similar principles. For the information of the public, the following sketch of the Turvey club has been inserted.

The Friendly Society of Turvey, was composed of three divisions.

First. *A club for children* of both sexes, from seven to sixteen years of age; each member pays one shilling entrance, and a penny per month; and is allowed in sickness eighteen-pence per week. From three to four pounds is the yearly expenditure on sick members. The society has deposited 50l. in the savings-bank, after twenty years' duration. Its members have varied from twenty to forty children. At sixteen years of age a member becomes eligible to the senior clubs, and is entitled to receive half the entrance for admission.

Secondly, *The club for women*, confined to persons from seventeen to thirty five years of age. The entrance is five shillings; the monthly subscription one shilling, or one shilling and eight-pence, at the option of the members. Those who subscribe the larger sum, receive six shillings per week in illness; and to the lesser subscriber is paid four shillings weekly. The number of members has varied from thirty to forty. The average payments for the last twenty years is 20l., and the society has 200l. in the savings-bank.

Thirdly, *The men's club*, also, forms a double class, who pay seven shillings and sixpence entrance, and one shilling, or one and fourpence monthly; and they receive eight shillings or six shillings weekly in sickness. Their annual expenditure has been £35, and their present fund amounts to nearly £400. These clubs have about twenty honorary members, who greatly contribute to the opulence and prosperity of these institutions; and their bounty, joined to the subscriptions of a constant succession of young members, Mr. Richmond considered, on the calculation of the Northampton tables, to be adequate to the demands of the club. The rules and regulations of the Turvey club, resemble, in most respects, those of other friendly societies; but some additions and amendments were made by Mr. Richmond, too important to be omitted.

First. No persons of immoral character were admissible, or such as were likely to disgrace the society by habits of drinking, impurity, cursing and swearing, or other notorious crimes.

Secondly. A careful superintendance was maintained over the members, by Mr. Richmond and the officers of the society. Offenders were admonished; and after three admonitions, if unrepentant, were excluded from the benefits of the society.

Thirdly. The practice of assembling the members of these societies at public houses, and of spending a portion of their funds in liquor, was prohibited; and their meetings were held in the vestry of the church, at which Mr. Richmond constantly attended. By this arrangement nearly a fifth part of the funds was saved, and the temptations of the public house prevented.

In this, and indeed in all other plans of improvement. Mr. Richmond was the presiding genius. Every thing was conducted under his eye, and owed its success to his wisdom and example. He possessed the happy talent of exciting interest, conciliating regard, and meeting difficulties with calmness; he overcame impediments by a gentleness that disarmed opposition, a judgment that corrected mistake, and a temper which diffused universal harmony. There was an openness in his manner, which impressed all with a conviction of his sincerity, and

prevented a suspicion of his having any other motive, than a wish to promote the welfare of his parishioners.

Where he met with opposition, he did not hazard the failure of his measures by indiscreetly urging them; but he rather left his arguments steadily and gradually to produce their effect. Circumspection and caution marked every part of his conduct; his great aim being at all times to give no offence in any thing, that "the ministry might not be blamed." He was consistent throughout, in his ordinary intercourse with his parishioners; and thus, the energy of his zeal in the pulpit was known not to be the excitement of the moment, "the spark of his own kindling;" but the steady flame of a Divine spirit, imparting to others the sacred glow which animated his own bosom.

To the character, example, and authority of Mr. Richmond, the members of these societies submitted their judgment, and yielded, for the most part, a ready acquiescence in his counsels.

Notwithstanding the acknowledged excellence of these plans, there appears to the writer of this memoir, one important defect. His societies were still of republican character; and it was competent to the members to injure their own interests, by an overpowering majority. On one occasion, this defective government had nearly proved fatal to the Turvey club. The funds had increased beyond the expectation of the members, who, in a time of great pressure, resolved to appropriate a portion of them to the relief of their necessities; and they were with difficulty hindered from their purpose, by his firmness and personal influence. This defect is remedied in a society formed at Emberton, on Mr. Richmond's plan. One of the rules of which provides, that no proposition shall pass into a law, without the concurrence of the president and honorary members. Mr. Richmond acknowledged the improvement upon his principle, observing, with his usual frankness, "our good friend at Emberton has secured by law, what I have effected by personal influence."

It is very desirable that the rules of these societies, after a time, should be enrolled according to act of parliament; by which they become legal corporations, and the evil attending the removal of such men as Mr. Richmond, is provided for, as far, at least, as it can be done, by bringing these societies under the sanction and protection of the law, and thus enabling the better informed of the poor themselves, to ensure the proper application of their funds, and control the sudden impulse of popular feeling.

Mr. Richmond's club, like other similar institutions, kept their anniversary; but in a different way, and with different effects. These feasts are usually held at the public house, and lead to much disorder. The feast at Turvey was not a revel of riot and drunkenness; but a generous hospitality, consistent with Christian principle. Mr. Richmond invited, on these occasions, a number of his clerical brethren, and other respectable ladies and gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who usually assembled at Turvey, to the number of thirty or forty persons, and with a large concourse of the villagers, accompanied the society to the church. The subjoined letter gives a pleasing account of the proceedings of the day.

TEMPERANCE.

VIEW OF THE TEMPERANCE REFORMATION.

By the executive Committee of the New-York City Temperance Society.

STATE OF THE CASE.

For several years previous to 1826, the attention of judicious observers had been directed to the alarming increase of intemperance, and its dreadful influence upon human welfare. Various plans had been proposed for arresting the progress of the evil, as by an excise, or some other mode of taxation, by limiting the places of sale, restrain-

ing or punishing drunkards, or placing guardians over them, and the like. But still the evil grew, because the remedies proposed were impracticable, in the existing state of public sentiment. At length it was made manifest to a few persons, that the friends of reformation needed themselves to be reformed; that moderate drinking has a strong tendency to produce excessive drinking, and that the example of the moderate drinker precludes him from the effectual administration of reproof, persuasion, or remonstrance to the intemperate. Delighted with the idea that they had discovered the secret, and found out where lay the great strength of intemperance, these benevolent persons set themselves immediately to the enterprise of promulgating the great doctrine of total abstinence, as the only remedy for the most appalling evils that ever afflicted a nation.

Franklin and Rush.

The truth itself was not new. When Franklin worked at the press in London, he drank nothing but water; and his strength was such, that he used to carry two forms up and down stairs, when his companions could only carry one. He gained by his abstinence the appellation of the "American Aquatic," and has recorded his experience for the benefit of his fellow mechanics. But his recommendations produced no visible effect, because intemperance had not yet gained its giant enormity, alarming the whole community, and making people feel the necessity, constraining them to break off from strong drink. Dr. Rush also, was a strenuous advocate for total abstinence, and taught it to his pupils, as well as published it through the press. Other scattered individuals occasionally advanced the same principles, in public and private. But no general impression was made because the power of combined action, and concentrated influence, was not then understood, or not applied to moral subjects.

Formation of the Society.

The American Temperance Society was formed in 1826, at Boston, and its design was, "to effect a change of public sentiment and practice in regard to the use of intoxicating liquors." Dr. Edwards, then of Andover, visited several of the principal towns in Massachusetts, and some in New Hampshire and Connecticut, and preached in behalf of the Society; and his labors were every where accompanied with wonderful success, in producing, in multitudes, an impression that something must be done, and a resolution to break off, from all connexion with the drink of drunkards. About the same time, Kittredge's address, and Beecher's six sermons, were published. In many places, crowded meetings were commenced, week after week, to listen to the reading of these powerful appeals, and wherever it was done, a visible reformation was effected.

Mr. Hewit.

Some years before the Society was formed, the Rev. Nathaniel Hewit had turned his attention to this subject, and excited some wonder, and endured much obloquy by advancing the doctrine of total abstinence, as affording the only security to the temperate, and the only deliverance to the intemperate. Where this gentleman's private character is known, there is no need of the testimony, which every honest man who knows him is prepared to give, to the strictness of his integrity, the purity of his zeal, the consistency of his life, and his earnest efforts for the best interests of his fellow men. The success which has every where attended his efforts, evinces with how much ability he has pleaded the cause of temperance, and shews, better than a thousand lectures on prudence, the wisdom of that bold uncompromising course of attack upon the evil, which he adopted at first and has uniformly continued. He early became the principle agent of the Society, and its operations have been chiefly carried on through his instrumentality.