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MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN DYER.

ADEQUATE materials for a memoir worthy of the subject are not at hand ; but a sketch of Mr. Dyer's history though brief and imperfect, will at the present moment be acceptable to many readers, and the intimate friendship which had existed between the writer and the deceased for more than a quarter of a century, impels to an immediate attempt to render some assistance in the formation of the public estimate of his character.

Mr. Dyer was born January 3, 1784, at Devizes, in Wiltshire ; where his father, Mr. James Dyer, was pastor of a small baptist church. Dr. Steadman, then of Broughton, published a sermon on occasion of his death, to which a short biography was appended ; and he describes him as the possessor of an uncommon degree of manly sense, and the life of the circle in which he moved. "As a preacher," it is stated, "he had an uncommon fund of original thought and natural eloquence ; his conception was penetrating, and his ideas sublime ; his voice was very commanding, and his language, though little cultivated, peculiarly expressive and striking ; whilst a masculine fervour, expressive of a full conviction of the truth and importance of what he delivered, constantly attended all he spoke. As a pastor, he had a more than common affection for the people of his charge, and laboured for them with a peculiar degree of delight, both in public and in private. As a friend he was firm and steady in his attachments ; ever ready to afford assistance

when needed, if within his power, and in the habit of remembering each of his friends, in particular, at the throne of grace." His death, which was occasioned by repeated paralytic seizures, took place when he was fifty-four years of age ; and his excellence in the domestic relations of life, it is observed, was then attested by "the tears of a mourning widow, and of seven dutiful and affectionate children."

The subject of this memoir was at his father's death about thirteen years of age ; and had then displayed an aptitude for the acquisition of knowledge, which attracted the attention, first of the Presbyterian and then of an Episcopalian minister at Devizes, to both of whom he was indebted for assistance in his studies. After the decease of his father, he resided for some time at Broughton, with an aunt ; and it was here, we believe, that an incident took place, important in its consequences at the time, and very remarkable when viewed in connexion with his future life. The beauty of his handwriting has been noticed by thousands who have seen his official correspondence, and the same excellence, it appears, distinguished it in his youth. On one occasion, some specimens being shown to a person who had been conversing respecting the baptist mission to India, then in its infancy, he observed to the juvenile penman, "You write so well, you may be secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society perhaps some day." The thought instantly struck him, "How unsuitable am