

deceased, be inclined to throw a veil over his faults, and to ascribe his actions to the best motives. These feelings operate with double force when writing an account of any one who is but recently dead: the sorrowing pity of friends united with their regret for his death, has a strong tendency to make all overlook, any shades there might have been in his character: while those who have enjoyed his favours feel a blank for the want of pleasures they have been used to. All these not only operate in preventing the Biographer from coming at the real truth; but frequently place him in the unpleasant dilemma of either sacrificing his character for veracity and correctness of detail, or of incurring the dissatisfaction of those nearly connected with the subject of his account. The stern but just perversion of the maxim by Dr. Johnson, ought certainly to be kept in mind, and to have its due share of influence with every Biographical writer: for although it may flatter the feelings of surviving relatives to say nothing but good of the dead; it is doubly necessary for the Biographer, both for his own sake, and for the sake of the world, to confine his attention to say nothing but what is true of him.

In writing the history of Mr. Henry we are, however, happily relieved from a great part of the difficulties which attend such an undertaking in many other instances. The latter part of his life has been spent in such a way as brought him into view and produced an acquaintance between him and many who are now alive: in addition to the information collected from these, the subject of this memoir has left a mass of materials from whence a history of his life might be compiled, on a much larger scale than the limits of this article will admit. In 1809 he published an account of his travels and adventures during 16 years, in which he resided in different parts of the Indian territories, being then engaged in the Fur Trade: and what gives the stamp of authenticity to his work is the circumstance of the facts it contains having been corroborated by the observations which a better acquaintance with these countries have enabled subsequent travellers to make. This little volume, besides the materials it furnishes for his own biography, by displaying the stronger features of his character when placed in many trying and perilous situations, contains a great deal of valuable geographical information relative to the country, and many curious details of the customs and manners of the natives. Having therefore so great a claim to authenticity,—and having been published under his own eye, we shall offer no apology for such extracts as we may make, descriptive either of the conduct of Mr. Henry, or of the scenes in which he was engaged—and which influenced his pursuits. A true and unvarnished account of Mr. Henry's political principles may be detailed without offence to the feelings of any party; and should a picture of his conduct as a gentleman, and as a valuable member of society appear too high coloured; the blame is not in the writer, but in the sterling value of the original. It is not our fault should truth wear the aspect of panygeric.

Mr. Henry was born in the state of New Jersey in August 1739—and it is probable that he here spent the early part of his life, and acquired his education. But of his parents, who are said to have been respectable persons in the middle ranks of life, or of his early years,