

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, JULY 25, 1820.

NO. 27.

BIOGRAPHY.

LEGH RICHMOND.

(Continued from page 178.)

His removal from the Isle of Wight—Temporary connexion with the Lark Hospital, in London; and final settlement at Turvey.

A change of destination in the life of a minister, is at all times a subject for grave deliberation. He can take no step, in the consequences of which, others are not deeply involved as well as himself. In no instance does he stand alone: his principles, habits, and conduct, wherever he goes, exercise their powerful effects on all around him; and he is the star, by whose genial or unfriendly influence, their present, as well as future destiny, in a great measure to be determined. It is the truth which constitutes the moral responsibility of accepting a new appointment. If the glory of God, and conversion of immortal souls, is the grand object of which, as a minister, he is never to lose sight; nothing less than a deliberate and well-founded conviction that this is the governing principle of his conduct, to which every other is subordinate, ought to determine his removal, more especially from a scene where his labours have been owned and blessed.

So long, however, as we are assured that "the Lord directeth a good man's goings," and "appointeth the bounds of his habitation;" the indications of his will, and the openings of his providence, rightly interpreted, will ever form the best guide and ground for his determination. It was under the fullest conviction that he was pursuing the path of duty, that Mr. Richmond was induced to listen to an offer of assisting the Rev. Mr. Fry, in his laborious services as Chaplain to the Lock Hospital in London; and we shall see, by the result, in what manner his acceptance of this appointment, short as was its duration, providentially led the way to the subsequent events of his life. He proceeded, therefore, to London, to confer on the subject of his new arrangement, and preached his first sermon on the following text; "But of him are ye in Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption."—1 Cor. . . 30.

Some extracts from letters written to his wife at this time, previously to the removal of his family from Felling, will throw light on a few of the circumstances connected with this change of his residence and ministry.

London, Feb. 5, 1805.

"I think I may say, I am determined to try this situation. The Lord seems to give me such tokens of affection, friendship, and acceptableness, amongst the congregation of the Lock, and points out so many spiritual advantages, though mingled with great trials and temptations, that I believe I am right in coming to this decision. On Wednesday evening, I preached for Mr. Fry. Several gentlemen spoke to each of us, expressing a hope that I should undertake the charge; and one of them suggested that if it were an object to me, he did not doubt but very many would gladly contribute towards the expenses of the removal, and some increase of salary. The hint was kind, whatever might be the result. Yesterday morning, Mr. Fry and I conversed for a considerable time together. I told him all my history and circumstances. He seems resolved to omit nothing which may contribute to the hopefulness and comfort of my arrangement: and I really think that it is God's will that I should repose a temporal as well as a spiritual confidence in him. I called yesterday on Mr. Wilberforce, who put five pounds into my hand to go about from poor to poor and distribute.* Blessed com-

mission! I am to, dine there to day, and to take leave of the Dean of Carlisle, who goes to Cambridge to-morrow. No two men ever harmonized more sweetly in opinion, views, taste, judgment, &c. than Mr. Fry and myself. Our friendship is forming and confirming, on the best grounds, I trust.—You will judge how little able I am to see many friends, or to do any thing but labour in my vocation, when I tell you that I am to preach twice on Good-Friday, twice on Easter Sunday, once on Easter Tuesday, and, perhaps, Easter Monday, and even next Wednesday. You cannot write too often, the sight of your letters cheers and delights me. I wish I could play on the ground for half an hour with the children.

"Pray believe me truly and affectionately

"I am,

L. RICHMOND.

London, Sunday, April 15, 1805.

"I begin a few lines to you, my dearly-beloved wife, in the interval between my two services, and I can hardly give any other reason, than that my mind is worked up to a high state of agitation, by meditating and preparing to preach to night, from John v. 28, 29, and it wants a few minutes relief.—The subject is truly solemn: & the manner in which I propose to treat it, will be very trying and awful both to me and my hearers. I preached to an overflowing congregation, this morning, from Phillip iii. 10:—it cost me great thought and pains;—I administer the sacrament to near two hundred persons. I have been meditating two hours, on death, judgment, heaven and hell. I feel, that in the pulpit I shall either deliver myself with very little, or very great feeling and effect. Oh! for a heart to feel more for myself and others:—what a poor, cold, miserable creature I feel myself to be; I am sometimes constrained to cry out—can such a worthless being be saved? yet there is worth in Jesus for the most worthless. God make me to experience fully, the power of his resurrection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away. Adieu for the present—perhaps I may add a few lines before I go to bed.

"Sunday night, ten o'clock.—My sermon proved very solemn, and brought forth very copious tears from many eyes. I trembled inwardly, whilst I painted the resurrection and punishment of condemned souls; and the effect was very striking on a very large and attentive congregation. I am sitting up to think about a sermon for to-morrow morning.

"Monday morning, five o'clock.—Yesterday, at the sacrament, I observed kneeling at the rails, close to Mr. Wilberforce, a negro. I was much struck, and many interesting associations filled my mind. I find also that it was quite accidental, and that Mr. W. knows nothing of him. Last night, I dwelt on the meeting of husbands, wives, parents and children at the resurrection, and thought deeply of you and your babes;—in fact, I wept; I saw the tears of others responding with my own."

While he was thus engaged in the duties and arrangements of his intended destination, the following letter will prove that in dispensing spiritual instruction to others, he was not unmindful of what he owed to one, whose happiness and welfare was so nearly connected with his own.

London, April 20, 1805.

"My dear Wife,

"I really feel it as an answer to very many prayers which I have for years past offered up for you, that you are now seriously thinking on the all important subject of religion. I trust you will hence-

forth become my spiritual monitor and counsellor, my help-mate in every good word and work, and my wife indeed, united in grace as well as in providence. With respect to the inward conflicts and doubts which you entertain in your mind, you must seek spiritual armour to fight the battle. Remember, that if you truly desire to overcome all the evil tempers, affections, desires and principles of your natural heart, you have an evidence within that God must have wrought it, and that he will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear, but will with the temptation, make a way to escape. With respect to prayer, I recommend you to consider the precept of 'pray always and without ceasing.' This evidently refers to that perpetual disposition of the heart to lift itself up in sudden, short ejaculatory prayer, which is one of the most necessary means and proofs of grace. It is this alone which can render the appointed and regular devotions of the church, the family, and the closet, lively, strong and efficacious. Satan will lose much of his strong hold, if you thus laboriously strive to obtain a prayerful frame of heart, an habitual meditation upon Christ and eternity, a frequency of conversing on sacred things, and above all, experimental contemplation and conversation. The world is a deadly enemy to spiritual attainment; you cannot too soon see the high importance of being less conformed to it, in all its vanities, vices, follies, and unprofitable waste of time, gifts and talents. The Christian will appear, even in the simplicity of every personal ornament. The dress, the countenance, the tone of voice, the address, will lose its former levity; and in the minutest trifles of common life, you will see the hand of God leading to important events, and his finger pointing to the life that is to come. I have just been praying most earnestly, that God may carry on such a work in your heart. The grand work of all is to believe. This is the root and fountain of all other graces. That believing look at the Saviour, which sees an interest in him, or which at least leads to full conviction, both of his sufficiency and efficiency to save our own souls, is the master work of God. May you be fully led to see this, and in God's own time to rejoice in it. Accustom yourself to talk constantly with Nugent and Mary on the substantial parts of Christianity, and appeal to those little instances of experience which even a child may comprehend. I wrote to you yesterday, and hope you have got my letter. I have this instant received your's of Tuesday. I hope to be able to leave London by the time you mention. The three things which I have to settle, if possible, are—the house, the furniture, and a successor; and I do hope another week will arrange the two former. I only fear for the latter, and this makes me uneasy; however, as I shall retain the curacy till Christmas, there is still time and opportunity; only, so much depends on a desirable substitute for the summer, otherwise fall might be overthrown.

"Saturday morning, six o'clock.—I went yesterday to the hospital, and spent three hours in very close inspection of the miserable objects whom it includes. I have now resolved on taking the house. It is in Chester-street, about a hundred yards from the Lock; it is surrounded by fields, has a very pleasant prospect, charming air, great retirement and quietness, with a little garden, a remarkable neat exterior, and as neat and comfortable an interior.

"Our final removal, if we can get a curate, must be in the middle of June. I am asked, and have consented to preach the Charity Sermon at Newport, on May 16th. I must now more assure you, that I shall not stay a day longer than absolute business requires. I trust our separation has been for the best and that our temporal and spiritual concerns, our views and resolutions, tempers and principles, will all thrive and prosper for the better.—God bless the dear children. Kind regards to your fire-side, from your truly affectionate husband,

"L. RICHMOND."

* The wisdom of this mode of doing good, must at once commend itself to those, who are aware of the circumstances in which clergymen are frequently placed relative to the poor. Their parochial duties bring to their notice peculiar cases of want, which ought not to be made public. So limited, generally, are their own resources, that unless funds are in this way put at their disposal, many of God's

own children may be left to suffer. It is the practice of some churches, to put portions of money in the hands of their Pastor, for distribution among such destitute members as may come under his special notice; in addition to the appropriations which the Deacons are expected to make. Some churches are too poor to furnish such funds. How proper then, that the wealthy should remember and imitate this example of Wilberforce. A. E.