

THE

CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

"ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN."

VOL. I.] MONTREAL, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1823. [No. 18.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE
REV. RICHARD CECIL, M. A.
MINISTER OF ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL,
LONDON.

Mr. C. was a native of London, and born Nov. 8, 1748. His father was an eminent dyer in Chiswell Street, and a zealous member of the establishment; but his mother was a Dissenter, the only daughter of Mr. Grosvenor, the brother of the excellent Dr. G. an evangelical and popular preacher among the Dissenters, and author of the Mourner.

St. Jude speaks of the believers being 'preserved in Christ Jesus; and called:—such was evidently the case with Mr. C. who experienced several remarkable instances of providential deliverance before he was called to the knowledge of the truth. Two of them are stated as most observable. Once he fell under the lye in a large back of water in his father's grounds, where he was discovered by a remarkable circumstance, taken out apparently dead, and with difficulty recovered. At another time his coat was caught in the wheel of a mill; from which he was extricated through an extraordinary presence of mind, which stopped instantly the motion of the mill. None of these things, however, suitably affected him. His father took him constantly to the parish church; and his mother, who was a woman of real piety, admonished him a long time in vain. He was designed for business, and placed in a respectable commercial house;

but his disposition was gay and thoughtless, and his attachment was to Literature and the Arts, particularly Painting; for the latter he had so strong a passion, that, unknown to his parents, he rambled to France to see the works of the foreign masters; and would have gone to Rome also, if his means had been sufficient. Circumstances, however, compelled him to return to his father; who, perceiving the strong inclination of his mind, was about giving him up to his favourite pursuit; but Providence prevented it by an accidental circumstance, as the time approached when he was to be called by grace to a very different sphere of life.

Young Mr. C. had long indulged in reading sceptical books; thereby hardened his conscience, and fortifying himself in infidelity. He went farther: he led others into the same depths of sin, from which all his subsequent endeavours never could reclaim them;—but while thus proceeding in a course of evil, the Spirit of God began to work upon his conscience.—Remaining one night upon his bed, he thought of his pious mother, and the support she seemed to derive from her Bible: 'but,' said he, 'she has a secret spring of comfort of which I know nothing; and if there is any such secret in religion, why may not I attain it as well as my mother? I will immediately seek it of God.—He rose up in his bed and began to pray; but he soon recollected that much of his mother's comfort seemed to arise from her faith in Christ.—'Now,' thought he, 'this Christ have I