

idelity and purity. The same may be said of our own church, and of various sections of our country and denominations of Christians. In estimating the success of this experiment, there are two important circumstances which should be taken into account. The one is the rapid increase of our population. The American churches have had to supply the means of religious instruction not merely to the regular and natural increase of their number, but to keep pace with a population, (a large portion of which, he might have added, consist of the very refuse of the old world,) which doubles itself in twenty-five years. The other circumstance is, that in many parts of our country the population is so sparse, that to bring the ordinances of religion within the convenient reach of every family, would require one minister to every two hundred individuals. Taking these circumstances into consideration, I think it may safely be asserted that quite as much has been accomplished towards supplying the people with religious instruction, as in the countries where this duty rests upon their governments, and quite as much as would have been accomplished by any church establishment, and to unspeakably better purpose."—*Introductory Lecture, delivered in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. Nov. 7, 1828. — Biblical Repertory. New Series, vol. i. pp. 80, 81. Princeton, 1829.*

NO. VI.—JOHN HOLT RICE, D.D.

"Religion, to be completely successful, MUST BE FREE. Experience shows, in this country, that it has the energy of liberty—it has free course and is glorified." Beyond a doubt, it will ultimately triumph. At this time (1829) there are more than a million of communicants in the several Protestant churches in the United States, probably a larger proportion than exists in any other country in the world. The number increases at the rate of one hundred thousand a year. Such increase is perfectly unexampled since the days of the apostles. Religion will triumph; and no power on earth can prevent it; and it will triumph precisely because it is perfectly free.

The intelligent clergy, of all denominations, understand this; and would be the very foremost to oppose any effort to bind religion to the car of the state."—*High Church Principles opposed to the Genius of our Republican Institutions.* By JOHN HOLT RICE, D.D. Minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Virginia. Washington, 1829.

A PIOUS MOTHER.

A retrospective view of the mercies of the Lord, hallowed by the heart's grateful emotions, must ever be esteemed by the Christian as a choice source of joy, causing him throughout his pilgrimage to sing,

"Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal."

To trace with the natural eye the manifestation of infinite wisdom, power, and love, in

our own planet, and in the bright and beautiful worlds around us, is indeed a high duty and privilege, for the earth and "the heavens declare the glory of God." To trace the same hand of wisdom and love in all the guidance of the poor pilgrim from the city of destruction to the mount Zion of eternal glory, is a duty and privilege of a more excellent character, unfolding to the contemplative mind more varied kindness and multiplied adaptations of heavenly wisdom, love and power, to the numerable weaknesses, wants and unworthiness, of the vessels of mercy which our Father has "prepared unto glory."

Among these blessed means of grace, the favor of a holy mother, next to the gifts of the Son and Spirit of God, is pre-eminent. The relation she sustains in the department of the earliest training of the intelligent and moral being, forming, instrumentally, a character for earth and heaven, involves a responsibility and consequences which can be properly estimated only in the clear perception and vivid impressions of the awful realities of the eternal state.

To the praise of eternal love, the writer of this imperfect article bears his feeble testimony to the inexpressible value of a pious mother. While she now mingles her holier praises with those of the spirits of the just made perfect, he delights to raise his humble notes for the prayers, the tears, and the counsels of her, who in infancy, childhood, youth, and in manhood too, watched over him with a solicitude peculiar to a mother's love.

Often when his heart has been cheered amid life's woes with the animating hope of eternal rest, has he traced that hope to the divine mercy flowing in the instructions, the rebukes, and the pleadings of parental love. Often has the touching of this chord inspired his cold heart with ardent gratitude and joy, calling forth contrition for past delinquencies, and animating him to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Delightful indeed is the calm retrospective view of this invaluable favor. To think of the hour when, lying at the fountain of infant nourishment, the maternal prayer ascended on his behalf; of the hour when the folly of childhood was checked by faithful correction, and the perversity of youth rebuked by holy counsel; and especially of the hour, thrice blest, when the efficiency of divine grace secured to these means the result of holy penitence and faith—these are reminiscences more precious to his soul than the gold of Ophir. In the contemplation of them he still loves to linger.

As the daughter of the Egyptian monarch said to the mother of Moses, so God saith to every mother, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." How imperative the command! How solemn the charge! How fearful the responsibility! How encouraging the promise!