

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, JUNE 20, 1820.

NO. 22.

BIOGRAPHY.

LEGH RICHMOND.

[CONTINUED.]

In the year 1801 he formed a society at Brading, which proved an occasion of much benefit; the rules and regulations being peculiarly calculated to promote order, sobriety, and religion. This society met every Wednesday evening, and he himself assumed the office of director. The members of whom it was composed, were such as had derived advantage from his ministry, and were sincerely desirous of advancing in knowledge and true holiness.

To the soldiers that were occasionally quartered in that part of the country, he was made highly useful by his preaching. The history of one of those men is remarkable. It is recorded at length in a communication inserted in the 'Christian Observer,' for the year 1802 (p. 772.) Being too long for insertion here, the substance of it is as follows:—

"A young soldier, one day, introduced himself to Mr. Richmond, in company with one of his comrades, begging to know if he would kindly purchase from him a few clergyman's bands, and some manuscript sermons. Being asked by what means they came into his possession, he stated, with much embarrassment, that his history was wholly unknown to his companions in arms, but that being thus urged, he would recount the painful circumstances of his past life. He proceeded to declare that he was the son of a clergyman in Wales—that he himself had been regularly ordained, and officiated during three years on a curacy in the county of W—; that disorderly habits, and debts incurred without the possibility of discharging them, had brought him at length to ruin and disgrace; and that, to avoid imprisonment, he had been induced to enlist as a common soldier—that he had served in the last campaign in Holland, and was then about to proceed with the army, in the expedition to Alexandria, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie. He added, that it was to furnish himself with a few necessaries, that he was led to offer the articles in question for sale. Mr. Richmond having ascertained, as far as possible, the correctness of his story, purchased them, and afterwards held a very long conversation with him, on the awful consequences of his past life, and his unfaithfulness to the solemn and sacred engagement he had formerly contracted. The soldier seemed to be more abashed by the disclosure of his history, than impressed by the consciousness of his guilt, and the admonitions that he had heard. In June, 1802, the comrade who had originally accompanied him, once more called on Mr. Richmond, and stated that he was just returned from Egypt, and that the young man, in whose welfare he had taken so lively an interest, had fallen in battle, and died a true penitent—that on the evening preceding the engagement of the 21st March, he had been seized with a presentiment that he should not survive the event of the following day; and had commissioned him, (the bearer) should be spared to return, to inform Mr. Richmond, that the counsel he had so faithfully given to him, though it had failed at the time to impress him as it ought to have done, had ultimately sunk deep into his conscience, and produced all the effects that he could have wished; 'tell our dear pastor,' continued he, 'that I owe him more than worlds can repay; he first opened my heart to conviction, and God has blessed it to repentance. Through the unspeakable mercies of Christ, I can die with comfort.' The event that he had prognosticated was fulfilled; and it was discovered that poor Mr. E— lost his life by a cannon ball, at an early period in the action."

Such were his parochial labours in the Isle of Wight. We omit the interesting circumstances that gave rise to the publication of his popular tract of the 'Dairyman's Daughter,' because they will be recorded at the proper time; but what has already been detailed, furnishes conclusive evidence, that he was sustaining the part of a laborious parish

priest; that he was "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed;" and that his doctrine, energy and example, were holding forth a bright prospect of the more extensive career of usefulness, on which he was shortly about to enter. The writer of these lines cannot recall without emotion, a visit that he paid to the village of Brading, some years after Mr. Richmond had left that scene of his former labours. And, if the recollections awakened by the mention of a person's name and affectionate traces of the past, be one of the testimonies paid to worth, and a token that we are not forgotten, that mark of distinction might justly be claimed as his; for every tongue was eloquent in his praise, and every eye glistened with delight, while the virtues of their former beloved pastor furnished the theme of conversation, and was the welcome subject of fond remembrance, gratitude and love.

Having described him engaged in the duties of his parish, the following extract from a letter, addressed to his mother, will prove that the same high sense of his ministerial responsibility, and anxious desire for usefulness, discovers itself in its correspondence. He had recently been invited to preach the annual sermon in the abbey church at Bath, on the subject of cruelty to the brute creation, in conformity with the request of the Rev. Henry Brindley, at the close of the last century. It is to this circumstance that the letter alludes.

BRADING, March 26, 1801.

"My dearest Mother,

"It gives me real and unspeakable gratification that any thing you observe in me should give you the pleasure you describe; yet I fear you overrate me. Daily do I become more and more sensible of my own deficiencies; and when I hear myself praised, my failings and corruptions seem to be magnified in the mirror of conscience and conviction. I do feel an earnest and solemn wish to be a real Christian Minister of the Gospel of Christ; but it is indeed a character too exalted for my expectations of attaining, and unutterable is the responsibility attached to it. To be a Christian at all, in the scriptural sense is a business of unwearied attention, watchfulness, and labour; but to be a teacher, an example, a shepherd to the flock, requires tenfold circumspection. May God make me what he wishes, in order to form that character; and may no self sufficiency, carelessness or presumption, ever lead me to false security, neglect of duty, or inactivity—to all of which we are so prone by nature. In exact proportion as we struggle to rise above our natural propensities, Satan endeavours not only to stop our progress, but to turn our very improvement into danger, and a snare, by exciting pride and self-satisfaction at what we have been enabled to do. I have no objection to hearing that my preaching excited attention at Bath (though I ought to avoid every thing likely to awaken vanity,) because I am convinced that it is not so much from any thing in me, individually speaking, as in the scriptural truths which, by God's grace, I invariably endeavour to advance and expound, that approbation was manifested. I claim no praise, but that of being in earnest; and when I open the counsel of God to a congregation, I hope I feel anxious for the welfare of my hearers, and really desirous that they should, for their own sakes, 'mark, learn, hear, and inwardly digest the Holy Scriptures,' when explained according to the principles of sound orthodoxy, and evangelical truth. And, thus considering sound truth as the matter, and pastoral anxiety as the manner of my preaching, I hope to steer clear of any personal vanity, or silly presumption, in the arts of human eloquence, either written or oratorical. I have no wish to be a popular preacher in any sense but one, viz., as a preacher to the hearts of the people."

"Mary and the children send kindest love to you and my father, with your affectionate son,

LEIGH RICHMOND.

"To Mrs. Richmond, Bennet Street, Bath."

The following letter was written about the same time, to his sister, on her marriage:—

"Forgive me, my beloved sister, if I express myself with more than customary anxiety, in now writing to you: related as I am by the nearest ties of kindred, and by the still more close bonds of love and tender friendship. I feel a lively interest in all which concerns you; and should be more than commonly happy, if a brother's prayer, and a brother's admonition, should prove in any way conducive to the welfare and advancement of a much loved sister.

"I am desirous of seeing and knowing that you will shine in the united characters of wife, mother, friend, and Christian. I feel truly and unequivocally anxious that you should not, even in appearance, sink into the mere accomplished and elegant woman. I wish you to set a right estimate upon that far more accomplished, and infinitely more useful character, which exists chiefly within the walls of your own house. Every thing depends on your first outset. By the model which you frame for your conduct this very year, will probably be regulated all your subsequent character and conduct in every future station and relation of life.

"You well know the affection, and I trust will not despise the judgment and sentiments, of him who speaks thus candidly and frankly to you. I am well persuaded that a young woman, to be truly respectable, must dare to be laudably singular. There always will be a certain description of persons in every place, who will wonder that you can exist without passing your time as they do; but amongst those whose esteem and opinion alone ought to regulate your own feelings and conduct, the more retired and seldom-to-be-seen wife, whose theatre of real action and real pleasure is within her own house, in the fulfilment of sober, useful, and exemplary duties, will ever be most beloved, most respected, and most befriended.

"By way of immediate occupation of your time and thoughts, allow me to direct them to the relief and benefit of the poor; not by idle gratuities, but by diligently seeking them out, informing yourself of their wants and distresses, and economizing in superfluities, in order that thereby the poor may abound in needfuls, and you may abound in their blessings. Be systematically charitable, both to their souls and bodies. Promote plans for instruction; assist in superintending them; employ yourself in making clothes for them; and rest not till you have made it a settled and uniform part of your character, to be actively, constantly, and watchfully charitable.

Be scrupulously attentive to the observance of the sabbath, both in public and in private, both at church and at home; and in all your pleasures, all your pains, all your employments, prospects, plans, and engagements, remember that the use of this life is to prepare for a better; and that 'strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to eternal life, and few there be that find it.' Read your Bible with prayer, daily, under the impression of this awful truth: and may God remember you my dearest sister, amongst those whom he especially loveth; and his grace render you, what I wish you may always prove to be, a valued wife, a tender mother, an estimable friend, and a devoted Christian.

Your affectionate brother,
L. RICHMOND."

DIVINITY.

From the Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald.

RELIGION.

THE BEST OF ALL PRINCIPLES ON WHICH TO ACT.

Religion is either true or not true. If it be not true, how are they deceived who embrace it. Their lives are spent in delusion, and blissful dreams, and heavenly fantasies. They die in the arms of imaginary triumph, and for all their toil, watchings,