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MEMOIR OF OLINTHUS GREGORY, LL.D., F.R.A.S., &c., &c., &c.

LATE PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS IN THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF WOOLWICH.

WHILE we owe it no less to our readers than to the memory of this inestimable man, to offer in these pages a brief sketch of the history of his life, we feel how impossible it would be within such narrow limits to do any justice either to his greatness or his goodness. All that can be attempted is to indicate the more prominent points of his public life, and to attempt a brief delineation of his character.

Olinthus Gilbert Gregory was born of respectable and intelligent parents at Yaxley, in Huntingdonshire, on the 29th of January, 1774. He received his early education under Mr. Richard Weston, then master of a school in that county, an able mathematician, and one who appeared to have understood the art of teaching in a degree very rare in those days, and not exceedingly common in these. Under his judicious superintendence, Mr. Gregory remained for ten or twelve years, and during this period of ardent intellectual activity, laid the foundations of his future eminence. At a very early age, intellectual and literary tastes developed themselves in his mind to a singular and precocious degree. Before he was fifteen years old, he had acquainted himself with the writings of some of our greatest philosophers and poets, among whom may be mentioned Bishop Berkeley and Locke, Shakspeare and Milton. Even at this early age, the young student spent whole

nights in the study of these authors, and in the still more difficult investigations of abstract science; and by such severe and premature labour he no doubt made an impression upon his physical constitution, which his own natural prudence and the fond cares of others in after years could never entirely efface.

Most men who take the trouble to examine the history of their own minds, will find that their most important and lasting intellectual tendencies have been determined by what appears to be accident. So it was with Dr. Gregory. While engaged in mathematical inquiry, and first employing himself publicly in the solution of those mathematical problems which were currently proposed in the periodical literature of that day, a passage from the "Paradise Lost," which was accidentally cited in his hearing, turned his attention to subjects at once more subtle and more comprehensive. His youthful mind, disciplined to close and accurate thinking, plunged at once into all the difficulties and abstrusenesses of metaphysics. With the unchastened fervour of youth, he strained his intellect to comprehend and philosophize upon the infinity of the nature and the eternity of the existence of God. And, though his maturer reason and his deeper knowledge in after life may have led him to smile at these excursions of his juvenile fancy, there is no doubt that these early studies served to rescue him from