

A

MEMOIR

OF THE

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BY WILLIAM MAXWELL.



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TO THE REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.

*Richmond, April 13th, 1819.*

MY DEAR SIR,

The situation of Virginia is daily becoming more interesting to Presbyterians. The people below the mountains are becoming more accessible to us. Prejudices are yielding, and, in some instances, complacency is taking their place.

Our Hanover Society, auxiliary to the Board of Missions, has done well this year. We have employed missionary labours to the amount of twenty-two months, but have not been able at all to satisfy the demand. In fact, it is greatly increased. And we are solicited on every side to send missionaries. Franklin, Pittsylvania, Lunenburg, Nottoway, Surrey, Prince George, Princess Anne, Charles City, New Kent, Louisa, Orange, Albemarle, Fluvanna, Buckingham, Nelson, and Amherst, all loudly call for, and eagerly expect missionary labours. The prospect of paying for these is encouraging. Missionary associations are increasing. A society has just sprung up in Norfolk, one in Mecklenburg, two associations in Albemarle, one in Buckingham, one in Fluvanna, one in Lynchburg, two in Bedford, all organized within about a year.

But where shall we get missionaries? The Young Men's Society of Richmond is most eager to employ some zealous, popular young man; if it were but for a month. They think, and have reason for it, that could they let the people of Richmond see such an one engaged heartily in their service, going from house to house, among the poorest and most profligate, carrying the warnings and invitations of the gospel, it would at once establish the association in the favour of the public, and give assurance of very enlarged means for prosecuting the charity in which they are engaged. Can you not afford some aid to them in their laudable design? Their movements have already pro-

duced considerable sensation through the state. They gave the impulse to Norfolk and Alexandria. I have promised to plead their cause with you, and in their name entreat that you would exert your influence in sending them a missionary.”

Some time in May following, having been appointed by the Presbytery of Hanover a delegate to the General Assembly, he repaired to Philadelphia, to attend the sessions of that body; when he was very honourably elected the Moderator of it; and, we are told, discharged the duties of the chair in a manner that gave great satisfaction to all the members. This, of course, made him more generally known to his brethren in all parts of the country, and very naturally increased his reputation and influence among them; while, at the same time, the elevated position which he now occupied, served to give him a more extensive view of the growing interests of the church, whose prosperity was always most justly dear to his heart.

TO MRS. JUDITH M. SMITH.

*Richmond, July 6th, 1819.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am heartily disposed to write to you frequently; but I really find it out of my power. And when I do sit down to chat a little with a friend in this way, I am generally so hurried that I am incapable of saying any thing worthy of attention.

We had a most delightful excursion to the North. I never saw as large an assembly of preachers on any other occasion; and they brought up many encouraging reports respecting the prevalence of religion. I suppose that probably not fewer than ten thousand souls were added to the Presbyterian Church during the last year. This trip has considerably enlarged my ideas of the growing influence of this society in our country. It will, should no unforeseen disaster occur,