

A

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. JOHN H. RICE, D.D.

First Professor of Christian Theology in Union Theological Seminary, Virginia.

BY WILLIAM MAXWELL.



PHILADELPHIA: 

PUBLISHED BY J. WHETHAM.

RICHMOND:—R. I. SMITH.

1835.

5

the full work of three men is on my shoulders, I feel quite worn down and exhausted.

In all my labours and trials, I have a most valuable aid in my excellent friend Mr. Roy, whom I here introduce to you. He is general agent for the Seminary, and has been a most invaluable man to us. To him I refer you for information as to the present state and prospects of our institution. He is fully possessed of the whole subject; and will call on you as one of our best friends, for all the information that he will need in prosecuting his agency.

I will just say that this is a time of most urgent necessity with us, and that it will require the vigorous efforts of all our friends for the present to keep us along, until the plans which we have laid shall be carried into execution. The Lord in his mercy succeeds us in such a way that we have hope to animate us, and urge us forward. Surely he who has in a wonderful manner favoured us thus far, will be with us to the end.

We have in several places the prospect of revivals of religion in our desolate region. My beloved people in Richmond are now highly favoured. There is a pleasing excitement in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and very promising appearances in Lynchburg, in this state. May God pour out his spirit on all flesh. My brother, remember us in your prayers. May grace, mercy, and peace be on you.

Most affectionately yours,

JOHN H. RICE.

TO THE REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.

*Theological Seminary, Feb. 20th, 1827.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I should have written to you sooner, but have been prevented, partly by bad health and excessive occupation, and partly by a wish to make some trial of Mr. G——, before I would say any thing about him.

It gives me very great pleasure to say now, that as far as

six weeks experience has enabled me to form a judgment, you could not possibly have made a better selection of an assistant than you have done. Mr. G's attainments are even greater than I expected. I think his talents excellent, and his industry in study more than sufficient. But his highest qualification is his very warm and exemplary piety. He is very popular as a preacher, and has already become a very general favourite. I feel very greatly indebted to you for your agency in this business. Had not Mr. G., or some assistant been obtained, I must have sunk under the severity of my labours, or have sought another situation, where I could have rendered some service without being kept under continual pressure.

My hopes are good respecting the ultimate success of our plans, and the utility of our enterprise. We have now fifteen students, and they have among them a better spirit than I have before witnessed here. They are very diligent in the cultivation of personal religion, and are endeavouring to be useful in the neighbourhood.

We have quite a flourishing Sabbath-school in the neighbourhood. Some of the young men have recently opened another in Farmville, where they have gathered nearly forty scholars, and where a weekly prayer-meeting is well attended. A third school has been opened under quite encouraging circumstances, about six miles south near the Charlotte road, in the neighbourhood of the Biggers; and there a weekly prayer-meeting is held also.

The circumstances of the congregation here are, I think, improving. There is an indication of better feeling, and, if I mistake not, more of a spirit of prayer among the people. Our hopes are somewhat raised. But there is this to discourage us, that the spirit of party politics is waxing very hot among the people; and I fear that we are going to have something of what we witnessed in the days of the other John Adams.

The revival in Richmond has not ceased; and there are

very encouraging prospects in Petersburg. The church there appears to be much awakened up.

I saw Archy Lyle yesterday. He tells me his father's health is truly bad. I am very apprehensive about him. Archy saw James and William the day before; and I learn that, probably, they will be with us by to-morrow. Best love to Mrs. A. and the children, as well as to yourself, from Mrs. R. and

JOHN H. RICE.

TO WILLIAM MAXWELL, ESQ.

*Theological Seminary, Feb. 24th, 1827.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter and the copies of your speech, and I heartily thank you for all.

Your speech, as far as I have known, is very much approved of; and *skittish* as you think me, I do not see any thing in it to which I object, on *any* subject. Your remarks have convinced me that you do not apprehend, (and I am sure that the fault is in me that you do not,) the ground of my caution in this matter. I am most fully convinced that slavery is the greatest evil in our country, except whiskey; and it is my most ardent prayer that we may be delivered from it. But it is my full belief that the deliverance is not to be accomplished by the combination of benevolent societies. The great body of persons composing such societies are too little accustomed to calculate consequences. They go directly at their measure, and have no means of accomplishing it but the producing, by means of speeches and addresses, a strong excitement. But on a subject of this delicate character, where much opposition is to be encountered, these very means give the adversary an advantage, which he will not fail to use to the injury, perhaps to the destruction of the Society. While, therefore, I do most devoutly wish success to the Colonization Society, I do earnestly wish that its friends may not refer to it as a means of