

A

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. JOHN H. RICE, D.D.

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

BY WILLIAM MAXWELL.



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TO THE REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.

*Richmond, Feb. 4th, 1819.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I have lately received two or three circulars respecting an "Education Society for the Presbyterian Church," which have given me much uneasiness. I perceive that there is a division on this subject, and fear that it will lead to unhappy results. I should be very glad to hear a candid and impartial statement of the affair, and to hear it soon, for I perceive that much industry is employed in attempting at least to secure partizans. One thing is certain, that we of Virginia will cleave to the General Assembly to the very last. For we regard that body as the great bond of union in our church. Another thing too is certain. Although we have been endeavouring, and still are in a feeble way endeavouring to build up a Theological Seminary for the South; we are not indifferent to the success of Princeton. On the contrary, in any collision of interest between that and *another*, we shall cleave to Princeton with all our hearts, and afford support to the extent of our abilities. This is my feeling most decidedly.

It gives me pleasure to inform you that Mr. Post is producing a great sensation in the part of the country where he labours. He is much admired by the most enlightened people. I received a letter not long ago from Gen. C——, in which he mentioned that having heard him once, he rode fifteen miles to hear him again. The people near Milton are very anxious that he should settle among them, and I wish that he would. Albemarle is now the most important part of our country, as the University of Virginia is located there. I do want a good Presbyterian of suitable talents placed there very much.

When Chester was here the other day, he gave me the 3d Annual Report of the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York. I read it with much interest. Chester preached

at an evening meeting for us, and a number of young men were present. While he was preaching, I felt in my pocket for my handkerchief, and took hold of this report. At once the thought rushed into my mind—I will try when Chester is done if the young men here can be roused to any feeling on the subject of establishing a Missionary Society. As soon as the preacher closed, I rose and delivered an address. It set Chester in a flame—several young men were kindled by it. The result was that a Society has been organized, denominated the “Young Men’s Missionary Society of Richmond.” It consists now of about forty members. The officers are all such young men as I approved. The Society is auxiliary to the Young Men’s Missionary Society of New York, and looks to Princeton for Missionaries. The sum of five dollars is to be contributed annually by the members. I hope that you will favour the institution as you may have it in your power. We regard it as an event of some consequence, in as much as we hope that the example will be followed in Norfolk, Petersburg, and Fredericksburg, and that these several institutions connected with a society as respectable and orthodox as that of New York, will help to bind together different parts of the church by new ties; at the same time that means of sending the gospel to the destitute will be enlarged.

I was surprised to learn from Mr. Chester, that an opinion is afloat that I am prejudiced against Princeton. Nothing can be further from truth. I should rejoice to see it prosper, and do most earnestly pray God to smile upon it, as I do that he may abundantly bless you and all yours; in which I am joined by Mrs. Rice.

Yours most truly,

JOHN H. RICE.