

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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Mr. Peters, which you will see, I suppose. In this I tell him that we want plain Bible preachers—men, who instead of thinking that they have made wonderful discoveries which will cause the people to admire their ingenuity, will be self-denying enough to tell them just what is in the Bible, and no more, nor no less.

I hope that you will find no difficulty in making the collections for the New York Professorship, especially as one of the finest sons of New York is in our seminary. I am more and more pleased with Mr. Goodrich as a teacher. He is fully bent on making our institution just what I proposed—a Bible school. He enters entirely into all my plans; and goes beyond my expectation in one thing—he *makes the critical study of the Bible a means of promoting the piety of the students.* This study has always been objected to, on account of its deadening influence on pious feeling; but under Goodrich the case is just the reverse. He is worth more than his weight in gold.

Mrs. Rice joins me in love to you and yours. Pray for us.

Most affectionately yours,

JOHN H. RICE.

I expect to-morrow to set out for North Carolina, to be absent ten days.

TO THE REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.

*Union Seminary, Nov. 18, 1828.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your favour by Mr. Lane, and would have answered it sooner, if I could. But you shall judge whether this is a mere excuse or not. On the 25th of September I set out to Philadelphia. After preaching, you know, I set out next morning home. On my arrival my examination had commenced. The day after I set out to attend Presbytery in Albemarle. From thence I went to Synod in Staunton. On my return home, I attended two days meeting of the Board of College, and on the evening of the second

day I went on my way to the Synod of North Carolina. The day after my return, I set out to a meeting of our Presbytery (at Painesville in Amelia!!) and last night I arrived at home, sick with a severe cold. Now, I mention all this, *only* for the purpose of showing why it is, that I so seldom have communicated with you. My life is one of incessant labour—and I hope that it will be so as long as I live. It is a privilege enough to be employed for the building up of the Church. If I do any thing, as far as influence is concerned, and success is gained, it is all from above. As for the instrumentality by which I was originally excited to this course of action,—you were employed for that purpose. I take no credit to myself at all—I deserve none. I am a poor sinner; and deserve nothing but eternal perdition. If delivered from sin and made *holy*, it will be honour and happiness enough. But I did not sit down to write in this way.

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I was unhappily from home, when my friend James passed through the neighbourhood. I mean unhappily for myself—for I could not have the pleasure of seeing him. I hear that he is well, and preaching with great acceptance in Charlotte.

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The two Synods of Virginia and North Carolina have concurred, without a dissenting voice, in the appointment of Mr. Goodrich as professor of Biblical Literature. I think this unanimity very remarkable. We are now thinking of a third professor. But whether there will be a similar concurrence of sentiment is very doubtful. I wish much that attention could be directed to a man with learning enough to make the necessary preparation, and with a spirit of action, which might be breathed into all our students. If you should write to any of the brethren either in this state or in North Carolina, I wish you would drop a hint or two on this subject.

I rejoice in Mr. Hodge's safe return; and in his return

safe from German Neology. But this I expected. I should like much to see him. And I like much his new plan of a Repertory. I think Addison has got into his right place, and I trust his work will be profitable. We shall do what we can to get subscribers. But a specimen number will help us on considerably in that business.

There is still a gradual growth of religion in this region; and a strong spirit of inquiry. What do you think of a Presbytery meeting to ordain a minister at Painesville in Amelia county? Thirty years ago, that place went by the name of *Chinquopin Church*; but it was changed by a formal resolution, in honour of Tom Paine, into Painesville! And now, one of our students is labouring successfully there to build up a Presbyterian Church! But we do now want at least twenty Missionaries in our bounds.

I saw a young man named \* \* , sent by the General Assembly's Board of Missions to North Carolina. He was commissioned for five months to labour in the bounds of Concord Presbytery. The young man said he would stay the five months, but not a day longer in that region! This policy is still pursued, and it injures the cause of the General Assembly's Missions. Brief Missionary tours will not succeed in building up churches in the South, and he who comes to perform labours of that sort among us now, must come prepared to "enlist for the war."

Give our love to Mrs. Alexander and the children, including Mary Rice.

I am most truly, &c.

JOHN H. RICE.

TO THE REV. SAMUEL L. GRAHAM.

*Union Theological Seminary, Nov. 23d, 1828.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I was sorry to part from you so unceremoniously at Mr. Sneed's. Indeed, I expected that you would overtake us, and that I should have the opportunity of riding with you.