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
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.

*Union Theological Seminary, July 11th, 1828.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I have so much to say to you, that I am afraid to begin, on the subject of my passing through Princeton, without calling, on my return to Virginia. It was a very painful affair to me. But the case was this: I wanted to attend the meeting of the General Assembly's Board of Missions, which was held in June. I arrived in New York about 10 o'clock on Wednesday. The meeting was to be held in Philadelphia, at 3 o'clock on Thursday. I had several hours business to detain me, and could not leave New York until the 3 o'clock boat. This enabled me to get to Trenton about 1 o'clock at night. It was eleven when we passed by your house. I could only, as I went, offer a silent prayer that God might bless you and all yours—and this I did with all the sincerity of old unchanged friendship.

I have no doubt you have heard of the excitement, I think I may say revival of religion, in Prince Edward. It was prepared for by previous labours. Much that our valued old friend, Mr. Lyle, did in the way of sowing seed, is now springing up, and producing a glorious harvest. Douglass has the grace to acknowledge this. Other things paved the way. When Mr. Nettleton had strength to labour, he soon was made instrumental in producing a considerable excitement. This has extended; and now the state of things is deeply interesting. Five lawyers, all men of very considerable standing, have embraced religion. H. E. W——, S. A——, N. P——, M. P——, and P. H——. This has produced a mighty sensation in Charlotte, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Cumberland, Powhatan, Buckingham, and Albemarle. The minds of men seem to stand a tiptoe, and they seem to be looking for some great thing. I do fear that, un-

der the influence of men of other denominations, there will be a wildfire kindled in this region, and every thing will be seared, and withered by the fierceness of the blast. This, then, would put every thing back for another generation. I saw in Troy and Utica, how the raging flame had passed through the garden of the Lord, and every thing looked black and desolate. But what can we do to prevent this evil? We have no men. And in this case of necessity, as usual, I turn to you for aid and counsel. Is there no possibility of getting three or four sterling young men to come on to this middle region at the present time? Can we not get Kirk, Young, and some others of the same spirit? I have sent a letter to Kirk to Princeton, and will thank my friend William to give it the proper direction, if any of you know where he is now located. I really do not think that in this middle region there is any danger of bilious fevers, except in particular localities. Thus along through Prince Edward, and Buckingham, and on the north side of James River, among the hills of Albemarle, I am sure that there is less danger than in many parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

It is remarkable that the work here is as much among men as women; and, as far as it has yet gone, it is among that class of society which has hitherto been almost entirely free from religious influence, lawyers and educated men. At last Nottoway Court, there were in the bar at once, seven lawyers, professors of religion! This is unexampled in Virginia. O! if we had suitable men, the desolations of many generations might be built, and the ruins of Zion in our native State might be repaired. We cannot get on half fast enough, in raising a supply of religious instructors. And what this country will do I know not. You need not be told how it has suffered in its spiritual interests, from ignorant teachers. But experience of the evil is not sufficient for its cure. It is necessary that the people should have just ideas of something better, and they can acquire these only by experience too. But the difficulty is to find men to send

among them, and thus let them see and feel what is meant by *good preaching*.

Mr. Nettleton is a remarkable man, and chiefly, I think, remarkable for his power of producing a great excitement without much *appearance* of feeling. The people do not either weep, or talk away their impressions. The preacher chiefly addresses *Bible truth* to their *consciences*. I have not heard him utter as yet a single sentiment opposed to what you and I call orthodoxy. He preaches the Bible. He derives his illustrations from the Bible.

Mrs. Rice joins me in love to Mrs. Alexander and the children, as well as to yourself.

I am, as ever, most truly yours,

JOHN H. RICE.

TO MR. KNOWLES TAYLOR.

*Union Theological Seminary, Aug. 22d, 1828.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have received your late letters, and do thank God that you feel so lively an interest for our Seminary. The measures which you recommend, however, would be very much modified, if you were acquainted with all the circumstances of the country about us. It would require a very long letter to explain them; and I have not time to write one now. The statement, however, of a single fact, to a man of your habits of business and calculation, will throw great light on the subject. It is this, that the building of a wooden house with us, costs within about five per cent. as much as a brick one. It is universally admitted here then, that for any permanent establishment it is far best to build with brick. Under this conviction, and feeling the importance of having more room, before I received your letters, I ventured, on my own responsibility, to engage a workman to put up a brick building. And he is now actually engaged in the job, and has engaged to finish it this season.

At present Mr. Goodrich and I, with our wives, and all