

**MEMORIALS OF THE LATE REV.
JAMES BENNETT, D.D.:
COMPRISING A BRIEF
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, THE
FUNERAL ORATION**

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Memorials of the Late Rev. James Bennett, D.D.: Comprising a Brief biographical sketch, the funeral oration by J. Jefferson & S. Mc All

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J. JEFFERSON & S. MC ALL

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MEMORIALS

OF THE LATE

REV. JAMES BENNETT, D.D.

COMPRISING

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH,

THE

FUNERAL ORATION BY THE REV. J. JEFFERSON,

AND THE

FUNERAL SERMON BY THE REV. S. MC ALL.

*"For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith;
and much people was added unto the Lord."—*

ACTS xi, 24.

LONDON:
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1863.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

~~Bro 2102~~

The Biographical Sketch prefixed to this publication was prepared for and read at the Funeral Service, in Falcon Square Chapel. It is now printed with but little alteration, and without an attempt to make it, in any respect, a complete Sketch of Dr. Bennett's life and character, because a hope is entertained that a more extended Memoir may eventually be published.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH,

ETC.

DR. BENNETT was born in London, on the 22nd of May, 1774. His mother he scarcely knew, she having died when he was very young. She was, it is said, a woman of superior mind. His father was nominally a member of the Established Church, and, to use his son's words, "always maintained the character of an upright and Christian man. He was too conscientious to worship where the Gospel was not preached, and as this was not the case at his parish church, he usually attended one of Lady Huntingdon's chapels." He committed his son's education to a schoolmaster of the neighbourhood, of some celebrity in his day, whose name was Plough. Here James Bennett, besides receiving the ordinary elements of an English education, was professedly taught the rudiments of Latin and French. But although, in Mr. Plough's estimation, his pupil did him great credit, Dr. Bennett himself always spoke of the instruction he there received as of very little value.

On leaving school, he was sent to business with a man who proved so capricious and tyrannical a master, that the connexion was of short duration. Eventually the youth went of his own accord to Bath, hoping to find

employment of some kind there. He lodged with some good people, whose family were some of them Moravians, and others Methodists. Here it was that God met with him; and from this point his subsequent history might be gathered from his own diary.

But Dr. Bennett's public character, and, to a great extent, even his private life, are so well known, that it is scarcely necessary, for the present purpose, to recall the more prominent facts connected with his history. During his lifetime, however, those only who were most intimately connected with him by domestic ties, could obtain even glimpses of his innermost life; although most persons who could rightly appreciate his unblemished Christian character and long career of distinguished usefulness, must have felt convinced that his outer life was the reflex of an inner life watched with no common care, and nourished by no ordinary amount of divine grace. Of this, abundant evidence is afforded by the private memoranda which he has left behind. The principal of these memoranda is the diary referred to, which he kept from the period of his conversion up to the close of his public ministry. And although this diary was kept strictly for his own spiritual welfare, and manifestly intended for no human eye but his own, there can be no impropriety in making such use of it as may serve to elucidate the sources of his success in the ministry of the gospel of Christ, and in maintaining through a long, varied, and active career, that Christian character which may well stimulate others to seek in like manner for grace to honour God, and to be faithful even unto death. The diary appears to have been used with great constancy to assist the writer in carefully reviewing his

course. This was done especially at certain fixed periods, of which the principal were the anniversaries of his conversion, and of his ordination. These, and two other days, were kept as days of private devotion, and generally of fasting. For, although it does not appear that he considered fasting to be enjoined in the New Testament, he believed that it was sanctioned and occasionally profitable.

Attached to the diary are several documents, which appear to have been used in connexion with it. These are—

1st. A list of dates, which begins thus:—"May 22nd, 1774, born; August 13th, 1792, born again; December 24th, 1792, preached my first sermon."

2nd. A list of questions addressed to his own soul, dated March, 1795.

3rd. A paper, headed: "For my own sanctification."

4th. His confession of faith, and the charge delivered to him by Dr. Bogue, at his Ordination.

The diary, as it now stands, begins with the following entries:—

"*Monday, August 13th, 1792.*—A day ever to be remembered by me. I was unexpectedly invited to drink tea with two pious people in the house, at which I was not well pleased, as their company and conversation made me gloomy. After tea, they went to prayer, which made it still more irksome to my carnal mind. But the Lord soon answered the prayers they offered for my conversion. One of the party, Mr. Shum, a German, who belonged to the Methodist society at Bath, on rising from prayer, was seated directly opposite the beautiful hills surrounding that city, which led him to say, in a