

THE LIFE

OF

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.

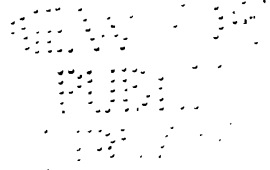
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BY

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M.DCCCLIV.



The letters of this time which remain are few indeed ; which enhances the value of that which follows, short as it is.

MR. ALEXANDER TO MRS. GRAHAM.

"HAMPDEN SIDNEY, July 19, 1808.

"DEAR SISTER :—

"By John Chavis I received yours, and pass over all the rest to answer that part in which you express some uneasiness at my entertaining doubts respecting the genuineness of the Kentucky revival.

"In answer, I observe, that I have never at any time expressed such doubts, though it is more than probable that I have said what some would suppose to indicate such a state of mind. I have not doubted that much good has been done in that country, and that a considerable number have experienced true religion. All these effects I attribute without hesitation to God. And in proportion as I obtain evidence of the existence of such effects, I am confirmed in the opinion that the Spirit of God has been poured out. But I have supposed, and now think, that those extraordinary bodily appearances furnish no evidence of a saving operation of the Holy Spirit. If I should not be able to account for them upon common and natural principles, I yet have no right to ascribe them to the immediate agency of divine power, unless they are among effects promised to be produced. If no stress be laid on them, I have nothing to say in relation to them. If they furnish no evidence in favour of a work being of God, they can, I presume, afford

nene that it is not. If they are ranked with tears, crying, &c., the common effects of religious passions, I am neither offended with them, nor am I much delighted with them. I have moreover supposed, and do still suppose, that many measures were adopted by the conductors of this work, which were imprudent and unwarrantable. When people are under strong religious impressions, there is more need of regulation and restraint than of encouragement. To give an instance—six or ten persons exhorting at once—five hundred praying as loud as they can cry; these things occurred in Carolina. My opinion is that the fruit of this revival will by no means answer the appearances, and that the declension will be so apparent, that the unbelieving will be greatly hardened. In all these opinions, however, I have a reserve. I have not been an eye-witness to the work; if I were, I might judge differently of many things.

“I remain your affectionate brother,

“A. A.”

“About this time,” says he, “the conduct of the students became very irregular, and I grew weary of governing them. I had been invited in the spring of 1806, to visit the Third Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, made vacant by the removal of Dr. Milledoler to New-York.* I declined the invitation, but in September I was again requested to visit the city, as there was no hope of fixing upon any other candidate. This came just at the time when our students

* The call was approved by the Presbytery, Oct. 23d, 1806.