

MEMOIR
OF
JULIUS CHARLES RIEU.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

FREDERIC MONOD, JUN.
One of the pastors of the Reformed French church
of Paris.

WITH

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,

BY THE

REV. A. ALEXANDER, D. D.

PHILADELPHIA:

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W. B. PERKINS

PHILADELPHIA

1833

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the autumn of the year 1831, the translator of this little work was riding in company with a distinguished pastor of Geneva, in the environs of that delightful city ; we were speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God ; of the long and profound slumbers of the church of Geneva ; of the recent revival, whose silent, but irrepressible power had broken up the icy bondage of established error ; of the attendant persecutions and sufferings of the ministers of Christ, and of the new reformation which the providence and Spirit of God are now rocking in the cradle of the old. Having spoken of the labours of Neff, Duvivier, Wilks, Haldane, and many others, “ whose record is on high,” he turned to me, with his peculiar earnestness of manner, and inquired, “ Have you read

the Memoir of Charles Rieu?" On my answering in the negative, he added, "Do not sleep till you have read it." Immediately on my return to the city, I procured and read it, with emotions kindred to those which are awakened by the memoirs of Brainerd, Martyn, Neff, and Oberlin. It is now given to American Christians in an English translation; with the fervent hope and prayer, that it may prove to their hearts, as it did to my own, *a coal from the altar*. What might not the American church do for her own extension and the conversion of the world, if all her sons were animated by the spirit of this holy and admirable young man—a spirit which breathed glory to God in the highest—love to all who bore the image of Christ—peace and good will to the whole world. Such was the spirit of Rieu. God grant that we may all be baptized with it, and that, under its influence, we may "count not our own lives

dear to ourselves, that we may finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord!"

The author of this little Memoir is well known, not only in Europe but in our own country, as the editor of the Archives du Christianisme. Within the last year, he has been chosen one of the pastors of the Reformed church of Paris, in succession to the late Mr. Marron. He was a personal and intimate friend of Rieu; and his memoir appears to have been a simple, unlaboured, and unpretending memorial of Christian affection. The translation claims no other praise than that of fidelity.

Philadelphia, Feb. 15, 1833.

MESSRS. FRENCH & PERKINS :

GENTLEMEN,—I have perused, with unmingled pleasure, the translation of Mr. Monod's Memoir of the Rev. Julius C. Rieu, which you were pleased to send me in manuscript. There is something exceedingly interesting in the whole narrative; but more especially in the last scene of this pious and heavenly-minded young man. It is rarely the case, that a minister of the gospel is permitted to express so fully his evangelical views and exercises, in his last moments, as was this devoted servant of Jesus Christ; and it is still more rare, to witness such a triumph of faith, and such a perfection of gospel peace, as are here exhibited. His farewell letter to his beloved elders and parishioners, is one of the most solemn and delightful discourses I have ever seen. It was, indeed, a sermon not only from the very heart of an affectionate pastor, but from the

mouth of the sepulchre. His farewell to his mother and other relatives, who were at a distance, is exquisitely tender. All the ideas of terror and distress, which usually crowd around the deathbed, were banished from the scene here described. We are permitted to contemplate a minister of Christ, though in the flower of his life, and in the midst of useful and delightful labours, not only willing to die, but ardently desiring to depart. Not that he was weary of his Master's service, for he was contented to remain and endure the combat; but his love to his Lord was so great that he felt an ineffable desire to be present with him; and esteemed it an extraordinary and unexpected favour, to be released from toil, and called to his reward, after so short a conflict. Seldom, indeed, has a death-bed scene been witnessed, in which the sting of death appeared to be more completely extracted, and in which the sweet peace of God, which

passeth all understanding, seemed more perfectly to expel from the mind every doubt, fear, and unpleasant emotion. Well may every reader exclaim, "O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Of the fidelity of the translation, I can express no opinion ; but the style is, in the main, neat, simple, and highly perspicuous ; and I regret that the worthy young clergyman, who has been at the pains of giving this interesting memoir of Mr. Monod an English dress, should, through what I must consider an excess of modesty, refuse to accompany his translation with his name.

As your object in forwarding the manuscript to me has been to elicit some commendation or expression of opinion, I am gratified to have it in my power to say, that I think, by publishing this little work, you will confer a sweet gratification on the pious of every denomination, who

will take the trouble to spend an hour in its perusal ; and that young ministers and candidates for the ministry will be furnished with a lovely model for their imitation, and with a strong incentive and animating encouragement to live near to God, and to be faithful in the performance of pastoral duties.

I am respectfully, yours, &c.

A. ALEXANDER.

Princeton, N. J., Feb. 27, 1833.

MEMOIR.

THE following pages do not aspire to the title of a biography. They are not intended to perpetuate the memory of one whose achievements or discoveries would entitle him to a place in this world's admiration; but simply to recall some incidents in the short but well occupied life of a modest and fervent Christian, whose *life was hid with Christ in God*, and whose example may be useful and edifying. Too often, *the righteous perish and none lay it to heart*; I write to prevent this, not to give to Charles Rieu those praises which, if living, he would not accept; but to present him as a monument of the grace of the Lord; and I do so with the fervent prayer that his memory may serve to influence the zeal of the ministers of Christ, of those who

are preparing for his service, and of all who may read the following pages, by showing them the nature and fruits of the Christian faith, and the efficacy and power of the Holy Spirit. I shall omit everything that would not directly contribute to the end which I propose, and which would not be interesting to all the friends of the Saviour. I shall confine myself in general to the relation of facts, and shall seldom give utterance to those reflections which are suggested on every recollection of a subject so deeply interesting both to my mind and heart. Connected as I have had the happiness to be with Rieu, and, as I still am, by ties over which death has no power, these, should I indulge in them, would bear, I fear, too vividly the impress of my affection and sorrow.

JULIUS CHARLES RIEU was born at Geneva, in August, 1792, of a distinguished family. His humility and great distrust of

himself, caused him at first to consider as beyond his reach a profession, demanding, as he felt, talents, and a purity of faith and sentiment which he did not believe himself to possess. More than once, even after he had entered on the study of theology, he was on the point of renouncing it; but such was not the will of the Lord, who designed to make him a shining light in his kingdom here below, and to show forth all his mercies towards him, in rendering him early ripe for the recompense which he reserved for him; and he persevered. The assiduous reading and meditation of the word of God soon became his whole pleasure; and conducted, as it was, with deep humility and a spirit of prayer, imparted to him a rapidly increasing strength. And from the moment when, by heavenly grace, he felt his own weakness, his total incompetency to do any thing of himself; when he had learned to seek strength and assist-

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ance only from the Lord ; to consider himself merely as an instrument, which is nothing but by the hand that wields it ; from that moment he felt himself superior to all difficulties, and discovered that he could do all things through Christ which strengthened him. The career on which he entered became an abundant source of joy and hope to himself, and of blessing to others ; and he was solemnly consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ, burning with an ardent desire to exercise his ministry from that moment, wherever it should please his Master to call him.

The providential summons was not long delayed. The office of pastor of the reformed church of Fredericia, a colony of French refugees, became vacant, and the consistory addressed an invitation to Rieu in 1817. Many considerations forbade his compliance with this invitation. His fortune ; the tender and mutual affec-

tion which attached him to his family ; the numerous friends who surrounded him, many of whom endeavoured to shake his resolution ; the restoration of his beloved country, which had then just recovered its political existence and liberty ; all seemed to permit, nay, to solicit the consecration of his life to the service of the church of Geneva ; all invited him quietly to await the opportunity of being numbered among its pastors. But an inward voice, more eloquent than the claims of kindred and of country, reminded him, that since the field had been opened, it became him to apply himself to the work, and enter, without delay, on the harvest of souls. He was then nearly twenty-five years of age. He did not long hesitate. Strengthened from on high, and constrained by the love of Jesus, he mastered the strongest affections of the human heart ; and, in the true character of a missionary, forsook all, and departed alone to carry into the depths of

the north the good tidings of redemption by the blood of Jesus. From that moment a light seemed to be kindled up in his soul, which shone with increasing brightness, till, having soon reached its zenith, he was judged meet for a removal to that eternal kingdom to which the better part of his being seemed to have been already transferred.

Having learned that many of the parishioners had forgotten the French language, he stopped at Göttingen on his journey to the colony, devoted three months of unremitting study to the acquisition of German, and arrived at Fredericia prepared to preach the word of God in that language. His ministry on earth was not destined to continue for a longer period than that of his Master. But what has he not accomplished during the three years and a half of its duration !

By the sweet influence of his instructions and example, and by the assistance of God,

which he never ceased to implore, the moral and religious character of the colony underwent in a very short time a visible alteration. Drunkenness had there been a vice of peculiar frequency. But after a short time, Rieu persuaded the heads of families to subscribe a regulation which authorized the consistory, under the direction of the pastor, to deprive the drunkard, who persevered in his vice after three or four successive admonitions, of his colonial rights during a certain period: that is, that his portion of the lands, gratuitously bestowed by the Danish government on the colony at its first establishment in Jutland, should be administered during that period for the benefit of the community. This rule was put in force against one of the colonists in 1821; he was, if I mistake not, deprived of the revenue of his colonial lands for three years.

Though reminded that a preacher ought

not to neglect the talents with which he had been endowed for exhibiting the truth with power, Rieu was still more deeply persuaded that the great excellence of a sermon did not consist in its being formed of sonorous and well cadenced periods, or written in a style of scrupulous accuracy, or constructed with art on a method laboriously conceived, and skilfully adjusted. He was convinced that the too great importance often attached to these things was what the apostle denominates *preaching ourselves*. It was his resolution to *preach Christ Jesus the Lord*, according to the commandment which he had received ; and it was therefore his principal care to set before his flock, the great truths of the gospel, and the great moral lessons which flow from them, with all possible force and simplicity ; and he was always eloquent, but with a Christian eloquence very different from that of the world. “ My oratorical

art," said he, "is prayer;" remarkable words, which ought to be graven on the heart of every preacher of the gospel. Never did he separate morality from doctrine, or doctrine from morality; these two things were connected, and, as it were, commingled in his heart and in his discourses, like the sun and the light, and with that inseparable union in which they are presented in the gospel. The fall and the spiritual misery of man, the necessity of a Saviour, redemption accomplished by the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, justification by faith in Christ, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, a final judgment, an eternity either of happiness or misery; and as consequences, repentance, sanctification, the observation of all Christian duties; these were the subjects of his discourses. Though I am not acquainted with all his sermons, yet I have sufficient knowledge of them to warrant me in affirming that

all, to the number of nearly two hundred, invariably present, in the midst of a happy variety in their subjects and details, the same *foundation, the only one* that a Christian *can lay, which is Jesus Christ.* He was not ambitious to elicit the remark that he preached well; but to make the word of God strike upon the ear of the sinner in its own impressive simplicity; to enlighten his faith, sanctify his heart, awaken him to godly sorrow and repentance, and point him to *the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.* He took the text of his sermons alternately in a gospel and in an epistle; advancing regularly from the beginning in each, and taking a longer or shorter portion according to the sense and richness of the subject. By this method he gained the time, (often not inconsiderable) which preachers generally occupy in determining their subjects and their texts; he followed in his

sermons the order which the Holy Spirit has thought proper to follow in the inspired volume, and he was well assured, that if the Lord had prolonged his life, no subject should be neglected, and that he should declare, within a certain period of time, *the whole counsel of God*. The festivals of the church were an exception to this rule. He then preached directly on the subject of the festival; and expressed his inability to conceive how a minister of Jesus Christ could ascend the pulpit on the days of Christmas, of Easter, of Whitsunday, of Communion, &c., without announcing directly those great truths which these festivals were designed to recall. The point of view in which his subject was to be exhibited being once determined, he kneeled before the Lord, implored the assistance of his Spirit, and besought Him to prepare himself that spiritual nourishment which He knew to be best suited to the souls for which it was

designed. He then took his pen in hand, and wrote with freedom and rapidity a sermon which was always useful, because it was full of the spirit and the word of Christ ; of that word which never returns void to him from whom it emanates. And this man, who but a year before occupied months in the laborious composition of a single sermon, now prepared two during each week ; for he preached on the Sabbath morning in French, and in the afternoon in German. The first of these sermons he committed to memory ; the second he read, not being yet sufficiently familiar with the German to trust his memory with the repetition of a discourse in that language. During nearly four years, he constantly composed two sermons in each week ; for it rarely, if ever, happened, that he repeated an old discourse. He thought that this practice gave to the ministry too much the character of a trade ; that it was

important to give to public discourses, as far as possible, the appearance of *improvisation*, and that the tone, the tendency, and the details of a sermon ought to vary according to circumstances, which are never entirely the same at different periods. He adopted the habit recommended by Reinhard,* of being always in advance by one week in his preparation. Seldom did he preach a sermon either in French or German, unless that which was to succeed it was ready in his desk, and thus he was never left to be embarrassed by those accidents which might occur during the week, to interrupt the labours of preparation. It is true that he rose at four o'clock in the morning; that he occupied, as a faithful

* See Letters of F. V. Reinhard on his studies and labours as a preacher, translated from the German by J. Monod, one of the pastors of the Reformed church, of Paris. This valuable work has been translated into English by Rev. O. A. Taylor, of the Theological Seminary, Andover.--Tr.

steward, every quarter of an hour which his master allowed him; and only took that repose which was absolutely necessary to the preservation of his health, a strict attention to which he considered his duty, both as a pastor and a son. The Sabbath was to him the happiest day of the week. Far from sharing in that species of anguish with which many pastors regard so rapid a succession of the Sabbaths of the Lord, he beheld their approach with joy, the source of which was to be found in the manner in which he employed them. At nine o'clock he ascended the pulpit and preached in French. He then visited, in succession, three or four infirm persons of his flock who had been confined for years to their own houses, and performed with each of them a private service. At two o'clock he commenced his service in German, at the close of which he held in his own house a large Sunday-

school. And finally, at six o'clock, the young apostle opened the doors of his house, and the faithful resorted thither with eagerness, to be again edified by the reading of the holy word, and by the tidings of the progress of Christianity on the earth. The day of the Lord being thus occupied to the end, the faithful pastor closed it in supplications for his flock, and found in his own heart a sweet and effectual recompense for his labours, a true foretaste of that eternal recompense which awaited him, and which he was so soon to receive.

During the winter, he held in each week two catechetical exercises, and at least two of those evening meetings which the experience of Christians has proved so instructive and edifying. He read the Bible with several persons who had desired it. He gave lessons in reading, writing, orthography, arithmetic, &c., to a young teacher whom he was preparing to take the direc-

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tion of the school, of which we shall speak more particularly hereafter. He was also one of the most active members of the Bible Society of Fredericia, the institution of which was in a great measure owing to his exertions. It is needless to add that he devoted much time to the assiduous study of the Holy Scriptures in private. This study was his joy and his consolation. He had literally a *hunger and thirst after righteousness*; and daily food was not more necessary to his body, than this spiritual nourishment to his soul. He was in the habit of underlining those passages which struck him with peculiar force; and one of his favourite exercises was to meditate on the word with his pen in his hand, verse after verse, securing, as he proceeded, the ideas and impressions which it suggested. An analysis of the epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, which has since been published, is one of the fruits of this deep

and habitual meditation on the word of God. He also committed to memory each day a portion of the New Testament in Greek. It was from the word of God, read with prayer and simplicity of heart, that he derived his strength and his expedients.

In addition to this mass of labours, he had time for a regular domestic worship, morning and evening, in his own house ; for superintending the labours of his school ; for reading and making extracts from many valuable works in theology ; even for extraordinary occupations,* when they were

* I cannot refrain from relating the following characteristic anecdote. Rieu happened one day to be in company with several officers belonging to the Danish garrison at Fredericia, and heard them urge against the miracles of Christianity the usual objections of thoughtlessness, ignorance, and incredulity. He took up with zeal the defence of the gospel, but found himself embarrassed in expressing his ideas, in consequence of being obliged to make use of the German language. He then inquired of these gentlemen whether they were disposed to read on the subject. On their answer.

subservient to his great end; and for an extensive correspondence, both on the affairs of his church, and with his relatives and friends, with whom he preserved to the last, the closest and most tender relations. All his letters were instructive, edifying, and consoling; they were true apostolical epistles.* When it is added to this, that he went *from house to house*, with a zeal which never seemed, for a moment, to

ing in the affirmative, he immediately applied himself to the task; and, at the end of a few weeks, placed in their hands a German treatise of considerable extent, on miracles; their credibility, their certainty, and the proof which they furnish in favour of Christianity. This work was read with pleasure by the majority of the officers, and on some of them it produced, by the blessing of God, the effect which Rieu had solely in view in composing it. A copy of this treatise fell into the hands of a professor of Theology in Germany, who, I am informed, has expressed the opinion that its publication would be useful.

* The excellent *Choix de lettres Chrétiennes* (Selection of Christian Letters) by Mr. Gonthier, contains some of these letters.

abate, exhorting sinners with entire frankness, consoling the sick and afflicted, strengthening the feeble, carrying along with him everywhere the words and the blessings of Christ ; we shall have a feeble idea of the extent to which this faithful servant occupied the talent entrusted to him. He regarded science and literature as useful and honourable instruments ; but he was persuaded that a minister of Christ has not too much time for those studies which bear directly upon his sacred calling, and above all, for the study of the Bible, which ought to occupy the greater part of his life. Thus entirely devoted to his ministry, he had no other end, no other thought than to acquit himself of it faithfully, to the utmost of his means. *His meat was to do the will of Him who sent him ;* his life was a life of faith ; he was always in the presence of the Lord ; the earth was for him only a place of passage, of trial, and of expectation ;

and young as he was, he thought habitually on the desired moment when he should be *delivered from the body of this death, and depart to be with Christ*, which he knew to be *far better*. He *watched and prayed always*, that he might be *ready at whatsoever hour the Son of man should come*. He wrote me as follows, while he was yet in the full possession of health and vigour ; “ Let it be our endeavour, dear brother, not to lose one of those moments which our Master has allotted to us. How short is this time which we call life ; and how much shorter may it prove than we expect ! Let us no longer place its termination at a distance from us, not at the distance of a year, not of a month, not even of a week ; let us place it at the evening of each day in which we find ourselves still on the surface of this passing world. Let us live and act during each day as if that day were our last. This calculation will not deceive us,

and it is only thus that we can be secure from surprise."

This was written on the 15th of May 1821, and six weeks after, time, as it regarded him, was no longer !

I cannot express all that I felt on seeing him in the midst of his flock, surrounded with love, respect, and confidence.* I cannot do justice to the edifying tendency of his conversation, always full of amenity and frankness, and always bearing in some way on *the one thing needful*. Although habitually grave, he was by no means a stranger to a sweet gayety of spirit ; and the peace of God which was shed abroad through his heart gave him an unalterable serenity. Kind, gentle, and affable towards all, his

* The most eloquent and impressive preaching can produce no such effects as this living and active exhibition of the Christian faith, in its purity and simplicity, in all the words, the conduct, the habitudes of him who possesses it. This is the finest and most persuasive testimony to the truth and efficacy of the gospel.

whole discourse as well as his conduct bore the impression of his faith and hope ; these sentiments beamed, if I may so speak, even from the features of his countenance, to which his perfect candour and sincerity imparted the happiest expression. It may be said with literal truth, that it was not *he who lived but Christ who lived in him.*

I will not speak of the scrupulous exactness with which he fulfilled all his duties ; not only those of a pastor, but those of a son, a brother, a friend, a master, even in those details which are apparently least important. All this is a necessary consequence of what I have already said. He never felt that he had done enough. If he failed in an enterprise, his failure was attributed to his own weakness and misery, which he felt profoundly. If on the contrary he succeeded, the glory of his success was ascribed to the Lord alone. His zeal knew of no bounds, but the number of souls on

which it was possible for him to act. Fraternal rebuke was in his view a sacred duty, which he never failed to discharge ; and with so much charity, gentleness, humility, and earnest conviction, that it almost invariably produced the happiest effects.

One thing was yet to be done, of great importance to the welfare of the colony. The schoolmaster was an old man, respectable for his long services, but too far advanced in life for the energetic fulfilment of his duties. Rieu selected an intelligent and pious young man of his flock ; for two years he laboured with unwearied assiduity to develop his faith, and to give him the necessary instruction ; and at the end of that time he caused his parishioners to provide an honourable retreat for the aged instructor, and substituted his own pupil in his place. The apartment in which the school was formerly kept could not contain half

the children of the colony. Rieu deeply felt the need of a larger and better organized school ; he prayed to the Lord, and immediately set his hand to the work, with the same confident faith with which Noah formerly built an ark on the dry land. He soon found himself an object of censure ; many accused him of thoughtlessness and levity, when they saw him actually laying the foundations of the new building with which his cherished hopes were associated, while he literally had not the money which was necessary to raise a single layer of wall upon those foundations. " It is your unbelief," he replied, " which occasions these fears. We are doing the work of the Lord, and the Lord will find us the means which are necessary to accomplish it ; only believe, and our success is certain." He was not disappointed. An appeal made to a great number of reformed churches in Europe ; among others to those

of France, through the "Archives of Christianity," was evidently blessed from on high ; and two years after, a beautiful building, constructed according to the directions of the worthy pastor ; arranged for a school of mutual instruction, and spacious enough for the accommodation of 200 pupils ; promised to the colony an enlightened and Christian generation, and was the joy and glory of those good peasants who, to the full extent of their means, had contributed to its erection. The school is situated directly opposite to the windows of the parsonage ; and at every hour of the day the happy pastor was enjoying his work ; not for the indulgence of his pride, but to awaken his gratitude to the powerful and invisible hand which had crowned it with success. These sentiments were expressed in the following inscription which he placed over the door, and in which he would not allow the date of its erection to be inserted " that

no one," said he, " may be tempted to ascribe the merit of the work to myself."

"The love of God desired it, prayer obtained it. In the name of Jesus Christ the most distant churches have responded to their brethren. To God alone be the glory."

It is needless to describe the pure and lively joy with which Rieu beheld the approach of the day on which this school was to be opened to the numerous children of his parish. I shall never forget the tone with which he addressed me, on entering the schoolhouse, when I had the happiness of visiting him in the month of June, 1821. "Stop dear brother, see what the Lord has done ! It is here that I hope within a month to become a schoolmaster ; for I intend, if it please God, to put all the arrangements in train myself. O what joy ! what joy ! how good is the Lord ! let us bless him together, dear brother."

Little did he think while uttering this, that a greater joy so soon awaited him.

Though it is my wish to think only of him ; to realize the certainty and extent of his happiness in the presence of that Saviour whom he loved so ardently here below ; yet I cannot refrain from bestowing a thought at the same time on his flock, on his relatives, on his numerous friends, and on myself. My heart sinks within me, for I feel that I am now entering on the painful part of the task which I have undertaken. I will be brief.

In the course of the winter of 1821, there appeared at Fredericia, a dangerous malady which, for some unknown reason, principally attacked the members of the colony. Indeed to such an extent were its ravages confined to them, that it was called *the malady of the reformed*.* Great numbers of

* The Danish population at Fredericia, adopt the confession of Augsburg.

the colonists were among its victims. Rieu, aided by the worthy Madame H——* a

* I deem it proper briefly to state in this connexion that Madame H——, a woman of about 50 years of age, had been the object of Rieu's pastoral attentions, during a sickness, which for a long time was considered mortal. God had heard the prayers of her worthy pastor, both in behalf of her body and her soul, so that she was restored at once to health and to the Lord. Her faith was pure and active; the gospel was her habitual nourishment, and Christ her only Saviour. About six months before the death of Rieu, the elders of his consistory solicited Madame H——, to place herself at the head of his household. Rieu, persuaded that the presence of Madame H——, in the colony, would have the happiest moral and religious effects, engaged her to come to Fredericia for the purpose of giving lessons in French and design, which she was then doing in a small neighbouring town, and he consented to relinquish to her a separate part of the parsonage, which had been previously hired to an officer of the garrison. He was not disappointed in his expectation; Madame H—— was a kind mother to himself, and of the utmost value to his parishioners by her attentions to the sick and afflicted, and by making those visits which he was unable to make himself, or where his presence was not absolutely necessary. She was thus materially instrumental to the good which

woman full of zeal and of true piety, was indefatigable, both by the beds of the sick, and in the cemetery, by the side of those trenches which were daily opened to receive some new victim. There, like John the Baptist, with a voice of truth and power which I seem even now to hear, Rieu cried aloud to his auditors to *flee from the wrath to come*; besought them to be *reconciled to God through Jesus Christ*, and pointed them to the Divine Physician to be healed of the maladies of their souls.

In the beginning of June, the epidemic seemed to have passed away. I spent two days with my happy friend and parted with

Rieu did in his parish. In the course of these visits, she was seized with the prevailing epidemic, and calmly resigned her soul to her Saviour three days before Rieu.

When I quitted Fredericia on the 22nd of June 1821, I left in the parsonage, four persons in the enjoyment of perfect health. Rieu, Madame H——, and two domestics. On the 28th all four had gone to *appear before their Judge*. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

him on the evening of the 12th at Christiansfeldt, a community of the United Brethren, which we had visited together. But the last and severest visitation of the scourge still awaited the colony. On the 21st, Rieu felt the first symptoms of the fatal disease. He was ready, and death was to him a messenger of good tidings. What had he to fear or to regret? *The spirit of God bore witness with his spirit that he was a child of God. He knew that his Redeemer lived; that there was no condemnation to them who are in Christ; and he presented himself before his Judge entirely disrobed of his own righteousness, but clothed in the wedding garment, holy in the holiness of his Saviour, and righteous in His righteousness.* He bade adieu to his relatives and friends; but it was to be for ever with a better and dearer Friend, in whose presence he hoped for a speedy reunion with those whom, for a short time, he preceded.

He left his beloved flock without a visible guide, but he left them under the care of "the great Shepherd," and this assurance banished all anxiety.

He wrote, on the same day, to the elders of his consistory, a letter which is here inserted, with the omission of a few lines relating to business of an entirely private nature.

" Fredericia, June 21, 1821.

" Gentlemen, and well-beloved elders and brethren of the French reformed church of Fredericia,

" Being this day attacked by the symptoms of a disease which has already brought many of our brethren to the grave, I feel it proper to leave you a few instructions, which will be found of importance in the event that it should please God to remove me to himself.

" All my papers of every description will be forwarded without delay to my family.

May the Lord accompany them with his blessing !

“ And now, my beloved parishioners, I have but one word to say to you. It is but a repetition of that which you already know, and which will occupy my thoughts even to the end. It is that I have loved you, and at this hour love you with my whole heart. My prayers have ascended and will ascend in your behalf to the last breath of my life. I believe that I have shown my love towards you, by declaring to you the truth of God as I have believed it in my conscience and before God. Before I have prepared for you the food which it was my duty to dispense, I have invariably cast myself at the foot of the throne of grace, and besought the great Shepherd of souls himself to speak to you by my mouth, and not to suffer me to intrude a single thought of myself. Alas ! I know that but for my unbelief, the Lord would have much more

eminently accomplished his strength in my infirmity, and would more exclusively have exhorted you himself. Nevertheless, I have this firm and perfect confidence, that He who has chosen me ; (me, an unworthy creature, more than a thousand times dead and condemned by my defects and transgressions,) has verily enabled me to build on *the only true foundation, Christ crucified* ; and that, without regard to the great imperfections and blemishes which everywhere cleave to my ministry, He will *keep that which I have committed to Him unto that day, and will save me unto His heavenly kingdom* ; and this assurance is the more unwavering, because at this hour I lay myself at the foot of His cross and make a full and entire renunciation of my own merits, which are all, from first to last, but *filthy rags* ;—and solemnly declare before God that I receive Jesus Christ, *God blessed for ever*, for my only Saviour, who by the

blood which he shed on the cross has washed me from all iniquity and purified me by his Spirit; so that I can stand before his face in righteousness. I smite my breast like the publican, with a deep consciousness of my guilt; and I cry with the crucified and converted thief, ‘Lord! remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.’

“Thus death becomes to me the happiest moment of my life; though I feel myself *in a strait betwixt two*, willing still to labour for the souls entrusted to me; yet ardently desirous *to depart and be with Christ, which is far better*. Assuredly, should He remove me so early, it would be a favour for which I cannot sufficiently humble myself before Him and sing anthems of praise.—What was I, O my God! that the combat should be so soon terminated before I have ‘resisted unto blood, striving against sin?’”

“Dear parishioners, consider well your

responsibilities. I have declared to you the counsel of God ; it is true, (and I make the confession with grief and humiliation before the cross,) with too much weakness and fear of man ; above all, my conscience reproaches me for not having sufficiently imitated the example of the apostle, by exhorting each of you in private from house to house ; nevertheless you can bear me testimony that I have never been ashamed of Christ crucified, while proclaiming his word to you in the pulpit. *His kingdom then is come nigh unto you ;* the walls of your temple attest it. Oh ! that you had all listened to that word of life which alone can save your souls ! What would have been my joy to see multitudes of you converted to Christ ! Hearken, hearken to his voice *while it is yet to-day ;* I call to you from my sepulchre. If you hear not this voice, you would not be persuaded *though one rose from the dead.* Heaven and earth will pass away, but this

word will not pass away. O Christ save them and pray for them, as thou hast condescended to pray for me !

“ Adieu then, dear parishioners, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace ; watch and pray, *for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come.* We shall soon stand face to face before the tribunal of Christ.

“ If time permit, I will also write to my beloved relatives and friends in Christ. If not, they will know that I had an ardent desire to do so ; you will communicate to them these lines. Oh ! that grace and peace may rest upon them ! may they all consider that they are soon to *pass from this world to the Father* ; may they hasten to follow that Saviour who is the light of the world, the resurrection, the way, the truth, and the life. Adieu, also, to my well-beloved sister H— ; if she survive me, and escape the dangerous malady which now threatens

her life. I commend her also to the grace of the Lord, in whom she has trusted, and who has redeemed her. I commend her in this world to my dear parishioners, and to my beloved family, desiring them to render her existence as comfortable as possible. I say to her, adieu, we are not separated. I entreat my relatives to make every possible exertion to send a pastor to supply my place in this church. To my last breath I will pray to God for you all, whom I love with the tenderest affection. May grace and peace be and abide with you from this time forth and for evermore! I remain deeply affected with all the proofs of attachment which you have given me.

“ Your devoted pastor,

“ CHARLES RIEU.”

He was first confined to his bed on the 22d, and on Sabbath, the 24th of June, wrote, with a pencil, the following journal.

“ Journal addressed to my family, to ac-

quaint them with the circumstances attending my illness, in the event that the Lord should do me the favour to remove me from this world. It will be forwarded together with the letter written on the evening of the 21st, (Sabbath, June 24, 1821.)

“I was unwilling to alarm you, dear relatives, by speaking of the contagious disease which has prevailed here during the winter, and has broken out with redoubled violence in the spring, cutting down especially fathers and mothers of families in the flower of their age. During my stay at Copenhagen, great numbers were swept away by it. The physician, nevertheless, affirmed that the contagion was not attended with any formidable danger. I have, however, taken the enjoined precautions, not to remain very long with the sick, and to wash my hands and face with vinegar. Madame H——, has done the same; but she has sometimes visited the sick as often as three

times, when their illness was dangerous, and when the festival of Whitsunday, added to the frequent addresses which I was called upon to make at the graves of the dead, left me but little time for visitation. She, therefore, was first seized by the epidemic, at the period of our first communion, on the very day that our friends the Monods arrived. But we did not then suspect that it could be the prevailing malady, as our sister seemed entirely restored on Monday and Tuesday, even to such a degree as to accompany us to Christiansfeldt. But on our return, she was again confined to her bed. Providentially confided as she was to my care, at a distance from all her friends, and but little acquainted as yet with the people of Fredericia, my first assiduities were evidently due to Madame H——. She seemed on Sabbath to become better, and we celebrated the communion together in private. But alas! from twelve o'clock

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there appeared a sudden change in her disease, and an obstruction at the chest required the application of leeches and bloodletting. I then wrote to our friends, the Monods, entreating them not to mention her illness, lest it should give you needless alarm. For several days she became gradually worse. On Thursday morning, I began myself to feel a slight oppression at the head, which however, I naturally attributed to frequent watchings, and felt confident that repose would soon remove it. By the advice of the physician, I waited till the next day before resorting to the medicines usually taken at the first appearance of this complaint. But on the morrow, all my symptoms being aggravated, I took my bed, and placed myself in the hands of the physician, by whose prescriptions I was reduced in a few hours to a state of extreme weakness. I will not weary you by a detail of what has followed. In a word, I felt a desire to converse with

you from my bed, if it should please God that I am never again to have an opportunity of doing so otherwise. I wish you to be assured, dear friends, that I have neglected none of the means which God has placed within my reach, for the restoration of my health. I have repeated this to my good elders, who are greatly alarmed for me. I consider it my first duty, to conform in every particular, to the advice of my physician, precisely for this reason that, having but very little confidence in men, I consider the physician chosen in this place, whether he be of reputation or not, simply as an instrument in the hand of God, by which he executes his will in relation to every patient. With this view, I feel absolutely no disquietude whatever. The principal characteristic of this disease is a total prostration of strength, with frequent delirium. Thus far, thanks be to God! I have been free from the latter, which is most to be dreaded,

as it turns away the thoughts from the one thing needful, the only source of consolation. On Thursday morning I was separated from our dear sister H—— ; till then, I was able to visit her occasionally, when prudence and my other occupations permitted. She still lingers between life and death, and seldom utters a rational expression. I cannot say that I feel the least grief. My physician finds me, to-day, (Sabbath) somewhat better ; but as there are frequent examples of a sudden re-appearance of the danger, I shall not, in any event, regret that my friendship for you has induced me to trace these hasty lines. My soul is filled with unutterable peace and joy. If anything causes me, after all, to expect my recovery, it is that so early a recall, almost before I have entered into the conflict, would be a favour infinitely beyond my merits or my hopes. What am I, the most worthless and polluted of creatures ; what

am I, that such *manner of love should be bestowed upon me!* Doubtless, I ought to receive it with more fervent gratitude than any other blessing; I have done absolutely nothing to deserve it; but what do I say! rather is not all, all, all absolutely gratuitous? It would be delightful for me to speak to you from time to time in short and hasty sentences,—this brings me near to you,—and to speak to you of God; for He alone should be viewed,—and his voice should be heard and obeyed in this matter.

I have just been much affected with a moment's conversation with my young pupil, who came into the parsonage before public service. He expressed with great simplicity the interest felt by all my people in my sickness. "What will become of us if the Lord should take you away?" I replied to him, as to my elders, that he might be assured I would not feebly shrink from the

combat, and that I was ready still to bear my cross as long as it should please the Lord ; but my only prayer was, that of my Master, “ *Thy will be done!*” and that I would regard so great a favour of the Lord as altogether too distinguished towards a miserable sinner like myself, readily to expect so early a recall after so short a combat. As soon as he had retired, the excellent Favre came in, bathed in tears, and believed me, when I assured him, that if I had expressed much joy at the thought of my deliverance, it was not from an indolent aversion to the toils of life or want of affection for them.

“ Later in the morning.—My symptoms more threatening ; the same calm in my soul. I know in whom I have believed. I go forward with joy indescribable through the dark valley ; for I go to Jesus, my God ; to Christ, who has conquered for us. All his promises converge to a point, and fill my

soul with a gladness which I have never known before.

• “No, he has not deceived us!

“Happy are they who have not seen, and yet have believed! I go to see him as he is. Already I see him. I feel his hand supporting my soul; while this clay is crumbling down, the inward man is renewed. I shall be changed into his image. I shall be like him! where no sorrow——

“Oh! that I could impart this joy to your souls! But there you also may find it. I am not separated from you; in the moment that I close my eyes here, I seem to stand with you, and behold Christ coming in the clouds.

“Oh! that you may all sleep in Jesus! Farewell beloved friends! A little hope— This happy moment then approaches for which I have so ardently longed, and in the thought of which I have habitually found my sweetest satisfaction. Oh! how

good art thou, my Saviour! Thy face fills me with joy. Resurrection and life! Eternity, eternity with Jesus! So much beloved, though unseen; what will it be; my spirit fails; O blood! O cross!

“What peace in that last word to the thief: To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise. Joy, endless joy! fulness of pleasures! for ever with him whom our souls love; we shall raise the song of the Lamb, with the ten thousand times ten thousand who know it, who have learned the new song. To him who hath saved us. Before his throne—I burn!

“When will this wall of flesh be broken down? Yet a little while—Oh! how great is his goodness! Weep not, my friends.

“The last thing which could even in a slight degree oppress my conscience, is the recollection of a warning which I wished to give to certain offenders, which I have been compelled to neglect by a succession of re-

cent circumstances. I have just sent this admonition by my elders, so that I feel assured their blood will not be required at my hands.

“ My peace is still pure, and perfect, and unmingled ; my joy passes all understanding. I only describe it to you that you may yourselves breathe after it. Surely, it is not found in the busy circles of the world, and the path thereof is not traced by the philosophers of the world. No, no, Thou alone bestowest it, O God, God the Saviour, God the Comforter !

“ Blessed, blessed, blessed for ever be thy glorious name !

“ Dear mother, uncle, aunt, brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, friends in Christ, we are not separated. We shall soon meet.

“ Still Sabbath morning—I will write no more until to-morrow.” (Here the Journal terminates.)

I will not weaken the emotions produced by the above sentences, by attempting to express them. I will simply remind my readers, that he who wrote thus, before a death that he foresaw, was not twenty-nine years old, and had in prospect, not only a useful but a happy existence, even in this world's estimation. On Monday the 25th he became delirious, and on Thursday the 28th, at half past one o'clock in the morning, his soul *entered into the joy of his Lord*. A few days after, the following article appeared in a journal at Copenhagen,* under the head of Fredericia :

“On the 28th of June, the French reformed colony of Fredericia sustained an irreparable loss in the death of their beloved pastor, Mr. Rieu of Geneva. At the end of about four years residence among

* A friend of Rieu, Mr. E. P. Rosendahl, published in 1822, at Copenhagen, a Danish Memoir of the friend whom he lamented in common with all who knew him.

them, he has been cut off at the age of twenty-eight years, by a contagious sickness which has for some time prevailed in the community, and during which, his daily occupation has been to pray with the sick and to afford them charitable assistance and the consolations of religion.

“ An unbounded beneficence made him the father of the indigent. By his instructions, his preaching, his multiplied exercises of devotion among the sick, the aged, the poor, and the ignorant, he has approved himself a true shepherd of souls, in the noblest and most extensive acceptation of the word.

“ To devote himself to his holy vocation, and to labour for the good of his flock, he made a voluntary sacrifice of all the pleasures of the world.

“ Even after his death, he is the benefactor of the colony, as he has bequeathed to them the half of his fortune. Besides the invisible monument which he has left in

the affections of his people, he has raised a visible one beside his grave in that beautiful building for the school, for which the colony is wholly indebted to his indefatigable exertions, in procuring contributions from all the protestant countries of Europe, to assist in its erection. He died in the Lord, and his remains are interred far from the land of his birth ; but in that common country, whither all his thoughts and hopes aspired, he is followed by his works, and raised above all human praise, though accompanied with tears of gratitude."

On the 14th of August the elders wrote to the family of Rieu, at Geneva, an affecting letter, of which the following is an extract :

" We know not but that the constant visits of our excellent pastor to the sick may have been the cause of his illness ; but at the same time, we take God to witness that all that depended on us was done for his

preservation. The professor of medicine, and all the other physicians of the town were called to his aid. We watched night and day by his bedside, and from Friday the 22nd of June till the hour of his death, which took place on Thursday the 28th, he received the unremitting assiduities of friends and physicians. But *'the ways of the Lord are not as our ways, and his thoughts are not as our thoughts.'* In short, our worthy and beloved pastor sleeps in peace. Yes, *'he died the death of the righteous, and his last end was like his.'*

“No language can describe to you the great sensation produced by his unexpected death, not only among his own flock, but the inhabitants of the town of all communions. The magistracy, the Lutheran pastors, the Catholic pastor, the Jewish catechist, the regents of the schools, and a great number of distinguished persons, assisted at his funeral, which took place on the 2d of

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July, at noon. The bells of the Lutheran churches were rung, while the last duties were paid to his remains. Twelve young girls, confirmed at the last Easter by their deceased pastor, led the procession, and sang, while the body was borne down into the vault, some stanzas suited to the mournful occasion. The Lutheran pastor afterwards delivered a funeral oration, under which the whole assembly was melted to tears. The exercise was closed with prayer and a suitable hymn. The elders received the remains at the gate of the cemetery. Our pastor had desired that the coffin should be covered with black cloth, and we conformed in this respect to his wishes and the usage of his country.* The colony wore

* M. Rieu had long deplored the luxury displayed in Denmark in the construction of coffins. They are adorned with carved work, painted black, and enriched with plates of silver, because they are borne to the cemetery uncovered. Rieu had in vain opposed this usage, so burdensome to many of the colonists. On the

mourning for their pastor during four weeks, especially when assembled for public worship; and his loss is deplored with unceasing tears and lamentations.

“Thus, sir, it only remains for us to form the most ardent desires that we may be so happy as to fill the place of our worthy and zealous pastor.* * * Our tears still flow, and the memory of this good shepherd of our souls will ever be dear to us and to our children.* * *”

What a life! what a death! What sorrow! *The will of the Lord be done!* His thoughts are, indeed, far different from our

day that he fell sick, he obtained from his elders a promise that, if the Lord should remove him, his body should be interred in a very simple coffin, which they should cover with a black cloth, purchased at his expense, and to remain ever after, for the common use of the colony. What a pastor was he, who, in the moment of quitting the world, could be so deeply interested in the most trifling circumstances which related to the good of his flock!

thoughts, when he calls away, at so early a period, a faithful servant, whose days, had it been left for us to determine their limit, we should have thought it best to prolong indefinitely. But we have no cause to weep for him. If God gave us the power, should we have the cruelty to call him back to this earth? Oh, no! The Lord has called, and he has obeyed the summons, and has gone to *be for ever with the Lord. He has life, and he has it more abundantly.* Such a death, a grave so remarkable, crowns the idea which his life had given of his fidelity. How happy is he! The thought which his memory unceasingly recalls, is, "*yea! saith the Spirit, for he rests from his labours, and his works do follow him.*" Blessed is he to whom God gives such faith and love, and for whom he reserves such an end! May God our Father, and Jesus Christ our hope, bestow this grace upon us, in his own time and way; upon me who

write these lines, and on you, my dear brethren, who read them, and who, I am persuaded, have not read them without emotion, or without frequently lifting up your hearts to the Author of *every good and every perfect gift*. If we find that Rieu has *chosen the good part*, let us do as he did, and *it will never be taken away from us*. Let us walk in the same path! It is open to all. The voice of Christ is addressed to all; he has *shed his blood for the remission of sins; let us believe on him and we shall be saved*. May God grant us the grace so to do! Lord, send such labourers into thy vineyard! Lord, *let thy kingdom come!* And to thee, Lord Jesus, to thee, O God our Saviour, *who hast loved us, and hast washed us from our sins in thine own blood, be praise and glory for ever and ever, Amen.*

THE END.