

THE LIFE

OF

JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER, D.D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY.

BY

HENRY CARRINGTON ALEXANDER.

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me as very grand, and I was surprised to see it at one end of the town instead of being in the centre. We crossed the Tiber on the Pons Milvius. A scum of filth was floating on its surface. The colour of the water is a dirty yellow. We entered Rome about five o'clock, through the magnificent Porta del Pòpolo. I again escaped the custom-house by means of the kind, though unscrupulous old bishop; and thus I have got to Rome without having my trunk opened, a thing which rarely occurs to travellers in the public conveyances. I should, no doubt, have lost some of my books, as Frazer did. We drove to the 'Hotel del l'Europa, in the Piazza di Spagna, where I took up my abode. The bishop and priest shook hands with me very cordially, and the old man thanked me for my company. I had not Italian enough to thank him as I wished, but he understood my looks. He showed me to-day a copy of the British and Foreign Society's Italian bible which he bought in Florence. I wish that instead of selling it he would read it himself, and, Oh, that it might convert him! And why not? 'The Law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul.'"

In the coach he composed some very striking and suggestive blank verse. I give the lines exactly as he wrote them:\*

The wheels ran smoothly on the Italian road, and all within was silent. Stiffly braced or carelessly relaxed, each traveller sat, and as he sat he slept. All slept save one, whose thoughts were wandering far beyond the seas in sweet yet bitter musing. For a time the ocean dwindled to a drop; and home—his father's fire-side, and his mother's form—were with him in his exile. Even there he felt himself at home; and well he might. For the resplendent moon, which he had seen go down behind the Alps, was his own moon, the moon which he had loved in foolish childhood; and the few bright stars that still kept watch were his familiar friends. The busy sprite who had bewitched his eyes, now made his ears to tingle. Parting words, adieus, and benedictions crowded back like ghosts but not to scare him. And with these mingled the lasts sounds which had

met his ear as he forsook his country ;  
 first the hum of streets and markets, then  
 the busy stir and bustle of the port and last  
 the voice of the impatient ocean, as he  
 chafed against the New World. For the  
 wanderer loved that wild mysterious  
 music, in its swell and in its dying fall. To  
 him it seemed as if the strings of nature  
 had been swept by an almighty hand  
 and forced to give their diapason forth.  
 These were his thoughts in days long past ;  
 and now that he recalled those days, those  
 thoughts returned ; and with them came that  
 \* \* \* \* the sound itself, that  
 old familiar sound. The coach stopped ; and  
 Italy was forgotten and he seemed to stand once more upon  
 his native beach. The coach stopped and the thought  
 that he was still a stranger in a strange land, all  
 at once entered his soul like iron. The coach went  
 on ; and still that sound, \* \* followed  
 \* \* hard after. Weary of a dream  
 which, like the drunkard's solace, only  
 soothed in order to torment ; he rubbed his  
 eyes and strove to be awake. But still the voice  
 of Earth and Ocean meeting filled his ears. He  
 is awake and every other sense performs its  
 office. \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* Thanks be to God, our senses are  
 contrived to disabuse each other ; and as  
 oft the ear reproves the eye, so now at  
 last, the stranger called his eyesight to  
 his aid ; and looking forth saw what ? I-  
 talian vines, hung in festoons between  
 the trees ; or spread as a green curtain  
 over frames like that which Moses reared  
 at Horeb \* \* \* forming cool  
 delicious arbours hung with clustering —s  
 of gold and purple grapes. The scene was void

\* Almost all the verses which he wrote while travelling are written like  
 prose. Milton has written verses in the same way.

of foliage and of fruit; but in its barrenness there was a charm for him who now surveyed it. 'Twas the sea. Not a Swiss lake or fish-pond, but a sea, with its blue convex surface reaching up to the well marked horizon. Not a lake nor yet the mighty ocean in its wild immensity of compass; but a sea, whose waves have language, and whose ragged coast from every inlet and projecting point sends back the echo of a thousand years. These are the land-locked waters upon which the old Phenician crept along the coast with coward daring—these the waves, on which Carthaginian learned to conquer and be conquered. It was here that the first plash of Roman oars was heard, e'er yet Duillius had become a god \* \* and reared his mortal column.\*

Composed in the coach between Viterbo and Rome, Sept. 7, 1833."

On Tuesday, Sept. 24, they were called by the servant at 3 o'clock in the morning. The sunrise was beautiful, but they were soon enveloped in fog. They crossed the Po on a pont volant and entered the Austrian dominions.

Their baggage was examined at the custom-house near the river, and Dr. McDonnell, an English-speaking companion, had to leave a trunk behind him. In the course of the day, the fog subsided and they had delightful weather. They breakfasted at Rorego, and dined at Padua. I now quote again: "The road from Padua to the sea-side is delightful. It is one long street skirted with gardens, parks, neat and sometimes splendid houses. The moon rose clear and the night was most superb. At Fusina we left the diligence and got into a boat. We stopped at a military station in the midst of the water to show our passports. Our first view of Venice was rendered more impressive by

\* An allusion to the *columna nostrata*. See Cicero *Pro Cu.* 25. Oxon. p. 455 and *De Senect.* 13. Planc. 455.