

All Saints, Turvey.

LEGH RICHMOND CENTENARY,

SUNDAY, MAY 8th, 1927.

LEGH RICHMOND was Rector of Turvey from 1805 until his death on May 8th, 1827. A service of commemoration will be held in Turvey Parish Church at 3.30 p.m. on the 100th anniversary Sunday, May 8th, 1927. The preacher will be the Rev. H. L. Goudge, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. The following account of Legh Richmond's life and works is re-printed from "Former Days at Turvey," by a late Rector of the parish, the Rev. G. F. W. Munby :—

"The name of Legh Richmond was, before he died, almost a household word among religious people in England.

Mr. Richmond was born at Liverpool in 1772, where his father there practised as a physician. Legh Richmond became B.A. and M.A. of Trinity College, Cambridge, and on his ordination was Curate of Brading and Yaverland, in the Isle of Wight. It was at Brading that he resided. Here he collected, from his local experience, materials for his three well-known tales of village life, which obtained for him subsequent large repute. These were called respectively "The Dairyman's Daughter," "The Young Cottager," and "The Negro Servant." The heroine of the first tale, Elizabeth Wallbridge, lies buried at Arreton; the cottage of the second tale's heroine, "Little Jane," is still shown at Brading; and Sandown is the scene of the third narrative.

These stories were written in the year 1809, in the early days of Legh Richmond's ministry at Turvey, and were printed by him, under the signature of "Simplex," in the *Christian Guardian*, between the years 1809 and 1814.

Their simple pathos and piety won for them instant popularity, and they were reprinted together in 1814, by the Religious Tract Society, under the title of "The Annals of the Poor." By far the most popular of these tales was "The Dairyman's Daughter." This book was greatly enlarged by Mr. Richmond, after its first publication, and two editions of twenty thousand copies each were printed in 1816. The book was, soon after, translated into the French, Italian, German, Danish, and Swedish languages, and it obtained a very wide circulation in America. It is calculated that, in the lifetime of the author, the number of copies printed in the English language alone amounted to two millions.

It is not to be wondered at that the author of these books, being, besides, an earnest speaker and preacher, was soon widely known and valued, on being appointed Rector of Turvey. He was an able Evangelical preacher, and many persons from the neighbouring towns and villages used then to come to Turvey Church. He was also a diligent and faithful shepherd of souls in his own parish, and is largely remembered as the organiser of village Benefit or Friendly Societies, agencies which he was amongst the earliest clergymen to initiate and encourage.

As his reputation extended, his services as a preacher were also sought for, far beyond his own parish. He interested himself deeply in the establishment of the great Evangelical Societies, which took their rise at this time. These were the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Church Missionary Society, and the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. For one or other of these Societies he frequently travelled great distances through the country, preaching in the large provincial towns, and raising large sums of money. Of the Religious Tract Society he acted at one time as joint secretary.

In 1806, he undertook the editorship of a series of selections from the writings of the English Reformers, in order to bring the principles of the Reformation more

prominently before the public. The substance of the writings of Tindal, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, Hooper, Bradford, Jewell, and others, were thus presented to the English reader in eight large octavo volumes, under the general title of "Fathers of the English Church."

Soon after this, in 1814, he was appointed chaplain to the Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, who was in entire sympathy with his religious and literary endeavours, and would have raised him to higher honours, but for opposition made, to which the Duke gave way.

In 1820, Mr. Richmond visited the island of Iona, during a preaching tour which he made in Scotland. Here he was greatly struck both by the beauty of the island, and the intense interest attaching to it as the cradle of North British Christianity, and the home of Columba. He addressed the people of the island, and also entertained them with much liberality on the shore, and eventually raised a large sum of money in their behalf, which was expended in founding a Library, which is called after his name, and still continues to benefit the people. Legh Richmond died, greatly lamented, in 1827, and is buried in Turvey Church. His Life was written by his friend, the Rev. T. S. Grimshawe, Vicar of Biddenham, and passed through many editions. But so great was the demand for information about him, that a second book, called "Domestic Portraiture," was afterwards issued, in 1833, which was compiled by another neighbour and friend of the family, the Rev. T. Fry, Rector of Emberton.

This book was a description of Mr. Richmond's character and principles, and it passed through at least nine editions."

GUY BEECH,

RECTOR OF TURVEY.

Easter, 1927.