

THE
CHARACTER

OF

REV. JOHN ELIOT, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE

NEW-NORTH CHURCH, BOSTON,

AND CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE MASS. HIST. SOC.

WHO DIED FEB. 14, 1813.

Amavi vivum ; nec minus amo mortuum.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY THOMAS WELLS, 3 HANOVER-STREET.

Watson & Bangs, Printers.

1813.

bless those who cursed him : he however blessed those, whom many other men curse ; that is, he spoke favourably and candidly of those, who differed from him in opinion, whose sentiments, tastes, and habits were in opposition to his own. He sympathized with you, my brethren, in prosperity and adversity : he rejoiced with you, when you rejoiced, and wept with you, when you wept. He condescended to men of the lowest estate : humility was a striking feature of his character ; and he was totally free from self-conceit. He was attached to that which is honest and honourable in the sight of all men : and he endeavoured to promote the peace and union, the virtue and happiness, of all with whom he was connected.

This is a general view of the virtues of your late pastor. It will tend to sooth your minds under your loss, if we take a particular survey of some of the amiable, valuable, and distinguishing parts of his character.

DOCTOR Eliot was happy in his birth and early education. He was the son of one of the best and most enlightened of men, who during many years was the support and ornament, not only of this church, but of this town, and who still lives in your grateful remembrance. The elder Dr. Eliot was an indulgent and affectionate parent ; but he subjected the manners, the understanding, and the heart of his son

ing it; and he was prevented from executing his design, only by the counsel of a friend, to whom he was accustomed to communicate his most secret intentions. His friend observed to him, that however oppressive the rank might be to his modesty, he ought to retain it, from regard to his flock, his wife, and his children; because every good man owes something, if not to his own reputation, yet to the reputation of those whom he loves; and he could not deny, that the honours which illustrate a pastor, husband, and father, are reflected on his church and family. This motive prevailed with him to abandon his purpose; and his humility was overcome by a stronger virtue, benevolence.

From the same unaffected modesty, the degree of doctor in divinity, which was conferred on him by a foreign university, instead of gratifying vanity and affording him any pleasure, was a source to him of real mortification. The worthy gentleman, who procured it for him, without his consent, and without his knowledge, undoubtedly meant well, and knew not how much pain he inflicted on him; but it may be made a question, whether one man has a right to shackle another, even with a golden chain, which he is averse from wearing. If it had been possible to have shaken off the cumbersome name, he would have sent back the diploma, as soon as it was received. All he could do was to put it immediately out of his