

## The Richardson MSS.

THE MSS. now catalogued in D. as "Richardson MSS." were presented to the Friends' Reference Library, during 1911, by Emma R. Pumphrey.

The collection consists of six quarto volumes of MS. which belonged to George Richardson, of Newcastle (1773-1862).

George Richardson was a prominent Friend in the first half of the nineteenth century. He journeyed many thousands of miles as Guide to American Ministers visiting England, and was himself a valuable Minister, travelling, as such, over the greater part of England, Wales, Scotland, the Channel Islands, and Ireland.

Volumes I.-III. of the MSS. contain extracts, many of them in G. Richardson's own handwriting, from various sources, which give evidence of wide reading as well as of much freer time for writing than is the case at the present day.

Volume IV. is a collection of some eighty "Letters from Ministers" dating from 1803 to 1852. The letter of the last date is one from J. Bevan Braithwaite thanking G. Richardson for his comments on J. J. Gurney's *Essays*. J. Bevan Braithwaite, referring, no doubt, to the *Memoirs of J. J. Gurney*, on which he was then engaged, says: "I have no intention of entering into any elaborate review of J. J. G.'s works; as I think that such attempts are very seldom, if ever, either interesting or profitable to the reader. Besides which I have a strong principle against making any man's writings a touchstone of opinion, which is almost always the result, practically, of saying a great deal about them. Let the writings of our late dear Friend be read with the same discrimination, the same seriousness, the same openness to receive the Truth, and the same candour and willingness to make due allowance, with which we should desire to read the writings of our early Friends. This is all I would ask for them."

Volume V., "Miscellaneous Letters," contains about one hundred letters, most of them from Friends, many of them asking for advice and help in matters temporal and spiritual, and more thanking George Richardson for help given.

One group of letters, addressed to Eleanor Richardson by E. S. Chambers from Ackworth, contains interesting references to the school life of the children from 1819 to 1827.

Another group of letters concerns the starting of a school at Black Boy Colliery, Bishop Auckland, by the family of Jonathan Backhouse; and the training of a certain William Fuller, of Arbroath, a *protégé* of Jonathan Backhouse's, for the position of schoolmaster.

Volume VI. is a copy of a Record kept by George Richardson of "visits paid by Public Friends to Newcastle and neighbouring Meetings from 1800 to 1850.

ELSIE M. SMITH.