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The friends and acquaintance of the Rev. RICHARD BIBB, are requested to attend his Funeral on to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock. The procession will leave his late residence, and proceed to the family burying ground, about 7 miles from town.

January 25th, 1839.

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# THE NORTONS

OF

RUSSELLVILLE, KY.

REMINISCENCES.

BY

DAVID MORTON.



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## DEAD ERE HIS PRIME.

JOHN LEONARD was the second child, and was born in Russellville, October 11, 1816. I am not informed as to his boyhood. He was a grown young man when I first knew him, tall and well proportioned, with a handsome face, of fine address, and naturally sprightly and vivacious. He was then in partnership with his brother George in the store before described, and remained so till his death, which occurred September 4, 1843. Though less than twenty-seven years of age at his death, he had already evinced the same aptitude for business and the same ability as a financier which has since distinguished all his brothers.

Notwithstanding he began business when still in his teens, he continued to read and study until he attained to no mean scholarship by dint of systematic and persistent self-culture. His native gentleness of spirit, refined by taste for music and love of flowers, combined with his consistent walk and his noble charities, developed a type of excellence as rare as it is comely.

On the 14th of February, 1843, he was married to Miss Lucinda Brown of his native place, the union being the outgrowth of a mutual affection fostered by their almost daily association at home

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and school and church from their childhood to their nuptial day. Only about seven months of wedded life had been vouchsafed them, when, after a few days of severe illness, he died. The shock occasioned by the suddenness of his demise did not so disturb the community as the pathetic circumstances of his end. The smitten widow and the posthumous son, strongly resembling his father and bearing his name, were for many years objects of special interest to all their neighbors. And after the lapse of nearly fifty years, the older people of the town will tell you that with the ebbing of that life there departed one whose promise of usefulness was scarcely equalled by that of any other man ever born in their midst.

His last will and testament, made during the night before his death, excited much interest among his friends and neighbors and throughout the whole town, when it was first published just after his decease.

His bequests to the church were more numerous and much larger than any that had been previously made in that whole region of country, and evinced a discrimination that put to silence any thought that he was not fully aware of what he was doing.

He commenced by giving five hundred dollars towards buying or building a parsonage for the pastor of his church; then he gave another five hundred for Indian Missions and another for the Bible

Society; then two hundred towards finishing the incomplete church edifice in which he had worshipped; and, lastly, five hundred to the American Baptist Publication Society, thus showing a wise discernment of the local and general interests of the church and a clear appreciation of both the present and future needs of the cause of Christ.

To a widowed aunt, battling with adversity and yet struggling to educate her five sons and two daughters, he gave five hundred dollars to aid her in this work, and to each of his father's family servants fifteen dollars, a token of good will which they must have enjoyed, as well as they did the little comforts which it provided.

Then to wife and son he gave one-half of the remainder, and to his parents and brothers and sisters the other half, directing that each sister's share should be five hundred dollars more than that of the brothers.

These latter bequests were an important contribution to the capital with which the fortunes afterwards made by the other brothers, especially the younger, were earned, and this fact was recognized in a substantial way by more than one of them in after-years.

The closing scene was transcendently beautiful, and has not to this day lost its inspiration upon those who were present or have heard it described by eye-witnesses. It was a fitting finale to such a

life. When only about sixteen years old he had embraced religion and joined the Baptist Church, living for the remainder of his days an humble, active Christian, beloved by the church and respected by the world. He was a fine singer, and usually led that part of the exercises in the congregation with which he worshipped. My father was with him in his last hours, and I well remember, though I was less than ten years old at the time, the account given by him to my mother of what occurred. Friends were surrounding his bed, and he, fully aware of his condition, expressed himself as ready to go. After speaking in rapturous terms of the blessed future awaiting him, he addressed most tenderly all about him, especially his young wife, and then asked my father to join him in singing the hymn in which occurs the couplet,—

“And when I close mine eyes in death,  
O Lord, remember me!”

My father began, and the dying man, in a clear, sweet voice, joined and sang till the hymn was ended, and in a few moments breathed his last. The sun was just coming up over the eastern hills as his spirit took its flight to the regions of eternal day, and he doubtless realized with the Psalmist,—

“I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.”