

1840

Testimonies Concerning Deceased Ministers: 1840

London Yearly Meeting

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TESTIMONIES
CONCERNING
DECEASED MINISTERS.

PRESENTED TO
THE YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,
HELD IN LONDON, 1840.

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A TESTIMONY

From ABERDEEN MONTHLY MEETING, concerning JOHN WIGHAM, who departed this life at Aberdeen, the 17th of 4th Month, 1839, and was interred in Friends' Burial-ground, at Kinnuck, the 20th of the same. He was in the 91st year of his age, and had been a minister about 67 years.

“ MARK THE PERFECT MAN, AND BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT, FOR
THE END OF THAT MAN IS PEACE.”

THIS declaration of the royal Psalmist, we believe to be peculiarly applicable to this our dear and honoured friend, who was enabled in the course of a long life, faithfully to labour for the promotion of the cause of truth and righteousness in the earth. His end was peace.

What follows, respecting his youth and early life, is chiefly derived from his own account left in writing. He was born at Cornwood, in the County of Northumberland, in the compass of Allendale Monthly Meeting. His parents were William and Rachel Wigham, whose religious care over him during his minority he has recorded in terms of thankfulness and gratitude, as having been particularly valuable to him, and especially that of his mother, who, he says, “ was deeply concerned that her children might be carefully educated in the way of truth, and preserved from the snares of the world, and she often exhorted us to be atten-

tive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, secretly manifested in our own hearts, which was of great benefit to me in my childhood; for as the Lord was graciously pleased sensibly to visit me when very young, I was made aware, sooner perhaps than many children who are not favoured with such instruction, what that Spirit was that both reproved and comforted me. When I was about eight years of age, strong desires to be the Lord's servant were raised in my mind; and being made sensible that I could not serve Him acceptably unless I were preserved from evil, I often begged, in my childish way, that He would enable me to overcome all my evil propensities, which I saw were many." He appears to have continued much under religious exercise of mind, and to have been preserved from many of the snares incident to youth, until he attained to about the sixteenth year of his age, when, having been put to work with his father's servants, and not maintaining a state of watchfulness, their company proved very hurtful to him, for beginning to take delight in folly and merriment with his companions, he soon became leavened into their spirit; and, though still preserved from what are deemed gross sins, yet being led into many wrong things, his mind became alienated from his God and Saviour, and he lost that savour of Truth with which he had been favoured in his earlier years. During this period of disobedience, distress and bitterness of soul were often his portion, and he seemed to have no power to escape from the bondage in which he was held. At length, the Lord, in infinite compassion, who had continued to follow him by the convictions of his Holy Spirit, was pleased to open a way for his deliverance. In the twenty-first year of his age, he entered into the married state with Elizabeth Donwiddy, who proved to him a truly faithful helpmeet. This change of situation became the means of separating him from the company that had led him astray, and being mercifully favoured soon after this event, with a fresh

and powerful visitation of Divine Love, he was enabled to see the load of guilt and sin that was upon him ; under a sense whereof he was deeply humbled, and brought to sincere repentance. The blessed fountain (he says) was set open to his view—the blood of Christ to cleanse from all pollution, on condition of his forsaking those things that defile ; and although he was made sensible that he had no strength of himself to forsake sin, yet a portion of precious faith was afforded him, in the efficacy of the grace of God, which was sufficient to give him the victory over all his spiritual enemies, and he was preserved from fainting, and encouraged and strengthened to hold on his way, by his gracious Redeemer manifesting Himself to be “ a High Priest touched with a feeling of his infirmities,” and who was also “ his Advocate with the Father.” After passing through many secret exercises and conflicts of spirit, and experiencing the operations of that baptism that cleanses the floor of the heart, he became convinced that, if he was faithful to what was required of him, he must become willing to testify of the Lord’s goodness to others ; and yielding obedience to this call, he came forth as a minister, about the twenty-fourth year of his age. In the exercise of his gift, he appears to have been especially careful to keep close to the Divine openings, waiting in all his movements for the fresh anointing and putting forth of the good Shepherd. Thus he became fitted for the work committed to him, and with the unity of his brethren, was engaged, at different times, to visit, in Gospel love, many of the meetings, and some of the families of Friends in several parts of England, to the peace of his own mind.

Some time previous to the year 1783, he was impressed with a belief that the Lord called him to leave his native country and near connexions, and go and reside in Scotland. This brought him under very close trial and exercise, and, for a season, into much discouragement : he having at that

time a family of seven young children, and his means of supporting them being small, he could not well see how they were to be provided for. But at length he found relief in yielding up *all* in resignation to what he believed to be the Divine will ; and his faith was strengthened and confirmed in the rectitude of the *proposed movement by his beloved wife, (who had before this time appeared as a minister,) communicating to him, though she had no outward knowledge of his concern, that she had in view a similar prospect.* Thus in simple faith, in obedience to the Divine requiring, and with the concurrence of his friends, in the year 1784 he removed with his family to the vicinity of Edinburgh. After *remaining* there about two years, he came into our Monthly Meeting : first residing at Aberdeen, and subsequently near Kinnuck. In the year 1794, he paid a religious visit to friends in America, travelling among them for about three years, both in the United States and in some of the British settlements, holding many meetings among those not professing with us ; and, from the testimonials received, it appears that his Gospel labours were acceptable and edifying to those he visited.

After his return, in 1797, he continued a diligent labourer in his Great Master's cause. In the years 1798, 1799 and 1800, he was much from home, visiting many of the counties of England, as far as the Land's-end in Cornwall, South Wales, and the Island of Guernsey : during this *period, and for some years after, he resided occasionally at his former place of abode, near Kinnuck, but principally at Edinburgh, until the year 1807, when he left that city, and removed to Aberdeen, which was his home during the remainder of his life.* Subsequent to this removal he was again engaged in visiting Friends in and about London, and many other parts of the nation ; and in 1812-13, he paid a visit to Friends in Ireland, Cumberland, and some parts of Westmoreland and Lancashire, which he

accomplished under considerable bodily suffering; these proved his last engagements of the kind out of Scotland. He continued, nevertheless, while ability was afforded, a diligent attender of meetings at home, and visited those at a distance within the compass of his own General Meeting; but the infirmities of age continuing to increase, he was confined to the house for a number of years, during which, his sight, which had been gradually becoming defective, at length totally failed, and he was for a considerable period quite blind: this he felt a great privation, but he was enabled to bear it, and all the other afflictions that were allotted him, with Christian resignation and cheerfulness, being ever more ready to number his remaining blessings than to utter a word of complaint.

In the year 1827 he was deprived by death of his wife, who had been his affectionate and sympathizing companion for about fifty-seven years. Soon after this event, he penned a memorandum, of which the following is an extract. "I am now in my eightieth year—a long and weary pilgrimage—many conflicts—many trying exercises have attended me, yet through all the Lord has sustained me. It seems as if I had well nigh finished my course. I say not, I have kept the faith, but the Lord has kept me in the faith; and I feel near and dear to me his precious cause, which, I believe, He engaged me to advocate; and though day after day passes over in much weariness of the flesh, yet, by his sustaining love, the bitter is sometimes made sweet, and what would otherwise seem hard is made easy. I feel constrained to say, that the Lord is good—inexpressibly good—and I have an unshaken hope, which is the precious gift of God, that, when the conflicts of time are over, I shall enter a region of everlasting rest, peace, and joy. I sensibly feel I have no merit—I am unworthy of the least of the mercies bestowed upon me: the love, grace, and mercy of God in Christ Jesus has done all for me. * * By faith my

dear wife obtained the victory, and was enabled to triumph over death, hell, and the grave ; as evinced by almost her last expressions, praising the Lord with her latest breath. I feel the loss of her company, but I do not regret that she is gone before me (as I trust) to be with Christ which is far better."

As a minister, he was much esteemed among us, being sound in the Christian faith and doctrine, exemplifying by a life of self-denial, the precepts of the Gospel—being truly "an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity."

During his long confinement, our dear friend having been favoured to have his memory clear and retentive, and his mental powers unimpaired, he continued to take a lively interest in all that concerned the best welfare of his fellow-professors, and the prosperity of our Religious Society. He frequently expressed deep regret for those amongst us who, as he believed, were "forsaking the fountain of living waters, and hewing them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water;" but he was nevertheless confirmed in a belief, that, though the Lord had permitted a sifting time, He had not forsaken his people ; that eventually the testimonies of Truth committed to our predecessors, would be more and more conspicuously exalted among mankind.

The meetings of ministers and elders for several years were held at his house ; at the conclusion of one of these, he expressed himself to the following effect : "As this is probably the last time I shall sit with you, in this capacity, I feel free to tell you, that *all is well*. I have not been following cunningly devised fables ; neither have I been endeavouring to serve the Lord for nought : notwithstanding my unworthiness, my many weaknesses, and short-comings, He has richly rewarded me—and I may also tell you, that if you continue to persevere in faith and patience, in stability of conduct, He will crown your latter end with loving kindness and tender mercies, as He is abundantly doing for me."

About three weeks before his final close, his sufferings were often very distressing to him, and he sometimes expressed a desire to be unclothed of mortality ; but in giving utterance to such a wish, he never failed to add, “ When the right time comes.—It is the Lord’s will that I am kept here, and it must be right ;—He doeth all things well, and we are called to *suffer*, as well as to *do* his will.”

On one occasion, on being asked how he was, he replied, “ I am just about as weak and poorly as I can well be, but I have a hope—I am favoured with a lively hope, that, when I have done with time, I shall have peace for ever.” And, on its being remarked to him, that it was a great mercy to have such a feeling to sustain him, he replied, “ O yes ! and none can tell how precious it is, but those who feel it.” At another time, in a fit of pain and sickness, thinking his end was near, he sent for some of his family who were not then with him, to whom he signified his readiness to depart, saying, he had no desire to be anything but what the Lord would have him to be—wholly resigned to *his* will ; and, addressing himself to those around him, said, “ You, too, must follow on—never let go your hold—keep to the Rock that never failed any one.”

During the few days he continued after this, he seemed to wish for quietness, and said but little ; yet evincing at different times, so long as the power of articulation remained, his unshaken confidence in his God and Saviour, saying, he had nothing to trust to but the goodness and mercy of the Almighty.

Thus he finished his course, full of days and full of peace. His memory is precious to us, and we reverently believe his redeemed spirit is numbered among those who “ came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Signed in and on behalf of the Meeting aforesaid, held at Aberdeen, the 15th of 4th month, 1840.

TESTIMONY

*From ROCHESTER MONTHLY MEETING, concerning
WILLIAM RICKMAN, deceased.*

RESPECTING our late dear friend, William Rickman, we believe we may say, that he was one who "set his affection on things above, not on things on the earth." During the latter years of his life his mind appeared to be much engaged with the concerns of eternity, and the desire of promoting the prosperity and enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom. He was born in the latter part of the year 1745, in or near a small village, called Hellingly, in Sussex. When fourteen years of age he was apprenticed at New York.

With the early part of the life of this our dear friend we are not much acquainted, he having passed twenty-six years of it in America. It appears, however, by some memorandums, made by himself a few years since, that through disregarding the convictions of the Holy Spirit, he had departed very widely from his God; that these convictions still followed him through a long course of disobedience and transgressions; and that, at length, he was favoured to experience repentance; and through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, was brought to the enjoyment of a portion of solid peace. This lamentable deviation he has frequently been heard very feelingly to deplore, and to extol and magnify that grace which had wrought for him such marvellous redemption; often repeating those expressions of the royal

Psalmist, " He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

He left America in the year 1785; in the year following came to reside at Rochester, and was acknowledged as a minister in the year 1793. In 1788, he was married to Elizabeth Alexander, the daughter of the friend whom he succeeded in the school in that place. In his frequent religious visits, she cheerfully gave him up to the service of his great Master, and peacefully departed this life in the year 1832, aged seventy-three years.

Our dear friend was, at various times, engaged in the service of visiting the families of Friends in his own Quarterly Meeting: he twice paid a religious visit to Friends in Ireland: in the year 1815, visited some of the western counties, and the islands of Guernsey and Jersey; and again in 1830: in the year 1816, some of the northern counties of England; twice the meetings and on one of these occasions the families of Friends in Scotland. Between 1818 and 1820, he visited Friends in America: in 1829, Paris, and those professing with Friends in the south of France; and, at other periods, was engaged in visiting Friends in various parts of this country. In these his religious visits, our dear friend was enabled to discharge his apprehended duty to the satisfaction of many among whom he laboured, and was favoured to return with the reward of peace to his own exercised mind.

He was a very diligent attender of our meetings for worship and discipline, even to a very short period previous to his decease, and when in so feeble a state of body that his friends were apprehensive his strength would scarcely enable him to bear the exertion.

Though not of a robust constitution, he was favoured with good general health, and was remarkably preserved from the

pains and infirmities which are the common attendants of the great age to which he attained, and for this blessing he frequently expressed his thankfulness. He was kind and charitable to the poor—a sympathising friend and counsellor, and this trait in his character was never more conspicuous than in his frequent visits to those who were labouring under affliction either of body or mind. He was greatly redeemed from the love of the world, and very earnest not to be entangled with its affairs, in order that he might serve Him faithfully who had chosen him to be a soldier in the Christian warfare.

As our dear friend drew towards the close of his long life, his concern for the prosperity of the church increased, and his love for his friends and goodwill to every one, flowed abundantly; so that we may respecting him adopt the language, “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

In the early part of the year 1837, he was greatly reduced by an attack of illness, and to himself, as well as to his friends, it appeared improbable that his feeble frame would struggle through it. At this time, speaking of the uncertainty of his continuance, he said, “I desire to be entirely resigned to the Divine will. I have nothing of my own to trust to—nothing but the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, who died for me and all mankind.” From this illness he recovered, though he never regained his former strength, and towards the summer of 1839 he began rapidly to decline.

To a relative, who paid him a visit, he said, “I have been in a very low state, greatly tried and tossed for a long time, but this promise was brought to my remembrance, and O, the comfort it has been and is to me. ‘O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires,’ &c. The Lord has been with me all my life long, from youth to old age, and He will not leave me now that

grey hairs are come upon me. My many sins of omission and commission too, He hath forgiven them all. What a poor creature I have been—nothing in myself, no, nothing—it is all of mercy, free grace and mercy.”

For some time previous to his decease, he was confined almost wholly to his bed, and his weakness was so great that at times he appeared nearly exhausted. At intervals, when refreshed, his whole frame seemed animated with new vigour, the liveliness of his spirit raised him, as it were, above himself; and he appeared unable to find words to express his sense of love and gratitude to his Heavenly Father for the many mercies of which he was made a partaker. On one occasion, he said, “O! the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord—it is inexpressible! O, his condescension to poor, weak, fallen man!—wonderful to think, that the beloved Son of God should leave the bosom of the Father, and his glory in heaven; that He should take upon Him our nature and be made like us in all things, sin excepted.” He then recounted, in order, the principal circumstances in the life of our blessed Saviour while personally on earth, pausing at intervals, as if to dwell on the sacred theme, and intermingling occasionally prayers and praises. He dwelt particularly on his birth, labours, sufferings, condemnation, crucifixion between two thieves; his burial, resurrection, subsequent converse with his disciples, and his glorious ascension into heaven, where He now sitteth at the right hand of God, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, concluding with, “O, the glory of that power which was afterwards poured forth upon his disciples when the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and that power remains the same that ever it was.”

At another time, “I am passing away—nearly done with all below—this frail tabernacle will ere long be committed to the dust, but, if preserved unto the end, I believe that through redeeming love and mercy, my soul will mount up

as on eagle's wings, and will join that innumerable company of saints, and angels, and archangels who surround the throne, there to unite with them in ascribing glory, thanksgiving, honour, and praise to the Lord God and the Lamb for ever and ever. Alleluia!"

The following morning, being asked how he had passed the night, he said, "O, so comfortable, so peaceful, so peaceful! The Saviour is very near, very precious—He has followed me all my life long, and in mercy borne with my backslidings and my many transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities, He was wounded for our transgressions. O! the love and mercy of the Lord to me—they are inexpressible: His condescension! I am passing away so gently—my body will soon be in the silent grave, but I have faith to believe there is in me an immortal part, which will dwell for ever in the presence of the Lord; and I believe, that through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, my many short-comings and backslidings, my multiplied transgressions, are forgiven. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life—yes, all the days of my life. I do believe that a brighter day will dawn upon the church, and upon our Society. 'The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' His kingdoms shall be exalted, and his dominion be over all for ever."

About two weeks previous to his decease, he called one of his daughters to him at an early hour in the morning, and said to this effect: "What a refreshing sleep I have had!—it has felt to me as though my soul was in heaven. I seem to have heard the sound of angels and archangels. Thou knowest I have had a severe conflict, a low season, but it is very different now. What a favour!"

An evening or two preceding his death, as his daughters were by his bedside, he raised himself up and said, with a clear, audible voice, "Farewell in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

He gradually became weaker, till he gently and calmly breathed his last on the 29th of the 7th month, 1839. His remains were interred at Rochester on the first-day following, attended to the grave by a large company of friends, many of them from various parts, and also by many of his neighbours.

He died in the ninety-fourth year of his age, and was a minister about forty-five years.

Signed in Rochester Monthly Meeting, held there the 1st of the 1st mo., 1840.

A TESTIMONY

From the MONTHLY MEETING of the WEST DIVISION of DEVONSHIRE, concerning SARAH JAGO, late of PLYMOUTH, who died on the 28th of the 4th mo., and was buried in Friends' Burial-ground at that place, the 3d of 5th mo., 1839, aged about seventy-five years.

WHILE thus notifying the decease of our dear friend, Sarah Jago, we think the relation of a few circumstances connected with her religious character may be instructive and encouraging, particularly to such who, like herself, do not move in the more elevated situations of life.

Her parents were members of the national church, and, according to her own grateful testimony, were concerned to bring up their children in the fear of God—in the diligent attendance of public worship, and in habits of industry. When about twenty years of age, she engaged herself as a household servant in a Friend's family, where the conscientious discharge of her duties obtained for her their regard and confidence, which were continued unabated, during the fifty years that she remained their assistant.

A few years after entering into this service, being thoughtful on religious subjects, she attended some dissenting places of worship, and with one society was about to be united in membership, but doubts arising in her mind on the propriety of such a step, she relinquished it. About the same time, a domestic affliction occurred in the family in which she resided, occasioned by the death of an interesting child, un-

der circumstances of a peculiarly trying nature ; and observing in its affectionate mother, her mistress, a holy resignation, notwithstanding the poignancy of the stroke, she was led to conclude that it arose from a supporting principle, of which her own greatly agitated mind had but an imperfect knowledge. We apprehend it was this circumstance that first attracted her attention to the religious principles of our Society. She did not, however, immediately take any apparent step in consequence ; but her mind being thus further opened to religious subjects, she afterward believed herself required to attend Friends' meetings, and on entering one the first time, these words seemed distinctly sounded in her mental ear, " Thou hast well done that thou art come." Nor did she, we believe, in the subsequent course of her life, ever doubt the rectitude of the step. At this time, the meeting she attended was generally held in silence ; she was however so fully convinced of the rectitude of the peculiar views of Friends, including those regarding worship and the ministry, that she became united to the Society as a member, about the thirty-second year of her age. Having experienced that baptizing power, which alone rightly qualifies for religious service, she believed herself called to appear in our meetings as a minister ; and in the year 1814, she was, by minute of the Monthly Meeting, recommended in that capacity to the meeting of ministers and elders. Our dear friend's religious services were pretty much confined to the compass of our Quarterly Meeting. Her communications were usually rather brief, but her openings on various passages of Scripture were often remarkably pertinent and edifying, giving evidence of their proceeding from the fresh springings of life, and were quickening in their tendency. Nor was she unfrequently led to enforce, with the earnestness of a steadfast conviction, the certainty and sufficiency of the immediate teaching of Divine grace ; and having, in her own experience, indubitably proved the efficacy of this vital principle of the

Christian's faith, she was especially desirous of upholding it, and recommending it to others. Having thus received the doctrines of the Gospel as professed by Friends, she was concerned faithfully, and even zealously, to support them ; it therefore gave her sincere regret, when she observed any, from whatever cause, relinquish those testimonies peculiar to our Society, and which she firmly believed were in full accordance with the doctrines contained in the New Testament.

She did not often use her pen, and but few memorandums have been found. These, however, mark the exercise of her spirit, and the following are of that character. "Thou, O Father ! hast tried and proved me, whose right only it is. Thou hast dipped in Jordan, as it were six times, spare not the seventh, if it be necessary to my further refinement, so that I may stand before thee without spot or blemish, for nothing that is unclean can stand in thy sight. Thou, O Father, who art perfect in purity, wills that those Thou hast called, should be pure in body, soul, and spirit."

"15th of 12th month, 1802. This day at meeting felt poor and destitute—the state of my mind being much like the atmosphere—cloudy and heavy: but towards the close, was favoured to believe, that the Power, which ordained winter and summer, and keeps covenant with both, had not altogether forsaken his tried children ; but as they are concerned to keep the word of his patience, He will also keep them in the hour of temptation. May I become one of those whom the Lord keeps and preserves at such seasons ! Amen ! saith my soul."

When concerned to give reproof or advice, she did it in faithfulness, which was generally received with attention and respect. It is believed that visits to individuals for this purpose were not unfrequent, and one, that it was known she paid, not long before her decease, to the keeper of a public-house, for whose eternal welfare she had been re-

ligiously concerned, was well received, and we may hope her labour was not in vain.

She felt much interest for young people, and frequently took opportunities to impart to them, in an affectionate and impressive manner, important counsel.

This, our valued friend, was not however free from human infirmities. Her temper was naturally irritable, and this was at times the occasion of great conflict and sorrow to herself. In reference to an instance in which she had yielded to it, she thus, in a paper found since her decease, describes the convictions of her mind: "Surely Satan has triumphed over all! Oh! may the strong man be bound, and his goods destroyed by Him who is stronger than death, hell, or the grave. But ask, O my soul, what pretensions hast thou to the care of Him, who alone is able to subdue all things to Himself, when thou hast openly rejected his counsel? O merciful Father, root up the corrupt tree, and plant instead the true seed, and if it be thy will, water it, that it may take root downward, spring upward, and bear fruit acceptable in thy sight, which cannot be, until body, soul, and spirit are wholly in subjection to thy Holy Will. O gracious Father, enable me to say, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Forgive me my manifold transgressions, and permit me once more to approach thy footstool, and to implore thy pardon."

The health of our dear friend gradually declined for some years; yet she was generally cheerful, and enjoyed the company of her friends, toward whom she evinced much affectionate attachment. The last First-day meeting which she attended, she was obliged to leave soon after it had gathered, from indisposition. In describing her sensation to a Friend who followed her out, she said, "It feels as if life were going"—then added with emphasis, "and who knows? perhaps it may be so." This attack soon passed off, and she was again at meeting on the following fourth day, in

which she appeared in a short, but lively and acceptable testimony. On seventh-day night following, soon after retiring to bed, she had an attack of illness: she had not now the power of utterance; and after a conflict only of a few minutes, she was released from suffering, prepared we doubt not, through the mercy of God, in and through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, to receive the welcome salutation of "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Signed on behalf of the Meeting aforesaid, held at Plymouth, the 16th of the 10th mo. 1839.

A TESTIMONY

*From FOLKSTONE MONTHLY MEETING, concerning MARY
HAGGER, deceased.*

IN preserving a memorial of this our dear friend, we are instructively reminded of her meek and lowly example ; she was desirous to be found adorning the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things ; that her rejoicing might be this, the testimony of her conscience, that with simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, she had her conversation in the world.

She was the daughter of our friends, William and Lettice Knight, and was born at Stone-hall, near Wanstead, Essex, the 4th of 1st mo. 1758.

The following selections from her memoranda, serve to show the early pious care of her parents. “ I was blessed with tender parents, that watched over themselves and their family with a religious care, taking us to meetings ; they were very diligent attenders themselves, though residing at a distance of several miles, the weather or business seldom if ever preventing.” She thus adverts to her religious feelings in early life : “ I well remember being in a garden by myself, and knew not what it was that so sweetened and tendered my heart, that for a considerable time I felt as though I could not leave the spot, and several times afterwards I took opportunities to retire, and had similar feelings.” “ As I grew I often felt the prevalence of my natural disposition, giving way too much to indifference in things relating to my best interest, so that I often desired something might befall me, to arouse me from such a state of ease and unconcernedness ; and after awhile, kind Providence, whose peculiar care is extended while passing the

slippery paths of youth, inclined my heart to love Him, and permitted me to have a fever, which in degree awakened me."

She had to pass through many painful conflicts, often lamenting the want of an entire surrender of heart to the refining hand of Him who was preparing her as a vessel for his service. She was impressed with a belief that it would be required of her to bear public testimony to the goodness of the Lord; from this sacrifice she earnestly desired she might be spared; and the language of her heart was, "Send by whom thou wilt send, but not by me." She yielded to this religious conviction, by giving up to speak a few words in meetings for discipline when she apprehended it required of her. On the subject of these meetings she remarks, "I believe that if the discipline is rightly supported, it must be by the influence of the same power that moves to every duty."

Whilst having to struggle with severe outward trials, she sought to cherish a tender conscience, and by adhering to Christian principle, her conduct became remarkable for strict integrity; and after being brought through her temporal difficulties, by the power of Divine Grace, she was raised up an instrument of usefulness in the church. By abiding in deep watchfulness and humble dependence on the Lord to know his putting forth to the solemn work, she became qualified to speak a word in season to the weary in Zion, and at times was strengthened to "lift up the banner on the high mountain." Her offerings in the ministry being expressed in few words, and in great diffidence and fear, were impressive, evincing that she sought not honour from others, but that which comes from the Lord alone.

In 1831 she visited by certificate the meetings in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, as also the families of Friends in Hertford; in the following year she paid a similar visit to the Monthly Meetings in the county of Nottingham, and in 1835 to those composing the Quarterly Meeting of

Essex: these services proved acceptable to her friends and afforded peace to her own mind.

She felt much interested in objects of Christian philanthropy: the poor and the afflicted, more especially, obtained her commiseration. She cherished a deep solicitude for the religious welfare of her near connexions in life; desiring that they, as well as herself, might experience a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; thus expressing her feelings on this all-important subject, "I pray for myself and my dear children, that we may be strengthened in an unshaken belief in the efficacy of the blood of the beloved Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who came down from heaven, and took not upon Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate the cruel and shameful death of the cross, to be a propitiation and atonement for the sins of the whole world, rose again the third day from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and is the Advocate and Mediator between God and man, the King, High Priest, and Prophet of His church, the author of salvation to all that obey Him;—true God and perfect man."

At the latter end of 1835, our dear friend was visited with severe illness, from which her recovery then appeared very doubtful; but she was favoured to be restored to usual health until the close of the following year, when she was seized with another alarming attack which greatly reduced her strength; yet she so far recovered as to be able to assemble with her Friends at religious meetings, though often under great bodily infirmity.

During the illnesses above alluded to, her mind was much clothed with love, and her expressions were often weighty and instructive. After passing a low and deeply depressing season, she said, "Should I be taken now, all will be well; I have such a full assurance there is a mansion

prepared for me, and that crowns all." At another time, "It is an awful thing to appear before the Judge of the whole earth, and I am sure I have not a rag nor anything to cover myself with; but my whole and entire dependence is on my holy Saviour, who I humbly hope will plead my cause; I do believe love will cover the judgment-seat; if there are any that slight the offers of a merciful Saviour, how deplorable must be their condition!" "I have felt the Comforter at the threshold of the door, waiting to do his own office." At different times she expressed as follows, "I feel very low: I want to feel more of my heavenly Father's presence. O! I do most fervently hope if there are any sins yet remaining, they may be blotted out." "O! how unworthy! I feel that I have not a good act of my own that I can plead; but my dear Saviour died for me; and I have a hope, that He will receive me, not of works, but of his free grace." To one of her family whom she had not seen for several days, she said, "I want to tell thee the bands are broken, and I feel great liberty in the truth, and can sometimes sing high praises." At another time, "O! that it may please my heavenly Father to say, it is enough, and take his poor, (I am almost afraid to say servant to so high a power,) to Himself."

Our beloved friend for many years suffered from a violent nervous affection of the head, accompanied with a distressing cough, which greatly exhausted her enfeebled frame, so that from the spring of 1839 to the ensuing autumn, she was almost wholly confined to the house. In the 9th mo. of that year, she received a visit from her only surviving brother, who, after a few days' illness, died at her house. After this sudden and unexpected event, her health rapidly declined, and she suffered much at times from mental depression, yet was favoured to know her heart stayed on the Lord. At one time she said, "O that I may die the death of the righteous, and that my last end may be like

theirs! I have a hope that casteth out fear, I have a hope both sure and steadfast."

A few days before the final close, when alluding to the death of our blessed Saviour, she observed, "I must die the death: mine is a natural death, but His was for the whole world. He gave up his life freely, and suffered on the cross: He gave his life a willing sacrifice, and we must give up our whole hearts. 'No cross no crown,' is a sure testimony, and will be answered in a future day; if we will not bear the cross, we cannot have the crown." Then addressing her children present, said, "O, my dear children, from my dying bed, I beg it of you, that it may be the constant breathing of your souls, that you may be redeemed from the perishing things of time, and that your affections may be fixed on eternity.—What would it avail now, or at any other time, to have the world, or as much as might be equal to our extravagant desires to possess? I would freely give it up for a happy possession [in heaven.] Oh press after it, do not be satisfied in anything that is sensual or carnal, but oh that we may press after an inheritance in that which will endure for ever!" Nearly her last expressions were, "Oh eternity!—Oh the length of eternity!—Oh that it may be impressed on every heart, the length of eternity! there is no end."

She peacefully expired on the 25th day of the 1st month, 1840, aged about 82 years, and is, we have no doubt, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, gathered to the just of all generations, to unite in ascribing salvation to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore.

Her remains were interred in Friends' burial-ground at Ashford, on the 2nd day of the 2nd month, 1840.

Given forth by Folkstone Monthly Meeting, held at Canterbury, the 12th of the 3rd month, 1840.

A TESTIMONY

Of NORTHAMPTON MONTHLY MEETING, *concerning* ELIZABETH HOYLAND.

OUR dear friend was the daughter of John and Ann Barlow, of Sheffield. She was deprived of maternal care in the eleventh year of her age; her mother being removed by death at that period; an event which she recorded in terms indicative of the valuable character of her departed parent.

It appears that her mind was, in early life, made sensible of the visitations of heavenly love; and that yielding to its constraining influence, she was not only made willing to take up the cross to a taste for gaiety, which she had in some degree indulged, but also about the twenty-first year of her age, to surrender herself to become a public advocate of the cause of truth and righteousness; and was engaged in declaring to others the unsearchable riches of Christ. In 1781, in her twenty-third year, she was married to John Hoyland, of Sheffield. In 1784, with the concurrence of Balby Monthly Meeting, she united with her valued friend, Esther Tuke, in religious service in London and parts adjacent; and from that period to the year 1816, we are informed that she was frequently engaged in religious visits to the meetings, and often to the families of Friends in various parts of England; thrice in Scotland, once in Ireland, and once at Dunkirk. In many of these visits she was united with her friend Martha Smith. In the year 1818, she removed with her husband to Northampton, and became a member of this meeting. During her residence

among us, she was an example of diligence, in attending our meetings for worship and discipline ; and was often engaged therein, in short lively testimonies to the truth ; which, carrying with them the evidence of a right concern, and being illustrated by an exemplary life, were very acceptable to her friends.

It is permitted to the servants of the one Lord to exemplify in somewhat different degrees the various parts of the Christian character : in our dear friend humility and love were the more conspicuous features. She was a consistent example of plainness in dress and address ; and evinced much solicitude that the youth among us might retain this characteristic of our religious society ; believing it to be a part of true Christian simplicity. For many years she took a lively and active interest in the circulation of the Holy Scriptures among the poor around her ; and, with a mind framed to sympathize with the afflicted, she often ministered to their temporal necessities from her own limited means, and as the almoner of others ; and, we believe, was also frequently the minister of counsel and consolation to the wounded spirit.

In the summer of 1837, she attended the General Meeting at Ackworth ; and, under an apprehension of religious duty, with the concurrence of this meeting, she visited the meetings of Friends in her way to and from Ackworth. Of this, her last religious engagement from home, she has left the following brief record. After enumerating the meetings which she had attended, she adds, " I had some satisfaction in attending the above-mentioned meetings ; in which I felt a lonely, solitary pilgrim ; desiring, I trust, to be faithful in the little that was required, and fearful of exceeding the small commission I apprehended I was entrusted with ; greatly desiring, in passing along, that the precious truth might not suffer through so feeble an instrument."

that as she advanced in years, she increased in the fruits of the Spirit.

It pleased the Lord, in the year 1826, to bring her into deep trial by the loss of her husband, the late Edmund Janson, of Tottenham, to whom she had been united for six years, in the closest bonds of natural and religious affection : by this privation, she was left a widow, having one son, and a daughter who was born on the day of her husband's interment. Under these trying circumstances she was enabled to retain her trust ; and in simple resignation to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord."

In the summer of 1827, she removed to York, and continued to reside there the remainder of her life. Here her Christian deportment, particularly marked by humility and cheerfulness, endeared her to her friends, and spoke instructively and encouragingly of the way of truth. Her mind, however, was no stranger to temptation and conflicts. Her estimate of her own attainments was very low ; and deeply was she impressed with her need of continual watchfulness and prayer, that she might be preserved from the attacks of the enemy of souls ; and that all that was in her, which would oppose the divine will, might be thoroughly subjected.

Under date of the 4th month, 1830, she thus expresses herself : "For long past, my dwelling has generally been as at the bottom of Jordan. Oh for capacity to seek for renewed ability to bring up stones of memorial from thence ! but, alas ! the disposition to reason unprofitably has not been sufficiently guarded against. Oh ! when will every thought be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ ! this is what I long increasingly to experience ; yea, that all may be sanctified, and a capacity known for doing or suffering according to the will of God. As clay in the hands of the potter, so make me, O Lord ! what thou wouldst have

me to be. The power is thine, the work also is thine, and unto Thee shall all the praise be given, if Thou wilt graciously condescend thoroughly to purify and cleanse a heart that has seen and felt its own deceitfulness."

It was in the latter part of the year 1830 that she first spoke in our meetings for worship. The following memorandum expresses, we believe, some of her feelings in connexion with this circumstance.

"12th mo. 13th, 1830. What shall I render unto Thee oh Lord ! for all thy benefits? Thou hast, in abundant and unmerited mercy, helped the helpless, and strengthened the faithless ; subdued my fears, and enabled me at length to offer a sacrifice but too long withheld. Oh ! make me to feel continually dependent upon Thee. Thou knowest that I have neither store-house nor barn."

Our dear friend was recorded as a minister in the 6th mo. 1834. Her communications in our meetings were generally short, lively declarations of the Lord's goodness, or exhortations to the dedication of the whole heart to Him.

During the last six years of her life, a disease under which she laboured, occasioned her much suffering, and frequently prevented her meeting with her friends for public worship ; yet her zeal and diligence therein were truly exemplary ; as was also the cheerfulness she steadily maintained under her trials : indeed, she was less apt to speak of these to her friends, than she was to recount the mercies which she enjoyed.

Our dear friend was firmly attached to the religious principles in which she had been carefully educated. Her Christian experience and observation had commended them to her ; and her judgment was still further confirmed by the consideration of them, into which she was led by the secession of some of our members. Her feelings in connexion with this subject, are doubtless conveyed in the following memorandum :—

“We are nothing ; Christ is all ! This was the language, and I doubt not the heart-felt language of George Fox, for himself and his friends ; and well would it be for us, who are making a profession of the same faith, if our experience could enable us to bear such a testimony. Though but a few words, they convey the substance of true religion : a renunciation of self, and ascribing the whole work of salvation to be through and by Him alone, who said, I am the alpha and omega, the *first* and the *last* !”

The increased state of illness which preceded her dissolution, came on rather suddenly ; the following memorandum was evidently written a short time before the period of this change—“ Under, I think, a little renewed feeling of the Lord’s mercies ; I am disposed to acknowledge, that though my path has long been, and will continue at times to be felt, a solitary one ; it has nevertheless been cheered by some rays, from the ever-blessed source of light and life, enabling the poor traveller to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation. In addition to innumerable outward blessings, though trials of one kind or another have abounded, unmerited consolations have also been dispensed ; and with an almost unshaken humble hope respecting the termination of time.

“ I hope I do sometimes feel that all the sufferings of the present time, are not to be compared with the glory to be revealed, though I am sure I have no works of righteousness to look to ; life if wholly devoted, would have been an offering insufficient to have claimed any merit. Our salvation is not of us, but wrought by and through Him who died that we might live ; though I believe that those who are alive in Him, will be fruit-bearing branches, and if they abide in Him, their love and their zeal for his glory will increase, and thus they go on from strength to strength.”

A few days after the alarming change in her state of health took place, which was early in the 3rd month, she expressed herself to the following effect, to an intimate friend :—

“ I feel mercifully supported, and what a favour it is at such a time as this, when my poor body seems weighed down with disease, and I so utterly unworthy ! for when I look at myself, I seem as though I could see nothing but infirmity, nothing but short-coming ; yet I have, through infinite mercy, known divine grace working in me. Truly, all the strength I have ever experienced, to do anything with acceptance, has been through the same infinite mercy. I have not one single scrap of my own to trust in, all is of pure redeeming mercy ;—and in that mercy in Christ Jesus, is my hope and trust.” A few days after she said, “ I am mercifully permitted to have a hope which is as an anchor to my soul, sure and steadfast, and which I believe will never fail me : my hope is in Christ Jesus, my Redeemer and Sanctifier, who alone is able to blot out our sins ; to blot them out *so* that they never more shall be brought in remembrance against us. Words would fail to speak the blessing of having *such* a belief, at such a time.”

Although in a very weak state, and often under great suffering, she was enabled to maintain a lively interest in the welfare of her friends ; and she thought it right about this time, and at several subsequent periods of her illness, to invite many of the members of York meeting, singly, to visit her ; to whom she imparted in much love and simplicity, pertinent counsel and encouragement. Her Christian interest was particularly drawn forth towards those who were in the station of parents, or who had in any wise the charge of youth. These she was engaged to encourage to seek diligently in their daily walk, to maintain a state of watchfulness and prayer, in order that they might receive a greater portion of that holy anointing, which would en-

able them to discern what was good in their children ; and qualify them to strengthen them in their desires after holiness, and also to restrain in them the evil tendencies of their fallen nature.

Thus occupied in the service of her Lord, and engaged to keep her lamp burning, she was prepared to *welcome* the nearer approach of her final change ; yet she said she found it needful to be very careful, lest she should impatiently desire her release before the Lord's time, which only could be the right time.

With reference to her dear children, she expressed her surprise, how fully she felt able to commit them without anxiety to the Lord, and the care of the church.

She referred in one of her conversations, to a time of apparent desertion, through which she had had to pass, in which the sensible feeling of good was so entirely absent, that she hardly felt able to put up a petition to the Lord for help. She considered that this discipline was designed for her instruction, by the trial of her faith ; and that such a dispensation tended greatly to the reduction of self, if a patient and watchful dependence upon the Lord was but maintained.

About a week before her decease, she spoke nearly as follows:—" I believe it is right for me to say, and I wish it should be known, that in this solemn season, near the close of life, I am fully persuaded, that the principles and testimonies which have been professed and held up by our Society are the truth, the very truth ; and I believe all those who have been endeavouring to keep to them, and to follow the leadings and guidance of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, will be enabled to testify, as I can, and now do, that we have not followed any cunningly devised fables." Some time after this, thinking the time of her departure near at hand, she wished her dear sister and friends to sit down beside her ; and then, speaking sweetly to each of them, she

affectionately bade them farewell in the Lord. A solemn pause followed, and in a short time she broke forth in an audible and melodious voice, after this manner:—"The Lord Jehovah is my song! I can now say, He is become my salvation: praises—praises—high praises unto his great and ever-excellent name. Blessing and honour and praise be ascribed unto Thee, O Lord God! who sittest upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, now, for ever and evermore, world without end, Amen." After a short pause she added, "Thou hast, in thy adorable love, prepared a table before me;—my cup runneth over. Surely I can testify that thy goodness and thy mercy have followed me all the days of my life; and Thou hast granted me a blessed assurance, that I shall dwell in thy house for ever."

Her end, however, was not quite so near as she then appeared to anticipate; and some time after her mind was brought under much exercise on account of the present state of our Society, particularly in reference to those among us who are standing in the foremost ranks, and are called upon in different ways, to engage in service for the promotion of the cause of truth; expressing her persuasion, that the time was come, when this class of our members must be willing to enter into a more close self-examination, and to exercise more watchfulness over themselves, their families, and their houses, than has been generally the case of late. "I am persuaded, (she said,) that weakness has spread, and the services of many have been lessened by the want of more individual faithfulness, dwelling with the gift in themselves, and labouring in their own families and houses; for *there*, I do believe, many things have found entrance, which have hindered the progress and spreading of truth, and which are like the stumbling-blocks, that must be removed out of the way before the Lord's work will go forward and prosper, as He designs it should do." And she desired that such considerations might more and more engage the attention of

Friends. Two days before her decease, on being asked how she had passed the night, she replied, "Some of the hours of it were very humiliating ones to me: I may say I have had to pass through the valley of deep humiliation; and it has been very good for me. All my short-comings, my sins, and my transgressions, were brought to my remembrance, and were more in number than the hairs of my head; and the view of them laid me prostrate even in the very dust: but it was sweet to me, for I saw that they were *all* blotted out for His name's sake; and I was brought to the feet of my blessed Saviour, and laid low before Him; and there I desire to lie for ever."

On the following morning she said, that it now seemed to her, as if she had nothing more to do here, than to give praise, and to watch; yet, she added, "closely to watch, that I may be ready when my change comes."

And thus watching unto prayer, and in humble confidence in her Redeemer, did this servant receive the blessed summons, to enter into his rest. About nine o'clock the following morning, in great clearness and serenity of mind, the purified spirit was permitted to leave its earthly house, and (we reverently believe) to be clothed upon with its house from heaven.

Read, approved, and signed, in our Monthly Meeting held at York, the 11th day of the 3rd month, 1840.

THE END.