

1837

# Testimonies Concerning Deceased Ministers: 1837

London Yearly Meeting

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# TESTIMONIES

CONCERNING

## DECEASED MINISTERS,

PRESENTED TO

THE YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD IN LONDON, 1837.

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MDCCCXXXVII.

The Testimony respecting our late friend EDWARD ALEXANDER,  
of Limerick, has been printed by order of the Yearly Meeting  
held in Dublin, 1837, and may be had by application to  
WILLIAM MANLEY.

## A TESTIMONY

*From PARDSHAW MONTHLY MEETING, in CUMBERLAND, concerning our late dear friend JAMES NICHOLSON, of CARTGATE, near WHITEHAVEN, who departed this life at CARLISLE, on the 9th of 6th mo. 1836, and was interred in Friends' Burial-ground at SCOTBY, aged forty-one years ; a minister about thirteen years.*

IT having pleased our Heavenly Father, in his inscrutable wisdom, to remove this our dearly beloved friend, at a time when his loss is peculiarly felt, we desire to bow in humble submission at his footstool ; and may we seek with fervency of spirit, for right ability to petition, that if consistent with his holy will, other faithful labourers may be raised up in this part of his heritage.

We are, however, renewedly convinced, that the Lord can work mightily for the help of his people, by many or by few, and that his grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, is sufficient for us ; the manifestation of which we believe will not be withheld, in the needful time, from the sincere, humble, seeking soul.

Our dear friend was born at Whitehaven, in the year 1795, the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Nicholson. In early life he was impressed with the necessity of submitting to the cross of Christ, and by yielding obedience to the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit, he witnessed the blessing of preservation ; and was thus enabled to become a "preacher of righteousness in life and conversation," and to bring forth fruits to the praise

of Him whose blessing peculiarly rests on an early surrender of heart to his service.

In the year 1823 he believed that it was required of him publicly to declare to others the unsearchable riches of Christ, and what had, in unmerited mercy, been done for his own soul.

His communications in the ministry were instructive and edifying. He was often earnestly engaged to impress upon Friends the importance of an early dedication of heart, and the need of watchfulness unto true prayer, that a preparation might be experienced, lest the solemn messenger should be sent to any in an unexpected moment.

His views of Christian redemption were clear, sound, and scriptural; a living faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ our Saviour, being accompanied with a full belief in the necessity of obedience to Divine grace in the soul.

In his solemn approaches to the footstool of Divine mercy his mind was clothed with deep reverence, manifesting self-abasement, and much fervency of spirit.

He was often concerned to exhort friends faithfully to maintain our various Christian testimonies, and that the affairs of society should be conducted under the influence and direction of Divine wisdom.

Love to God, and to his fellow-men, being sweetly pourtrayed in the character of this dear friend, he was affectionately disposed to sympathize with the afflicted, and through the aboundings of the love of Christ, he was frequently enabled to administer comfort and consolation to minds bowed down in seasons of deep probation.

In the year 1832 he was united in marriage to his friend Sarah Waite, a member of the same meeting; but this endearing tie was soon severed, no doubt in unerring wisdom.

Having been in a declining state of health, (and the fatal nature of his complaint not being for some time appre-



hended,) and believing it right to use all suitable means for its restoration, he was induced to take a journey on that account. He reached Carlisle without much apparent fatigue, where, at the house of his brother-in-law, symptoms of approaching dissolution appeared. While the issue of the complaint was hid from his view, he had often to express, in much brokenness of spirit, his resignation to the Divine will, however it might terminate.

On the day preceding his death, a few friends calling to see him, he entered with much interest and feeling into the state of our society; and concluded some instructive observations in nearly these words: "I firmly believe that He who raised us to be a people will never suffer the Christian testimonies, of which we make a profession, to fall to the ground; but, friends, hold to your principles, for we have not followed cunningly devised fables."

On the morning of his decease his dear wife was strengthened to inform him, that it was the opinion of his medical attendant that his close drew near; and soon after enquired if any thing rested upon his mind. He, with much composure, replied, "No: I feel quite resigned, and am perfectly easy in body and mind. If any thing further is required of me time will be given." He again repeated, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables." He then desired his dear love to be given to many of his friends, and in a short time afterwards very peacefully passed away.

Thus closed the life of our much-loved friend, having, as we believe, in time of health endeavoured to know an establishment on the only sure foundation—Christ Jesus, the Rock of Ages; and thus, through the infinite mercy and matchless loving-kindness of our God, we humbly trust his spirit was permitted to enter into that glo-

rious kingdom, to unite with the redeemed from among men, in singing praises to the Lord God and to the Lamb, for evermore.

The foregoing testimony was read and approved in the Quarterly Meeting for Cumberland and Northumberland, held at Carlisle the 30th of 3rd month, 1837, and therein signed on its behalf by

JOSEPH WATSON,  
*Clerk this time.*

Signed on behalf of the Women's Meeting,

MARY NICHOLSON, *Clerk.*

## A TESTIMONY

*Of SOUTHWARK MONTHLY MEETING concerning*  
*JOSEPH BINNS, deceased.*

THIS our dear friend, the son of Thomas and Rachel Binns, was born at Exeter the 11th of the 2nd month, 1774. He was educated at Ackworth School, and on quitting that institution he went to London, and was soon placed as a clerk in the East India House, where he continued several years, exposed to much temptation and very unprofitable company. In after life he frequently recurred to this period with deep feelings of gratitude and thankfulness, recounting the mercies of the Lord in following him with his goodness, and in preserving him from many of those snares by which he was surrounded. He was afterwards many years engaged as a commercial traveller in a concern in which eventually he became a partner, and continued to reside in London until his death.

He was the subject of many convicting and merciful visitations at different stages of his life; but it does not appear that he fully yielded to these manifestations of Divine love until the year 1824, when he was attacked with an alarming illness, from which his recovery appeared very doubtful. At this season it pleased the Lord again powerfully and awfully to impress his mind with a sense of his undone condition, and of the fulness and freeness of redeeming grace. The following extracts from a letter



written about this time, by a near relation, are descriptive of the state of his mind at that critical period.

“ When laid on the bed of sickness, with the prospect of an awful eternity before him, accompanied with a deep inward sense of his utter unfitness to appear before the tribunal of the just Judge of ‘ quick and dead,’ he was brought into such distress and anguish of soul as words cannot describe; the billows of dismay and despair seemed ready to engulf him, hardly daring to lift up his eyes and say, ‘ Lord be merciful to me a sinner.’ After having thus to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, and being stripped of all the ‘ filthy rags’ of his own righteousness, with which he had heretofore sought to cover himself, he was enabled to cry out, ‘ A Saviour, or I die ! a Redeemer, or I utterly perish !’ After this season of conflict a ray of comfort broke through the thick darkness with which his path had been surrounded, and he was favoured to witness that there was still ‘ balm in Gilead, and a physician there,’ who was all-sufficient and ready to heal all his diseases, and to set his captive spirit free. The command, ‘ Peace, be still,’ seemed to go forth, ‘ and there was a great calm.’ His now broken and contrited spirit was ‘ prostrated’ before the throne of grace. He was enabled to pour forth the effusions of a heart overflowing with gratitude for so great a deliverance, and was led to desire, if it should be consistent with the Divine will, that his life might be spared a little longer, and that he might be enabled by devotedness and obedience to the requirings of infinite wisdom, to encourage and animate others, by example as well as by precept, to follow on in that path which alone leads to true rest and peace.”

Our dear friend was mercifully enabled to bow in submission to these renewed extensions of Divine love, and after many conflicts and deep baptisms of spirit, he gave up to what he believed to be the Divine requirings, and in

the year 1830 appeared in a few words as a minister in our religious meetings. Continuing watchful and faithful to the discoveries of the light of Christ, he was enlarged in his gift, to the comfort and edification of his friends.

His communications were weighty and impressive, and delivered in the life and power of the gospel. He often appeared like one who felt as if standing on the brink of eternity, whilst pleading with his friends, and seeking to persuade them by what he had himself known of the terrors of the Lord for sin, and by those mercies of which he had so largely partaken, to flee from the wrath to come. On these occasions love, Christian love and humility were conspicuously the clothing of his spirit, earnestly desiring the salvation of all, and especially exhorting the youth, that by an early submission to the visitations of the love of God to their souls, they might escape those conflicts and trials which he had passed through in having so long resisted the offers of Divine grace.

Considering himself, to adopt his own expressions, as a monument of Divine mercy, and as a brand plucked from the burning, he was a tender counsellor to those under conflict of mind, exhorting them to lift up their heads in hope, and cast themselves in living faith upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus—that mercy which had so eminently followed and sustained *him*.

Towards the end of the year 1835, in company with our friend Robert Alsop, of Maldon, he paid an acceptable visit to the families of friends of this monthly meeting. On returning the minute granted him, in a very feeling and broken manner he acknowledged, that he could adopt the language, "Return unto thy rest, oh, my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." And in alluding, a short time before his decease, to this engagement, he said that he had been wonderfully strengthened to perform it to his own admiration and peace of mind.

The last illness of this beloved friend was of short duration, and attended with much bodily suffering. At one period he was permitted to experience the buffetings of the adversary, yet he could acknowledge that his faith and confidence never wholly forsook him; and though he could not clearly see how the illness might terminate, he believed his release was near at hand, and hoped to be preserved in patience, to wait the appointed time. At one time he repeated the text of Scripture, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also." At another time he exclaimed, "O! death, where is thy sting? O! grave, where is thy victory; the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And he signified what a mercy it was to know that his innumerable sins and transgressions were washed away in the blood of his Redeemer. The day previous to his removal he said, "I die firm in the faith of my dear Redeemer, and in the principles professed by our worthy predecessors;" remarking that he had passed through many deep baptisms, on account of those who were in any degree departing from those principles; also that his mind, at that season, was peculiarly clothed with love for them, accompanied with ardent desires that they might be all favoured to meet in a blessed eternity. He was deeply exercised for the prosperity of the church at large, and for the universal spread of the gospel: also, that none might be discouraged at the apparently low state of our society; but keep their eye steadily directed to that Power which alone can preserve on the immovable Foundation: and he was afterwards engaged in prayer for exercised individuals, that they might be enabled "to look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities," and to behold "Jerusalem a quiet habitation."



He expressed to his wife, shortly before his close, that every cloud was now removed, and the change to him would be unspeakably glorious. His last hours were almost wholly employed in thanksgiving, adoration, and praise for the bright prospect vouchsafed to him of an entrance into the mansions of eternal bliss.

He died at his residence in Horslydown, the 19th of 2nd month, 1836, and his remains were interred in Friends' burial-ground, Long-lane, on the 28th of the same, after a solemn meeting at Southwark. He was aged sixty-two years. A minister about five years.

*London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting, held the 28th of 6th month, 1836.*

The foregoing testimony on behalf of our late dear friend, Joseph Binns, has been read in this meeting, and is united with.

Signed in and on behalf of the Meeting by

GEORGE STACEY, *Clerk.*

Read in the Women's Quarterly Meeting, 27th of 9th mo. and signed in and on behalf thereof, by

ELIZABETH KIDD, *Clerk.*



## A TESTIMONY

*From TOTTENHAM MONTHLY MEETING, concerning MARY STACEY, who died in the eighty-first year of her age, at TOTTENHAM, on the 28th of the 2nd month, 1836, and was buried there on the 5th of the 3rd month following, having been a Minister forty-three years.*

“THE memory of the just is blessed,” and we feel this to be emphatically true, as applied to the character of this our beloved and honoured friend, who was enabled, through the course of a long life, to show forth the praises of Him who had called her out of darkness into his marvellous light.

She was born at Kendal in the 8th month, 1755. Her parents, Isaac and Rachel Wilson were much valued as ministers in our society; and as bright examples of things that are lovely and of good report. She truly honoured her father and her mother, and ever retained a thankful sense of the goodness of God to her in the blessing of such parents. They were concerned to bring up their children in the fear and love of the Almighty; and in a high value for those views of the spirituality of the religion of Christ, which Friends have believed themselves called to uphold.

In the nineteenth year of her age, when absent from home on a visit, she was seriously afflicted by the death of her eldest sister. This event, through Divine mercy, was made the means of deeply impressing her with the truth, that “one thing is needful.” She strongly felt the vanity of her

past life, and the insignificance of every thing in comparison with the favour of God, whose grace was at that time sweetly drawing her to seek first the kingdom of heaven. She has often remarked, on recurring to this period, that the visitation was not so much one of terror for past transgressions, as a conviction of the unspeakable love of God, and of the blessedness of conformity to his will. Thus, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, was her mind brought into deep contrition and true repentance before Him. From this time there was a marked change in her habits and deportment. She became an instructive example of self-denial to her young friends, proving to them that her affections were now set on things above. The light reading in which she had taken so much pleasure was given up, and the Bible, with books of a devotional nature, became her frequent companions. This was not to the exclusion of works calculated to store the mind with really useful knowledge; for the cultivation of the intellect was ever regarded by her as a duty not to be neglected by the watchful Christian. The death of her beloved mother, not long after the period above alluded to, when in London on religious service, was blessed in its effect on her already awakened mind, to her furtherance in the right way of the Lord; and she may thenceforward be viewed as having entered on that course of usefulness, in which she shone forth conspicuously in after life.

In the year 1781 our dear friend was united in marriage to George Stacey, and became a member of Westminster Monthly Meeting. She was thus introduced into our large Quarterly Meeting, in which she was previously scarcely at all known, and where she felt herself much of a stranger. But faithfully endeavouring to serve God, and in watchfulness and humility to follow the guidance of his Spirit, she gained the love, esteem, and confidence

of her friends, and for some years acceptably filled the stations of overseer and elder among them.

It was in the year 1793 that she first yielded to an apprehension of religious duty, which she had long felt, to speak as a minister of the gospel. A sense of the awfulness of the engagement, in a mind which shrunk from such a public course of conduct, led her into deep humiliation and secret conflict; but she was strengthened to surrender her own will to what she believed to be the will of her divine Master. Her ministry was delivered in the fear of God, being attended by a solemn sense of his purity and holiness, and under the constraining power of the love of Christ; and hence it was edifying to her friends. We have an instructive remembrance of the reverence of her engagements, more especially in prayer.

She travelled in the exercise of her gift in the ministry in the eastern and northern counties, and was alike acceptably engaged within the limits of our own Quarterly Meeting. She also yielded to the judgment of her friends, in paying visits in different parts of the nation, which were made by special appointment of the Yearly Meeting; an engagement for which she was well qualified, as well as for service in meetings for discipline, in which, under a lively interest, she took a very acceptable and useful part.

It was her great concern to dedicate the gifts and talents with which she was entrusted, to the service of her Lord, and thus they became improved and enlarged. She enjoyed the society of her friends, and was given to hospitality. Her conversation was instructive and improving in its character, seasoned with grace, and accompanied by true Christian kindness, rendering the way of righteousness attractive and lovely to others. She feelingly and willingly entered into the concerns of her fellow-labourers in the ministry, and was in various ways



helpful to them ; and her counsel and judgment as an elder in the church continued to be highly valued. To the young and inexperienced, whose feet were happily turned into the way to Zion, she was a judicious friend and counsellor, being concerned, whilst kindly entering into their circumstances, to direct them to the Lord as their refuge and their strength. Many who are now living have cause to give thanks unto Him, in that she was made an instrument of good to them.

When in the vigour of her days, and during her more immediate connexion with friends of London, the latter part of which time she was a member of the Peel monthly meeting, as well as after her removal to Tottenham, in the year 1808, as long as bodily health permitted, our dear friend was remarkable for her attention to the sick and afflicted, visiting them, and giving herself up to serve them in illness, or when bereft of tender connexions, or brought into trouble from other causes. Having experienced the goodness of the Lord to her own soul, she was often, on these occasions, made an instrument, both by example and by counsel, to direct her friends to Him who is the physician of value, the comforter of the afflicted.

It was her daily practice, independent of the usual times for assembling the family to read the Scriptures, to retire into her own chamber for the purpose of waiting upon God. These seasons appear to have been eminently blessed to the strengthening of her faith and the deepening of her religious character. It has been often remarked by her family, that her countenance, after these occasions, beamed with unusual sweetness and heavenly serenity, conveying the impression that she had been with Jesus, and thus attracting her children, and those around her, to their Saviour, by the persuasive language of example.

The guarded education of our dear friend had pre-



served her from many of the temptations and contaminations of the world; yet she was often humbled under a strong sense of her many transgressions and her proneness to sin, of her awful responsibility as an accountable being, and of that purity of heart and holiness in all manner of conversation to which we are called. Thus it was given her to see that the work of sanctification is no superficial thing, but that which ought to become the great business of life. Many and deep were her baptisms; they did not, however, produce gloominess of character, but Christian gravity, which was accompanied with great cheerfulness. She was habitually active, doing with alacrity what her hands found to do. It was her continued concern to be found bearing her daily cross and the yoke of Christ; and thus she proved his love to be a source of comfort and of hope.

In the year 1816 she was, by death, deprived of her valued husband, whose memory as an upright man, who feared God, and as a faithful elder in the church, is still honoured amongst us. They had lived together as fellow-labourers and helpers, sharing each other's joys and troubles. Our beloved friend bore this heavy trial with much submission, and was enabled at the graveside feelingly to appeal to the Searcher of hearts, and, acknowledging that it was in his fear that she had entered into the union which, as far as related to the body, was now dissolved, to ask for the continuance of his mercy to the end of her days. On reviewing the years of her married life, they present us with a striking and instructive evidence that the Lord in wisdom ordereth the ways of his children, who are concerned to look with a single eye to his guidance.

Our dear friend survived her husband twenty years. Her usefulness continued; her humility increased: she was much at home and amongst us. It is sweet and ani-

mating to look back to the evening of her pilgrimage; when she seemed to be as one waiting for the coming of her Lord, who might adopt the language, "God has been the strength of my life, and He will be my portion for ever." She was a very diligent attender of our religious meetings, and that even to nearly the last day of her life. In this solemn duty, and in her reverent waiting upon God on these occasions, she was a bright example.

The following memorandum was written by her in the year 1828. "The consideration of my advanced period of life has for some time past awfully affected my mind; and a few days ago a very serious attack of sickness seemed almost ready to announce, that time, to me, should be no longer; the poor frame has, however, been permitted to revive, no doubt in Divine mercy and goodness, in order that the great work of sanctification may be more fully accomplished. Oh, may I be strengthened to keep this object continually in view, that the few remaining days allotted me, in this state of probation, may be rendered a pure offering of thanksgiving and praise, through the mercy of Christ Jesus."

After this period the powers of nature obviously became less vigorous; but the deep sympathy with human woe, which had marked her path through life, continued to shed its influence around her, and when she could no longer administer, by her personal succour, to the help of others, she was still anxious to bestow of her substance for the relief of the poor and afflicted.

Her experience was accompanied by a deep sense of being an unprofitable servant; and in her declining years, in the frequent review of former days, she peculiarly felt that to her belonged blushing and confusion of face. The awfulness of these convictions produced deep contrition, and prostrated her soul as in the dust. Under

these feelings she was, through the mercy and loving-kindness of the Most High, permitted from time to time to rest, in living faith, on that blessed gospel-truth, that eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

After returning from a meeting appointed for the Friends of our Quarterly Meeting, on the 25th of the 12th month, 1833, our dear friend remarked that she had that morning been much engaged in thinking of the close of all things here, that probably her days would not be many ; and how infinitely important it was for her to know her peace made with God. She further observed, that soon after taking her seat in that meeting, the language seemed sweetly sounded in her ears, " Thy sins are forgiven thee, for the sake of Christ." Adding, " My mind has been so filled with peace, that it seemed as if nothing could disturb me."

The devotional language of the book of Psalms was very refreshing to her, to the last day of conscious existence. When little ability remained for listening to general reading, the experience of the sweet psalmist of Israel was heard with thankfulness, as a song of praise ever new. About ten days before the final change, she said, one evening, on retiring to rest, that she felt low, and it would seem a favour if the Almighty saw fit to remove her ; but this would be a solemn prospect. On its being remarked to her that her dependence was on the mercy of her Saviour, she replied with unusual strength and animation, " Yes—it is on that, and on that only."

The immediate approach of death was marked by unconscious slumber. She quietly expired without any apparent suffering, after being only two days alarmingly ill ; and we reverently believe that she has joined the ransomed of the Lord, who come to Zion with songs and



everlasting joy; and who for ever sing the praises of the Lord God and the Lamb.

*London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting, held the 27th of 12th month, 1836.*

The foregoing Testimony on behalf of our late beloved friend, Mary Stacey, has been read at this time, and feelingly united with.

Signed by direction and on behalf of the Meeting by  
GEORGE STACEY, *Clerk.*

Signed in and on behalf of the Women's Meeting,  
ELIZABETH KIDD, *Clerk.*



## A TESTIMONY

*From TOTTENHAM MONTHLY MEETING, concerning*  
THOMAS SHILLITOE.

THIS our dear friend was born in London in the 2nd month, 1754, of parents not in profession with Friends. In his youthful days, through the visitations of Divine grace, he was given to feel the importance of a religious life; but at that very critical period he was often exposed to great temptations, and in the way of associating with those who did not fear God, but slighted his holy law, and went in the way to do evil. He felt the sad consequences of this; but a hand unseen was near to protect him: the attractions of heavenly love were graciously afforded, and were not disregarded.

It appears that as he advanced towards manhood, he became, from preference, a frequent attender of our religious Meetings, though he had been brought up in the national mode of worship. He was then entirely dependent on his own industry for support; and as his attachment to the principles of our religious Society increased, he was, in consequence of his conscientious conduct, brought into difficulty as to the means of gaining a livelihood. This circumstance became known to some Friends in London, through whose kind interest on his behalf, he was placed as a clerk in a banking-house in the city. He felt the great importance of a life of self-denial, and of entire conformity to the Divine will; yet was he often sensible that he had

strong temptations to follow the vanities and follies of this world. He had a great fondness for gay apparel, and felt that his peace was concerned in mortifying this disposition; and he faithfully bore his cross in this as well as in other things. In the course of his services as banker's clerk, he had to purchase lottery-tickets for country correspondents, and to do some other things which troubled him. Hence, as he was a man of a tender conscience, he became uneasy in his new situation: he sought for Divine guidance, and after many conflicts of mind, gave up his place, and thought it his duty to learn the trade of a shoemaker, an employment which he followed as long as he continued in business.

The confinement of London not suiting his health, he removed to Tottenham, in the year 1778, having some time previously been admitted as a member of our religious society, by Gracechurch-street Monthly Meeting. Here he steadily followed his new line of employment, and in the ensuing spring formed a respectable connexion in marriage. His course and that of his wife were marked by honest industry and contentment with their lot; and they trained up a young family consistently with their circumstances, and in accordance with our religious profession, teaching them to fear God and keep his commandments.

In the year 1790, our dear friend was acknowledged a Minister by this Monthly Meeting, having for a considerable time previously spoken in that character in our meetings for worship. After this period, he left his outward concerns from time to time, and in Gospel love visited his friends in nearer and more distant counties, and paid a general visit to Friends in Ireland. The cares of a rising family pressing heavily upon him, he felt these sacrifices to be acts of simple faith; but believing them to be in the line of his religious duty, he allowed no inferior considerations to turn him aside. When from home, he pursued the

service with great diligence: his visits were acceptable to his friends, and, we believe, to their religious edification. He was accustomed to travel in a very simple way, and very careful not to occasion needless expense to himself or to his friends; and in order to set himself at liberty for these services, he often made great exertions in his business previous to leaving home. When, in the latter part of the time that he was in trade, he found that he could leave his outward concerns with less anxiety, the journeys were performed principally on foot. About the year 1806, thinking that, through the Divine blessing on his honest endeavours, he had gained a competency, he retired from business, believing it right to be given up to the service of his Lord. His means were limited, but as his wants were few, and his habits very simple and moderate, he found that he had a sufficiency.

Our dear friend was a man of an energetic mind. If in conscientiously and plainly setting before his friends, in his intercourse with them, what he believed to be their mistakes, whether in practice or in opinion; and if in an honest zeal to be found not flinching in the discharge of his duty, he at times tried them, his love and affection were such as to prove the sincerity of his heart and the kindness of his intentions. He was often brought very low, partly arising from nervous feelings, and partly from the religious exercises of mind which he passed through: he was also not unfrequently very cheerful. This was strikingly the case after the performance of any act of duty to which he had believed himself called. In these acts of dedication, he was faithful and persevering, however humiliating the nature of the engagement. The greater the cross to his natural inclination, the greater was his fear, lest self-love, or the desire of ease to the flesh, should cause him to shrink from what he believed to be the will of his God. An instructive illustration of this feature in



his character is presented in some very trying service which he performed in Ireland. In the populous cities of Dublin and Cork, as well as in some other places in that nation, where vice and immorality abound, he went, in the years 1810 and 1811, accompanied by some of his friends, from house to house, without distinction, where ardent spirits were offered for sale, to warn those who kept such shops, and the persons assembled there, of the evil of their doings. The message which he conveyed was short and plain and simple; but being delivered in Christian love, it was received by many with attention and respect.

He was remarkable, through a long course of years, for his kindness to the poor and distressed, sympathizing with them in their troubles, pleading for a just remuneration of their labours, and liberal to them according to his means; prompt and unwearied in soliciting the affluent for relief for such, especially exerting himself on behalf of those who had seen brighter days. In these labours of love, his disinterested applications seldom failed to be successful. He bore a faithful testimony against the love of the world, whether it showed itself in vanity in dress or in other extravagance, or in the eager pursuit of wealth, calling his friends to the necessity of daily bearing the cross in all things, warning them against speculations in trade, and urging them to take heed lest, by coveting riches, they should make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

With a view of being near his children, he left Tottenham in the year 1812, and lived some years in Yorkshire, and a longer time in Hertfordshire. We have received the following communication from Hitchin Monthly Meeting, within the compass of which meeting he resided, when at home, upwards of eleven years.

“ Although our late friend THOMAS SHILLITOE was a member of this Monthly Meeting for some years, yet, as is well known, for a considerable portion of that time he was

absent from us on important religious engagements, for which services he was at different times freely set at liberty by this Monthly Meeting, under feelings of sympathy, and with desires that throughout the same he might mercifully experience Divine guidance and protection. Whilst here, he possessed the esteem of Friends; and in some instances, rather remarkably so, that of several persons of other religious societies, who seemed to respect him for his faithfulness. He was frequent in visiting the sick, and sympathizing with the afflicted, evincing much concern for the everlasting welfare of those among whom he resided. The moral and religious improvement of the poor was also a subject that often occupied his attention. He was frequently engaged amongst us in a plain, searching testimony, tending to arouse from a state of indifference and unconcernedness in religion, and to stir up all to diligence in occupying with the different talents entrusted to their care. His watchfulness and circumspect conduct had, it is believed, a salutary influence amongst us, and when he left these parts, his removal was sincerely regretted."

During the period above alluded to, our dear friend paid two extensive religious visits on the continent, passing through, or tarrying in, many of the nations of Europe between the years 1821 and 1825. In the course of these engagements, he visited the few professing with Friends in the south of France and in Germany, also in Norway; and he sought out and visited pious characters in many places through which he travelled. Accounts have been received from several of those of the comfort and instruction derived from his Christian labours among them. He travelled mostly alone, and being wholly unacquainted with the languages of the people, it was a close trial of his faith. But keeping a single eye to the guidance of his gracious Lord, he was mercifully cared for from place to place: his way was in a remarkable manner opened by

unexpectedly meeting with kind, efficient interpreters, who assisted him in performing the service which he believed to be required of him. He had long entertained a high sense of the purity of morals which the Gospel of Christ requires: in his travels he found much that was opposed to this, and did not fail, on some such occasions, honestly to testify against it. One thing which greatly troubled him was the sad disregard of the first day of the week; he plainly set this evil before those who had the power to apply a remedy. When in the cities of Hamburg and Altona, he drew up an address to the inhabitants of those places, remonstrating with them on the neglect of this duty. This address was translated into the German language, and extensively distributed by him there with his own hand.

Though our departed friend had received but little education, his courteous and affable, yet respectful manners often facilitated his access to persons of high rank in society. Considering kings in the character of fathers of their people, he many times, both in this and in foreign countries, thought it his duty to seek for interviews with them. As he patiently looked unto the Lord, in simple dependence upon him, an opportunity was often afforded him to communicate what was upon his mind. Either verbally, or by written memorials, he conveyed his exercise for their eternal welfare, and that they might be good examples to their subjects; and also his concern for their adopting measures calculated to repress crime, and to promote Christian virtue, and the true happiness of their people.

In the year 1826, at the advanced age of seventy-two, he paid a religious visit to friends in America, and travelled among them about three years. It was a time of much unsettlement and of sore trial to faithful Friends, owing to a grievous disesteem, on the part of many, of the great truths of the Christian religion. It appears by the testi-



monials which have been received, that the company of our dear friend was acceptable to his brethren in America at that time, and that his solid, consistent deportment, and steady testimony against the spirit of unbelief, tended to their encouragement and strength.

After returning home he lived the rest of his days at Tottenham with his wife, who had been and continued to be a faithful help-meet to him, and who survives him. He felt the infirmities of declining years. Of later times his bodily sufferings were often considerable; but living near the meeting-house, he regularly attended all our meetings, continuing earnestly to exhort us to let our obedience to the law of God keep pace with the knowledge of its requirements; labouring with us on the necessity of pressing after holiness of life, and of a thorough surrender of our wills to the Divine will. He still endeavoured to do good and to communicate. He was much beloved and respected by his neighbours. One of the very last acts of his life, when his weakness had greatly increased, and disease was wasting his constitution, was to collect and assist in expending some money for the comfort of a few of his poorer neighbours, by the repair and improvement of some alms-houses. He was continually concerned that he might be found ready to meet his Lord, when the solemn messenger of death should arrive, often adverting to the necessity of watchfulness, lest having long professed the truth, he should in the end become a cast-away. In the retrospect of his lengthened but active life, he was very desirous that his friends should know that he trusted in nothing but the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus, repeatedly assuring them, that all his own righteousness was but as filthy rags.

On the 5th of the 6th month, 1836, he was taken more alarmingly ill. Early in the morning of the following day he became much worse, from increased debility; and

his breathing being difficult, he said, "It is labour, but not sorrow. O! deliver me, if consistent with thy blessed will. I am in the hands of a merciful God—take me. I can give up all in this world. Mercy! mercy! O! come, come, blessed Jesus, if it is consistent with thy blessed will." In the course of the evening of that day he was visited by a friend, who found him in extreme weakness; but in the possession of his mental powers. He observed that it was difficult to maintain patience. "O! for patience!" he exclaimed; "O! for a little help to be preserved in patience;" adding, after some further expression, "but surely mercy is even now covering the judgment-seat as to a hair's breadth." A hope was expressed to him, that although the body was brought very low, the mind was anchored on the unfailing Rock; he promptly replied, "O, yes. If it were not so, what should I now do, or what would now become of me? Ah! truly, I am a poor creature every way, wholly dependent on the mercy of my Redeemer; and if he do but admit the pearl gates to be so far opened that I may be admitted within them, it will be enough. O! I see the goodly land before me, and the glorious journey thither; but I am not yet permitted to enter it. It is indeed a beautiful prospect, as clear to the eye of my soul as any outward object to the natural sight." He then exclaimed, "O! the love of my Redeemer, how sweet it is. May my latest breath be engaged in singing his praises." He further observed, that he had no works or merit of his own to carry with him on that beautiful road, nor any claim to prefer at the pearl gates; but the love and mercy of that Saviour who shed his precious blood for him. On the Friend's taking leave of him, he expressed that he felt love to all his friends without exception, emphatically adding, "to *all* my friends." At another time, on receiving a message of love from two friends, he said his love was to every body, all the world

over, even the worst sinner. He loved them; but not their deeds—that his love was universal to all the human race; adding, “If it were not so, how miserable indeed should I feel!”

He quietly passed away from time to eternity, on the 12th of the 6th month, 1836, and his remains were interred in our burial-ground at Tottenham, on the 17th of the same. He was about eighty-two years old, and had been a minister upwards of fifty years; and we believe, that to this aged servant of God may be applied the words of Holy Scripture: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

*London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting, held the 28th day of 3rd month, 1837.*

The foregoing testimony on behalf of our late dear friend Thomas Shillitoe, has been read in this meeting, and is feelingly united with.

Signed by direction and on behalf of the Meeting by

GEORGE STACEY, *Clerk.*

Signed on behalf of the Womens' Quarterly Meeting, by

ELIZABETH KIDD, *Clerk.*