

1846

Testimonies Concerning Deceased Ministers: 1846

London Yearly Meeting

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TESTIMONIES
CONCERNING
DECEASED MINISTERS.

PRESENTED TO
THE YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,
HELD IN LONDON, 1846.

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A TESTIMONY

Of BANBURY MONTHLY MEETING, concerning JOSEPH LAMB, deceased.

THIS our dear friend was born at Sibford, in Oxfordshire, in the year 1754, his parents, John and Mary Lamb, being members of our religious society. In his youth he had not the advantage of more than a very limited portion of school-learning; possessed, however, of strong natural abilities, which he perseveringly cultivated, he acquired a degree of self-instruction superior to many of his day, and fully equal to the requirements of the station in which he moved. As he grew up, he followed the occupation to which he had been accustomed from early youth, the cultivation of land; and industry and talent in business were marked features in his character.

In early life he was often visited with the light which makes all things manifest, and shows what the Lord requires at our hands: he appears, however, to have been too frequently disobedient to these visitations of his heavenly Father's love—to have indulged in some of the various amusements and vanities which so frequently beset the path of youth, and, in consequence, to have brought on himself condemnation: still, however, the invitations of mercy followed him, and we believe it was about the 24th year of his age that he became more decidedly serious and thoughtful respecting his eternal welfare. He now began the attendance of week-day meetings, to which he had not

been previously accustomed, and although under discouragement from some outward causes, he felt much satisfaction in so doing.

In the year 1784 our friend was united in marriage with Margaret Hall, of Hook Norton, by whom he had a numerous family. Their union continued through nearly forty-eight years, his wife being removed by death in 1832. The recollection of her virtuous life and sweetly peaceful close, is still fresh in the memory of her family and surviving friends.

As the work of Divine grace continued to be carried on in the heart of our dear friend, and he was made willing to yield to the convictions of the holy Spirit, and to resign himself to such service as the great Head of the church was pleased to require of him, he believed himself called upon, in the early part of the year 1791, to appear as a minister in our meetings, and friends feeling unity with him therein, he was, about the close of the following year, recorded as a minister by Banbury Monthly Meeting.

He was careful to train up his children to a diligent attendance of meetings, and manifested much satisfaction when he saw any of them reading such books as instructed them in the truths of the gospel of our blessed Redeemer, especially the holy Scriptures: he would frequently call on his family to sit down together, and on these occasions was often led instructively to address them on the important concerns of their everlasting well-being.

From the period when our dear friend became fully sensible of the necessity of following, with unreserved obedience, his heavenly Guide, through the remainder of a long life he was diligent and exemplary in the attendance of our meetings for worship and discipline; his communications in gospel love were instructive and edifying. He was frequently concerned to press upon all (especially on the young) the great importance of an early and entire surren-

der of the will of the creature to that of the Creator; and he often referred, under great tenderness of spirit, to the Lord's gracious visitations to his own soul, in seasons of solitude and retirement in the morning of his life, and to the peace of mind which never failed to follow every act of devotedness to the Divine requirings. In meetings for discipline he was concerned faithfully to uphold the various testimonies of our Society; and the talents entrusted to him, regulated by Divine grace, rendered him a highly useful member of these meetings.

Under an apprehension of duty, he frequently attended the small meetings belonging to his own and neighbouring Monthly Meetings: he several times visited, with the concurrence of his friends, the meetings and families in his own Quarterly Meeting, as well as parts of Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. He was once engaged in like manner in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, and on other occasions he visited the meetings in various places, holding some public meetings in the vicinity of his own residence.

When about 70 years of age he left business, and retired on a small competency, which he had been enabled, by persevering industry, to obtain. From the infirmities of age, which were now increasing upon him, he had, at times, to pass through much pain, and in consequence of lameness he was mostly confined at home; yet under much bodily weakness he continued frequently to attend meetings, and the cheerful and affectionate conversation which had rendered him a pleasing and instructive companion in earlier years, continued, through the long period of his retirement, to endear him to his friends.

When about entering on the 82nd year of his age, in a letter to a friend, he wrote: "though I feel the infirmities, pains and weakness generally attendant on old age, yet I am mercifully favoured to feel peace and quietness both

within and without. Oh ! what a favour to be sensible of the life-giving presence of Him whom my soul loveth, of Him whose light was the guide of my youth, whose name was known to be as a strong tower and place of safety in times of greatest trial — a covert from the heat, and refuge from the storms in the meridian of my day. Oh ! my dear friend, what a favour it will be, when the curtains of the night are closing around us, to know that our Redeemer liveth, and that he who hath been our ‘morning light’ is then our ‘evening song,’ and to praise Him whose mercy endureth for ever.”

The illness which terminated his life was of short duration : on the 30th of 9th month, 1845, he had a sudden attack whilst standing, supported by his crutches: the power of articulation almost entirely failed him, yet he appeared, at times, to be in some degree sensible to what was passing around him, and, apparently suffering but little pain, he lingered till the 7th of 10th month, when he was gently released from the conflicts and trials of time, and, we reverently believe, that through redeeming love and mercy, his spirit has been admitted into the realms of everlasting rest and peace.

He was upwards of 91 years of age, and had been a minister about 53 years.

His remains were interred in Friends’ burial-ground at Sibford, on the 12th of 10th month, 1845, after a solemn meeting, which was largely attended by friends and others.

A TESTIMONY

*Of the SOUTH DIVISION OF WALES MONTHLY MEETING,
concerning JUNIA PRICE, deceased.*

WHILST commemorating "the work of faith and labour of love" which were instructively exemplified in the dedicated course of our beloved friend, Junia Price, and the brightness and peace which marked its termination, the language which was addressed to the Apostle John is revived in our remembrance: — "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, 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."

This dear friend was the third daughter of Peter and Anna Price, and was born at Penryn, in Cornwall, in the year 1787. She was endowed with a sound and vigorous understanding, and to much firmness and decision of character, were added a gentle, affectionate, and very retiring disposition; these qualities, measurably regulated by divine grace, made her a beloved associate of the aged and the young.

In the year 1801, her parents removed into Wales and, on her leaving school in Gloucestershire, she joined them, and became a member of Carmarthenshire and Glamorganshire monthly meeting.

In the following memorandum she gratefully recognises

the privilege of parental care and instruction. "My most affectionate acknowledgments are due to my parents for their tender care over me, which I can never repay, therefore must leave all to a gracious Providence, hoping they may have a blessing poured on them to the end of their days, and reap a full reward in, Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

Her own language may best describe the progress of divine grace in her mind, when taking a retrospect, some years afterwards, of the conflict and sorrow which were her portion, consequent on her having joined a gay and mixed marine party of pleasure, from the fear, if she refused, of disappointing others. She writes, — "I recollect with pain, even to the present period, that I did not attend to the gentle inward monitor, and refrain from joining the party on the day alluded to: it was much too gay and dissipated for me, and made work for many a day's and week's repentance. Yet," she adds, "this proved a repentance never to be repented of, as I was ever after preserved from joining in parties which I believed to be hurtful; and all are hurtful wherein the divine fear is not kept uppermost, so as to preserve from evil: how important is it to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation!"

In the latter part of 1817, and the following year, she was the frequent companion of an invalid brother in voyages undertaken in the hope of arresting pulmonary disease, and there is reason to believe that by her prayerful sympathising spirit, she was made a blessing and help to him in the days of languishing appointed to him ere his happy change came. This event took place early in 1819; and in the autumn of the same year she was called from attending the interment of a beloved sister near London, to join another sister at Dover, to proceed, for the health of the latter, to the South of France or Italy. They felt a decided preference for Italy as their resting place, but

visiting by the way the little company of our fellow professors at Congenies, their minds were introduced into so much interest and feeling for the different classes there, especially the young, that after considerable conflict, they relinquished their original intention, in the conviction that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps," but that these must be ordered of the Lord. So much satisfaction and peace were the result, that our dear friend not unfrequently alluded to this circumstance as a turning point in her life, and she became from this time a more conspicuously exercised member of the militant church, and continued in her daily walk an example of humility, devotedness and charity.

Although a great sufferer from complicated bodily disease, she more than once went from cottage to cottage in the town near which she lived, to ascertain the wants of the poor, relative to the Scriptures, and was earnest to promote the religious education of their children, and to diffuse, by the circulation of tracts, the principles of peace and temperance. For many years she believed herself required to maintain her testimony against the iniquitous yoke of slavery, by refraining from the use of slave-grown produce: patient and unobtrusive in her practice, but stedfast in her belief, that though it involved some sacrifices, it was required of her, as much as in her lay, to stand clear of a participation in upholding the system.

In 1826 she was nominated to the station of elder. Her humble views of herself rendered such an appointment unexpected and formidable; but having enlisted under the banner of her Lord, He was training her to discipline, impressively teaching the language; — "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Ere long, she felt that she dared not shrink from the call which was intelligibly heard, to declare unto others the unsearch-

able riches of Christ. Her surrender to this service was in 1827. Many seasons of proving and dismay were her portion relative to this solemn engagement, to which she thus alludes in the following year. "These exercises are perhaps permitted in order to give me a more undoubted assurance that the Lord hath been pleased to call me to put a hand to His own work, to labour in His vineyard: for when I have yielded to what I have apprehended to be required of me, I have felt sweet peace: yet is the enemy afterward apt to take advantage of my low opinion of myself, to persuade me that I have mistaken my calling, and to seek to shake my faith in Him in whom I have most surely believed, and therefore have spoken. Be pleased then, O Lord, when he seeks to come in as a flood, to lift up Thy standard against him! I believe the work is not mine but Thine: only be pleased to make me a perfectly obedient instrument in Thy holy hand. Truly we have the treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be from Thee."

In the year 1831 she was, with the full concurrence of her monthly meeting, recorded as a minister. At this time she remarks: "Having passed through many deep conflicts, and often been tossed as with a tempest, my mind was brought into great calmness, in which I could say — my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; may I be found faithful. Give me understanding, that I may keep thy precepts diligently. Oh! that I were more fully devoted to thy service, standing ready to follow thee, at thy gracious call, instead of suffering the infirmities of nature to plead for a more convenient season." Her ministry was sound and edifying; being raised above the fear of man, she desired to be found faithful in the exercise of her gift. Her communications, when at home, were generally short but lively, arousing to the careless, comforting to the contrite ones, and persuasive to the youth, for whom she felt

deeply interested; and her approaches to the throne of Grace were marked by a deep reverential awe.

In the latter part of 1832, the fearful pestilence of cholera prevailed in the neighbourhood; but it was the time when she apprehended the command was clearly sounded, to pay a religious visit to the families of friends within her monthly meeting, and attend to any other service which should be required of her. A friend coming with a certificate under similar concern, opened the way for the performance of it. Preservation was mercifully experienced at this critical juncture. From this period, through a series of many years, was our beloved friend supported in unmurmuring patience under great bodily affliction, strengthened from time to time to quit her sick bed, and to go forth and fulfil in many portions of the Lord's heritage, that ministry which she had received of Him. From the last of these errands of love, she returned on the 15th of ninth month, 1845. Having believed it to be the will of her divine master that she should make a little tarriance in a few places in the counties of Carmarthen and Pembroke, and a visit to the inmates of the gaol at Carmarthen having long pressed upon her mind; a minute from her monthly meeting was cordially granted to her, to visit the few friends, and some in connexion with them, at Milford; leaving her at liberty for any other service to which she might feel herself called. This she accomplished to the peace and relief of her mind, in company with a long-valued friend, an elder, who had been her companion in Ireland, and some other of her gospel labours; and eighteen days previous to her death, she was restored to her mother and family, to their inexpressible comfort.

Instruction often flowed from her lips to those around her, and those who visited her, whilst she was meekly and quietly resigning herself to meet the undeniable messen-

ger, reposing on the beloved of her soul, sensible that she should soon be, for ever, with Him.

One evening, very soon after her return, she was carried to the room of her aged parent (who was confined to her chamber), and almost immediately a solemn stillness pervaded the little company, when she expressed her sense that the heavenly wing was spread over them, and her desire that there might never be a shrinking from such seasons of stillness and retirement, but that there might be a continual watching unto prayer, and a willingness on such occasions to speak a word if it be given, but that it was a good thing to be found watching; and even if no words of prayer were felt to arise, she believed the aspirations of soul would be acceptable to our Heavenly Father. After this, her beloved mother alluded encouragingly to the blessed consolations of the gospel, when a solemn pause again ensued, and the dear invalid said that whilst she could not say much of "Songs in the night" being her experience, yet was she enabled to trust in the Lord, and to feel her mind stayed upon Him.

Although her bodily weakness increased, accompanied by much shortness of breathing, still animated by the love of Christ to invite others to a full acceptance of his love, only nine days before her death she felt attracted to pay a visit to one or two individuals some miles distant, remarking that it had been long on her mind, and that the promise had been that morning applied relative to this effort, "as thy days so shall thy strength be." And truly did she realize it, for she returned refreshed and relieved, saying that it seemed to her as if her work was done. She frequently spoke of the full peace she was favoured to feel, saying, on the first-day morning before she died, "What a nice thing not to have *one* anxious thought;" and soon afterwards added, "quietness as a mantle seems to cover my mind." More than once she said, "I feel like a child

that is being laid in its cradle by its mother, such repose!" At another time, when filled with a sense of the Lord's abounding mercies, she uttered the words of the Psalmist, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want:" and a few evenings before she died, ejaculated, "Oh! mercies abound!" When tenderly sympathizing with a near relative in the prospect of the pending separation, she said, "We must not give way to weeping — we shall not gain strength by *that*; do not shed tears of sorrow for me; let us rather part as on a bright day, soon to meet again."

On hearing that a dear young relative had called, she desired to see her, and addressed her as follows. "Thou mayest seem now but as a little one and a weakling, yet mayest thou grow strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and be the means of turning many to righteousness, for it is declared that such shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. It may seem but little that thou canst do, but a child may do much in turning others from a wrong into a right way:" adding an earnest exhortation to "seek the Lord now in the days of her youth."

On third-day evening, the meeting for ministers and elders was held by appointment in her aged mother's chamber; as the time approached for holding the meeting, she believed strength would be given her to bear the effort of being carried up once more, and for the last time to assemble with the little company. She was carried, in an easy chair, to the apartment of her mother, whom she met with tender affection and much composure. It was, indeed, an affecting solemn hour! The silence was broken by her dear mother, in whose heart a word of encouragement arose for her beloved daughter, in the consoling belief that she had been made and kept of the number of those who are of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. She was followed by the dear invalid, who expressed a desire that we might each

apply the query to ourselves — “What lack I yet?” that she believed we should all unite in desiring to have our hope fixed on the Lord, and she desired we might all become more and more of those who “are of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” A little before they separated, she expressed the great uncertainty whether she should ever again sit with that company, and that although no very bright openings were hers, yet was she favoured with a quiet peaceful trust in the Lord, adding, “and it is my chief desire that whether I live, I may live unto the Lord, or whether I die, I may die unto the Lord, so that living or dying I may be His. And now, in parting, I would greet my beloved friends in the words ‘Be stedfast, be vigilant, take diligent heed to the word of that grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance amongst all them that are sanctified.’” At the close of this impressive season, she seemed rather refreshed than fatigued; bade a tender farewell to her beloved mother, no more, as it proved, to meet on earth, and was again carried to her own chamber.

On the following day, her brother coming to her couch, she remarked that she felt very weak, and desirous of keeping the watch, not knowing when she might pass out of this life, but said, “I am favoured with such peace and repose, that I feel a trust that my feet are fixed upon the Rock, which Rock is Christ: and this hope I have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.”

She passed a trying night, and on fifth day morning she was removed to a couch; on awaking from a refreshing sleep, she said, “Sweet sleep! Oh how good the Almighty is!” She afterwards expressed much deep interest and christian solicitude on behalf of some whom she had lately visited, saying, “she felt acquitted of what she

had believed to be required at her hands towards them, and felt no condemnation in the retrospect." She committed to her brother and sister the minute which had been granted to her by the monthly meeting to be returned to it on that day, the last which it was allotted her to spend on earth ; it was very affecting to them to be pressed by her to leave for some hours, when the time with her was so precious to them, but she encouraged them to make the sacrifice, and charged them with a message to the friends assembled on the occasion, "that their sympathy and unity had been a help in the performance of the service for which the minute was granted ; that she had no righteousness of her own to clothe herself with, but found the work of righteousness to be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

On their return early in the afternoon, accompanied by some other members of the family, they saw that to her time was fast receding ; but she still bore full testimony to the support mercifully granted her, saying, "I feel nothing in my way: all my sins and transgressions are blotted out," and added to one of the company, "I believe I have felt as much shrinking from dying as thou hast, but it is all gone, and I find that dying power is reserved for a dying hour ; it seems to me as if angels and archangels were waiting to receive me."

Shortly after this she was removed from the couch to the bed, slumbered a little at intervals, breathed more and more shortly till soon after 4 in the morning, when one gentle sigh liberated the redeemed spirit.

She died on the 3rd of the tenth month, 1845. The remains were interred in Friends' burial-ground, at Neath, on the first day week following.

A TESTIMONY

Of the MONTHLY MEETING of RATCLIFF and BARKING, concerning ELIZABETH FRY, of UPTON, who died the 13th day of the tenth month, 1845, in the sixty-sixth year of her age, a Minister about thirty-six years.

OUR late beloved friend was extensively known in this and other countries, by her christian exertions for the benefit of the poor, the afflicted, and the outcast; but it is more especially laid upon *us* to record her services as a minister of the Gospel, and her bright example in private life.

She was the third daughter of John and Catherine Gurney, of Earham, near Norwich, and was born on the 21st of the fifth month, 1780: she was one of a numerous young family, who were deprived by death of the care of a pious and affectionate mother, when she was only twelve years of age. Her naturally tender and sensitive heart long mourned her loss; and she says in one of her memorandums, many years after, "My mother endeavoured to train us up in the fear of the Lord, and I now remember the solemn feelings I had while sitting in silence with her after reading the Scriptures. I believe that her prayers on our behalf were not in vain in the Lord."

After her mother's decease she was exposed to many dangers; the world began to spread its fascinations before her; her attractive qualities, both of person and mind, which rapidly unfolded themselves as she grew up, ren-

dered her the object of much flattering attention ; she was exceedingly fond of music, and used to sing herself, and even to indulge in dancing. The period of her youth, too, was one of great political excitement, especially in Norwich and its neighbourhood ; and many persons with whom she associated were at once eminent for talent, and grievously destitute of a sound Christian belief. Under these affecting circumstances, she became sceptical in her opinions ; and acknowledges in her private journal (an interesting diary kept from her youth up) that she continued in this state of mind from her fourteenth to her seventeenth year. Under the date of 1796, when just sixteen years old, she observes, "I am at present like a ship put to sea without a pilot ; I feel my heart and mind so overburdened : I want some one to lean upon." Some time afterwards, "I see everything darkly ; I can comprehend nothing ; all seems to me to be folly ; I doubt upon everything."

Yet through these clouds of darkness it is evident from her journal that she saw the excellence of a life of virtue, and sometimes earnestly strove to attain to it ; her heart, even then, flowed with benevolence towards the distressed ; and, while she took delight in contemplating the beauties of nature, she was not altogether blind to the evidence they afford that there is indeed a power which creates, animates, controls and governs all. She thus closes a comment, made some years afterwards, upon this time : — "In mercy I believe I was visited, and the beauty of good shown me, and the dreadful consequence of sin : I was striven with and knew not by whom." And again, in a note on some memorandums of the first month, 1798, she says, "Thus far I continued without religious belief ; the desolation of my spirit none could tell but those who have had similar experience : I sought with all my might in my own strength to be what I ought to be, but how fruitless

my efforts, until I yielded in faith to the power of redeeming love ! ”

But the time was now approaching for her deliverance. Under the date of second month 4th, 1798, after having listened to the ministry at meeting of a friend from America, the late William Savery, and conversed with him elsewhere, she writes as follows. “To-day much has passed of a very interesting nature. I have had a faint light spread over me ; owing to having been much with, and heard much excellence from, one who appears to me to be a true christian. To-day I have *felt* that there *is* a God.” In a note written thirty years afterwards, she observes, “ I believe the remarkable hold Wm. Savery had taken of my mind was in the ordering of Infinite Wisdom. The Lord is pleased to carry on his work by various means ; and he saw meet in this instance to make use of W. S. as the instrument to draw my poor, unsettled, wandering heart to Himself.”

Soon after this time, and while her mind was not yet decided, she visited London ; and, inconsistent as it was in a member of our society, or a christian character, she was, as she observes, left at liberty to attend places of public amusement.

On her notices of this time in her early journal, she thus comments in 1828. “ Here ended this important visit to London, where I learned much and had much to digest. I saw and entered various scenes of gaiety, attended many places of amusement, saw many interesting characters in the world, some of considerable eminence in that day : I had the high advantage of attending some most interesting meetings of Wm. Savery’s, and at times of enjoying his company in private ; with that of other friends. It was like the casting die of my life. Certainly [the exposure] was a great risk. One of the important results [however] was, the conviction that these things are wrong, from see-

ing them and feeling their effects. I wholly gave up, on my own ground, attending all public places of amusement; I saw that they tended to promote evil, led many from the paths of rectitude, and brought them into much sin. I perceived the vanity and folly of what are called the pleasures of the world, and that they do not satisfy, but eventually enervate and injure the heart and mind. I was much confirmed in my judgment of the infinite importance of religion as the only real stay, help and comfort in this life, and the only means of our having a hope of partaking of a better." On the 17th of the tenth month of the same year (1798), she writes, "I have now two things weighing heavily upon my mind; viz., dancing and singing: so simple, so sweet, they *seem*; but so surely as I indulge in either, does a dark cloud come over my mind." After she had resolutely confessed to one of her sisters, whose views were different from her own, that she fully believed it was required of her to give up both these amusements, she observes, "The total change that has taken place in me since I spoke to [my sister], is astonishing: I am come from misery to joy!"

In the course of the next two years, her christian character gradually became more and more developed; the vanities of the world were forsaken, one after another; and, notwithstanding the frequent suggestions of a still doubting and reasoning mind, that such things are matters of indifference, she found herself constrained to adopt the appearance of a consistent friend, and to use the plain language, both with friends and others: she spent much time in reading the Holy Scriptures; and formed, and, herself, superintended a large school for poor children, on her father's premises. "I never feel so happy," she observes in her journal, "as after I have been serving any body in any way; a little alleviating the sorrows of my fellow-creatures."

She became deeply sensible of the solemnity of a living silence in divine worship, and at the same time felt a true relish for Gospel ministry: she thus notices an incident in a visit which she paid at the house of a friend at Coalbrook-dale. "Towards the close of our pleasant visit, my heart began to feel itself *silenced before God*, and without looking at others, I felt myself under the shadow of his wing: the rest of the company appeared soon to fall into the same state: after we had been sitting for a time in awful silence, [a female ministering friend] spoke beautifully; she touched my heart, and I felt melted and bowed before my Creator: [another] followed, addressing herself partly to me; I only fear she says too much, of what I am to be, — a light to the blind, speech to the dumb and feet to the lame! Can it be? It seems as if she thought I was to be a minister of Christ. *Can I ever be one?* If I am obedient I believe I shall."

This prophetic view was indeed strikingly fulfilled; but although from her first conviction, she entertained an apprehension, — to her a fearful one, — that she should be called to the work of the ministry, it was not till after many more years of christian experience and preparatory baptism, that her mouth was opened in this service.

In the eighth month, 1800, soon after she had attained her twentieth year, our dear friend was married to Joseph Fry, of London, and settled in the heart of that metropolis. Here new scenes of interest and duty awaited her: she became the mother of a young family, over whom she exercised the tenderest maternal care; yet her domestic relations did not prevent her diligent attendance of our religious meetings, both for worship and discipline, or her labouring with constant zeal for the benefit of her fellow men, and personally examining, and with the help and encouragement of her husband, effectually relieving very numerous cases of distress. Their house, too, was always

open to friends who were travelling in the work of the ministry, with many of whom she formed intimate and lasting friendship.

On the death of her father-in-law, she removed with her husband and family to his paternal residence, Plashet, near East Ham ; where she greatly enjoyed the retirement of the country and her beloved domestic circle ; but when a more extended charity preferred its claims, she was promptly found again on the scene of action.

A short time before she appeared in the ministry, we find the following entry in her journal : —“ ‘Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God ; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth : therefore let thy words be few ;’ ” this expresses what I have felt and know from experience. It is when nature is still that we feel the Divine strength. I do not desire that my *imagination* should dwell too much on spiritual things, for the real work of religion is in the *heart* : what I seek after is a *heart* fully, singly, and simply dedicated to its Creator, and to be always ready to wait as a servant ought, for orders, and not in my own ability to come forwards. O ! for a deep, inward, constant waiting on the Lord.”

In the tenth month, 1809, she was suddenly summoned to Earlham, in consequence of the approaching death of her beloved father : the following notice of what took place after it, is given in her journal. “On my entering the room soon after it was over, my soul was bowed within me ; not only in love for the deceased, but also for the living ; and in humble thankfulness ; so that I could not help uttering my thanksgiving and praise. The power given to me was wonderful to myself, and the cross none : I have desired since to leave the event, but it was such a time as I never before passed through ; all love, — all joy, — all peace ! ” This, it appears, was her first offering in the ministry : in describing the funeral, she speaks of a second sacrifice of

the same character. "I remained *still* by the grave-side, until a movement was made for our retiring; when, finding that it might not be omitted, I fell on my knees with words which had long impressed me; 'Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints; be pleased to receive our thanksgiving.' And then, not feeling the power continue, I arose directly; and a quiet, calm and invigorated state, mental and bodily, was my portion afterwards."

Early in the following year she says, "I know that my desire is to serve *him* in this awful undertaking, whom my soul, I believe I may truly say, loves and delights to please." And again, a few weeks afterwards, "I think I may truly say, that with increase of experience, I find increased cause for faith in that small inward voice which is no cunningly devised fable, but *truth*; which ought to be followed, even if it leads to suffering and death." Another entry in her journal closes thus; "Oh, Lord! I pray thee, carry on thine own work in me to thy own praise; keep me for thy mercy's sake! Let me never go astray from the ways of thy commandments! Permit nothing to separate me from thy love in Christ Jesus, but yet more increase my knowledge of thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; and enable thy poor child, in word and in deed, to prove herself the humble, lowly, devoted and loving follower of her dear Lord and Master."

This expressive prayer is an evidence of the state of mind in which she engaged in her master's service, and diligently exercised the gift which she had received at his hands.

Her ministry was sound in doctrine, practical and touching; freely conveying the glad tidings of salvation, comforting the mourners, affectingly warning the careless and indifferent, and richly flowing forth in tender love, which

sought to gather all into the fold of the Redeemer. Her endearing addresses to the young found remarkable access to their hearts; and her vocal prayers, both in public worship and in the domestic circle, were fervent and deeply impressive. It was humbling to her and in the cross to her own inclination that she ventured, from time to time, on public service; especially when addressing those who were not of our Society: but amidst all her conflicts, and many fell to her lot both from without and from within, there was a fountain of living water which supplied all her need. "I can scarcely forbear expressing," she remarks in her journal, "how marvellous is the power which appears to help and overshadow me in the ministry: it is at times like a living, fresh spring, rising up and overflowing its banks, so as to remove all obstacles."

She travelled on numerous occasions as a minister, with minutes or certificates, chiefly from our own Monthly Meeting, to which she was recommended from that of Gracechurch-street, in the 11th month, 1813.

Generally in company with her beloved sister-in-law, Elizabeth Fry, she visited most of the meetings of friends in England and Wales, and was repeatedly engaged in extensive journeys in Scotland and Ireland; she also twice visited the Channel Islands. In many places she was laboriously occupied in visiting the families of friends and in holding public meetings; also in inspecting prisons, hospitals, lunatic asylums, and other kindred institutions. Her philanthropic exertions were no hindrance to the exercise of her gospel ministry, but were remarkably blended with it, and often opened her way for it to her own humbling admiration.

We would particularly observe, that while she felt living unity with the true disciples of Christ, under whatsoever name, she lived and died in faithful attachment to those christian testimonies and spiritual views, of the truth of

which she had been so thoroughly convinced in early life. It was as a *consistent friend* that she trod that path of usefulness which, had she not been such, would have been in various ways circumscribed. She moved along in the obedience of faith; and in dependence on Divine influence, was enabled to find her way to the heart and understanding of the child at school, the sufferer on the sick bed, the hardened criminal, and even the poor maniac: we believe it was under this influence that she first entered the walls of Newgate, and so remarkably succeeded in bringing a lawless multitude of her own sex into order, and afterwards in prosecuting, on an extended scale, her excellent plans for the reformation of female criminals. In all her varied services she wore the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, accompanied by christian courage and sound discretion; and it was a remarkable feature in the character of our departed friend, that in the prison or the palace her demeanour was the same; and before the most exalted among men, she boldly pleaded the cause of the poor, the afflicted and the persecuted.

During the years 1838 and 1839 she twice spent a considerable time in Paris, with certificate, where she found an open door for usefulness in various ways, and, in large companies drawn together by objects of general benevolence, was frequently led into religious service. Similar engagements afterwards awaited her at Lyons, Toulouse, Nismes, and various other towns in France and Switzerland; she had some public meetings; and at Congenies and the neighbourhood she visited the families of friends. She was accompanied on these journeys by her husband and their faithful friend, Josiah Forster.

In the spring of 1840, in company with her brother Samuel Gurney and our late beloved friend William Allen, she visited Belgium, Holland, Prussia, and some other parts of Germany. In this journey they had many large

religious opportunities of the character of those she before had in France; they held many public meetings in different parts, visited friends at Pymont and Minden, and sat with most of them in their families, and were much occupied in visiting prisons and schools, and in other objects of philanthropy, as well as in distributing books illustrative of our principles; and she had to acknowledge on her return, that the Lord had remarkably made a way in the minds of the high and the low, among whom their lot had been cast, for their labours of love.

In 1842, with her brother Joseph J. Gurney, she visited Holland and Germany again, and also Denmark, where, as well as in Hanover and Prussia, they again received much kindness from persons in high station, and their engagements were in a great degree similar to those in the former journey; they afterwards passed into Silesia, feeling it their duty to lay before the king of Prussia several subjects of practical importance to the welfare of his people. Our dear friend was at this time in feeble health, yet she was surprisingly strengthened for every call of benevolence and duty.

In the spring of 1843, she once more visited Paris, in company with her friend Josiah Forster, and her brother Joseph J. Gurney and his wife. In this, her last journey with certificate, she manifested a remarkable degree of brightness in her religious service; acknowledging, when she gave it up on her return home, that she had been enabled, in great measure, to accomplish that to which she believed herself to be called, and that in the retrospect of her numerous and weighty engagements, her portion was peace.

While we thus record the public religious labours of our dear devoted sister, the remembrance is precious to us of the sweet influence of her spirit in our own Monthly Meeting: always promoting love, peace and union, and feeling-

ly sympathizing in the joys and sorrows of those of all conditions around her. Her low estimate of herself in the midst of her prominent engagements, and her resignation and hopeful trust under reverse of circumstances and trials of many kinds which her susceptible mind had to undergo, were alike exemplary and instructive.

Soon after her return from Paris, and during the whole of the following autumn, it became evident that her always delicate constitution was giving way; and a distressing affection of the nerves, and other maladies, brought her into great weakness and lingering suffering, so that towards the close of that year it was apprehended that her end was approaching. From this state she was in some degree restored in the following summer, after a residence of many weeks at Bath, so as to be able, though with difficulty, not unfrequently to attend our meetings at Plaistow, where she was often engaged in living ministry to the comfort and refreshment of her friends.

Affliction, however, continued to be remarkably her allotment, not only from infirmities and pains of body, but from the successive deaths of some very near relatives, and especially of a dearly beloved son. She, who had been called to so much active service in the cause of Christ, was now enabled to glorify him by patient submission to her heavenly Father's will: "No one knows" she said "what I suffer, but it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." At another time, "I never have known despondency, whatever may have been my depths of suffering in mind or body: still the confidence has never left me that all was and will be well, if not in time, in eternity." These sentiments were frequently repeated: on one occasion she added, "Love never fails me, not only towards my own, but towards *all* men."

Early in the spring of last year she was enabled to pay a visit she had long wished, to her family and friends in

Norfolk; and even in the 5th month to attend, greatly to her own comfort and that of her friends, two sittings of the women's Yearly Meeting. She was there engaged to enforce the necessity of abiding in Christ, the true vine, in order to the bringing forth fruit to his praise; warmly encouraged those to faithfulness who were desiring to love, serve and obey *Him*, and expressed her apprehension that she should never again be permitted to meet her friends in that place; ending with a solemn prayer.

During the latter part of last summer she accompanied her husband and daughter to Ramsgate, where she passed many weeks in a state of great weakness, and yet of quiet enjoyment in the company of some members of her family, giving much of her mind and time to the distribution of useful tracts, and especially of bibles and testaments, chiefly among the crews of foreign vessels which frequented the harbour. "May we to the end," she said, in a letter to one of her brothers, "sow beside all waters, looking to the great Husbandman to prosper the seed sown."

On several successive first-days, in the little meeting at Draper's, which, notwithstanding considerable difficulty from increasing infirmity, she made a point of attending, she earnestly dwelt on the necessity of preparation for the heavenly state; and at the last in particular, she appeared much impressed with the apprehension that some one present was near to the final, solemn change. "Are we all now ready," said she, "if the Master should this day call us? Is the work completely finished? Have we anything left to do?" solemnly reiterating the question, "Are we ready?" The same week, in her last letter to her brother, she wrote, "To Him who seeth in secret I commit my body, soul and spirit; He only knows the depth of my love, and the earnestness of my prayers for you all. I have a humble trust that He will be my help, even to the end; and when the end comes, through the fulness of the

love of Christ and the abundance of his merits, I shall join those who, after having passed through great tribulation, are for ever at rest in Jesus, for they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

On the following 7th day, the 11th of the 10th month, she was seized with pressure on the brain, under which she gradually sank into a state of insensibility. Rousing up at one time to a feeling of great illness, "It is a strift," she said to a faithful attendant, "but I am safe!" And again, an hour or two afterwards, "Oh! my dear Lord, help and keep thy servant." After this she spoke no more, but remained apparently unconscious till early on the morning of the 13th, when she breathed her last.

"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."

The remains of our beloved friend were interred in Friends' burial-ground at Barking, on 2nd day, the 20th of the 10th month, 1845. The funeral was very largely attended by friends and others.

A TESTIMONY

*Of WARWICKSHIRE NORTH MONTHLY MEETING, concerning
MARY CAPPER, deceased.*

OUR late dear and valued friend Mary Capper was born in 1755, at Rugely, Staffordshire. In a letter written to a relation in 1835, from which most of the subsequent extracts have been taken, she commemorates the Divine grace by which she was preserved throughout the course of a long life, in the following striking language: "In the present day it seems as if all was swallowed up in mercy, and in the marvellous watchful care, which kept me in the days of my ignorance from wandering far in the broad way, and has brought me hitherto, through a wilderness of pits and snares, and above all has settled my heart in a calm, peaceful, lowly state, no more tossed with floating opinions, but watching, waiting, and praying yet to be perfected and fitted for the kingdom of Heaven." Her parents were members of the national establishment, and brought her up in the strict observance of its rites and ceremonies: she says "my dear and valued parents accustomed their children to read the Scriptures, my beloved mother especially, to whom I often read and asked questions relative to some passages when I was about eight or ten years old." Whilst quite young she spent a considerable time at Macclesfield, under the care of an aunt, where she was allowed

to accompany her young companions to the theatre, and other public places of amusement, nor was she at that time sensible of the evil tendency of such practices. The first impression of a contrary nature distinctly remembered appears to have been during a residence at Birmingham, which she says "was whilst on my knees at my accustomed evening prayers: my thoughts being confused and dissipated, I lay down comfortless, believing that whatever distracted and hindered prayer must be wrong; this impression rested with me, and from time to time led to deep reflection and secret conflict; the witness for truth left me not, and as little sacrifices, such as declining gay parties, seemed to yield a peaceful calm, I was favoured with resolution to persevere." She also says "I was at times, and many times in earlier life, very thoughtful as to the genuine effect of religion on the mind; my constitution was weak, which I have considered a favour (amongst others), as my nature was volatile, and I was much left as to outward restraints." She gradually became increasingly serious, but for several years made little alteration in her manners or personal appearance.

In 1776 she went to France, on account of the precarious state of her health, and that she might be qualified by education to obtain for herself, if needful, a respectable maintenance. Whilst there she was much exposed to dissipating company, but appears to have been remarkably preserved: soon after her return an obvious change took place in her religious views, and she remarks: "In process of time I could not conform to what I had been taught as being necessary to salvation; I kept much retired without attending any place of worship, or having a view to any, although I think I had been at a Friends' meeting for worship at Birmingham, but do not call to mind any particular impression, saving a tenderness of spirit, I think to tears." It appears, however, from a manuscript journal

kept by our dear friend, that whilst making a short stay in London on her way to France, she was introduced to several members of our Society, from whom she received considerable information relative to our principles, and in whose company she attended a meeting for worship in Gracechurch-street. She resided for some time with her brother, who was a minister of the episcopal establishment: whilst under his roof, she was brought into very close exercise of mind respecting taking what is termed the sacrament, which she says "was administered by my brother with much solemnity;" but she adds "The best of teachers was pleased to calm and quiet my mind on a subject so important, that I no more repeated the ceremony."

About the year 1784 she went to reside with one of her brothers in London, and became a regular attender of our religious meetings. She says, "On my decidedly going to Friends' meetings, my dear father, no doubt in faithfulness to his own religious views, and the desire to rescue a poor child from apprehended error, desired not my return to the parental roof unless I could be satisfied with the religious education he had conscientiously given me; this, with a tender heart-piercing remonstrance from my dear mother, was far more deeply felt than I can describe, and marvellous in my view, even to this day, was the settled firm belief, that I must follow on to know the soul's salvation for myself truly in a way that I knew not."

Mary Capper was settled within the compass of Peel Monthly Meeting, and was admitted into membership by that meeting about the year 1788. Whilst residing in London she believed herself called upon to express a few words in our meetings for worship, which she thus describes. "I have no distinct recollection as to any serious thoughts of speaking in a religious meeting; it sometimes arose in my view, that possibly I might have to tell unto others how I had been taught and kept from the broad

way of destruction, but a few words arising in my mind with something of unusual power, I think at the Peel meeting, I stood up and spoke them, and was very quiet, nor did I anticipate or foresee that such a thing might ever be again, and thus was I led on from time to time, not knowing but each time might be the last." Our dear friend removed to Birmingham in 1789, and in 1794 she was recommended to the Meeting of Ministers and Elders; in reference to which, she remarks, "I know not that I ever questioned the propriety of such a step, yet really so simple, so like a childlike learner to this day, I know not that I can claim the awful important character of a gospel minister." Her travels in the work of the ministry were a good deal confined to her own and the neighbouring quarterly meetings; in many of her religious visits she united with her friend, Mary Beesley, of Worcester; in addition to several journeys nearer home, they visited in 1798 friends of Bristol and Somersetshire, and in 1800 they united in a visit to the meetings and families of Friends in Oxfordshire. In 1803 she was liberated to unite with the same friend, then Mary Lewis, in a visit to Hampshire, Somersetshire, and Devonshire.

In 1811 Mary Capper removed to Leominster, and was recommended from thence back to Birmingham in 1816, where she resided until her death. In 1823 she was liberated for service in and about London, and in 1826 she visited the meetings and families of Friends in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and part of Leicestershire, which appears to have been her last engagement of this nature away from home.

Her ministry was sound and of a spiritual character; having herself largely partaken of the conflict between flesh and spirit, she was often concerned to encourage the sincere-hearted patiently to submit to these proving seasons, looking for effectual help to the light and power of

our Lord Jesus Christ, and frequently whilst suffering from a sense of the low state of things amongst us, as a religious society, she looked forward with encouragement and hope towards a brighter period. She was accustomed both in her ministry and in conversation, to express the great objection she felt to a disputatious spirit, particularly when exercised in matters relating to doctrine, recommending her young friends, who were anxiously enquiring after truth, to wait for the unfoldings of Divine light, which in due time would make known all that was needful for their salvation, if they were faithful to that which was already manifested to them, and stating her belief that such would never be suffered to perish for lack of knowledge. Our dear friend was very exemplary in the attendance of our meetings for worship and discipline, even in the latter part of her life, when her bodily powers were much weakened. She felt a lively interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of her friends, was ever ready to afford advice or assistance to those who stood in need of it, and with very limited means was an example of contentment, and liberality to the poor. Her correspondence, until within a few years of her death, was extensive, and many of her letters were addressed to those who were in affliction, or who she thought in some way needed her affectionate remembrance or sympathy; and for usefulness in this way she appeared peculiarly qualified.

The natural cheerfulness of her disposition, and her uniform kindness and courtesy, endeared her to all who were acquainted with her, and rendered her society both pleasant and instructive. She was firmly attached to the principles of our religious Society, believing them to be in full accordance with the New Testament, but largely cherished Christian love and charity to all those who conscientiously differed from her. In a letter written to a friend in the 80th year of her age, she says "I am bound in gratitude to ac-

knowledge the gentle hand of mercy which has guided me hitherto and joined me in strong affection to the Society, and satisfied my seeking mind as to the genuine gospel principles of salvation." In a memorandum made about the same time, after referring to the earlier part of her Christian experience, she proceeds: "The sinfulness of sin in all its subtleties is not discovered all at once, neither is the efficacy of Divine grace manifested in its fulness, but as we can bear it, obedience keeping pace in deep abasement and humiliation with the Spirit revealed,—God the Father revealing the Son in us, the Light, the Life, the Way, wherein we come to a view, though yet faint and imperfect, of the atoning sacrifice for sin, with the new and living way cast up for the redeemed to walk in, and whereby we have access to a reconciled God and universal Father. My simple, yet reverent testimony is to the love, the marvellous love of God, as the guide of our youth, and the staff of lengthened years to those who acknowledge Him in all their ways."

Our dear friend was at meeting on the morning of the first day previous to her decease, and was enabled to address her friends in encouraging language, and spoke particularly to the dear children. The day following she was so unwell that it was thought desirable to send for her medical attendant, and on fourth day morning, being hardly aware that her weakness rendered it impracticable, she wished to be dressed that she might go to meeting, remarking that many friends were absent attending the yearly meeting, and she wished to assemble with those who remained. To a friend who called upon her after meeting she said, she hoped she should not be cast off in her old age; the friend replied, she believed she would not, that she had done her work in the day. "Ah!" she remarked, addressing herself to those about her, "you will feel a comfort in such a day as this, that you have been engaged in His service."

On fifth day she became much worse, several friends called to see her, with whom she conversed very cheerfully, and although she did not appear aware that she should see them no more, she parted from them very affectionately. Previous to settling for the night, she said to her attendant, "I think thou hast not read to me in the Bible to-day," and expressed a wish to hear a portion of it; the chapter in course was the 14th of John, beginning "Let not your heart be troubled," which seemed very consoling to her: as the reading proceeded she responded to it, and spoke of the boundless goodness, mercy, and power of God, saying, "how beautiful to go to a mansion ready prepared for us, and if such should be my happy experience it will indeed be all of mercy, unmerited mercy." She appeared to be much engaged in prayer during the night. In the morning her bodily powers were evidently fast failing; after this she spoke but little, and about eleven o'clock in the forenoon her purified spirit gently passed away, exchanging, we doubt not, through the mercy and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, an earthly for a heavenly habitation.

She died on the 23rd of 5th month, 1845, in the 91st year of her age, a minister about 55 years.

THE END.