

MEMOIRS OF MRS. HULTON.

ANN, the youngest daughter of Mr. Philip Henry, was born at Broad Oak, November 25th, 1668; she was baptized by her father privately. When she was about a year old, she was sick and nigh unto death of an ague, on which he notes, "that she was freely given up to the will of God. Lord, do thy pleasure with me and mine, but contend not with a dry leaf."

He hath noted another ill fit she had when about a year and a half old, and adds, "No sooner doth any thing ail my children but I am presently thinking it is for death. My own guilt, and sense of my unworthiness, causes such misgivings, 1 Kings xvii. 18. but God is good."

She gave very early indications of a sweet and towardly disposition, and an aptness to learn above most of her sex and age, which induced her father, after she had learned to read English well, before she began to sew, to initiate her in the Latin tongue, which she took very easily, but made no great progress in.

From a child she knew the Holy Scriptures, and read them with delight; spoke intelligently of Scripture stories, and was betimes, as soon as she grew to any capacity, very well affected and inclined to the exercises of piety and devotion.

Yet in her own reflections upon her childhood, (written in the year 1688,) though she blesses God for the advantages of a good education, she bewails that the cursed fountain of original sin soon bubbled up. "My childhood and youth" (saith she) "were sinning vanity. I can remember nothing that I did in the world for many years, much less my sins: but when I now see what follies other children are guilty of, I have no reason to think that I came behind them therein." She accuses herself of loving play, and being froward; though few of her age were more mild and tractable, and loved work and a book better than she did.

She soon made her Catechism very familiar to her, and loved to hear and ask questions concerning the things of God. Before seven years old, she learnt to bear her part in the repetitions of the heads of sermons in the family, having the happiness of a very quick understanding, and a good memory.

When she was about eleven years old, she began to write sermons, and continued it all her days. What she wrote was good sense, well spelled, and the substance of a discourse. She kept her sermon-books very carefully, and in good order; she very frequently looked over and conversed with what she had written long before. Read under her own hand the account of the days of her youth. "I soon learned" (saith she) "a course of external duties, and was pleased with the bare performance of the duty without looking at the *manner* how it was done; but at length it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to call me by his grace, and reveal his Son in me. I cannot be punctual as to the *time*, but rather desire to make sure the *thing*. The merciful circumstances of this good work were, that it was done early in my days, and not attended with such pangs and terrors as some others endure. The Spirit of God convinced me and wrought on me by degrees. Many a time hath God spoken to me in a still small voice, and therein he considered my frame, but the less fine was paid at first, the greater rent I must expect to sit upon afterwards; perhaps, the least terror the more doubts afterwards. I might tell (saith she) long stories of the goodness of God in discovering to me the infinite evil of sin, giving me to mourn over it, quickening me to duty, especially to make sure work about my *foundation*, enabling me to close sincerely with Jesus Christ, which I think I have done as well as I could, though never so well as I would. When God gave me some enlargements in holy duties, I rested much in them, and counted upon comfort and assurance; when, alas! I was not at all ready for it. But oftentimes my secret duties were more long than fervent; more external than internal." She complained to one of her sisters long after, that she found it was possible to lose much time even in the closet. Those that were intimate with her, could not, however, but observe, not only how constant she was to secret worship, and how she abounded in it, but what a discernible pleasure and delight she took in it.

In the sixteenth year of her age, she was admitted to the Lord's supper, February, 1684, and with a great deal of satisfaction both to herself and her

father, joined herself to the Lord in an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten. After the second time of her approach to that ordinance, she made this remark of her spiritual state: "I now fell into a very dull and lifeless frame. Drowsiness prevailed much: it was very grievous to me, and after many foils by it, I resolved, with tears, never to yield to it. How I got out of this frame I cannot tell, but this I know, that it was the work of the grace of God. It was a great hinderance to my progress in religion, that I did not open the case of my soul to those that were able to advise me; which proceeded from my reservedness, and has cost me dear. But this I did seriously promise to one that will be a witness against me if I lie, that whereas there are those who make excuses for non-attendance at the gospel-feast, I will not be excused." Afterwards she thus writes—"I was very full of complaints, and empty of praises. I had great supports, but few suavities; some sweet sabbaths and sacraments, but very many damps to my joys. Sin was exceedingly odious to me, and I remembered, with shame, how I had stifled convictions, and how careless and indifferent I had been in matters of religion; how pride and passion had most easily beset me; and how often God had called by his word and I would not hear. The place where I was planted was a vineyard, but it grieved me to think how I had cumbered the ground by my barrenness; yea, brought forth wild grapes by relative miscarriages, and other sins, both of omission and commission. Blessed be God, that which I did I allowed not; with my mind I served the law of God, and delighted in it after the inner man. I esteemed holiness above any thing in the world, and had chosen God for my portion. I smarted greatly for some tongue-sins; some untrue words, though not devised, yet spoken in haste through inadvertency, were as a sharp sword in my bowels, and my bones were broken through my own carelessness. The spirit of bondage long prevailed sadly; it cannot be expressed what straitness of spirit I found; how the wings of faith were clipt, and how the tempter conquered me. But when the sorrow of my spirit even tied my tongue, yet I loved to be alone before God, to be looked on by him; and many a time hath he had pity. I cannot say that ever he was wanting to me, but made all grace to abound towards me. His word has been a means of conviction, of quickening, of comfort to me many a time, and I have found it sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. He restored my soul, he led me in the paths of holiness for his name's sake. It pleased God, some time after this, to make me more than ever sensible of the insufficiency of my own righteousness to justify me, and to show me my need of Christ, and his fulness; so that I counted all things but loss that I might win Christ and be found in him. Thus did the Lord, many a time, wait to be gracious to me, when I was

like him who said, *Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?* At length the Holy Spirit, who came to convince the world, was pleased (as at a certain time I was verily persuaded) to convince me of these ten things: viz.

"1. That God is my chiefest good, and that to know, love, and serve him, is my honour and happiness; the greatest I am capable of.

"2. That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; that he is able and willing to save me, and there is salvation in no other.

"3. That religion is the most amiable, pleasant, and beneficial thing in the world.

"4. That much of the power of godliness consists in the great duties of self-denial and mortification.

"5. That I have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and am undone without Christ.

"6. That the favour of God is better than life.

"7. That sin is the worst of evils, exceeding sinful; an evil and an only evil.

"8. That there will be no getting to heaven without much pains and difficulty.

"9. That I shall never be a loser by doing my duty.

"10. That I am infinitely obliged to God, who hath wrought these things in me."

"Now," saith she in her papers, "I fear I did every day act contrary to these convictions, not keeping up a continual watch over myself; but commonly my daily failings passed not without sad reflections. I was solicitous to make sure my being joined to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, and thereupon I did vocally do it in Mr. Alleine's form of words; and did also subscribe with my hand to the Lord, which remains as a witness against me if I be false to it. Renouncing the world and the flesh, I did cleave to God in Christ alone as my sovereign Lord and Ruler, my chiefest good and highest end; and I never repented it, only that I did it no better. God was pleased sometimes gently to correct me by distempers of body, but in much mercy; for I had been as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, knowing neither how to want, nor how to abound; yet now I see he works all for *good*, and do purpose, by his grace, to be well pleased with every thing that happens to me, because it is the will of God."

In a paper written in the year 1688, she thus mentions the advantages of her education:—"I was born of one who had the honour to be of that office who are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ; (2 Cor. iii. 13.) a labourer in the vineyard, though thrust out by men, yet at work in season and out of season; and being it was so, my education was accordingly, in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord*."

"As I grew up I have strained at gnats and swallowed camels, often falling into sin. I did not prefer the word of God's mouth to my necessary food.

My own iniquity prevailed, that is, flesh-pleasing in food and apparel, and sinful bashfulness in profitable questions." "Yet," she adds, "one evidence of my love to God is love to the sabbath day. It is the best day of the week to me. I am glad when it draws near; I feel the want of it before it comes. Another evidence is, mean thoughts of the world: my age exposes me to the contrary temptations: but *whom have I in heaven but thee?* and I would get above it. The promise-performing God has begun to perform that promise to me, (Romans vi. 14.) *Sin shall not have dominion.* Pride, that tympany of the soul, by the applications of the heavenly Physician, is begun to be cured, though but begun. Psalm ciii. 2. *Who healeth all thy diseases. Vain thoughts compass me about like bees.* I am stung with them. My pride appears in my thoughts, pleasing myself with my own sayings and doings. O that I could say as David, Ps. cxxxi. 1. *Lord, my heart is not haughty.*" She observes once after a sacrament, "I thought that the apostle's method was taken, *Let a man examine himself and so eat*; yet dull, lifeless, and unbelieving."

"March 28, 1689. I was very proud, given to pleasure, with the neglect of God; and it does find me out; for *they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies.*"

She mentions her father's particular advice to her to look to *secret* duty. Keep up that whatever you do, nothing will prosper without it; all grace grows, as love to the word of God grows.

This collection of her experiences she drew up when she was about nineteen years old, but, I believe, never any one beside herself saw it, or knew a tittle of it till after her death. For the top of her ambition was to be accepted of that God who sees in secret. Any one that hath read these lines, which were the easy and natural product of her pen, and of a piece with her discourses, will say there is something more in them than is usually found in such tender years, and will wish she had been more large and copious in the account.

She wrote also her father's exposition of the Scriptures in the family very judiciously, and made use of them in her private reading of the Bible. She gave herself much to the reading of good books, yet not neglecting the useful employment of her sex and place. Mr. Clarke's last volume of *Lives* she read again and again with much pleasure, and was well versed in it: and ready, upon all occasions, to produce pertinent and profitable passages out of that and other good books for the edification of others: she was able, with the good householder, to bring out of her treasury things new and old. She made a large collection, in writing, of what she met with most remarkable in her reading.

How amiable and exemplary her deportment was in all relations, as a daughter, as a sister, as a

friend, they who knew her can easily bear record: and, though it never appeared to the discouragement of the rest, yet it could not but be discerned that Mr. Henry had a special dear love for his little Nancy, and sometimes said she was the diamond in his ring.

In the twentieth year of her age she was married to Mr. John Hulton, a tradesman in Chester, April 26th, 1688; and she was equally yoked. Take the account of that turn of her life in her own words, in the continuation of the afore-mentioned papers:—

"After nineteen years' barrenness in the place where I first sprung up, God was pleased, by his providence, to put me into the married state, and transplant me into a new soil. It was an affair I thought of great weight, and I was much afraid of seeking great things for myself in this world therein. When I press it upon my conscience, I cannot but acknowledge that I did therein commit my way unto the Lord, and did lay myself before him as white paper, for him to write his will upon me; and accordingly, his providence brought it to a comfortable issue, after much distraction of mind about it."

April 21, 1688, (a few days before her marriage,) she thus writes:—"I did set myself before the Lord to repent of all the sins of my single state; and if sin were never bitter before, I think it was exceedingly bitter then, and, through grace, I did then renew my hold of God as mine."

Soon after this, she removed to Chester. "That morning," she writes, "reading alone, in course, (Exodus iii.) of Moses's objections against going on God's errand, I was much comforted by God's answer, v. 12. *Certainly I will be with thee.* Applying that word to myself was very refreshing. Some time before this, reading Genesis xxviii. concerning Jacob's vow, it affected me, and I then, with some seriousness, entered into a solemn promise, that if God would be with me, in that present way, and provide for me, and make the issue comfortable, that then he should be my God; creatures should not have the throne in my soul. I would be more watchful against sin, and be more diligent and careful in his service."

Some weeks after her settlement at Chester she thus writes, under the foregoing record of her solemn vow:—"Because deceit lies in generals, and because after particular foils by temptation my conscience reproaches me that it was for want of resolution, I now, in God's name, go forth resolving, not only in general to serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of my life, but particularly, in the strength of Jesus Christ, I resolve against the following sins:—flesh-pleasing and inordinate appetites; passion and frowardness; drowsiness and weariness in the worship of God; despising others; thinking or speaking ill of any; self-

conceit and pride ; a lying tongue ; all injustice in the calling wherein God hath put me ; discontent in the condition allotted for me.

" I do likewise, in the same strength, resolve upon the following duties :—self-denial ; meekness ; liveliness in duty ; reproving when there is opportunity ; humility, and low thoughts of myself ; truth, equity, justice, and charity : in general, making conscience of all God's commands.

Thus she set out in her new condition, and how strictly she adhered to the rules she laid down was very evident, as far as could fall under the observation of others. Some time after, she thus writes :—" Because, through the necessity of my outward affairs, my secret duties are commonly limited and contracted more than formerly, I have been ready to fear that I have declined in grace, and left my first love. I am sensible of the prevalency of unbelief, and of God's withdrawals ; but, though he slay me yet will I trust in him. I have this day promised seriously, to spend some time every day in converse with God. I see in a trade the shop must be constantly attended, though, perhaps, for some time no profits come in ; so the trade of religion must still be followed, though there be not, for the present, any sensible comfort and benefit. In this place where God hath set me, he doth require of me,

" 1. That I get much knowledge and grace, because I have means for getting them.

" 2. That I be very humble, because my gifts are small, and my attainments poor, graces weak, and failings many.

" 3. That I be ready for death, because I see many funerals. And because death at a distance did not affect me, it pleased God to bring it nigh me in the death of a near, and that a very dear, relation, viz. sister Henry, February 14, 1688-9. The quarrel God seemed to have with me therein was upon the account of relative sins, and the omission of relative duties ; whereupon I endeavoured to repent of them, and renew my covenant in that matter. And because that providence did not do the work for which it was sent, shortly after, another dear friend whom I loved as my own soul, was suddenly taken away (Mrs. Bradbury) ; the circumstances of her death being such as I was near falling into myself, viz. child-bearing ; it did much affect me with cares and thoughts about another world, which had been too little minded by me. After this providence, I was threatened by the illness of my dear mother ; upon her recovery, my sense of the mercy obliged me to promise to be more freely willing to resign to the will of God another time ; and surely there is all the reason in the world, when the great God condescends to grant my request, that I should say, His will be done. Sin hath much prevailed. Omissions witness against me, and a constant remissness in my walking. I cannot answer for

one of a thousand ; but—help is laid upon one that is mighty."

She became a mother, July 29, 1689, (but the child died in the birth,) on which providence she thus writes :—" A day never to be forgotten ; wherein I felt the bitter fruits of the sin of my grandmother Eve ; that part of her sentence being fully fulfilled, *I will greatly multiply thy sorrow. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth.* The peril and danger was much greater than ordinary ; so that, as the Lord liveth, there was but a step between me and death. My flesh and heart were ready to fail, and friends ready to despair ; but God became the strength of my heart and my portion ; and I trust he will be so *for ever*. But, behold, what have these sheep done ? The innocent I cannot say, but the less guilty, must die. O Adam, Adam ! what hast thou done ? My comforts are taken away before I had well received them. Was it all lost labour ? Surely no ; I have good hope that heaven is something fuller for my babe. I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me. My God is instead of all to me ; and were he not mine, sure it were impossible to bear up without sinking under those pains I endured, but the mercy swallowed up the affliction, and rejoiced against judgment. I often promised to love him, and to live to him ; and I do it once more."

From the consideration of this event, concerning her first child, she hath sometimes said, " What need mothers have to pray for their children before they are born ! "

Her next remark is, April 26, 1690. " I sickened of the small-pox, and though in perilous circumstances, yet was wonderfully brought through them : when I had received the sentence of death within myself, surely the Lord was ready to save me ; and the mercies, the sweet mercies which I experienced in the affliction, I shall never forget.

" I may truly say, with David, *Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction.* But God doth seem by his providence to call me to be heavenly minded ; to be more humble ; to take up with him as my happiness ; to be less afraid of death ; to abound always in the work of the Lord. Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of destruction, for thou hast cast all my sins behind my back." Isa. xxxviii. 17.

In this illness, when she was asked how she did, her usual answer was, " I shall be well."

June 29, 1691. " I received," she writes, " special mercy from God, in answer to prayer. He was to me a present help, and did not only spare, but multiply, and gave me a living son, or rather, lent him to me for a while : and I have resigned him and myself to the will and disposal of our heavenly Father. How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty ! Zech. ix. 17. I look upon every sin, after such a mercy as this, to be more deeply aggra-

vated than before. My great unprofitableness under the means of grace, is that at the serious consideration of which my heart doth even melt, and my spirits sink; finding comfort in that Psalm, (ciii. 12.) *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed my transgressions from me*; I thought, with joy, if it were so good for me to have my transgressions removed as far as the east is from the west, how much better would it be when they shall be removed as far from me as hell is from heaven."

On a sacrament day, May 6, 1694, in which it seems she had more communion with God than ordinary, she thus writes: "Forget not ever, O my soul, the sight that thou hast had this day from Pisgah's mount of Canaan's land. What shall I render to the Lord? I have, at the Lord's table, seen my Redeemer as he was in his blood and sufferings; but shortly I hope to see him as he is, though not as I am. See to it then, O my soul, that thou purify thyself, even as he is pure."

May 5, 1695, she writes thus: "This last month past I have received great mercy from God in the recovery of both the children from the small-pox; the one brought into great peril, the other brought through imminent danger, by a fever which seized him about three weeks after the beginning of the small-pox. What shall I render to the Lord for his great benefits? He hath been trying me whether I could freely give up my children, which, I hope, I having done, he turned the scale and restored them to me. God having corrected me by the child's relapse, my own heart condemneth me for my own backslidings. Oh that now I might remember whence I am fallen, and repent and do my first works! I have been this day showing forth the Lord's death, and renewing my covenant with him: surely it is meet to be said unto God, 'I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.' Amen, Amen."

November 19, 1695. In her confinement, after the birth of a child that died when nine days old, she thus writes: "God hath of late been proving and trying me, to do me good in my latter end. I looked for peace, but beheld trouble. My house not made to grow; but the Lord who gave, quickly took away again; adored be the name of the Lord. And now, what doth the Lord my God require? My greatest concern is to improve this providence. God hath (and so have I) been calling my sin to remembrance, that I may be humbled under his mighty hand, and cleave closer to him in love, dependence, and resolution; for even this is performed for me: and what have I to show now for my interest in him and relation to him? Is not my hope a groundless hope? I do not ground it upon myself and my own righteousness, but Jesus Christ is he, concerning whom I say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?*"

March 1, 1696. "Dare not, my soul, to deny that thou hast this day met with thy God at his table.

Silence, thou loud and clamorous unbelief. Never open thy mouth any more. God is willing to be mine, and who can say against it? For, if he will work, who can let it? Only remember, that having received Christ Jesus the Lord, I must walk in him."

Thus far goes her paper of experience, in which she seems to have given vent to her thoughts when they were more than usually enlarged. And if such as this was her converse with God, it will be of use to inquire what was her conversation in the world. Not to mention the common characters of all the saints, which appeared eminently in her, nor the careful discharge of the duties of her particular relation, there are some things which have been observed concerning her, which were peculiarly exemplary and instructive.

1. That though she was so constant in her secret worship, and took so much delight in her closet work, yet she ordered it with so much discretion, that it did not interfere with nor hinder her from any needful attendance upon her worldly affairs, in the house or shop. Every thing is beautiful in its season; and there is a way of abiding with God, and serving the Lord Christ in the particular calling wherein we are called, as well as in his immediate worship. The virtuous woman will look well to the ways of her household, and yet not neglect the ways of her heart.

2. That she was very industrious to promote the family worship in all the parts of it; contriving for it in its season, that nothing might put it out of time; calling to it; being ready to attend on it; and careful to prevent all disturbance in it. If inferior relations would thus do their part, it would be a great help to the master of the family in the discharge of his duty. In her husband's absence she carefully and constantly performed all the parts of family worship herself. It being their custom to pray together morning and evening, she frequently prayed with him. She prayed much for their children, and carefully instructed them in the things of God as they grew capable. Her tender care of two orphans, the relations of her husband, which the providence of God brought into their family, was very remarkable, especially her great concern for their spiritual welfare.

3. That she was very few of her words, not only in making of bargains, but in her converse, *swift to hear and slow to speak*; but when she did speak it was with wisdom, and to the purpose. She was like the still waters, which run deep but make no noise. One might observe in all her discourse, that she thought twice before she spoke once; and so prevented a deal of that guilt and grief which attend the multitude of words. Her speech was always with grace. She breathed forth a religious air in her common converse; and usually expressed herself in her converse with her friends in Scripture

language. The word of God dwelt richly in her, and, by the divine blessing on her great diligence in reading the Scriptures and other good books, (which was her daily practice,) she acquired a good stock of Scripture knowledge; out of which treasury she readily brought forth things new and old, which rendered her conversation both pleasing and profitable.

4. That she preserved an evenness and composure of spirit under all events; one should seldom or never see her ruffled or disturbed by any provocation, lifted up with any joy or cast down with any sorrow; but, whatever happened to weigh down one scale, her wisdom and grace suggested something to put in the other scale to keep the balance even. Upon the death of her father, an affliction that went so near her heart, how calmly did she apply those words of Thomas to his fellow-disciples when Lazarus was dead, *Let us go and die with him.*

5. That she was very cheerful in her converse, and was far from that sourness and melancholy which some good people indulge themselves in, to the reproach of their profession; she made it to *appear* that she found the ways of wisdom pleasantness.

6. She was very charitable to the poor, and stretched forth her hand to the needy. She was always very careful not to make the poor at her door stay long for their alms, for in that time, she would say, they might get another alms elsewhere. She loved to visit the godly poor, when they were sick, and discourse with them, and relieve them. She was one that devised liberal things, and sought opportunities of doing good.

7. On the Lord's day she commonly had her heart much enlarged in rejoicing and thanksgiving, and she used to refresh herself much on that day with singing of psalms alone at the time of vacancy from other duties.

8. She was very forward to promote works of piety and charity, and to stir up others thereto. Her zeal herein provoked many. She delighted in opportunities of showing kindness to others, and was very courteous in her behaviour towards all.

9. She was very frugal of her time, and was observed by those about her to be continually employed.

SOME SAVOURY USEFUL PASSAGES, GLEANED UP
OUT OF SOME OF HER LETTERS TO HER RELATIONS
AND FRIENDS.

To a gentlewoman, under some doubts about her interest in Christ, she thus writes:—"I know not what is better for a man when he is out of the way, and is convinced of it, than to turn back and get as fast as he can into the *right* way: if thou art per-

sueded thou art not yet in Christ, give up thyself to him quickly in a marriage covenant. The word is nigh thee to direct thee; the throne of grace is nigh thee, and to it thou mayst draw near for assistance. I believe there is nothing God is more willing to give than his Spirit."

Upon the occasion of a marriage in her father's house, she hath this observation in another letter: "She that is married careth for the things of the world. Indeed, her opportunities of *doing* good will be more than they were, but of *getting* good less. *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* I find, as to myself, that a little thing abates my zeal and flattens my spirit in duties, which makes me fear the snares of the world. It is an enemy to our souls and our graces, to our duties and to our comforts, to our holy living and to our comfortable dying."

She had a tender sense of sin, as appears by this passage in a letter to the same person: "Indeed, it is difficult to be sensible of sins we think small; they are like knots in a fine thread, or hair, hard to untie: greater sins, like knots in a rope. I am greatly afraid of open presumptuous sins, such as may break my peace as long as I live. I may fitly compare myself to a body full of ill humours: though a sore in one place is seemingly healed, yet it breaks out in another; so when I am better in one respect I am worse in another."

Her mean opinion of herself she expresses in another letter to the same person: "Should I go about to tell you how bad I am, it were more than I could do; surely I am ready to go out of love with myself every day: there is some shift to be made to flee from other things that molest, but not from one's self. Really, Madam, religion is the most amiable thing in the world. If I could be very good, and yet think myself bad, how well were it."

In another, she thus writes about meditation: "I confess I am too little acquainted with it, especially the practical part, which is the sweetest. As to what I have tasted, I cannot tell the one half of the sweetness of it, and many times I have found more of God therein than in prayer; before I can fix there is some preparation necessary, and many a chain of vain thoughts to grapple with, which do often prevail and rob me of all my meditating time. As to my helps in it, my God is he that worketh both to will and to do. What more unruly than the thoughts? it is very hard to govern them! 1. I find a fixed heart a great help; the contrary I find a great hinderance; now where shall we find this, but whence every good and perfect gift comes? 2. An heart like the treasury of the good householder, wherein are things laid up both new and old. There must be knowledge to furnish us with matter. It is easier to know what helps there are than to find ourselves holpen by them. Most of my meditations are con-

fused and torn; sometimes some attribute of God is the subject of them, as his wisdom, power, holiness; sometimes some sin, some scripture," &c.

To her eldest sister,* who was married, she thus wrote:—"I am so well acquainted with myself as to know I am very unfit for the condition thou art in, and hast so much comfort in; the conditions are as the persons are. I sadly fear displeasing God, or doing any thing which will wound conscience. I am ready to think there cannot but be more hindrances in our *great business* in that condition than in my present condition. Dost thou not find it so? If it be not for the glory of God, I hope something will be thrown in the way to hinder it: for, however it is, God is good. It is no small comfort to have infinite wisdom and power engaged for one's good."

To another dear friend:—"I fear thou hast too good an opinion of me, which makes my work more difficult to beat down myself. Be not guilty of blowing up that bladder which is so apt to fill of itself. I shall take it as a part of friendship if thou wilt chide, instruct, and counsel me. Put thyself in my case. Thus far I am determined, and no farther, namely, to be guided by infinite wisdom. I heard something suitable to-day from Psalm xxv. *He will teach sinners*: within that number I come, if not within the latter, *The meek will he guide*. Be thou a fervent intercessor for me at a throne of grace; and pray meet me there at six o'clock on Saturday night, if thou canst conveniently. This morning I met with a suitable promise, Isa. lviii. 11. *And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not*: for the fulfilling of which to me I have no desert to plead, but divine mercy, goodness, and faithfulness; and is not that sufficient? Who but a fool will be in want of any thing, when he may have it for asking? I cannot but reckon it one of the greatest of my earthly blessings, that I am the child of such a family, a branch of this vine: and have often acknowledged it as a great mercy, that as I was the youngest, so I thought the most likely to stay longest here; and who knows but I may? I desire to trust God, however it be: the seed of the upright shall be blessed. Though myself I think unworthy, yet I am come of parents that are in covenant; but this will not save me, unless there be a principle within; it is encouragement to think that the smoking flax shall not be quenched. Mr. Vines† observes, 'That Christ would not have them drowned whom he calls, *O ye of little faith*,' Matt. viii."

To the same bosom-friend she writes, "I have not taken the world for my portion, and I think I have been made willing to take up with little of it for my

passage. In my father's house the lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place, and though I never absolutely resolved against a removal from it, yet I cannot but have dreadful apprehensions concerning it; the proposal of it hath occasioned me many a troublesome thought, and is like to do more. I am passive: delay in some cases is dangerous, but here desirable. Rebekah's relations, Gen. xxiv. 55. said, *Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at least ten*. But I was pleased to find it in the margin, a year, or ten months. Sure that is a quiet and desirable world, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage: of what little avail will it be there whether we were here single or married! My desire is to depart, and be with Christ, which I am sure is best of all. Dost thou see the providence of God going before me? A stander-by may see more than a person concerned. It is very comfortable to have that to plead which Jacob had when in trouble, Gen. xxxii. 9. *The Lord which saidst unto me, Return*. The Urim and Thummim is now abolished, we must expect direction in an ordinary way: who hath known the mind of the Lord? Certainly this is his mind, that we should live to his glory; this is his will, even our sanctification, and it *should* be ours."

To the same gentlewoman, her dear bosom-friend, she thus expresses herself before she was married:—

"Thou art writ upon my heart in capitals easy to be read, as those that converse with me may see; thou hast given me the right hand of fellowship in holy ordinances, but hadst thou seen through me, surely thou wouldst not have suffered me to sit so nigh thee; was there ever such a mispender of time, such a trifter away of opportunities, as I am? When thou thinkest well of me, thou seest me not in my own clothes. I am much afraid of getting hurt by the good opinion thou hast of me. Thou seest in my book the fulfilment of the Scriptures, Isaiah xlv. 5. O that thou couldst see in my life the fulfilling of my own engagements! It is easier to vow than to pay, but it is great encouragement to think that God is a covenant friend. He is not so to every one. Who are we that God should take us into covenant with himself? It is not because he hath need of us, but because we have need of him. And must covenant people walk as other Gentiles? Surely no!"

Soon after her marriage she wrote thus:—

"I scarce know yet where I am, but this I know, that I am under the care of my heavenly Father. It is now come to the trial, more than ever, whether I make conscience of duty or no, I mean my *secret* duty. When I had larger opportunities for it, I could not for shame but, at least, seem to improve them, though, alas, what lost time was there in the closet which others thought not so! It cannot but be bitter now. Yet I would not for something have

* Mrs. Savage.

† A learned and excellent divine, who died A. D. 1655. See

Clarke's Lives, fol. p. 48. and Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. iii. p. 230.

all undone that hath been done there; but I wish it had been done *better*. Blessed be God for the Redeemer that is come to Sion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob; as it is quoted, Romans ii. 26. though it is otherwise, Isaiah lii. 9. My thoughts are very much of dear parents, and brothers and sisters; but there is danger lest, if I think too much, I should be discontent with my present condition, which is best for me. I have seen a little more of the world than I had seen a little while ago, and, truly, there is nothing in it which affords solid comfort and satisfaction to the soul. One sight, by faith, of the lowliness of Jesus Christ, is enough to make one out of love with every thing else in comparison of him."

Upon the death of Mrs. Bradburne,* she thus wrote to a dear friend:—"As was her way, such was her end, even peace, submission to the will of God, rejoicing in Christ Jesus; expressed in such language as this,—'None but Christ, none but Christ, he is my all in all.' Thus did she go triumphantly to heaven. I shall never forget her whom I so dearly loved; her death made some impression upon this rocky heart of mine. If this be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? Sure it should make me think more of heaven. We used to fancy to ourselves how our friends and acquaintance, that are at a distance from us in the world, do live; though we never saw how, yet, from what we have heard, we imagine what they do; what company they have, what privileges, &c. And what a happy state do I imagine the soul of my dear friend to be in, whose face always shone, and yet was covered with a veil of humility. It is some comfort to me, that as I loved and delighted in her company here, so I shall enjoy it refined for ever. Though friends fail, yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. As to myself, I might be useful in the world if I had a heart according to the price in my hand. Indeed I have lived at ease in Sion, as it speaks mercy; I wish it might not be said so of me, as it speaks a sinful frame. I have been ready to say, My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved; when it is but God's hiding of his face, and I shall be troubled. When friends are gone, the sting of affliction lies in the reflection upon my misimprovement of them whilst with them. Let us therefore redeem the time, because the days are evil. The world is certainly nothing, and nothingness is all that is in it. Continue to pray for me for all things that may be suitable: spiritual mercies cannot be unsuitable. I pray, forget not in all your enjoyments to enjoy God as the gladness of your joy; for what is all without him but vanity and vexation? Even ordinances themselves are dry and sapless unless he fills them, though there is

the likeliest place to find him: more *of* God, but not more *than* God, we should seek for. It is very comfortable, methinks, when with new acquaintance we meet with those that are travelling in the same road with us, and aiming at the same ultimate end.

It is sure God hath his remnant every where, and heaven will not want inhabitants, though such unworthy wretches as I come short through unbelief. You are singing of mercy and judgment, we are mixed; therefore providences are so towards us in this world, a gleam of peace to fit us for a brunt of trouble, that we may not settle upon our lees. Where you are you learned to know what David complained of, when he sojourned in Meshech, and dwelt in the tents of Kedar. In such a place there is good to be *done* where there is none to be *gotten*: and there is this advantage to it, that by doing good we get good; by kindling others our own hearts will burn within us, and who knows whether you may be cast there for such an occasion as this?"

To another of her sisters, upon the death of her sister Henry, in the year 1689, she wrote thus:—"There were few families so little acquainted with the scourges of divine Providence as ours was; but now the days of visitation are come, and coming more and more. These are teaching providences; should we not learn obedience by them, passive obedience, lest the next furnace we are cast into be seven times hotter? It would, I think, be a greater affliction to have such relations as are with us our grief and burthen, whilst with us, than it is to have those that were our comfort taken from us. We must consider that God hath a greater interest in all our creature comforts than we have; they are but lent us, and he may call them when he hath occasion for them; and who are we that we should contend with him?"

To her sister in the country:—"I rejoice to hear of the continuance of your welfare; the same that is good is still doing us good, and loading us with his benefits; we must not expect that our health and prosperity should always last. Shall we receive good and not evil also, forasmuch as we do evil and not good? If we could learn this good lesson in the enjoyment of our creature comforts, to enjoy God in all, and in the want of them, to enjoy *all* in God, it would thereby appear that we lived by faith. It is difficult to learn how to want, and it is no less so to learn how to abound." In a time of affliction she thus writes:—"Tis pity that prosperity should do us hurt, for no affliction for the present seems joyous, but grievous; and if the heart had been duly humbled by constant mortification, and inured to the cross, these outward afflictions would not have been so hard to bear."

* Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, p. 31.

Upon her recovery from the small-pox she writes.—“I write to let you know that I am going from strength to strength through the divine goodness; yet reprieved, because not ready for heaven. Help me to praise God for sustaining and delivering mercy, and also to pray that I might greatly profit by this visitation, that my God may not complain that yet I have not returned unto him. I cannot but acknowledge with thankfulness the interests I have in the love and prayers of good people here, though unworthy of it.”

At a time of public trouble, she writes:—“It is a mercy there are not fears within, as well as fightings without; though, truly considered, public calamities were worse than personal, yet, commonly, personal do more affect;—when the sword doth not depart from the house, as in David’s case. It is an excellent thing to have a God to trust to, especially an interest in Him in whose hands our times are; not only events themselves, but the *seasons* of them. I find nothing more prejudicial to me than distrust, both in reference to the concerns of the soul, and of the body also. I hope to see you shortly, but wives must be *housewives*, and sometimes *shop-wives*, as I know who. I find it hard to turn into a closet. Let not *thy* farm, nor *my* merchandize, be hinderances to us in the way to heaven. The visiting of several sick and afflicted friends takes up a great part of our evening time now: we must not expect to be ourselves exempted from chastisement; the best we can expect is to have them from a Father—in measure and in mercy. There is no greater or better ground of hope than the truth and faithfulness of God, for that cannot fail; all the question is, Whether we can lay claim to the promises? He is in a sad case that must be miserable if the word of God be true, and he is as happy that must be so if the God of truth be true. Who shall separate us from the love of God? The children of Israel, in their march towards Canaan, removed out of the wilderness of Paran: in the world we go out of one wilderness into another, but the *Canaan* is before us. I am now at Elim, where there are twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees; led into green pastures and fed beside the still waters. The only trouble is my unprofitableness, barrenness, leanness, non-proficiency. It is easier to complain than to amend. I know you rejoice with us when we rejoice: that you may do so; you must know how it is with us;—as yet, health and peace are continued; the nursery prospers, and the little ones; angels watch over us continually; the tediousness of nursing we owe to sin; that which sweetens it is the hope that some of our children may glorify God in the world.”

And in another:—“The nurseries continue to prosper, thanks be to Him who comforteth us as one whom his mother comforteth. I am glad to hear you have this breathing-time. Our heavenly Father

is, we see, slow to afflict, but swift to show mercy; long in forbearing, not long in contending. If it be that he is preparing to strike, we should prepare to be stricken: what! shall we receive good, and not evil? Faith and patience are the two great bearing graces which are necessary in a time of peril. Base distrust is a sin that doth most easily beset me, either of God’s power or will; neither of which can easily be questioned; for is any thing too hard for God?—or is his mercy clean gone? No, no; O pray for more faith! I cannot but pity your frequent sabbaths spent at home, while we have the manna at our tent-door; but remember that the careful Father, if there be no school near, will teach his child at home, rather than he should not learn; so will the blessed Spirit, the great Instructor, do the work himself, teaching his people to profit; and, if he doth it, it will be *well* done; for assuredly, if he be not filling the ordinances, they are but empty breasts; if he pass by and do not speak, there is no meeting. O that we had more of God! not more than God, but more of him. Those same things you beg for yourself, beg for me, especially for faith. I have reason to believe (as Mr. Baxter said to his friends) that God will sooner hear your prayers than mine. In his funeral sermon, with the account of his death, his humility and self-denial appear admirable, and make me think of that Scripture, *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* If he did nothing to boast of, sure I have a great deal to *mourn* over.”

To her sister in the country, with common tidings and business, she intermixeth very pertinently such lines as these:—“We need sometimes to be in heaviness, we must look for it: herein is the heart deceitful,—that we think we trust in God; but when creatures fail, we find by our failing, that we trusted in *them*: you will not want spiritual supplies while God is all-sufficient.”

“To render good for good is no more than the publicans do; yet, alas! how much *evil* do we render for good to him that is good, and doth good!”

“Pray, pray that we may be found of God in peace, without spot, and blameless. The time is short, and therefore every opportunity ought to be taken hold of for improving relations, both near and far off, that that great talent of society may not be buried in a napkin.”

“I have less thinking time here than you have in the country. A solitary life I mightily prized formerly, but the great and wise God did not see it good for me: my temper inclined me to it, but now I can envy the outward condition of none.”

“You would not envy my bare enjoyment of gospel privileges if you knew how unprofitable I am under them; it is easier to spend a deal of time in the external performance of holy duties in the old road, than to improve a little time seriously and profitably

therein. If you knew my sad declinings, especially my great remissness in keeping my heart, you would pity me rather than flatter me. Pride is a weed that, in the soil of my heart, needs no watering."

"Poor sister Henry, upon the death of the child, is sitting alone and keeping silence. The consideration of her giving it up to God in baptism, when she was asked by my father whether she could freely do it, hath had influence upon her submission. Let us in a day of prosperity be joyful, and think of a day of adversity."

"Is it any wonder that dying creatures die?"

"In this vale of tears we are full of complaints. It is a bad sign that former afflictions have not done their work, in that he is further testifying against me by the sickness of the children; when the staff and the rod will not do, the cart-wheel and the thrashing instrument are used by him, who is *wonderful in counsel and excellent in working*, Isa. xxviii. 27—29. I need not request your prayers, mostly for divine teachings, that they may accompany divine chastenings. They are bitter things when an interest in covenant love is not clear, but *He knows the way that I take: when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold*. Let not the Almighty put me in the furnace and leave me there."

At another time:—"It is a mercy to have such comfortable homes as we have; such relations, so much health. O, how short do we come of the law of thankfulness; every one of God's mercies, even the least, calls for more praise and thanks than we return for them in general: to reflect upon my own unthankfulness may make me humble. I desire your prayers, as you have mine, for mercy and grace. This is a vain world we live in; time slips while I hold my hand; how busy, how diligent should we be; all will be little enough when we come to die! I heartily sympathize with you in the tediousness of your nursery, but take heed of complaining as Rebekah;—'If it be so, why am I thus?'—why is this child of promise so troublesome? It comforts me as to nursing inconveniences, that bringing up of children, lodging strangers, and washing the saints' feet, are put together as *good works*, 1 Tim. v. 10. Let not evil tidings remove your fixed heart; though when we looked for peace, behold trouble, did not we agree for this—if need be, for a season to be willing to be in heaviness? Our sympathizing with each other is a little help, but, alas! miserable comforters are we. I have sometimes been dejected in remembrance of former zeal, forwardness, and fervency in the good way, from which I fear I have declined; upon which, once calling to mind that Scripture did comfort, (Eccl. vii. 10.) *Say not thou that the former days were better than these*. O, that blessed book of God hath all in it I want! let us study it more. What calamities hath sin brought

upon us, and yet *itself* we should count a thousand times worse. It is easy to reckon up afflictions, but my sins and God's mercies are numberless, one of which is the interest we have in the pity and prayers of our dear friends. I may hope that all these things are performed for me, and may gather hence, that seeing the threatening part of the covenant is feelingly made good in afflictions, the promising part (Ps. lxxxix. 30, &c.) will also: the same truth is engaged for *both*. I rejoice to hear of your children's recovery: are we like the one leper, who returned to give thanks, or like the nine? Times of trial are times of gaining experience, for patience works experience. We usually pray often for the preventing the evils we fear, but seldom thanking serves; sure the mercy, the God of the mercy, deserves as many *praises* as prayers. I find worldly cares rightly compared to thorns, but *one thing is needful*. My little girl is learning to walk, and represents the weakness of the heart after it falls into sin. It fears, faints, and flags. The heart's deceitfulness is desperate: when in prosperity, I have thought if I were in affliction I should be very humble and contrite under God's hand; when in affliction,—O, if I were delivered I should and would be very thankful and obedient! but it is neither so nor so; never may it be trusted in again."

Upon the death of her little one, at nine days old, November, 1695, she thus writes:—"It is easier to answer you to your satisfaction, than to answer the call of divine Providence, which sounds louder and louder; it requires more time than I now have to tell you my need of chastisements, and God's wisdom and goodness in choosing this rod to do it with. My fruit towards him hath been untimely; the breasts of the promises have run waste; I have not drawn from them and been satisfied. It brings to my remembrance, as my own sin, so your affliction;—from the same hand, of the same kind, with the same design of good to us. O, that I could improve my present retirement in considering what the Lord my God requires of me! We should learn this by all our disappointments, not to boast of to-morrow, for we know not what a day may bring forth. It is no hard usage that I should be diminished whilst others are increased; for do not all things come alike to all? Nay, as many as our heavenly Father *loveth* he rebukes and chastens, and though it be a mighty hand, and therefore good reason why I should humble myself under it, yet it is the hand of a *Father*, which, whilst it is on to afflict, is under to support; and death itself shall not separate us from the love which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory for ever. When I have been a few days from home, I begin to think myself a wanderer from my place, as a bird that wanders from her nest. I wish I do not settle on the lees, being so much a stranger to that sojourning state which Abraham was

in in the land of promise. We are changing our servants; all changes are troublesome; this world, therefore, is a troublesome world, because so full of changes: sufficient to every day is the evil thereof."

A letter which she wrote to one of whom she heard something scandalous, taking care it should not be known from whom it came, may be inserted here.

"Mr. ———

"To ease myself, and, if it might be, to do you good, is my design in writing this. I having joined with you in gospel ordinances, cannot hear of your fall without fear and trembling. Very loth I was to believe it; speak of it I may not, 'tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon;' but first to yourself, whom I cannot expect to inform of that which you know not, but remind you of that you do know, that the prevailing love of God in the heart will no way consist with the love and liking of any sin. Whoever they be that name the name of Christ and do not depart from iniquity, I am sure their profession will carry them but a little way, at farthest but to heaven's gates: dissembled piety is double iniquity, and shall receive greater damnation. I do wonder how, and with what face, any one can appear before God, among his people, in solemn ordinances, that is yet resolved to go on in sin. Consider, you may deceive us that join with you, but not him that searcheth the heart, and knows what is in man. Is your spot the spot of God's children? It is true David fell foully, and I fear some have encouraged themselves in sin by his example; but let them consider it was once, in an hour of temptation, and it cost him dear. He came home by weeping cross, and I believe he would not for his kingdom have repeated the sin: after which he had scarce a good day. Wherefore is his sad fall recorded, but that all people may take heed of entering into temptation, and watch and pray that they may not? Is it a light matter that religion is so much reflected on? By your means the blessed name of Jesus Christ suffers. People say, Yea, they are all alike; whereas, God knows, as you have opened the mouth of the wicked, you have saddened the hearts of the godly, who mourn in secret for your miscarriages. May I advise you, nay, doth not the word of God command you, to remember whence you are fallen, and to repent; and let your repentance be public, as your fall hath been. There is yet hope if you return, but none if you go on: there is a fountain opened for poor sinners, to wash from sin and from uncleanness, but then you must look up to him whom you have pierced, and mourn. I know not what frame you are in, but God knows. This comes from the true love I bear to your soul, and the interest of religion,

which greatly suffers: offences do come, and will come, but woe to them by whom they come! Can there be baser ingratitude than to make him suffer by us who suffered so much for us? Do you thus requite the Lord? Dare any come to the table of the Lord for a cloak to vile practices? O profound madness! Is the holy Jesus a pattern of sin? Is Christianity a bare name? No, I will never believe it! What shall I say? Return unto the Lord, for you have fallen into iniquity: take with you these words, and say, *Take away all iniquity*, Hosea xiv. 2. I shall cease speaking to you, but not praying for you, who am

"Your soul's friend."

When sickness had long been in the family (and breach upon breach made) of a near neighbour and relation, she thus writes:—"The hand of God is going out against us; his providence shows his controversy to be great and long, and something more than ordinary. Judgments begin with us, the distemper spreads, and where it may end we know not; the dregs of the cup may yet be reserved for ourselves: I cannot say but I have had fair warning, and yet I have not got above the fears of death, that king of terrors. It is a great attainment: I can think of nothing future with so much certainty as dying; that great work, *once to die*."

When her children had the small-pox she writes:—"They and we are in good hands; it is a great mercy we are not singled out for some uncommon and extraordinary judgment, but visited with the same that many are tried with. I hope that you will entreat for us that this affliction may not be lost."

Writing the news of one who died suddenly, she added,—"What need have we to be ready to die at very short warning! Desire sister Radford, though she be abroad from her family, yet being there where she is useful, not to be too thoughtful of home, as I myself have sometimes been, when I found afterwards that I was not so much missed, as through my pride, and minding my own things, I thought I was."

After the death of her sister Radford she thus wrote to her sister Savage:—"The good tidings we have had of your safe delivery, (which was the next day after her sister Radford's death,) and that God was to you a present help, and both root and branch are spared, mixeth our song of judgment with mercy, and God hath set the one over against the other. We have been continued together many years, and after the crown fell from our head,* God let us alone another year also, but now the knot is broken. O for a sense of divine displeasure in this dispensation, and wisdom to spell out the meaning thereof! *for all this his anger is not turned away, but*

* An allusion to her father's death.

his hand is stretched out still. Dear sister Tylston* is very weak. We want our Aaron, the priest of the family, who would have stood between the living and the dead, that the plague might be stayed. God is angry, and yet I am not humbled as I should be under the mighty hand of God; and a mighty hand indeed it is. O, pray for me that I may be more so! I find there is no putting off the great work of closing with Christ till sickness and death come, for that is a very unfit time. And when it is done I see it is not easy then to have the comfort of it."

And in another:—"This is a loud-speaking controversy, and where it will end God only knows; but he is no less wise and good than ever he was, however it is. This shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Pray, pray hold up the hands and the heart, and you may do more than I."

And a little after:—"That you may know the better how to direct your prayers and praises, this comes to acquaint you that we are not consumed, and it is of the Lord's mercies it is so. The Lord will perfect that which concerns us; and what is that but our eternal happiness mostly? if that be sure, all is well. We have our infirmities, and is this our rest? If concerning this life only we had had hope, it had not been much worth."

When she had not occasion given her by providences to write such lines as these to her friends and relations, then she would fill her letters (and abundance of them are so filled) with the heads of sermons she had heard last, giving a concise account of the substance of them, and especially what in them did most affect her, and do her good. This practice would never leave us unfurnished with matter for pious and profitable letters, and might help very much to spread the savour of the knowledge of Christ.

A CATALOGUE OF SINS FOR HELP IN THE CONFESSION OF SIN.

"Who can understand his errors!"

ORIGINAL corruption; actual transgressions; sins of ignorance; sins against knowledge; sins in infancy, childhood, youth, and riper age; sins in the single state; sins in the married state; sins in unregeneracy; backslidings; sins against God, my neighbour, my own soul. More particularly,

Ignorance of God, aggravated by the enjoyment of the means of knowledge; atheism, questioning his being or providence; hard thoughts of God, forgetfulness of him; sins against the first commandment, which requires to know, love, and believe in God, to fear him, and trust in him; giving that glory to any other which is due to him alone, in re-

ference to God's worship, natural or revealed; neglect of prayer and praise; negligences in them; lothness to be beholden to God for any thing; ascribing the glory of deliverances to somewhat else, not to God.

Drowsiness; vain thoughts in prayer; sins in reference to God's Word; not hearing or reading it with attention, reverence, seriousness, but slightly and cursorily. Sabbath sins; want of preparation for it; slothfulness on that day; omission of sabbath duties; doing my own works; vain thoughts; weariness of the sabbath. Sacrament sins; baptismal covenant oft renewed, but forgotten, not improved. Covenants against particular sins, to particular duties broken, especially as to the spending of some time daily in converse with God, by meditation; neglect of that great duty, both solemn and occasional, and of daily self-examination; backslidings as to this from wonted care. Slovenly performance of closet work; taking the name of God in vain; spiritual pride and ostentation in religious duties; pride in apparel, in words, in thoughts, self-conceit, self-love; flesh-pleasing, gratifying inordinate appetites, the body fed, the soul starved; excess in food, sleep, recreations; God is not in all my thoughts, lying down and rising up; my aims every morning not actually set right at God's glory; the great gospel laws of repentance and faith broken; time, precious time, mispent; time of youth not improved; love of ease and pleasure; disobedience to governors; despising others better than myself; doing that which was good to be seen of men; no relation filled up with duty; many that I might have done good to dead and gone; others that I might have got good by; the opportunity past, sermons lost; reproofs lost and forgotten; anger and bitterness; unchaste thoughts or affections; abuse of lawful things; loving, and overloving; doing any wrong to any person, whether knowingly or ignorantly; uncharitableness; giving grudgingly; not devising liberal things; lying through heedlessness; impatience of reproof; slandering, or reporting of slanders; speaking evil of others; hearing evil spoken with delight; discontent; covetousness; love of this present world, appearing in worldly thoughts; many, constant, welcome; envying, and inordinate affections; neglect of reproving and watching over others; sinful bashfulness; little grief for others' sins; sin sits light; love of Christ little thought of; signal mercies ill-requited for; afflictions not improved; brought low, raised up again, yet not amended; no attainments made in grace answerable to the means I enjoy; great carnality; oppositions to the Spirit's motions of late and heretofore; prevailing dejections and despondencies of spirit. *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

* Catharine, the wife of John Tylston, M. D.

HEADS OF MERCIES FOR HELP IN THANKSGIVING.

Common Mercies.

A BEING, and that rational; mercies of my conception, birth, nursing, infancy, rational faculties, natural understanding, limbs and senses, preservation in the cradle, at the breast, sustenance, clothes, food, not only for necessity, but for delight; parents continued; other relations provided to take up before they forsook; mercies at school; a capacity to learn, a memory able to retain truths; continuance almost twenty-one years in the world; divine patience exercised; scarce a day's sickness in all this time, as I remember; daily bread; varieties; drink hath not been tears. Much comfort in the single estate, in the married estate; suitableness in relations; extraordinary deliverance when in the valley of the shadow of death, July 28, 1689.

Less common Mercies.

Godly education; daily instructions; special means for getting of knowledge; wise and seasonable reproofs; holy ordinances duly administered; admitted to the Lord's supper about fifteen years old; the example of godly parents; line upon line; Sabbath; some measure of knowledge.

Special Mercies.

Election from eternity; free, effectual calling sometimes in youth; strivings of the Spirit; checks of conscience; admonitions; quickenings from the Word; strength vouchsafed to perform duties; victory over temptations; comfort in sorrow; preventing mercies; taught to pray; answers to prayers for relations in working good for them.

Family Mercies.

The house preserved from fire when begun very near, June, 1690; the family begun to be built up; children preserved from the perils of infancy. Two of my near relations' children taken off quickly by death; mine, of the same age, spared. March 27, 1693.—One child of a dear friend burnt to death; another neighbour's child drowned lately, yet mine preserved; one of the children preserved from a dangerous fall down a pair of stairs into the street; the recovery of both of them from the small-pox, May, 1695. January, 1695-6.—Both recovered from a malignant fever when they had been given up; at the same time two servants brought low by it, yet raised up. Ourselves preserved from the same distemper when two dear relations, mother and daughter, fell by it: wonder of mercy not to be forgotten.

National mercies.

Great plenty; no famine; deliverance from the French fleet at sea, 1692, and victory over them, the wind turning for us; London delivered from the earthquake the same year when some kingdoms have been overturned and ruined by them.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HER LAST SICKNESS.

SHE was at public ordinances both morning and evening on the Lord's day, August 29: she had been with her relations, who were ill the day before, and that day also. Though the distemper had seized her a day before, yet she kept it to herself, as loth to be taken off by it from her work and duty. But that night it appeared that she was under the violent assault of a high fever, the alarm of which she received with her usual evenness and composure of spirit; and though she seemed from her first arrest to have received the sentence of death within herself, yet she was not at all disturbed at it, but spake of her circumstances with much cheerfulness. She was exceedingly afflicted with pain in her head, which quite deprived her of rest, and sleep departed from her eyes.

On Monday she sat up most of the day, spoke of her spiritual state with great humility and self-diffidence, repenting of sin, yet rejoicing in Christ Jesus: she said she was afraid of saying too much of her hope and comfort, because the heart is deceitful.

All that week she continued worse, (notwithstanding all means used,) but kept in a very patient, submissive, heavenly frame. When asked how she did, she answered, "Better than I deserve." Often said, "I know whom I have trusted." She desired to have the beginning of Isaiah xliii. read and opened to her; that Scripture which Mr. Bilney the martyr supported himself with,—*When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.* She desired pardon for her omissions in the duty of her relations. The following sentences she uttered:

"I am not weary of living, but I am weary of sinning: I would live as Christ lives, and where Christ lives, and that I am sure will be heaven."

"There are many passages in the Psalms not so proper for us but at such a time as this; as that, *My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.*"

"Let none think the worse of religion, nor of our family worship, for the afflictions that are in our families, nor have a hard thought of God, for however it be, yet *God is good.*"

When her pain and extremity were great, she said, "I know the great God can do me no wrong: who would desire to go so many steps back which

must some time or other be gone over again, when now I have but one stile more and I shall be at home?"

"I have hope in my death, for Christ hath said, *Because I live, ye shall live also.*"

"I have distrusted God, and am ashamed of it, for God is truth."

"Now for a promise."

"I hope this is no surprise."

"You are miserable comforters, but Jesus Christ is my abiding portion."

"I shall now be gathered to my people, and I have loved those that are godly, both poor and rich."

"Blessed be God for the Scriptures now."

Towards Saturday night she grew delirious; yet even then it was evident her heart was upon nothing so much as God, and the things of her soul; speak-

ing often with a smiling cheerful countenance of psalms of praise and hymns of joy.

While she was under this disturbance she often recollected herself with this word,—"*Here is nothing but Tahu and Bohu*, (referring to Genesis i. 2.) confusion and emptiness, but it will not be so long."

After eight days' conflict with her distemper, on Monday, September 6, 1697, between the hours of seven and eight in the morning, she fell asleep in the Lord.

She was buried September 8, in St. Bridget's church, attended to the grave with abundance of true mourners, with whom her memory is and will be very precious.

Mr. Samuel Lawrence* preached her funeral sermon that evening at her brother's meeting-place, on Job vii. 16. *I would not live always.*

* See an account of this excellent divine in this volume.