

stant; it is not my fault it now flies away, it is owing to circumstances.

"Monday, June.—I am at this present time in an odd state; I am like a ship put to sea without a pilot; I feel my heart and mind so overburdened. I want some one to lean upon.

(Written on a bright summer's morning.)

"Is there not a ray of perfection midst the sweets of this morning? I do think there is something perfect from which all good flows.

"June 20th.—If I have long to live in this world may I bear misfortunes with fortitude; do what I can to alleviate the sorrows of others; exert what power I have to increase happiness; try to govern my passions by reason, and adhere strictly to what I think right.

"July 7th.—I have seen several things in myself and others I have never before remarked; but I have not tried to improve myself; I have given way to my passions and let them have command over me. I have known my faults and have not corrected them, and now I am determined I will once more try, with redoubled ardor, to overcome my wicked inclinations. I must not flirt; I must not be out of temper with the children; I must not contradict without a cause; I must not mump when my sisters are liked and I am not; I must not allow myself to be angry; I must not exaggerate, which I am inclined to; I must not give way to luxury; I must not be idle in mind; I must try to give way to every good feeling and overcome every bad. I will see what I can do: if I had but perseverance, I could do all that I wish; I will try. I have lately been too satirical, so as to hurt sometimes; remember, it is a fault to hurt others.

"8th.—A much better day, though many faults.

"10th.—Some poor people were here; I do not think I gave them what I did with a good heart. I am inclined to give away; but for a week past, owing to not having much money, I have been mean and extravagant. Shameful!

Whilst I live may I be generous; it is my nature, and I will not overcome so good a feeling. I am inclined to be extravagant and that leads to meanness, for those who will throw away a good deal are apt to mind giving a little.

"11th.—I am in a most idle mind, and inclined to have an indolent, dissipated day; but I will try to overcome it and see how far I can. I am well; oh most inestimable of comforts! Happy, happy I, to be so well! how good, how virtuous ought I to be! May what I have suffered be a lesson to me, to feel for those who are ill, and alleviate their sorrows as far as lies in my power; let it teach me never to forget the blessings I enjoy. I ought never to be unhappy. Look back at this time last year; how ill I was, how miserable! yet I was supported through it. God will support through the suffering he inflicts. If I were devotional, I should fall on my knees and be most grateful for the blessings I enjoy;—a good father, one whom I dearly love, sisters formed after my own heart, friends whom I admire, and good health which gives a relish to all. Company to dinner; I must beware of being a flirt, it is an abominable character; I hope I shall never be one, and yet I fear I am one now a little. Be careful not to talk at random. Beware, and see how well I can get through this day, without one foolish action! If I do pass this day without one foolish action, it is the first I ever passed so. If I pass a day with only a few foolish actions I may think it a good one.

"25th.—This book is quite a little friend to my heart; it is next to communicating my feelings to another person. I would not but write in it for something, for it is most comfortable to read it over and see the different workings of my heart and soul.

"30th.—Pride and vanity are too much the incentives to most of the actions of men. They produce a love of admiration, and in thinking of the opinions of others we are too apt to forget the monitor within. We should first look to ourselves, and try to make ourselves virtuous, and then pleas-

ing. Those who are truly virtuous not only do themselves good, but they add to the good of all. All have a portion entrusted to them for the general good, and those who cherish and preserve it are blessings to society at large; and those who do not, become a curse. It is wonderfully ordered, how in acting for our own good we promote the good of others. My idea of religion is, not for it to unfit us for the duties of this life, like a nun who leaves them for prayer and thanksgiving, but I think it should stimulate and capacitate us to perform these duties properly. Seeing my father low this evening, I have done all I could to make him comfortable; I feel it one of my first duties; I hope he will always find in me a most true and affectionate daughter.

"August 1st.—I have done little to-day, I am so very idle. Instead of improving I fear I go back. My inclinations lead me to be an idle, flirting, worldly girl. I see what would be acting right, but I have neither activity nor perseverance in what I think right. I am like one setting out on a journey; if I set out on the wrong road, and do not try to recover the right one before I have gone far, I shall most likely lose my way FOREVER, and every step I take the more difficult shall I find it to return; therefore the temptation will be greater to go on, till I get to destruction. On the contrary, if now, whilst I am innocent of any great faults, I turn into the right path, I shall soon feel more and more contented every step I take. Trifles occupy me far too much, such as dress, &c., &c. I find it easier to acknowledge my vices than my follies.

"6th.—I have a cross to-night. I had very much set my mind on going to the oratorio, the Prince is to be there, and by all accounts it will be quite a grand sight, and there will be the finest music; but if my father does not like me to go much as I wish it I will give it up with pleasure, if it be in my power, without a murmur. I went to the oratorio; I enjoyed it but spoke sadly at random: what a bad habit!

"Aug. 12th.—I do not know if I shall not soon be rather

religious, because I have thought lately what a support it is through life; it seems so delightful to depend on a superior Power for all that is good; it is at least always having the bosom of a friend open to us, to rest all our cares and sorrows upon; and what must be our feelings to imagine that friend perfect, and guiding all and everything as it should be guided. I think anybody who had real faith could never be unhappy; it appears the only certain source of support and comfort in this life, and what is best of all it draws to virtue, and if the idea be ever so ill-founded that leads to that great object, why should we shun it? Religion has been misused and corrupted: that is no reason why religion itself is not good.

"15th.—For a few days past I have been in a worldly state, dissipated, a want of thought, idle, relaxed and stupid, all outside, no inside. I feel I am a contemptible fine lady. May I be preserved from continuing so, is the ardent prayer of my *good* man, but my *evil* man tells me I shall pray in vain. I will try. I fear for myself. I feel in the course of a little time I shall be all outsidefrillery, vain, proud, conceited. I could use improper words at myself, but my *good* man will not let me. But I am good in something; it is wicked to despair of myself; it is the way to make me what I desire not to be. I hope I shall always be virtuous; can I be really wicked? I may be so, if I do not overcome my first weak inclinations. I wish I had more solidity and less fluidity in my disposition. I feel my own weakness and insufficiency to bear the evils and rubs of life. I must try by every stimulus in my power to strengthen myself both bodily and mentally; it can only be done by activity and perseverance."

How beautiful is this deliberate stepping forward of the young and ardent spirit into the doorway of eternal

happiness! "I will try what prayer can do," said Elizabeth Gurney; and she was so well satisfied with the result that prayer became her staff in life and her pillow in death.

Soon after this time a Quaker preacher from America, named William Savery, visited Norwich, and his ministry had the effect of fanning the secretly burning embers of piety into an open flame. This important event is thus described by one of Elizabeth's sisters:—

"On that day we seven sisters sat, as usual, in a row under the gallery (the speakers' seat,) at Meeting; I sat by Betsey. William Savery was there—we liked having Yearly Meeting Friends come to preach; it was a little change. Betsey was generally rather restless at Meeting; and on this day I remember her very smart boots were a great amusement to me; they were purple, laced with scarlet. At last William Savery began to preach. His voice and manner were arresting, and we all liked the sound. Her attention became fixed. At last I saw her begin to weep, and she became a good deal agitated. As soon as meeting was over I have a remembrance of her making her way to the men's side of the meeting, and, having found my father, she asked him if she might dine with Mr. Savery, at the Grove, (the residence of an uncle,) to which he soon consented, though rather surprised by the request. We went home as usual, and, for a wonder, wished to go again in the afternoon. I have not the same clear remembrance of this meeting, but the next scene that has fastened itself on my memory is our return home in the carriage. Betsey sat in the middle and astonished us all by the great feeling she showed. She wept most of the way home. The next morning William Savery came to breakfast, prophesying of the high and important calling she would be led unto. What she went through in her own mind I cannot say, but the results were most pow-

erful, and most evident. From that day her love of pleasure and of the world seemed gone."

The description from the inner side is as follows:

"*Sunday, February 4th, 1798.*—This morning I went to meeting, though but poorly, because I wished to hear an American Friend named William Savery. Much passed there of a very interesting nature. I have had a faint light spread over my mind, at least I think it is something of that kind, owing to having been much with, and heard much excellence from one who appears to me a true Christian. It has caused me to feel a little religion. My imagination has been worked upon, and I fear all that I felt will go off. I *fear* it now though at first I was frightened that a plain Quaker should have made so deep an impression on me; but how truly prejudiced in one to think that because good came from a Quaker I should be led away by enthusiasm and folly. But I hope I am now free from such fears. I wish the state of enthusiasm I am in may last, for to-day I have felt *that there is a God*; I have been devotional, and my mind has been led away from the follies that it is mostly wrapt up in. We had much serious conversation; in short, what he said and what I felt was like a refreshing shower falling upon earth that had been dried up for ages. It has not made me unhappy: I have felt ever since humble. I have longed for virtue. I hope to be truly virtuous; to let sophistry fly from my mind; not to be enthusiastic and foolish, but only to be so far religious as will lead to virtue. There seems nothing so little understood as religion.

"*6th.*—My mind has by degrees flown from religion. I rode to Norwich and had a very serious ride there; but meeting and being looked at with apparent admiration by some officers brought on vanity, and I came home as full of the world as I went to town full of heaven.

"*Sunday, 11th.*—It is very different to this day week (a

day never to be forgotten while memory lasts). I have been to meeting this morning. To-day I felt all my old irreligious feelings. My object shall be to search, to try to do right, and if I am mistaken it is not my fault; but the state I am now in makes it difficult to act. What little religion I have felt has been owing to my giving way quietly and humbly to my feelings. But the more I reason upon it the more I get into a labyrinth of uncertainty, and my mind is so much inclined to both scepticism and enthusiasm that if I argue and doubt I shall be a total sceptic; if on the contrary I give way to my feelings, and, as it were, wait for religion, I may be led away. But I hope that will not be the case; at all events, religion true and uncorrupted is of all comforts the greatest; it is the first stimulus to virtue; it is a support under every affliction. I am sure it is better to be so in an enthusiastic degree than not to be so at all, for it is a delightful enthusiasm.'

Soon after this she visited London, and spent seven weeks in the Metropolis. She mingled freely in the gaieties of city life, went to balls, theaters, social gatherings, etc., and at other times attended the meetings of her own sober, religious society. It was a crucial test for her of the rival claims of the World and Religion. She tried both, and freely and heartily chose the latter. In after life she esteemed this experience of great value to her. She again met her American evangelist at this time, and thus records her impressions and progress:

"*March 17th, 1798.*—May I never forget the impression William Savery has made on my mind! As much as I can say is, I thank God for having sent at least a glimmering of light, through him, into my heart, which I hope with care,

and keeping it from the many draughts and winds of this life, may not be blown out, but become a large, brilliant flame that will direct to that haven where will be joy without sorrow, and all will be comfort. I have faith! how much is that to gain! Not all the pleasures in this world can equal that heavenly treasure. May I grow more and more virtuous, follow the path I should go in, and not fear to acknowledge the God whom I worship. I will try, and I do hope to do what is right. . . . May I never lose the little religion I now have; but if I cannot feel religion and devotion I must not despair: for if I am truly warm and earnest in the cause, it will come one day. My idea is that true humility and lowliness of heart is the first grand step towards true religion. I fear and tremble for myself, but I must humbly look to the Author of all that is good and great, and, I may say, humbly pray, that He may take me as a sheep strayed from His flock, and once more let me enter the fold of His glory. I feel there is a God and Immortality; happy, happy thought! May it never leave me, and if it should may I remember I have *felt* that there is a God and Immortality."

"*April 21st.*—I am glad I do not feel Earlham at all dull after the bustle of London; on the contrary a better relish for the sweet innocence and beauties of Nature. I hope I may say I do look 'through Nature up to Nature's God.' I go every day to see poor Rob, (a servant in declining health living in a cottage in the Park,) who I think will not live. I once talked to him about dying, and asked him if he would like me to read to him in the Testament. I told him I felt such faith in the blessings of immortality that I pitied not his state. It is an odd speech to make to a dying man. I hope to be able to comfort him in his dying hours.

"I gave some things to some poor people to-day; but it is not there I am particularly virtuous, as I am only following my natural disposition. I should be far more so if I never spoke against any person, which I do too often. I think I

am improved since I was last at home, my mind is not so fly-away. I hope it will never be so again. We are all governed by our feelings. Now the reason why religion is far more likely to keep you in the path of virtue than any theoretical plan is that you feel it, and your heart is wrapt up in it; it acts as a furnace on your character; it refines it; it purifies it; whereas principles of your own making are without kindling to make the fire hot enough to answer its purpose. I think a dream I have had so odd I will write it down. Before I mention my dream I will give an account of the state of my mind from the time I was fourteen years old. I had very sceptical, or deistical principles. I seldom or never thought of religion, and altogether I was a negatively good character: having naturally good dispositions I had not much to combat with; I gave way freely to the weaknesses of youth. I was flirting, idle, rather proud and vain, till the time I was seventeen, when I found I wanted a better, a greater stimulus to virtue than I had, as I was wrapt up in trifles. I felt my mind capable of better things, but I could not exert it, till several of my friends, without knowing my state wished I would read books on Christianity; but I said, till I felt the want of religion myself I would not read books of that kind, but if ever I did would judge clearly for myself by reading the New Testament, and when I had seen for myself I would *then* see what others said. About this time I believe I never missed a week, or a few nights, without dreaming I was nearly being washed away by the sea, sometimes in one way, sometimes in another; and I felt all the terror of being drowned, or hope of being saved. At last I dreamed it so often that I told many of the family what a strange dream I had, and how near I was being lost. After I had gone on in this way for some months William Savery came to Norwich. I had begun to read the New Testament with reflections of my own, and he suddenly, as it were, opened my eyes to see religion; but again they almost closed. I went on dreaming the dream,

The day when I felt that I had really and truly got true and real faith, that night I dreamed the sea was coming as usual to wash me away, but I was beyond its reach; beyond its powers to wash me away. Since that night I do not remember to have dreamed the dream.

Odd! It did not strike me at the time so odd; but now it does. All I can say is, I admire it, I am glad I have had it, and I have a sort of faith in it; it ought, I think, to make my faith steady. It may be the work of chance, but I do not think it is, for it is so odd not having dreamed it since. What a blessed thought, to think it comes from Heaven. May I be capable of acting as I ought to act: not being drowned in the ocean of the world, but permitted to mount above its waves, and remain a steady and faithful servant of the God whom I worship. I may take this dream in what light I like, but I must be careful of superstition, as many, many a e the minds that are led away by it; believe only in what I can comprehend or feel. Don't, don't be led away by enthusiasm; but don't fear. I feel myself under the protection of One who alone is able to guide me in the path in which I ought to go.

"29th.—The human mind is apt to fly from one extreme to another: and why not mine like others? I certainly seem to be on the road to a degree of enthusiasm, but I own myself at a loss how to act. If I act as they would wish me, I should not humbly give way to the feelings of religion; I should dwell on philosophy, and depend more on my own reason than anything else. On the contrary, if I give way to religious feelings to which I am inclined, (and I own I believe much in inspiration,) I feel confident that I should find true humility and humble waiting on the Almighty, the only way of feeling an inward sense of the beauties and the comforts of religion. It spreads a sweet veil over the evils of life; it is to me the first of feelings. I own my dream rather leads me to believe in and try to follow the path I would go in. But I should think my wisest plan of

conduct would be warmly to encourage my feelings of devotion, and to keep as nearly as I can to what I think right, and the doctrines of the Testament—not at present to make sects the subject of my meditations, but to do as I think right, and not alter my opinions from conformity to any one, gay or plain.

“*May 8th.*—This morning, being alone, I think it a good opportunity to look into myself, to see my present state, and to regulate myself. At this time the first object of my mind is religion. It is the most constant subject of my thoughts and of my feelings. I am not yet on what I call a steady foundation. The next feeling that at this present fills my heart is benevolence and affection to many, but great want of charity, want of humility, want of activity. My inclinations lead me I hope to virtue; my passions are I hope in a pretty good state; I want to set myself in order, for much time is lost and many evils committed by not having some regular plan of conduct. I make these rules for myself:—

First,—Never lose any time;—I do not think that lost which is spent in amusement or recreation. some time every day; but always be in the habit of being employed.

Second,—Never err the least in truth.

Third,—Never say any ill thing of a person when I can say a good thing;—not only *speaking* charitably, but *feeling* so.

Fourth,—Never be irritable, or unkind to any body.

Fifth,—Never indulge myself in luxuries that are not necessary.

Sixth,—Do all things with consideration, and when my path to act right is most difficult, feel confidence in that Power which alone is able to assist me, and exert my own powers as far as they go.

“*19th.*—Altogether I think I have had a satisfactory day I had a good lesson of French, and read much in Epictetus. Saw poor Rob, and enjoyed the beauties of nature which

now shine forth; each day some new beauty arrives. I love the beauty of the country; it does the mind good. I love it more than I used to do. I love retirement and quiet much more since my journey to London. How little I thought six months ago I should be so much altered; I am since then, I hope, altered much for the better. My heart may rise in thankfulness to that Omnipotent Power that has allowed my eyes to be opened, in some measure, to see the light of truth, and to feel the comfort of religion. I hope to be capable of giving up my all, if it be required of me, to serve the almighty with my whole heart.

“*21st (May).*—To-day is my birth-day. I am eighteen years old! How many things have happened since I was fourteen; the last year has been the happiest I have experienced for some time.

“*23rd.*—I have just been reading a letter from my father in which he makes me the offer of going to London. What a temptation! But I believe it much better for me to be where I am, quietly and soberly to keep a proper medium of feelings, and not be extravagant any way.

“*24th.*—I wrote to my father this morning. I must be most careful not to be led by others, for I know at this time I have so great a liking for plain Friends, that, my affections being so much engaged, my mind may be also by them. I hope, as I now find myself in so wavering a state, that I may judge without prejudice of Barclay's Apology.

“*27th.*—I must be careful of allowing false scruples to enter my mind. I have not yet been long enough a religionist to be a sectarian. I hope by degrees to obtain true faith; but I expect I shall lose what I gain if I am led to actions that I may repent of; remember, and never forget my own enthusiastic, feeling nature. It requires caution and extreme prudence to go on as I should do. In the afternoon I went to old St. Peter's and heard a good sermon. The common people seemed very much occupied and wrapt up in the service, which I was pleased to see. Afterwards