

## CHAPTER EIGHTH.

### RISING UP THE MOUNTAINS.

"*Eighth Month, 29th, 1829.*—Our wedding-day! twenty-nine years since we were married! My texts for the morning are applicable:—'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'—'We walk by faith, not by sight.' As far as we can judge from external appearances, mine has not been a common life. He who seeth in secret only knows the unutterable depths and sorrows I have had to pass through, as well as, at other times, I may almost say, joys 'inexpressible and full of glory.' I have now had so many disappointments in life that my hopes, which have so long lived strong that I should see much brighter days in it, begin a little to subside, and my desire is more entirely to look beyond the world for that which can alone satisfy me; and not to have my heart so much set upon the things of this life; or even on those persons nearest me; but more set upon the life to come, and upon Him who is faithful and will be *all in all* to His dependent ones. At the same time I desire faithfully to perform all my relative duties; and may my heart be kept in tender love to all near me.

"*Upton, Tenth Month, 21st.*—Something has occurred which has brought me into conflict of mind; how far to restrain young persons in their pleasures, and how far to leave them at liberty. The longer I live the more difficult do I see education to be; more particularly as it respects

the religious restraints that we put upon our children. To do enough and not too much is a most delicate and important point. I begin seriously to doubt whether as it respects the peculiar scruples of Friends, it is not better quite to leave sober-minded young persons to judge for themselves. Then the question arises, When does this age arrive? I have such a fear that in so much mixing religion with those things which are not delectable we may turn them from the thing itself. I see, feel, and know that where these scruples are adopted from principle they bring a blessing with them; but where they are only adopted out of conformity to the views of others I have very serious doubts whether they are not a stumbling-block.

"On First-day we were rather suddenly summoned to Plashet House to attend Anna Golder (aunt to my faithful Chrissy) who had charge of the house. She was one of the lowly, retired, humble walkers before the Lord; she was suddenly taken very ill, and died in half an hour after her niece got there. It was apparently a departure without sting to mind or body; as far, therefore, as it respected her, all was peace. But to myself it was different. I arrived there after dark, drove once more to the dear old place,—no one to meet me but the poor man who lived in the house, no dog to bark, nor any life, nor sound, as used to be. Death seemed over the place, such was the silence—until I found myself upstairs in the large and once cheerful and full house. When I entered the bed-room there lay the corpse. Circumstances combined to touch some very tender feelings, and the inclination of my heart was to bow down upon my knees before the Lord, thankful, surely, for the release of the valued departed—but deeply and affectingly impressed with such a change!—that once lively, cheerful home left desolate—the abode of death—and two or three watchers. It brought, as my visits to Plashet often have done, the hymn to my mind,—

'Lord, why is this? I trembling cried!'

Then again I find I can do nothing but bow, trust, and depend upon that Power that has, I believe, thus seen meet to visit us in judgment, as well as in mercy.

"31st.—Since I last wrote I have been called to another death-bed scene; our old and valued Roman Catholic friends, the Pitchfords, have lost their eldest son, a sweet, good boy. I felt drawn in love, I trust I may say Christian love, to be much with them during their trial; I felt it right to leave my family and spend First-day evening with them, when all hope of the child's life was given up. I had not only to sympathize with them in their deep sorrow, but to pour forth my prayer in their behalf. The next day I was with the poor child when he died, and was nearly the whole day devoted to them. We had a deeply interesting time after his death—my dear friends themselves, all their children, their mother, sister and old nurse. My mouth was remarkably opened in prayer and praises, indeed all day at their house something of a holy influence appeared to be over us: a fresh, living proof that what God has cleansed we are not to call or feel common or unclean. It surely matters not by what name we call ourselves, or what outward *means* we may think right to use, if our hearts are but influenced by the love of Christ, and cleansed by His baptism, and strengthened by His spirit to prove our faith by love and good works. With ceremonies, or without ceremonies, if there be but an establishment upon the Rock of Ages, all will be well. Although I am of opinion the more our religion is pure, simple, and devoid of these outward forms, the better and safer for us, at the same time I do earnestly desire a more full union amongst all Christians, less judging one another, and a general acknowledgement in heart, judgment, and word of the universality of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Amidst Elizabeth Fry's numerous avocations, she found time to select a passage of Scripture for every day in the year. She endeavored to combine in it that which is 'profit-

able for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;' and in a little preface she urged the importance of so seeking to appropriate the truths contained in it, with a heart uplifted, that the blessed Spirit might apply the word; and concludes, 'The rapid and ceaseless passing away of the days and weeks, as well as the months of the year, as numbered at the head of each day's text, it is hoped may prove a memento of the speed with which time is hastening on, and remind the reader of the importance of passing it as a preparation for eternity, in the service of God and for the benefit of mankind.' As soon as her little work was finished and printed she began its distribution; many thousands of copies did she give away, being amply supplied from the stores of affluence, with the right means of dispersing them. Great numbers were otherwise circulated. Where have not these little Text-books penetrated, from the monarch's gilded hall to the felon's dungeon?"

Among the numerous instances of their usefulness which came to light the following is related.

"Two or three years after their publication a text-book bound in red leather, which she had given to a little grandson, fell out of his pocket at the Lynn Mart, where he had gone to visit the lions. He was a very little boy, and much disconcerted at the loss of his book for his name was in it, and it was 'the gift of his grandmother' written by herself. The transaction was almost forgotten, when, nearly a year afterwards, Richard Coxe, the clergyman of Watlington, a parish about eight miles from Lynn, gave the following history of the lost book. He had been sent for to the wife of a man living on a wild common, on the outskirts of his parish, a notorious character, between poacher and rat-catcher. The message was brought to the clergyman by the medical man who attended her, and who, after describing her as being most strangely altered, added 'you will find the lion become

a lamb,'—and so it proved. She who had been wild and rough, whose language had been violent and her conduct untamed, lay on a bed of exceeding suffering, humble, patient, and resigned.

"Her child had picked up the text-book and carried it home as lawful spoil. Curiosity, or some feeling put into her heart by Him without whom a sparrow falleth not to the ground, had induced her to read it; the word had been blessed to her and her understanding opened to receive the gospel of truth. She could not describe the process, but the results were there. Sin had in her sight become hateful; blasphemy was no longer heard from her lips. She drew from under her pillow her 'precious book,' her 'dear little book,' which had been the means of leading her soul to Him who 'taketh away sin.' She soon afterwards died in peace and joyful hope."

In 1830 Mrs. Fry paid a religious visit to parts of Suffolk and Norfolk and attended the Quarterly Meeting at Ipswich. In the fall of the same year she went to Sussex to attend the Quarterly Meeting there, and some of its particular Meetings. The Yearly Meeting is thus described:

"*Sixth Month, 7th.*—I had a difficult path to tread during the Yearly Meeting. I did not of course receive Friends, but went, as I was kindly asked to various houses. I could not but at times naturally feel it, after having for so many years, delighted to entertain my friends and those whom I believe to be disciples of Christ; and now, in considerable degree, to be deprived of it. But after relating my sorrows I must say that through the tender mercy of my God I have many blessings, and what is more, at times such a sweet feeling of peace that I am enabled to hope and trust that through the unbounded and unmerited mercy of God in Christ Jesus, my husband, my children, and myself

will eventually be made partakers of that salvation which comes by Christ. The state of our Society as it appeared in the Yearly Meeting, was satisfactory, and really very comforting to me; so much less stress laid upon little things, more upon matters of great importance; so much unity, good-will, and what I felt, *Christian* liberty amongst us—love appeared truly to abound, to my real refreshment. I am certainly a thorough Friend, and have inexpressible unity with the principle, but I also see room for real improvement amongst us; may it take place; I want to see less love of money, less judging others, less tattling, less dependence upon external appearance. I want to see more fruit of the Spirit in all things, more devotion of heart, more spirit of prayer, more real cultivation of mind, more enlargement of heart towards all; more tenderness towards delinquents, and above all, more of the rest, peace and liberty of the children of God!

Among the frequent testimonials received during this period was a letter accompanied by an elaborately embroidered counterpane.

"*Liverpool, Sixth Month, 23rd, 1830.*

"The Ladies Committee who visit the House of Correction at Yorkdale, near Liverpool, beg Elizabeth Fry's acceptance of a counterpane worked by the female prisoners, and trimmed with a fringe of their own making. This memorial of a class of her unhappy fellow-creatures so eminently benefited and tenderly felt for by Elizabeth Fry, will, the Committee believe, be peculiarly grateful to her, as well as being a proof of their own affectionate regard.

"Signed on behalf of the Committee by  
REBECCA CHARLEY. *Secretary.*"

From Hamburg she received an application that a copy of her likeness might be engraved for an Almanac published by Beyerink, entitled, "For that which is Beautiful and

Good." The Almanac, when published contained this passage:

"1830.—Though faithful to her duty as a wife and mother, into the night of the prison Elizabeth Fry brings the radiance of love—brings comfort to the sufferers, dries the tear of repentance, and causes a ray of hope to descend into the heart of the sinner. She teaches her that has strayed again to find the path of virtue, comes as an angel of God unto the abode of crime, and preserves for Jesus' kingdom that which appeared to be lost. Is not this indeed what may be called loving our neighbor more than one's self?"

In September of this year she made a brief religious visit in Sussex county.

From Brighton she addressed a letter to Queen Adelaide expressing her "desire that, for the good of the community, she might promote the education of the poor, the general distribution of the Scriptures, and the keeping of the Sabbath seriously, by discouraging parties &c., &c., on that day amongst the higher ranks, as the tendency of them was very injurious to the lower classes, and to the community at large."

At this fashionable resort several of the higher classes were invited to attend the mid-week meeting, which is thus described:

"To my own feelings, a remarkable time we surely had. It appeared as if we were overshadowed by the love and mercy of God our Saviour. The ministry flowed in beautiful harmony. I deeply felt the want of vocal prayer being offered, but I did not see it my place upon our Meeting assembling together, when, to my inexpressible relief, a friend

powerfully and beautifully offered up thanksgiving and prayer, which appeared to rise as incense and as an acceptable sacrifice. After a time of silence I rose with this text: 'There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; differences of administration, but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all.' In a way that it never did before the subject opened to my view whilst speaking. How did I see and endeavor to express the lively bond of union existing in the Christian church, and that the humbling, tendering influence of the love and power of Christ must lead us not to condemn our neighbors but to love all. I had to end the Meeting by praying for the King, Queen and all their subjects everywhere; for the advancement of that day when the knowledge of God and His glory would cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea; for those countries in Europe that are in a disturbed state, and that these shakings might eventually be for good. After a most solemn feeling of union the Meeting broke up."

In the spring of 1831 this most industrious and faithful messenger of love made a visit to the Quarterly Meeting of Kent. She writes—

"I was much engaged, from Meeting to Meeting; labored to encourage the low, the poor and the sorrowful, to lead to practical religion, and to shake from all outward dependencies, and to show that our principles and testimonies of a peculiar nature should not be maintained simply as a regulation amongst us, but unto the Lord, and in deep humility, in the true Christian spirit; particularly as to tithes, war, &c. I felt much peace afterwards, and in going from house to house, breaking, I trust, a little bread, spiritually, and giving thanks. It appeared *very* seasonable, though long delayed, as I have had it on my mind many months, but hitherto have been prevented by various

things; yet this appeared to be the right time; and I take the lesson home, quietly to wait for the openings of Providence, particularly in all religious services, and not to attempt to plan them too much myself.

"The kindness of Friends was great, and I received much *real* encouragement from them; some from the humble ones that did my heart good. Indeed I cannot but acknowledge, in humiliation of spirit, however any may reason on these things, and however strange that women should be sent out to preach the gospel, yet I have, in these services, partaken of joy and peace that I think I never felt, in the same degree, in any other."

"*Fifth Month, 14th, (1831).*—About three weeks ago I paid a very satisfactory visit to the Duchess of Kent and her very pleasing daughter, the Princess Victoria. William Allen went with me. We took some books on the subject of slavery, with the hope of influencing the young Princess in that important cause. We were received with much kindness and cordiality, and I felt my way open to express not only my desire that the best blessing might rest upon them, but that the young Princess might follow the example of our blessed Lord, that as she 'grew in stature she might grow in favor with God and man.' I also ventured to remind her of King Josiah who began to reign at eight years old, and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left—which seemed to be well received. Since that I thought it right to send the Duke of Gloucester my brother Joseph's work on the Sabbath, and a rather serious letter, and had a very valuable answer from him, full of feeling. I have an invitation to visit the Duchess of Gloucester next Fourth-day; may good result to them, and no harm to myself; but I feel these openings rather a weighty responsibility, and desire to be faithful, not forward. I had long felt an inclination to see the young Princess and to endeavor to throw a little weight in the right scale, seeing the very important

place that she is likely to fill. I was much pleased with her, and think her a sweet, lovely and hopeful child," (then 12 years of age.)

"*Sixth Month, 3rd.*—The Yearly Meeting has concluded this week. I was highly comforted by the good spirit manifested in it by numbers. I think I never was so much satisfied with the ground taken by Friends, leading us to maintain what we consider our testimonies upon a Scriptural and Christian ground, rather than because our forefathers maintained them. My opinion is that nothing is so likely to cause our Society to remain a living and spiritual body as its being willing to *stand open to improvement*; because it is to be supposed that as the Church generally emerges out of the dark state it was brought into, its light will shine brighter and brighter, and we, as a part of it, shall partake of this dispensation. My belief is that neither individuals, nor collective bodies should *stand still* in grace, but their light should shine brighter unto perfect day."

During this season she held some meetings among the tower classes around Barking and Dagenham, some ten miles east of London—where she spent the summer.

"*Eighth Month, 1st.*—Last evening we finished our Public Meetings in barns. I passed a humbling night. Even in our acts of obedience and devotion how evident is the mixture of infirmity, (at least so it appears to me,) and we need to look to the great offering for sin and iniquity to bear even these transactions for us. I apprehend that all would not understand me, but many who are much engaged in what we call works of righteousness will understand the reason that in the Jewish dispensation there was an offering made 'for the iniquity of their holy things.' Humiliation is my portion, though I may also say peace, in thus having given up to a service much against my inclination; and I hope thankfulness for the measure of power at times granted in them.

"*Dagenham, Eighth Month, 24th.*—Upon my return home to Dagenham this day week, in the pony chair, with little Edmund Gurney, there was a severe thunder-storm the greater part of the way, but I felt quite easy to persevere through it. But when I arrived at the Chequers Inn I thought another storm was coming and went in. We had been there but a few minutes when we saw a bright flash of lightning, followed instantaneously by a tremendous clap of thunder. Upon being asked if I was a armed I said that I certainly was, and did not doubt that an accident had happened near to us. My dear husband who was out in the tempest arrived safely, but in a few minutes a young man was carried in dead, struck by the lightning in a field close at hand. I felt our escape—yet still more the awful situation of the young man, who was a sad character; he had been at our meeting at Beacontree Heath. This awful event produced a very serious effect in the neighborhood; so much so that we believed it right to invite all the relations of the young man, (a bad set,) and the other young men of the neighborhood to meet us in the little Methodist Meeting House which ended in one more rather large Public Meeting. The event and circumstances altogether made it very solemn: it appeared to set a seal to what had passed before, in our other meetings. My belief is they have had a stirring effect in this neighborhood, but they have been very humbling to me; the whole event of this young man's awful death has much confirmed me in the belief that our concern was a right one, and tended to prepare the minds of the people to profit by such a lesson. My dear brother and sister Buxton and their Pricilla were with us at many of our Meetings.

"*27th.*—We are just about leaving this place. I have endeavored to promote the moral and religious good of the people since the Meetings by establishing libraries of tracts and books at different places, and my belief is that my humble labors have not been in vain, nor I trust will they be.

I have felt so strikingly the manner in which the kindness and love of the neighborhood has been shown to me, after thus publicly preaching amongst them; and as a poor frail woman, advocating boldly the cause of Christ, I expected rather to be despised; whereas, it is apparently just the reverse,—the clergyman and his wife almost loading us with kindness, the farmers and their wives very kind and attentive, the poor the same. I felt how sweet it is to be on good terms with them all—one day drinking tea at the parsonage, abounding with plate, elegancies and luxuries, the next day at a humble Methodist shoemaker's, they having procured a little fresh butter, that I might take tea under their roof. The contrast was great, but I can indeed see the same kind Lord over all, rich to all, and filling the hearts of His servants of very different descriptions with love to each other."

Elizabeth Fry's character, and the effects of her ministry are beautifully illustrated in the following extract from her journal while at home in Upton Lane.

"*Twelfth Month, 20th.*—I am once more favored, after being far from well, with a renewal of health and power to enter my usual engagements, public and private. Yesterday I went to town,—first attended the Newgate Committee, then the British Society, which was encouraging to me. There were many present of different denominations of Christians, and a sweet feeling of love and unity pervaded the whole. Elizabeth Dudley spoke in a lively manner, and I had to pray. There is still much ground for encouragement in the prison cause; I believe a seed is sown in it that *will* grow and flourish, I trust when some of us are laid low. It is a work that brings with it a peculiar feeling of blessing and peace; may the Most High continue to prosper it! Afterwards I went to Clapham to visit a poor, dying, converted Jew who had sent a letter to beg me to go and