

lasting light, and thy God thy glory.' I believe this will be his most blessed experience whenever our Lord takes him to Himself. I write with difficulty and in haste, but my heart is so very full towards you that I must express myself. My dear love to every one of your tenderly beloved party, particularly thy mother. I feel as it respects thy dearest father, whether a member of the Church militant or the Church triumphant, all is well—and we may, through all our tribulations return God thanks who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This noble man and Christian statesman passed to his inheritance on the 19th of February, 1845.

After this event, and the removal of a son-in-law, on account of his health, with his wife and a portion of their children to Madeira,—which also proved a final parting—Elizabeth Fry felt a strong desire to revisit Norfolk and stay awhile at her childhood home. This was accomplished with great difficulty by the aid of her husband and daughter Louisa; and she remained at Earlham many weeks, "often able to partake of enjoyment, and highly valuing the communion with her endeared brother, Joseph John Gurney, his wife, and her beloved sister Catherine."

"She went frequently to Meeting at Norwich. She was drawn up to the Meeting seated in her wheeled chair, and thence ministered with extraordinary life and power to those present; her memory in using Scripture in no degree failing her, or her power in applying it."

That wheeled chair ought to be preserved as long as art can keep it. The throne of Queen Elizabeth is not half so honorable. Her brother, speaking of this visit, says:

"My dear sister Fry's visit has been very satisfactory and very sweet has it been to our feelings to enjoy her company. Her infirmity is indeed great, and her memory a little failing. Yet at times this infirmity subsides and she is much like her own dear and precious self. The Lord's anointing is still upon her, and she has been well engaged in our meeting, which is held at eleven o'clock, on her account, and which she has attended two First-day mornings in succession. The preserving, sustaining hand of the Lord is evidently with her."

From Earlham she went to Northrepps "in order to mingle her sorrows with those of her much beloved and bereaved sister Buxton and other mourners there. The last letter she ever addressed to her husband was from that place, dated Fourth Month, 10th, 1845."

"MY DEAREST HUSBAND:—

I am anxious to express to thee a little of my near love, to tell thee how often I visit thee in spirit, and how very strong are my desires for thy present and everlasting welfare. I feel for thee in my long illness which so much disqualifies me from being all I desire to thee. I desire that thou mayst turn to the Lord for help and consolation under thy trials, and that whilst not depending on the passing pleasures and enjoyments of this world, thou mayst, at the same time be enabled to enjoy our many remaining blessings. I also desire this for myself, in my afflicted state, for I do consider such a state of health a heavy affliction, independent of all other trials. I very earnestly desire for myself that the deep tribulation I have had to pass through for so long a time, may not lead into temptation, but be sanctified to the further refinement of my soul, and preparation for eternal rest, joy and glory. May we, during our stay in time, be more and more sweetly united in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of Peace. . . ."

Her health improved sufficiently to enable her to attend two sittings of the Yearly Meeting. The event is thus described by a Friend who was present:—

“She had for many years been regular in her attendance upon these meetings, and had taken a lively interest in their proceedings. After an illness so critical, and still in a state of such great infirmity, to see her again amongst them was scarcely less gratifying to many of the Friends there than it was interesting to herself. On this occasion she spoke of the Saviour’s declaration, ‘I am the vine, ye are the branches; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.’ She alluded in the course of her observations to the day that is ‘fast approaching to every one;’ but urged the b’essed truth on her hearers that those ‘who loved, served and obeyed Him who alone is worthy of all glory and praise, would find death deprived of its sting and the grave of its victory.’ The second meeting she attended was one when a Friend, Edwin O. Tregelles, gave a relation of his missionary labors in the West Indies. This recital drew from her some account of her own travels on the Continent. She afterwards enlarged upon the various instruments by which God accomplishes His works in the world. She referred to the simile of the different living stones which compose the temple of God. She addressed those of every age who heard her; especially such as might be compared to the hidden stones of the building. She encouraged them to go forward faithfully in the path of righteousness and good works: for though they might not be so much seen and known as the more polished stones in the ornamental parts of the structure—though perhaps not so fitted to shine and occupy a conspicuous station—yet were their places equally ordered, equally important, and equally under the direction and all-seeing eye of the Divine Architect. She expressed doubts

as to whether she should again be permitted to meet her beloved friends in that place. She offered prayer, her rich full voice filling the house, and concluded with that sublime passage, ‘Great and marvelous are Thy works Lord God Almighty! just and true are Thy ways Thou King of Saints.’”

On the 3rd of June she attended the Annual Meeting of the Ladies British Society which, to spare her fatigue, was held in the Friends Meeting-house at Plaistow. After her death this occasion was referred to in a touching memorial drawn up by the members of this first of the numerous organizations of which she was the founder.

“Contrary to usual custom the place of meeting fixed on was not in London, but at Plaistow, in Essex; and the large number of Friends who gathered round her upon that occasion proved how gladly they came to her, when she could no longer with ease be conveyed to them. The enfeebled state of her bodily frame seemed to have left the powers of her mind unshackled, and she took, though in a sitting posture, almost her usual part in addressing the Meeting. She urged with increased pathos and affection the objects of philanthropy and Christian benevolence with which her life had been identified. After the Meeting, and at her own desire, several members of the Committee and other Friends assembled at her house. They were welcomed by her with the greatest benignity and kindness, and in her intercourse with them strong were the indications of the heavenly teaching through which her subdued and sanctified spirit had been called to pass. Her affectionate salutation in parting unconsciously closed, in regard to most of them, the intercourse which they delighted to hold with her, but which can no more be renewed on this side of the eternal world.”

At this time Newgate, Bridewell, the Millbank Prison, the Gillspur Street Compter, White Cross Street Prison, Tothill Fields Prison, and Cold Bath Fields Prison were in good order, and the female convicts all cared for by the Committee. The prisons generally, throughout England were much improved, and in the greater number ladies were encouraged to visit the female convicts, and more than this, Elizabeth Fry had the satisfaction of knowing "that the principles she had so long asserted were universally recognized; that the object of penal legislation is not revenge, but the prevention of crime; in the first place by affording opportunity of reform to the criminal, and in the second by warning others from the consequences of its commission."

As summer advanced her husband took her to Ramsgate, to obtain the benefit of sea air. Before going there to remain she made a large wedding-party, at Upton, for her youngest son whose marriage was particularly pleasing to her, because he chose a Quakeress and friend of hers for his wife. She spoke of it as a "ray of light upon a dark picture."

"She received her guests in a room opening into the flower garden, and thence was wheeled to the end of the terrace; a very large family circle surrounded her, many connections, and others of her friends. It was a beautiful scene,—the last social family meeting at which she presided; and although infirm and broken in health, she looked and seemed herself.

"In an easy chair, under the large marquee, she entered into an animated discourse on various important topics with the group around her, the Chevalier Bunsen, M. Merle D'Aubigne, Sir Henry Pelley, Josiah Forster, her brother

Samuel Gurney, and others of her friends. An event of great interest shortly followed—the marriage of her faithful niece, Elizabeth Gurney, to Ernest Bunsen. This connection was one which her aunt liked, inasmuch as she valued the individual and highly esteemed his excellent and gifted parents, though not unmingled with regret that the children of her brother and sister, as so many of her own had done, should leave the Society of Friends by marriage, and thus separate themselves from that body of Christians to which their parents were so warmly attached. The wedding took place on the 5th of August. She joined the party afterwards at Ham House. It was an occasion of singular interest; Christian love, unity, and good feeling prevailing over 'diversities of administration,' yet all owning 'the same Lord.'"

This occasion was referred to by Madam (afterward Baroness) Bunsen, in a letter written after Mrs. Fry's death, as follows:

"We shall not look upon her like again! and must try to preserve the impression of her majesty of goodness which it is a great privilege to have beheld. I never wished more for the possession of the accurate memory which once was mine, than after hearing her exhort and pray, particularly on the day of Ernest's marriage. When we were at her house on the 3rd of July, on taking leave she said, 'May God bestow upon you His best gifts! the fatness of the earth is good, but the dew of Heaven is better.'"

In a letter of condolence to her daughter-in-law, Madam Bunsen also made this remark which it is pleasant to repeat as the tribute of one gifted and noble woman to another:

"What your blessed Aunt was for those who had the

privilege of approaching her continually, can in some degree be felt, even by us who only occasionally had felt her influence and been aware of the degree in which her whole life seemed to realize the life of God in man. She met everybody in every human sympathy, but of sin seemed to take no cognizance except in compassion."*

"During the week following she was moved to the house on Mount Albion at Ramsgate which had been prepared for her. A spacious bed-chamber adjoining the drawing-room, with pleasant views of the sea, in which she delighted, added to her hourly comfort and enjoyment. She found objects there well suited to her tastes. She distributed tracts when she drove into the country, or went upon the Pier in a Bath chair. Seafaring men have a certain openness of character which renders them more easy of access than others. They would gladly receive her little offerings and listen to her remarks. She was also anxious to ascertain the state of the Coast Guard Libraries—whether they required renewing, and were properly used."

Some of her family and friends were always with her, and did all that love and art could do to make her descent easy; but the bonds of mortality were still very painful. Her account with Nature had been over-drawn, and though it was in the best of causes, the day of reckoning must come. One had before said, speaking prophetically for Another, "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up:" and although in a different manner, it was yet true that this pure-souled woman laid down her life prematurely and painfully, that she might reconcile sinners unto God. The earnestness with which she toiled cut short her days in sor-

*Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen.

row. Whether or not it was wise or justifiable to go beyond her strength, whether the Spirit of Highest Love and Wisdom really called for so much, or for only a part, and the momentum of excited feeling gave the extraordinary exertion and incurred the suffering, and whether more good was done during the time she labored than would have been done had she kept the fire from consuming the instrument and lived to work longer, are questions difficult to answer. It is no doubt true that in the disordered condition of the world, where so few will do their part, those willing and best competent must often become martyrs; must freely sacrifice their lives for the safety or improvement of the race. And the three years of daily outpouring, struggle, and combat which Jesus spent in Judea and Galilee formed a longer span of time, if measured by their fruits, than that of the whole patriarchal age. Still the forfeit must be paid. The laws of nature, physical and moral alike, are inflexible. Atonement cannot be completed without a vicarious sacrifice equivalent to the shedding of blood, in larger or smaller measure, according to the exigency. The sacrifice of Christ was for the whole world; that of His children is for such a part as they stand related to in like manner, as His ministers—heads of nations, families and so on. As we are branches of the one Vine our crosses must also be branches of the one Cross. Having been saved by the one efficient Offering, does not exempt us from sorrow and sacrifice; but it raises these to the same divine order and makes us partakers of the vicarious sorrow of Christ for the sins and wants of others. How it ennobles the sufferings of Elizabeth Fry to know

that they were the direct consequence of her earnest zeal to serve her Master in pleading for the lowest class of society and bringing the means of restoration within their reach. How touching becomes this nearly last entry in her Journal, written in an almost illegible hand:—

“*Ramsgate, Eighth Month, 27th.*—It still pleases my Heavenly Father that afflictions should abound to me in this tabernacle; as I groan, being burthened. Lord, through the fullness of Thy love and pity and unmerited mercy be pleased to arise for my help. Bind up my broken heart, heal my wounded spirit, and yet enable Thy servant, through the power of Thine own Spirit, in everything to return Thee thanks, and not to faint in the day of trouble, but in humility and godly fear to show forth Thy praise. Keep me Thine own, through Thy power to do this, and pity and help Thy poor servant who trusteth in Thee. Be very near to our dear son and daughter in Madeira. Be with them and all near to us wherever scattered; and grant that Thy peace and blessing may rest upon us all. Amen and amen.”

September 14th she wrote to her brother Samuel Gurney—

“I was very low when I wrote to thee yesterday, therefore do not think too much of it. There is ONE only who sees in secret who knows the conflicts I have to pass through. To Him I commit my body, soul, and spirit; and He only knows the depth of my love and earnestness of my prayers for you all. I have the humble trust that He will be my Keeper even unto the end; and when the end comes, through the fullness of His love, and the abundance of His merits, I shall join those who, after having passed ‘through great tribulation,’ are forever at rest in Jesus, having ‘washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’

“I am, in nearest love,

Thy grateful and tenderly attached sister, E. F.”

“Pray remember the books for the poor old women; we must work while it is called ‘to-day,’ however low the service we may be called to; I desire to do so to the end, through the help that may be granted me.”

After this she rode four miles to attend a little meeting, and “preached a most powerful and remarkable sermon on the nearness of death and the necessity of immediate repentance and preparation, for she believed to some of that small congregation it was the eleventh hour of the day.”

“Her habits at this time were apparently those of former days. She was a good deal occupied by writing. She arranged and sorted Bibles, Testaments and tracts. She had applied to the Bible Society for a grant of foreign Bibles and Testaments which was liberally acceded to, and in the distribution of which, amongst the sailors of different nations in the harbor, she took great interest.”

She attended meeting for worship October 5th, referring to which on her return she said, “We have had a very remarkable meeting, such a peculiarly solemn time;” adding that she had been so impressed by the “need of working whilst it was day, to be ready for the Master’s summons, come when He might.” Those who were present described the occasion as “a very peculiar one. She had urged the question ‘Are we all now ready? If the Master should this day call us, is the work completely finished? Have we anything left to do?’ Solemnly, almost awfully reiterating the question, ‘Are we prepared?’”

On Friday of the following week she wrote a letter, and copied some texts for a person who desired her autograph. She then brought out some sheets of Scripture selections

which she was preparing with a view to eventually publishing another Text-book. "With this devout employment, was finished her work below." On riding out later in the morning her mind seemed to be abstracted from surrounding objects, so that she failed to notice a request for "some reading" from a farmer's boy who was keeping cows, until her grandchildren placed her tract-bag in her hand, and then she made the selections "with a slow and distracted air, as if her thoughts were far away."

The next morning she awoke suffering severely in her head; but received company which she had invited to dinner, and conversed a little. In the afternoon her strength failed and she was with difficulty removed to her bed; but she answered the physician's questions correctly.

About six o'clock on Sabbath morning she said to her maid, "Oh! Mary, dear Mary, I am very ill!" "I know it, dearest Ma'am, I know it," replied the servant. Soon she added, "Pray for me—it is a strife—but I am safe." Near nine o'clock, while one of her daughters was sitting by her bed side with the Bible opened to a favorite passage in Isaiah, she roused a little from her comatose state, and in a slow, distinct voice uttered these words:—"Oh! my dear Lord, help and keep Thy servant!" Her daughter then read the passage,—“I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” One bright look of recognition passed over her features, and then she sank into a state of unconsciousness from which she did not revive. About four o'clock in the morning of October 13th,

1845, the strife of nature ceased, and she entered into that Rest which remaineth for the people of God.

What imagination can picture the scene as her spirit rose to meet the happy company waiting to welcome her to that "City which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the Glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof!"

The funeral took place at Barking a few miles from London, where a large company assembled in a spacious tent erected for the occasion, and appropriate services were held in the quiet order of Friends, which admitted of no public demonstration. Her monument had long been erected in the hearts of the people, where it must remain, rising still higher as long as her story is read. If every grateful recollection of Elizabeth Fry were represented by a stone as beautiful as that memory, no material monument of king or hero has ever equaled what these would build. And may not such, in some higher sense, be the nature of the heavenly mansion which her Lord has prepared for her, by the aid of her own faithfulness and industry—a home of joy—built up and adorned not only with gems of human love and esteem, but, crowning all with that Pearl for which she freely gave all that she possessed.

Possibly too that faithful Rewarder of His servants may have ordained as He did in the case of another, who, from the broken alabaster box, poured the precious ointment upon His head and His *feet*—"Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there also shall this which this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her."

We cannot more fittingly close this account than with