

as destroyers of our peace. Those recreations which will not bear reflection are ill suited to rational, intelligent creatures. A train of such ideas kept me awake most of the night. Arrived at Herdinghen, Wednesday morning, the 9th.

14th. Am quite astonished to find myself, this evening, in my own room. This morning we went to Wissant, where I expected to find every accommodation for bathing, and where I anticipated a time of happy tranquillity, 'free from bustle, care and strife;' however, all my pleasing ideas vanished the very moment we were introduced to Madame, who received us with a disrespectful, vulgar air, in a miserable, dirty house. She shewed us two filthy rooms, for one of which she made an exorbitant demand. I therefore informed her that things were not to my mind, and left her. I know not what to do; however I am thankful that I am safe from Wissant. Boulogne is my resource; Madame Dupont's, if she do not object.

16th. Boulogne. Madame Dupont received me with friendly civility. I have no doubt that I shall find my situation agreeable; all the inconvenience which I apprehend is being obliged to see a great deal of company. Mademoiselle Dupont is absent, but expected soon. I think I shall find much pleasure in her society, as I can now converse with more facility.

Sunday, 20th. Madame Routier sent an invitation for us to sup with her upon a roast leg of mutton. In England, we should think it rather an extraordinary dish, but here such suppers are not uncommon; their dinners, in general, consist of lighter food than their suppers. We obeyed the summons, and were agreeably surprised by the entrance of Mademoiselle Dupont, who was very kind.

22nd. After dinner, sat with Félicité Dupont in her room, where she spends the greatest part of her time, reading, writing and drawing, in which latter art she excels. We had much serious conversation. I really feel myself strongly attached to her, as she seems to be free from that affectation and levity which are

generally so apparent in the French ladies. I think she has naturally a strong understanding, which has been improved by extensive reading.*

24th. Read French and English together; we reap pleasure and advantage from these reciprocal endeavours to instruct each other.

August 3rd. Sunday. Spent a few quiet hours, in my own room. Walked into the country, where we partook of a frugal repast, at a farm-house; sitting upon hay, with a plank for our table. The clouds were remarkably beautiful, and I was disposed to enjoy the calm contemplation which the surrounding objects seemed to invite.

4th. In the evening Félicité and I took our book to the garden, and seated ourselves under a clump of trees; we stayed nearly two hours, and enjoyed a pleasing calm; all nature glowing around us. I could not but regret the folly which leads men to search for happiness in crowds, and in pompous parade, when real satisfaction may be purchased at so cheap a rate. As a flower unfolds in the genial warmth of the sun, the mind expands in serious meditation and reflection.

9th. Dined at Madame Routier's with three Anglois. I was not satisfied with our amusements; they were of a nature too gay and noisy to contribute to the real delight of the mind which desires something more than momentary enjoyment.

22nd. Félicité and I took a ride to the Bois de Boulogne, about four miles off; it is a delightful spot. We sat under the trees, and enjoyed the tranquillity of the scene. The disposition of my friend seems formed to enter into my tastes.

28th. Received letters from my kind Parents; they are anxious and unhappy at my indisposition. Had a line from Bingham, informing me that she purposes going to Calais, to meet Mrs. P.

* This amiable young person was afterwards married to Brissot de Warville, who died under the guillotine during the Revolution in 1793. See sketch of his life in Aikins Biographical Dictionary.

Capper, who is going to fetch her children from a convent at Douay.

29th. The palpitation at my heart returned with great violence. The physician assures me that it is only the effect of the weak state to which I am reduced. I pass the nights almost without sleep, and have very little appetite, therefore I cannot, at present, expect to regain my strength. I hope I am not impatient under these bodily afflictions; they are light, in comparison with a wounded spirit. I have that trust and confidence in my God which makes his will my delight. Though he afflict me, yet will I trust in Him; and while his grace supports me, I can, as it were, forget the present pain, and look joyfully forward to that glory which shall be revealed to those who persevere.

September 1st. A comfortable day, without pain or sickness. Walked out and enjoyed the air, though winter begins to creep upon us, and as Thompson finely expresses it, 'lets loose his Northern blasts.' Received a very cold and formal letter from Mrs. Capper, informing me that she has arrived at Herdinghen with Mr. Bingham, and wishes to know if I purpose returning with her to England.* The abrupt proposal surprises me, and as I have received no such intimation from my friends, I shall decline giving a direct answer at present. My affectionate friend Félicité expresses great concern at the thought of our separation, and I think my own feelings are not less painful.

2nd. Much indisposed, but as it proved a delightful afternoon, my friend and I went, in the cabriolet, to the Bois de Boulogne, and reposed under the spreading branches of a fine old tree. As we generally take our books on these excursions, reading and conversation have their turn, and we enjoy many pleasing

* The behaviour of her relative probably arose from reports of her being inclined to become a Friend; but this is not explicitly stated. It seems also probable that the coldness and even unkindness of her conduct towards Mary Capper operated to her disadvantage in the minds of those about her; which she keenly felt.—Note by ED.

moments, untasted by those who are engaged in a continual round of more expensive luxuries. How greatly are we mistaken when we consider riches as the only happiness! The truly pious mind exults in well-grounded hope, and steadfastly fixes the eye of faith beyond the present scene.

4th. Again visited the wood, and returned about sunset, which afforded us many delightful views. They brought to my mind those beautiful lines beginning, 'These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!' It is impossible to contemplate the wonders of nature without feeling the heart glow with gratitude to the great Author, whose goodness is but dimly seen in these his works.

Saturday, 13th. A day of adventures! While engaged in a serious conversation with my friend, I was called down stairs to Bingham and her Father, the unexpected sight of whom gave me great pleasure. After I had made some enquiries about my relations, they told me that they expected Mrs. Capper, in a few minutes with Madame Brunet. I then begged leave to go and make some little addition to my dress, as I knew that these ladies paid much regard to the appearance. When Mrs. Capper arrived, I saluted her with pleasure, but she treated me haughtily; and seating herself, began without an explanation, to reproach me cruelly. I was confounded, and could not guess her meaning, till she was pleased to say that I was an ungrateful, undutiful child. I soon perceived that she had been misinformed, or that she had very unjust notions of my real disposition; however I calmly sat by and heard all; for knowing my own integrity, her accusations made no deep impression. She, at length, became more moderate, but I did not attempt self-defence, as her opinion is too variable to be of any value. Such dispositions are too trifling to be considered sufficient to disturb the minds of those who act from the unvarying rules of virtue. It is a deplorable thing thus to let the passions overcome the reason, and such persons are objects of pity. Happy the mind that is purified by humility, gentleness, and a meek dependence on a powerful and glorious Redeemer!

When Madam was quite spent, she begged me to send for a hair-dresser; I was glad of the release, and almost flew to oblige her. I then went to pay my compliments to Madame Brunet, as I recollected having neglected her, when I met Mrs. Capper. She did not receive me with her usual cordiality, nor could all my apologies restore her wonted good humour. This mortified me exceedingly, and I could, with difficulty, suppress my painful agitation. Taking my leave, I retired to my room, and suffered my tears to flow.

Sunday, 14th. I intend going to Herdinghen to-morrow. I do not expect a very agreeable reception; but as I think it due to those from whom I have received civilities, I shall not consult my inclination.

15th. Set out early, with Madame and Mademoiselle Dupont. We met Madame Brunet and a party of gentlemen and ladies at Marquise. They were going to the chase, and we joined the cavalcade, and passed the day as agreeably as I had any reason to expect. We dined upon the grass, while the sportsmen were in pursuit of their game. Mrs. Capper seemed to have forgotten all that she had said to me, and was so officiously kind that she scarcely left me a moment's liberty. The whole party were quite astonished at the change, as she had declared that she would not speak to me, if I came. I am sorry she has made herself appear so ridiculous. I regret to perceive that Madame Brunet has been prejudiced against me. Herdinghen is a very different place from what it was when I first knew and admired it. It was then free from noise and parade; now the house is full of company. Nothing is talked of but parties of pleasure. To-morrow the chase again, and on Monday, a party on the water, with music, &c. My friend Bingham looks fatigued and out of spirits, but Madame Brunet enters into all with cheerfulness. An English family named Toll, two gentlemen from Paris, &c. are here; all seems hurry and confusion.

16th. Spent the morning chiefly in my own room; the extreme

gaiety does not suit me. I feel like a stranger indeed! I have no inclination to familiarize myself with this mode of life; it may do for others, but give me sobriety, with a mind disposed for reflection. A letter just received from my dear Jasper, informs me that he has some thoughts of coming here. I shall greatly rejoice to see him. I cannot but observe how ill-informed we English females find ourselves, in comparison with the French ladies; they appear perfectly acquainted with the rise and progress of all material events in the history, both of their own and other nations. This is certainly a part of education not merely ornamental, which might well be substituted for more trivial acquisitions.

17th. Mrs. Capper and Mr. Bingham left us. I walked to the grotto, and found it improved in beauty, as the moss has taken root, and flourishes in all its various colours. Boulogne; evening. I can scarcely believe that I am now writing in the chamber of my friend Félicité!—At dinner-time an arrival was announced; I ran out of the room, and had the satisfaction of embracing the most affectionate of brothers; I readily agreed to return here with him, as fresh company had arrived."

It will here be needful to break off from the journal for a time, in order to take a glance at the state of things in the family at home. It appears that the decided attachment of her brother Jasper to the principles and practice of the Society of Friends, had awakened many fears in the minds of his Parents, who were much alarmed for the consequences of his influence among their numerous children; especially as they could not but see that Mary was strongly attracted to unite with the views of Friends. A letter, written about this time by Rebecca Capper, to her son William, will depict her feelings, in this trying exigency, so as to excite the sympathy of every susceptible mind. It may be premised that William never made much, if any, change in his religious observances, and always remained a member of the Episcopal Church.

“Birmingham, *September 18th, 1777.*”

MY DEAR WILLIAM,

A complaint in my eyes still remains; but I am induced to run the hazard of hurting my sight, to say a few words respecting a letter which your brother Samuel put into my hand last night. Your dear father (for he is indeed dear to me) has not seen your letter, nor if I can help it, ever shall; for the blow which your brother Jasper has given him, has almost struck him to the ground, and I am apprehensive that he could not support another such. As to my own feelings, I forbear to mention them; for I know, and am fully persuaded that, grievous as they are, they ought not to be held in any estimation against that which teacheth, ‘He that loveth Father or Mother more than me is not worthy of me;’ and if it has been your lot, my child! (for so I will yet call you) to be born of parents that were ignorant and ungodly; that neither by precept nor example taught you to serve God in spirit and in truth; but on the contrary, that it was enough to honour Him with the lips, though the heart was far from Him—but stop, and examine, O! my soul, dost thou not, in this, stand self-accused? I have indeed been guilty of great neglect of my duty, in that state in life in which it pleased God to place me! in caring too much for the things of this world, and in neglecting myself, and also in not instructing my children, to seek after the kingdom of God and his righteousness; not remembering that all these things would be added unto us. But sinful and wretched as I am, well knowing that as his justice, so his mercy is great; and that, upon sincere repentance and amendment, which, through his grace or Holy Spirit, that He hath promised to those who ask for it aright, and without which we cannot do the least good thing—I say, by this I hope, and will endeavour, to live better, for the short, perhaps very short, time I have to remain here. Now in the midst of this grievous and very heavy affliction, that we your Parents are at this time under, on account of the separation which is already made in the family, and more that are

likely to be made; I say, in this I can see a ray of comfort, and can draw this from it; that the Almighty Disposer of all things hath permitted, for wise and good ends, this his afflicting hand to be laid upon us; that He chasteneth and correcteth those whom He loveth and would draw unto Him; that it hath already inclined my heart more unto Him, and hath caused me to look more strictly into my way and manner of life, and hath raised in me a hope that, by his divine and inspiring grace, I shall be enabled to bring forth good fruits; to avoid those things which are contrary to my profession, and to follow all such things as are agreeable to it. Now this I knew before to be my bounden duty; but we are such poor frail creatures, (at least I find myself such) as to stand in need of frequent stirring up; and it may be one among the various and mysterious ways of Providence, that He permits so many different sects and opinions; as I make no doubt all believe, at least, that they are guided by the same divine grace or Holy Spirit, faith and Holy Scriptures.

You say you are inclined to attend the Meetings of Quakers by stronger motives than compliance to Jasper; that you find yourself enriched by the plain truths they deliver; that you are charmed with the love, sweetness, and tenderness of affection which appear among them. Oh! my child, you see not beyond the mask, nor why it is occasionally put on; but to gain three proselytes all at once is a great acquisition!—But stay! where am I running? or where is my Christian charity, if they think they are in the right way? A crowd of ideas press upon my mind, but I will only beg one favour of you; it will perhaps be the last I shall ever ask of you; it is this; that you will, for a few Sundays, go to the Church of which you have been a member, (though perhaps an unworthy one) and set your mind in a right frame of devotion, remembering that you are, at that time, as well as at all others, immediately in the presence of that God who knoweth the secrets of all hearts; and though He regardeth not time nor place, yet reflect and consider for what purpose you are come there; and as

much as lieth in you, suppress all vain and wandering thoughts ; keep your eyes from looking on the faces of others ; and do not, from their look and manner, judge of what passes in their hearts, but be careful of your own ; and with fervent zeal and humility, attend to those prayers, praises, and adorations, there offered to the throne of Grace ; and though they may be uttered by a man of like infirmities with yourself, yet let not that hinder you from sincerely seeking for the assistance of God's Spirit, to enable you to do that which is right in his sight ; and as I am sure you will find what will suit your own feelings ; in them join, with sincerity of heart ; for though God knoweth our necessities before we ask, yet hath it pleased Him to command that we, his poor creatures, should lay our wants before Him ; and if at all times and in all places, why not when we are gathered together ?

I have reason to believe my dear Mary's health is but very indifferent at this time, and that her old complaints return with greater force than ever. I firmly believe that the agitation of mind she has laboured under of late, has greatly increased her bodily infirmity.

I think it likely that she and I may never be permitted to meet again in this world ; but though by different roads, my sincere hope is, that we shall all meet again in the next. I had promised to myself some pleasure in coming up to London, to meet your sister there, and with joy to bring her home, but I fear that is over ; her home cannot be with us, her Parents ; for well I know, that would be the cause of strife and debate, which I think it is best to avoid ; and if we must be separated, may that Being who first gave you all to me, enable me with patient resignation to part with you, in whatever way He shall think fit ! but I find myself a poor frail creature, and do indeed, at this moment fear and tremble before Him.

I had much more on my mind to say to you, but I have lost it ; so conclude, with sincere prayer for your present and eternal welfare, your truly affectionate mother,

REBECCA CAPPER."

From this letter and from some subsequent remarks in Mary Capper's journal, it appears that she entered pretty fully into her brother's change of religious view, and that this had been so far made known to her Parents as to make them hesitate about allowing her to return home. She deeply felt her trying position, and she also sympathized tenderly with her brother, who was, at that time, much distressed in mind. He seems to have been sent, to convey her back to England, without loss of time. While they were detained before sailing, they were in the practice of frequently retiring together, for the purpose of silently waiting upon the Lord, that they might know his will, and experience a renewal of their spiritual strength ; and they were often comforted together, on these occasions.

Resuming the journal, Mary Capper proceeds :

"*September 18th.* My kind friend expresses much satisfaction at my quick return. I really feel greatly at the thought of leaving her, it may be for ever ! Her tenderness and amiable disposition have gained my admiration and my warm affection, and have greatly interested me in her future well-doing.

19th. Much in my friend's room, either reading or preparing for my departure.

20th. My Brother and Félicité accompanied me to the Bois de Boulogne, and we passed an hour very pleasantly under the shade of the fine trees, not in the least regretting the parties at Herdinghen. Mere sensual delights are very unsatisfactory to a mind, capable of tasting the pleasure which results from contemplating the wonders and the goodness of Him who created and preserves this universal frame. All nature speaks forth his praise ; and shall not his intelligent creatures admire and extol his infinite wisdom and excellence !

Sunday, 21st. My Brother and I declined going to Mass ; we passed the time very agreeably ; and I experienced true satisfaction in silence.

25th. My Brother and I rode out in the cabriolet ; he made

me acquainted with some circumstances, relative to himself, that are very far from giving me pleasure; however I must not suffer myself to be cast down, but be firm in hope, trust and confidence.

Sunday, 28th. Did not go to Mass, but sat with my Brother. Received a letter that distresses me exceedingly. Went to Vespers.

October 1st. After a restless night, was very sick and low all day. My Brother and I intend going to Herdinghen soon, to take leave of Madame Brunet, &c. I feel much at the thought, and cannot but reflect on many pleasing scenes which I have enjoyed, and on the many marks of more than civility which I have received from Madame Brunet; also on the affectionate esteem that I bear to my dear friend; the idea of quitting all these, with little probability of ever meeting again, really gives me such uneasiness as I never before experienced. My Brother still seems unhappy.

2nd. Could not sleep, and rose early. Distressed at receiving no letters from England.

4th. A polite note from Madame Brunet informs me, that she will be happy to see us next week; therefore I am a little in a hurry, as we females cannot move without an encumbrance of caps, ribands, &c. &c.

5th. Sunday. Ill in the night, and very poorly to-day, which I have passed quietly.

7th. A very civil reception at Herdinghen.

11th. Strolled about with my Brother. In the evening was agreeably surprised by the arrival of Madame Dupont and my dear friend.

12th. Sunday. My Brother and I sat together.

13th. Madame Dupont and Félicité left us. We have not determined when to go, but I hope soon, as the family are in a confusion of gaiety, which seems not to allow a moment for serious reflection. My Brother and I are considered stupid mortals, for we cannot join in the vacant laugh, noisy song, &c.

14th. Walked, embroidered and read; experienced sweet satisfaction in my own mind. My brother Charles arrived from St. Omer; he has grown robust.

16th. Took leave of Monsieur and Madame Brunet. The rising tears prevented my expressing the acknowledgments which I thought due to them. I made several attempts to speak, but my tongue seemed to refuse obedience, and I hastened to the coach; to hide my emotion. We arrived at Boulogne about noon, and I believe were welcome guests at Madame Dupont's.

18th. It is with difficulty that I keep up an appearance of cheerfulness, for my spirits are uncommonly affected. The thought of leaving my friends here, and of seeing those in England, causes an agitation which I can scarcely endure.

22nd. On board the same vessel which brought us to this place! I have left the arms of a tender, affectionate friend, and the tears still steal down my cheeks.

25th. Saturday. Arrived safely in London last night, after a tedious voyage. We were both very ill. This morning we landed from a small boat, and drove to my Uncle Smallwood's. I had scarcely sufficient strength left to embrace the tenderest of mothers!