

MEMOIR

OF

Miss Mary Sewell,

OF

HALSTED, ESSEX.

~~~~~  
A Present from the Sunday-School.  
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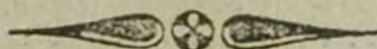
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When men in deep contrition lie.

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MEMOIR OF
MISS MARY SEWELL.



IT may be truly said of this amiable young person, that she was *pleasant* in her life; and in her death *lovely*. Her high affection to her pious parents made it her delight, from an early period, to be *strictly* obedient; and, by little

studied attentions, to administer all in her power to their comfort. Her attainments in knowledge were respectable ; but it was her element to make herself useful in the family ; being the elder of many children, in a house visited with much affliction, especially in the person of her beloved mother, the chief care of the family devolved upon her ; and the order with which every thing was conducted was the subject of general encomium. Her managements were always with a forecast, to make way for timely and orderly attendance on the means of grace ; not on the Sabbath only, but at meetings for prayer and con-

ference on week-days ; in the latter of which she greatly delighted. And while she studied to be *not seen* in religion, her unvaried attention to private devotion, and the scrupulous exactness of her moral conduct, could not pass unnoticed.—She was not cast down in times of affliction and trouble ; but would cheerfully say, ‘ Let us leave it, and hope the best.’ Meekness, modesty, and diffidence, in her were eminently conspicuous ; while seriousness, cheerfulness, and sweetness of temper were combined. In the Sunday Schools she took an active part, and a lively interest ;—and her soft, obliging, and gentle man-

ners, made her a friend with all; and were highly prepossessing wherever she came. In short, there was that in this amiable young person, which made her an ornament and a pattern to her sex. She languished several months in a gradual decline; during which she was calm as the summer evening! ‘Nature,’ she would say, ‘*clings to life.*— Were it left to me, I should desire to live; but I wish to submit. My hope is, that the Lord will fit me for what he designs for me.’ On this ground she was pleasantly patient, and cheerfully submissive.

Perceiving she was getting worse, her minister said, “Do you think,

my dear, this affliction will end in life or in death?" 'I get weaker and worse,' she replied. "When you think of dying," he said, "is the prospect distressing to you?" Pausing a little, she answered, 'I cannot say it is.' But then you have a reason," he added, "why it is not distressing. What is that reason? Do you think, if you die, that you will drop into the arms of mercy in Jesus, and make him your trust?" 'That is it,' she said; then eagerly, 'is that right?'—"Yes, surely, exactly right. It is the only retreat of a dying sinner; and it is said,— 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.'

A few days after, a material change took place; and she knew her hours were few. For a short time, the conflict appeared sharp with the enemy of souls. ‘Oh, what thoughts!’ she exclaimed;—‘dreadful thoughts! But I hope he (meaning Jesus) will not leave me.’ Soon her countenance assumed the most cheerful aspect, and she said ‘Now Christ is precious to me; and he is near!’ She spoke with a strength of voice exceeding what she had been able to do for many weeks, and was filled with peace. Her mother said, “You have been a kind and useful child to me, my dear.” In a tone of gentle remon-

strance, she quickly replied, ‘ Say nothing of that !’ Her minister entered at this moment. “ The loving Saviour (said he) still says to you, “ Look unto me and be saved.”— And he hath said,’ she quickly and firmly answered, “ I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee !”—shewing that this was the confidence of her soul. “ And he is not a man,” he replied, “ that he should lie : hath he spoken it, and shall he not make it good ?” ‘ Yet,’ she added, ‘ you do not know how wicked I am. I see myself more wicked and vile than ever :’ alluding to the conflict of her mind. ‘ Oh, this morning !’—when putting her withered hand

on her heart, 'here it lies. Oh, could I put it away!—but,' with a smile of inexpressible complacency, 'it will not go with me!'—her eyes the mean-while beaming with joy. About two hours after this, without a groan, she fell asleep in Jesus.

The principles which supported her at death were not new to her; they had formed and ruled her life. She owned herself to have been the subject of convictions from a child; that though she strove to suppress impressions received at an early period, by hearing a sermon from her minister; yet, that, against her will, they remained with her; pressing her attention to those spiritual

things from which her present hopes and consolations sprang. Papers, too, were found after her death, containing parts of sermons she had heard, and her remarks upon them; which shew that she took good heed how she heard; and that it ever was with self-application. She held also a correspondence with serious young friends at a distance; and of what nature it was, the following Extract of a Letter sent by her minister a few days after her decease, sufficiently testifies:—

A year and a half ago, (then in perfect health) she wrote thus to me:—“ I hope I desire to feel as I ought before God; that is, to

feel humble at the throne of grace, on account of my sinfulness and unworthiness. I know that Christ is the only way by which we can be saved ; but I find so much within me that is wrong ! When I would do good evil is present with me, and most easily besets me !

“ I want to feel sin as sin, and to hate it with a perfect hatred. I hope I do find the will in me sometimes to do good ; but how to perform, I know not. I see I need assistance from above, to keep me from that which is evil, and lead me in the right way. I wish I felt more sensible of the mercies I enjoy, and a deeper sense of my un-

worthiness ; then I think I should never indulge a murmuring spirit. It is because we do not feel as we ought, that we ever do murmur at what (referring to late afflictions in the family) the Lord is pleased to exercise us with."—Her young correspondent here remarks,—“While I feel these remains of depravity in myself, it is, and will be, a consolation to me, that they were the constant lamentations of the dear deceased.”—Her death was improved in the Independent Meeting-house, at Halsted, after her remains were interred in the burying ground, on Lord’s-Day, Feb. 27, to a numerous audience.

