

REMARKABLE INSTANCES

OF

Early Piety,

FOR

THE USE OF CHILDREN.



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REMARKABLE INSTANCES,

&c. &c.

THOMAS HAINS, son of Thomas Hains and Hannah his wife, of Southwark, in the county of Surrey, was educated in the way of truth, as professed by the people called Quakers, by his father; and also for some time at the school of Richard Scoryer, at Wandsworth. He was a dutiful child, and had a sense of the fear of God upon his heart, so that during his sickness he behaved more like a man than an infant (as he called himself,) having a care lest he should say any word amiss. When he took that which he found refreshed him, he did with much thankfulness acknowledge it; being also very sensible of the love and tender regard which his parents had towards him, and expressed it several times to them. He bore his sickness with much patience, and often expressed his willingness to die, saying, 'It is better for me to die; it is a troublesome world; we should every day, and every moment, think upon the Lord.' A few days before his decease, he uttered many expressions in prayer and praises to

the Lord, saying, 'Thou art a God of love ; thou art a God of mercy ; thou knowest the hearts of them that love thee ; thou knowest the hearts of them that seek thee. Lord, remember thy people. Thou knowest the hearts of the ungodly ; thou knowest the hearts of the wicked ; thou hast nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against thee.' He also spoke of the care we ought to take of the never-dying soul, and that the Lord will send forth his messengers. Another time, expressing his inward satisfaction of a future state, he said, 'Glory, glory ; joy, joy ; come mother, come father, come all ; it is a brave place, there are no tears nor sorrow ;' and praised God, saying, 'Thou art worthy to have the honour and the glory for evermore ; for to thee it doth belong ; thou art God of heaven, and of the whole earth !' he continued about a quarter of an hour in prayer to the Lord, and said, 'I am an infant, and cannot do any thing without thee.' One evening, several friends coming to visit him, he desired their prayers to the Lord for him : and the next day himself prayed again, saying, "Our Father, which art in heaven," &c. Afterwards he said, 'It is a brave thing to be at peace with the Lord.' His end drawing near, he said, 'Father, Father,' (his father being present, asked what he desired ; he said, I do not speak to thee, but to my heavenly Father) have mercy on me ;' and expressed much joy that he had with the Lord : then desired of them about him that he might be still : and so lay secretly praising the Lord. And a few hours before he died, he said, 'I come, Father I come :' being very weak, his voice was low, but he was heard to say, 'God is

my Father :’ and so like a lamb he quietly finished his days the 12th of the twelfth month, 1700 ; aged nine years.

GEORGE CHALKLEY, son of Thomas Chalkley, of Frankfort in Pennsylvania, was a lad much inclined to read the holy scriptures, and other good books ; and was obliging and dutiful to his parents, and ready and willing to do any service he could for his friends ; diligent in going to religious meetings, and an entire lover of religious people. He was, in an uncommon degree, affectionately concerned for his mother, doing whatever he could freely and cheerfully to serve her ; and told her not to do divers things which he thought too much for her, saying, ‘ Mother, let me do it ; for, if I was a man, thou shouldest not do any thing at all,’ (meaning as to labour) : and she, being affected with his filial love and care for and towards her, in her husband’s absence, would sometimes turn aside and weep.

If this dear and tender youth, when reading, met with any thing which affected him, either in the scriptures or other good writings, he would transcribe it, and get it by heart. One passage much affected his father : it was the 15th verse of the 57th chapter of Isaiah, viz. “ For thus saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit : to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

It was usual for his father to advise his mother, not to set her affections too much upon him, thinking he was too ripe for heaven to stay long on earth. He was taken ill the fifth of the eighth month, 1733; and in his sickness behaved more like a wise man than a child of ten years of age. His father was in another part of the world, and he would gladly have seen him, but said, he should never see him more; and desired his mother to give his dear love to him, and to tell him that he was gone to his Heavenly Father. He was very fervent in prayer, in the time of his sickness; and entreated that God would preserve his people all the world over.

One time, when in great pain, he prayed thus, 'Sweet Jesus, blessed Jesus, give me patience to bear my misery and pain, for my misery is greater than I can well bear. O come, sweet Jesus, why art thou so long in coming? I had rather be with thee, than in the finest places in the world.' One day he said, 'My misery and pain is very great, but what would it be, if the wrath of God was in my soul?'

His heart was full of love to his relations, acquaintance, and friends, who came to see him in his illness; and he took his last leave with a tenderness and sweetness which greatly affected many.

He departed this life the 13th of the eighth month, 1733, and his remains were carried to the Bank meeting-house in Philadelphia, the first-day following, and buried from thence, being accompanied by many friends and others. He was ten years and seven days old when he died; and, as he was greatly beloved for the sweetness of his disposition, he was greatly la-

mented by many who were acquainted with him.

His father returning home, and meeting with this trial, thus recorded his feelings: 'Although it was a great and sore exercise and deep affliction to me to lose this promising youth, my only son, yet it was made tolerably easy to me, for he departed this life in much brightness and sweetness, more like an old Christian than a youth of ten years of age.'

RUTH MIDDLETON, daughter of Samuel Middleton of London, and Rebecca his wife, was visited with a consumption in the Tenth month, 1700, and continued in much weakness of body till the 16th of the Fifth month 1701. During her sickness, these expressions, (among others) were observed.

One time, her mother being much concerned at parting with her, the child lying still as if she was in slumber, opened her eyes, and said, 'What is the matter, my dear mother? do not be troubled for me, and do not sorrow for me, I shall be happy; it is the Lord's will that I am thus afflicted, and we must be contented: thou knowest that Abraham was willing to offer up his son Isaac; and thou dost not know, if thou couldst freely give me up, but that the Lord might spare me a little longer to thee; and if it be his good pleasure to take me to himself, his holy name be blessed for ever.' At another time her mother said, 'How art thou now?' She replied, 'But indifferent; but I am well satisfied; for it is the will of God that I am thus afflicted. Oh! my dear mother, I should be glad if thou couldst

freely give me up.' One time, going to sleep, she prayed thus: 'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in me, as it is in heaven: Oh sweet Lord Jesus! feed me daily with the bread that comes down from heaven: and, Lord, if it stand with thy will, grant that I may sleep to refresh this poor needy body: but thou, Lord, knowest what I stand in need of better than I can ask; Lord, be with me, and my father, and mother, and brother:' and thereupon she went to sleep: and when she awoke, she said 'Oh, blessed and praised be thy holy name, O Father of Life! for thou hast heard my desires, and hast answered me; for I have slept sweetly.'

One time she said, 'The Lord said to his followers, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." A friend, after enquiring how she did, said, 'I hope thy eye is still to the Lord:' Her reply was, 'Although I can hardly speak, I think upon the Lord, and he knows my thoughts, and answers them.'

At another time she said, 'It will not be long before I shall be at rest and peace, where there is no more pain to the body, nor to the mind; and where there is nothing but joy for evermore. Dear mother, be willing to part with me, for I am willing to part with you all; I am not at all concerned for myself, but for thee, poor mother, who dost, and wilt make thy bed a bed of tears, often for me.'

Hearing her mother question her recovery, she said, 'Oh! what the Lord pleases; for I am not afraid of death; I never wronged any body of a pln to my knowledge, nor loved to make excuses;

I never told a lie but once ; when I should have said Yes I said No ; but that has been a great trouble to me ; but the Lord, I hope will forgive me, for I called the maid, and told her the truth.'

Near her end she desired to come out of the country to London, and said, ' The air does me no good, the doctor does me no good ; the Lord is the same at home as here.' And when she was removed home she said, ' Now I am glad ; if I die, it is better to be here, and will save a great deal of trouble.'

A friend asked her if she was willing to leave father and mother, and go to the Lord ; after some pause she answered, ' If the Lord please, I am willing to leave all, for I shall be happy.'

The night before her departure, after a friend had prayed by her, she said, ' I do understand well, and am inwardly refreshed : I am sorry that I cannot speak so that the friend could hear, or else I would give an account of my inward peace with the Lord.'

A few hours before her death she thus prayed, but her voice was very low : ' O Lord ! withhold not thy tender mercies from me at the hour of death. O Lord ! let thy loving-kindness continually preserve me.' Afterwards she said, ' I desire to slumber ; but if I die before I awake, I desire the Lord may receive my soul.'

She was thankful for the tender regard her mother had for her, and with a low voice said, ' Farewell, dear mother ; in the love of the Lord, farewell.' And then desired to see her father and brother ; and feeling for her brother's face, she stroked him, and said, ' Farewell ; be a good boy.'

Her father asking her how it was with her, she replied, 'I am just spent, but I am very easy, and shall be very happy. My body is full of pain, but the angel of the Lord is with me, and his presence will for ever preserve me;' and so kissed her relations, and bade them all farewell.

Her last words were expressing her desire to be remembered to the friends who visited her in her sickness; and in less than a quarter of an hour, like a lamb, she departed this life, on the 16th of the fifth month, 1701, being eleven years, two months, and four days old.

HANNAH HILL, daughter of Richard Hill and Hannah his wife, of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, was a child of a very sober and courteous behaviour; a pattern of piety, plainness, and obedience to parents, and of an obliging temper to all: religiously inclined when very young, and diligent in reading the holy scriptures. On the 23rd of the Fifth month, 1714, being the Sixth day of the week, she was seized with a violent fever and flux, which so increased upon her, that the third day following, both herself and others present, expected she would then depart, but the Lord was pleased to continue her a little longer, to testify of his goodness for the encouragement of the living; for at this time she was in a deep travail of spirit about her future state, and divers times would say, 'Am I prepared? Am I prepared? Oh! that I might die the death of the righteous, and be numbered with them at the right hand. Oh Almighty God! prepare me for

thy kingdom of glory.' And she earnestly entreated those about her, to help with their prayers, that her passage might be made easy. A friend present being moved thereto, kneeled down, and prayed; during which time, notwithstanding her extreme pain she lay still with great attention, lifting up her hands and eyes: a little after she said, 'Father, I shall die, and am now very willing.' After some time, she said 'O most glorious God! now give me patience I beseech thee, with humility, to bear what it shall please thee to lay upon thy poor afflicted handmaid.' After this she entirely made death her choice, and would often say she would rather die and go to God, than continue in this world of trouble; adding, 'When will the messenger come? Oh! hasten the messenger.' Then turning to her father, she said, 'Oh! that I could launch away like a boat that sails, so I would go to my dear brother, who is gone to heaven before me.' She desired those present not to grieve; saying, 'I am but going to a better place.' Doctor Owen coming to visit her she desired him to sit down by her, and said, 'All the town knows thou art a good doctor, but I knew from the beginning that I should die, and that all your endeavours would signify nothing; the Lord hath hitherto given me patience, and I still pray to him for more, that I may be enabled to hold out to the end, for my extremity of pain is very great.' She earnestly requested of her parents to give her up freely to the will of God, saying, 'It would be better both for them and her so to do.' And when she thought she had prevailed, she said, 'Now I am easy in my mind.' When some seemed to encourage her

with hopes of recovery, she said, 'Why is there so much to do about me, who am but poor dust and ashes? We are all but as clay, and must die; I am going now, another next day, and so one after another, the whole world passes away.' One taking leave of her said, 'I intend to see you again tomorrow; she replied, 'Thou mayst see me, but I shall scarcely see thee any more, though I will not be positive; God's will be done.' She would say to her dear mother, 'Art thou sorry I am going?' and to others about her, 'Why are ye troubled and weep, seeing I am but going to a better place?' adding, 'Oh! that the messenger would come, that my glass was run.' At another time she said, 'O my dear mother, I fear the Lord is displeased with me!' one answered. 'Dear child, why shouldst thou entertain such thoughts?' 'Because,' said she, I am continued thus long to endure this extremity of body, which none knows but myself, nor can any think how great my pains are.' But it pleased the Lord to remove her doubt, for afterwards she said to her father, 'I think the Lord has shewed me, I do not bear all this for myself only; glory be to his infinite Name! there is nothing can be compared to him.' And when the first-day of the week came, she asked, if her mother intended to go to the meeting; who answered, No, she could not leave her dear child in that condition; 'then, said she, 'let my cousins go, for it may be the Lord will be displeased, if all the family stay at home;' adding, 'not to look upon one another, but to wait upon God.' She would repeatedly say she was freely resigned, and willing to submit to the will of God, whether in life or death;

and was frequent in prayer to the Almighty, humbly beseeching the Lord to grant her patience; and divers times put up her supplications to him for 'living water, and that it might spring up in her unto eternal life.' Not long before her departure, she said, 'Father, the Lord hath assured me I shall be happy;' it was answered, 'That is comfortable indeed;' 'Ay,' replied she, 'this is matter of joy and rejoicing, can my soul say by living experience.' When she took leave of her dear and only sister, and of her cousin Lloyd Zachary, whom she dearly loved, she expressed herself thus: 'Dearsister, my desires are that thou mayst fear God, be dutiful to thy parents, love truth, keep to meetings, and be an example of plainness. Dear cousin, be a good boy, observe thy uncle and aunt's advice, and the Lord will bless thee, and they will regard thee as their own, and do for thee.' During the time of her illness, she spoke often of her funeral, and desired that friends and others might be invited, mentioning divers by name; and some strangers who were lately come into the country. So she recommended her spirit to God, saying, 'Glory, glory, glory;' and as with the sound of a hymn, this innocent maid closed her eyes, and expired as one falling into a sweet sleep, without sigh or groan. She departed this life the 2nd of the Sixth month, 1714, aged eleven years and about three months.

WILLIAM FENNELL, aged about twelve years, son of William Fennell, of Youghal, in Ireland, whom the Lord had vi-

sited about two years before his illness, and often followed with the reproofs and convictions of his Holy Spirit, when he was brought on his sick bed, was under an inward exercise of mind, and desired his mother to read by him ; and another time desired to have the ten commandments read to him, which was done ; and he was asked how far he found he had kept them : he answered he had not, as he could remember, ever taken the Lord's name in vain, and that he had loved and honoured his father and mother, and had been careful not to tell lies, or false stories of any one, nor had he stolen any thing, except taking some plums without asking leave, and hoped the Lord would pass it by, with what else he had done amiss. Remaining very weak, he was asked if he was willing to die ; he answered, ' If I thought I was fit.'

The 3d of the first month, two English friends being in town, he desired they might have a meeting in the chamber with him, and he afterwards expressed his satisfaction therein, and then broke forth in much trembling, saying, ' O Lord ! forgive all my faults, and have mercy and pity on my poor soul ; keep out the enemy that is ready to come in upon me, for none but thee, O Lord ! is able to do it,' with much more ; and then called for his sisters and brother, and exhorted them to love and fear God, and pray to him to fit them to die, and to love truth, and to go to meetings, and think upon God, and the Lord would love them. And further, to do what their father and mother bid them, and be obedient to them, and look in their bibles, and they would find it was God's command to children to obey their parents, for it is well pleasing unto the Lord.

One of his companions being by, he said to him, 'Dost thou think thou art fit to die? If thou thinkest thou art not, then pray to the Lord, and desire him to make thee fit, and do not mind play too much;' saying, he was very sorry he had so long, but he hoped the Lord would forgive him. Lying still some time under a concern of mind, he was asked what his concern was; and after some pause, he answered, 'I am desiring the Lord to bring me in with the rest of his lost sheep:' with more to that purpose, saying, 'I have cried unto him many a night since I have been ill; for I have been a wild boy, and loved play too well, and when you have sometimes corrected me, I took it a little hard; but now I am glad you did, and I cannot express the love I now have to you, for taking that care of me; you did well; had you not done it, I might have been wilder; for,' said he, 'the Lord hath been following me, and striving with me, to bring me down these two years, and let me see if I continued running on to be wild, then weeping, wailing, and lamentation would be my portion; and sometimes I have turned back, and have gone into the garret, and wept bitterly, and have desired the Lord to help me: but after, when enticed by my comrades to go, I was not able to resist the temptation, which was my great trouble; and I have gone into a secret place to endeavour to retire, and often have prayed to the Lord in the night season on my knees, when others have been asleep. Then he prayed, 'O Lord! hear me, and have pity on me; for thou knowest I am very sore afflicted, Lord help me: Oh! it is none but thou that can do it, Lord. O Lord! be near me, and suffer not the enemy to prevail over me.'

Speaking of the Lord's prayer, this child said, 'I have much lamented to consider how people teach their children the Lord's prayer, without minding the depth that is in it, saying, Our Father, which art in heaven: but they that remain in wickedness are not his children, so cannot rightly call him Father. Hallowed be thy name: but too many dishonour it by their wicked words. Thy kingdom come: oh! but too few let the Lord live and have dominion in them. Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven; [and we all know there is nothing but the will of God done there]; oh! but how little of the Lord's will is done here. Give us this day our daily bread: O Lord!' said he, 'give me daily bread from thee. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us: but, oh! how unwillingly do many people forgive them that trespass against them? How can such expect forgiveness of the Lord? Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; (and then he said) Oh! leave me not in temptation, but deliver me from the tempter; for thine is the kingdom, and all power is with thee, and glory for ever. This prayer' said he, 'people teach their children by heart, and think it is enough. I have been at play with a boy in the street, and his father hath called to him, saying, Have you said your prayers to-day?—and he hath gone in from me, and stood behind the door, and hath said this prayer, as fast as he could, for haste to go to play again; I hearkened to him all the while.' Such careless ones he lamented; and he gave good advice to many that came to him, and advised the servant maid against speaking bad words; and

though his breath grew short, he said, ‘ I desire to please the Lord always.’ He was very resigned unto the will of the Lord, and desired his parents to give him up freely, then took his leave, in great tenderness, of his father, mother, sisters, brother, and other relations; desiring to have his love remembered to his grandmother, and some other relations and friends, that were not present; and pausing, he said, ‘ Oh! what joy I feel!’ Then praising the Lord while strength remained, he sweetly departed the 14th of the first month, 1703-4, aged twelve years and a half, and two days.

PRISCILLA CUTHBERT was born at Brentford, in Middlesex, in 1697, daughter of Thomas and Isabella Cuthbert, of the same place. Some months before her sickness, she was observed to have a religious concern upon her mind, and did retire from the rest of the children, and denied herself diversions among them: she went into solitary places, and read in books, sometimes weeping by herself, and other times praising the Lord. She had a sight of her death before she sickened, and spake of it to several; when her sickness came, which continued three weeks, she bore it with much patience, praying to the Lord to be her comfort, and said, ‘ I hope the Lord will comfort my dear father and mother;’ acknowledging the tender care and cost which her parents had been at for the bringing up and education of herself,

and sisters and brothers; when her father came to her, upon her inquiry after him, she endeavoured to wipe off the tears, and said, 'Lord comfort my father and mother, and bless my poor sisters and brothers;' and gave good advice to her brother to obey his parents, and fear the Lord, saying, 'He will bless thee:' she said to her father, 'I am willing to live to praise the Lord, and I am willing to die.' At another time she said, 'In the time of my health I have been afraid when I have seen any dead nailed up in their coffins, but now the Lord hath taken away that fear, blessed be his name, and therefore take you notice that stand by me, that I am neither afraid of death nor the grave, but I am willing to die when it pleaseth the Lord.' She often prayed for her parents, to whom she expressed more than ordinary affection, on account of their love and tenderness to her, expressing her willingness to die, and her comfort in the Lord; her schoolmistress visiting her, she said, 'I am going where I trust in the Lord I shall have rest, for the Lord is my rest.' Near her end, her father speaking of his purpose to stay with her that night, she replied, 'No, no, for I shall not die this night, though it will not be long before I do.' The next day her father coming to her, she having had some rest in the night, she praised the Lord; a neighbour present supposed she might, by her praising God, disturb her father; to which she made no answer, till some time after she said, 'Is my father disturbed at my praising the Lord? No, no, I know he is not; indeed if I was dying, as some have done of late, rending and tearing with bad words, my father and mother

too would have great reason to be troubled ; but to have a child die in the Lord, I hope is their comfort, and I know their trouble is mixed with joy, blessed be the Lord for it ;' upon these words several young women present broke forth into tears. About two hours before she died, her father asked her, if he and her mother should turn her, to see if she could have a little rest, she answered, ' Do what you please.' A friend present advised all to be quiet and still, and in a little time hearing one weep, she said, ' Who is that, my sister Elizabeth ?' Reply was made, ' No ;' she replied, ' Do not cry for me, do not cry for me ;' these were the last words she was heard to speak : so departed this life without sigh or groan, on the 6th day of the sixth month, 1711, in the fourteenth year of her age.

In sending forth this little tract, containing several remarkable and instructive account of the latter days and dying expressions of pious children, an opportunity is afforded of inviting the youthful reader's serious attention to the subject of religion, the good effects of which are here so strikingly set forth. Many of you, dear children ! for whose instruction, these memoirs are printed, will, doubtless, after having read them, feel your hearts tenderly affected, and be led into serious reflection. You will, perhaps, be struck with the thought, how short a time these good children were suffered to remain in this world ; and, in comparing their ages with your own, finding but little difference, you may consider

the uncertainty of time with respect to yourselves. Indeed, you know not how short a time may be afforded you, by Him, who giveth to all, both life and breath, and all things; who still preserves these blessings to you, and you in the enjoyment of them. When you have thus reflected how uncertain your time is, that you know not how soon it may please your great Creator to take you also hence, the thought may arise in your hearts, how far *you* are prepared to leave this world, and to enter into another state of being. For, when you die, it is the body only that returns to the dust, while the spirit, the never dying soul, returns to Him that gave it, and must give an account of the deeds done in the body, good or evil. You will surely wish to leave this world, so as to be happy in the next; as we believe those dear children did.

Now, if you sincerely desire to die happy, you will be thoughtful how you live. In the accounts before you, you will find that these young persons were religious in their lives, they were good children. They were such as feared God and endeavoured to serve Him. So that, if you would die in the favour of Almighty God, you must live in his fear. Be attentive to the gentle impressions of duty which he is pleased to make upon your tender hearts, by his holy Spirit; do not slight any impression of duty. Most of you know something of what is good and what is evil: God gives you to know something of this, since he writes his law in our hearts; for though we see him not, "He is not far from every one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being." You have, perhaps, been taught, that it is good to fear and worship Him, to honour and obey

your parents, to be kind and affectionate to your brothers, sisters, and play-mates. But the wicked live without any proper sense of God, or any desire to serve Him ; they forsake Him, they forget Him and set aside His holy laws. Bad children are disobedient to their parents, and return them evil for all their love ; they tell lies and swear ; they live in quarrelling and fighting, and much wickedness ; and so instead of obeying the commands of Christ, their lives are such as will make their end miserable.

But what encouragement do these accounts of the dying expressions of pious young persons afford, for you to follow their examples ! How happy are good children in this life ! and if it should please God to take any of you hence in early life, what a blessed thing would it be to finish your days, as these have done, in full assurance of his favour ! and should it please Him to continue you here a while longer, to nourish you day after day, and follow you with one blessing after another, and one preservation after another, to give you food day by day, and clothing as you have need of it, let it be your care at all times to serve Him with gratitude and faithfulness ; that he may still bless and prosper you, and that your end may be crowned with confidence and peace.

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