

POOR SARAH ;
OR.
THE INDIAN WOMAN.



LONDON:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY ;
SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD ;
AND BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

[No. 244.]

POOR SARAH:

OR,

THE INDIAN WOMAN.

SHOWING THE

TRUE WAY TO HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT.



LONDON:

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;

Instituted 1799.

SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,
AND BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

POOR SARAH.



IN March, 1814, I first became acquainted with poor Sarah. She called to beg a few crusts, and said, "I desire nothing but crumbs; they are enough for my poor old body, which is just ready to crumble into dust." I had heard of her as a poor but pious Indian woman; and in relieving her, I regretted that I had but little to

give. I asked her, "How have you managed the last cold winter?"

"Oh, Misse," she replied, "God better to Sarah than she fear. When winter came on, Sarah was in great doubt: no husband, no child here. What if great snow come? what if fire gone out, neighbour great way off? What if sick, all alone! what if she die? nobody know it. Ah, while I think so in my heart, then I cry; while I crying, something speak in my mind, and say, Trust God, Sarah; he loves his people, he never leave them, he never forsake them; he never forsake Sarah: he be friend indeed: go tell Jesus, Sarah; he love to hear prayer, he often hear Sarah pray. So I wipe my eyes, don't cry any more: go out among bushes, where nobody see, fall down on my old knees, and pray. God give me great many words: I pray great while; God make all my mind peace. When I get up, I go in house, but can't stop praying in my mind: all my heart burn with love to God. I willing to live cold, go hungry, be sick, die alone, if God be there. He knows best, Sarah don't know: so I

feel happy great many days, and sing the good hymn :—

‘ Now I can trust the Lord for ever,
He can clothe and he can feed.
He my Rock, and he my Saviour,
Jesus is a Friend indeed.’ ”

“ Well Sarah, have you been comfortably supplied ? ”

“ Oh yes,” replied she, “ I never out of corn meal all winter.”

“ But how do you cook it, so as to make it comfortable food ? ”

“ Oh I make porridge, Misse : sometimes I get out, like to-day, and I go get some crusts of bread, and some salt to put in it; then it is so nourishing to this poor old body : but when I can get none, then I make it good as I can, and kneel down, pray God to bless it to me, and I feel as if God feed me, and be so happy here,” (laying her hand on her heart.)

Oh ! what a lesson, thought I, for my repining heart ! “ But do you get no meat, or other necessaries, Sarah.”

“ Not often, Misse. Sometimes I get so hungry for it, I begin to feel wicked, then I think how Jesus was hungry in the desert. But when Satan tempt him to sin

to get food, he would not. So I say, Sarah won't sin to get victuals. I no steal, no eat stolen feed, though I be hungry ever so long: then God gives me a small look of himself, of his Son, and his glory; and I think in my heart, They all will be mine soon; then I not suffer hunger any more. My Father have there many mansions."

"Sarah," said I, "you seem to have some knowledge of the Scriptures: can you read?"

"I can spell out a little, I can't read like you white folks; oh, if I could." Here she burst into tears; but after regaining her composure, she added, "This, Misse, is what I want above all things, more than victuals or drink. Oh how often I beg God to teach me to read, and he do teach me some. When I take Bible, kneel down and pray, he show me great many words, and they be so sweet, I want to know a great deal more. Oh when I get home to heaven, then I know all, then I not want to read any more."

In one of the many visits she afterwards made me, she gave me the following account of her conversion. She was

brought up in extreme ignorance, and lived until she became a wife and a mother, without hope and without God in the world. Her husband treated her with severity, she became dejected and sorrowful, and to use her own simple language, "I go sorrow, sorrow, all day long. When night come, husband come home angry, then I think, Oh, if Sarah had a friend; but Sarah have no friend. I no want tell neighbour, I get trouble; that only make it worse: so I be quiet, tell nobody; only cry all night and day for one good friend. One Sunday, good neighbour come and say, Come, Sarah, go to house of God; so I called my children, tell them stay in house while I go. When got there, a minister tell all about Jesus; how he was born in stable, how he suffer all his life, die on great cross, was buried, rise again, and go up to heaven; and so always be sinner's Friend. He say too, if you have trouble, go to Jesus, he the best Friend in sorrow, he cure all your sorrow, he bring you out of trouble, he support you, make you willing to suffer. So when I go home, I think great deal what minister say—think This the

friend I want, this the friend I cry for so long; poor ignorant Sarah never hear so much about Jesus before. Then I try hard to tell Jesus how I want such a friend; but, oh, my heart so hard, can't feel, can't pray, can't love Jesus, though he so good: this make me sorrow more and more. When Sunday come, want to go again, I sit down in the door, hear minister tell how bad my heart is,—no love to God, no love Jesus, no love to pray. So then, I see why I can't have Jesus for friend, because I got so bad heart: then I go pray all way home, Jesus make my heart better. When got home, feel sorry because my wicked heart, but I don't know how to make it better. When I go to bed, I keep thinking what that word mean, Ye must be born again. When husband go to work, I run over to my good neighbour, ask her if Bible say so. Then she read me where that great man go to see Jesus by night, because afraid to go in day-time; I think he be just like Sarah: she must go in secret to hear about Jesus, else husband be angry. Then I feel encouraged in mind, determined to have Jesus for friend: so ask neighbour

how to get good heart; she tell me, give your heart to Jesus, he will give Holy Spirit to make it better. Sarah don't know what she mean,—never hear of Holy Spirit. She say, Go next Sunday, she will tell minister of me,—he tell me what to do. So Sarah go hear how must be born again. Minister say, You must go fall down before God, tell him you are grieved because you sin, tell him you want better heart, ask him, for Christ Jesus' sake, to give Holy Spirit, and make your heart new. Then Sarah go home, feel light, because she know the way. When got home, I say, Sarah can't work any more Sundays, because this against God. I rather work nights when moon shine. So he (her husband) drive me hoe corn that night, he so angry: I want to pray a great deal, so go out and hoe corn, I pray all the time. When come in house, I kneel down and tell Jesus take my bad heart,—can't bear bad heart; pray give me Holy Spirit, make my heart soft, make it all new; so great many days Sarah go beg for a new heart. Sarah go to God's house all Sundays, and go hear good neighbour read Bible every

day. So after great while, God make all my mind peace. I love Jesus; love pray to him, love to tell him all my sorrows: he take away my sorrow, make all my soul joy: only sorry that I can't read Bible, and learn how to be like Jesus; want to be like his dear people the Bible tell of: so I make great many brooms, and go get Bible for them. Then I go ask neighbour if she teach me to read, she say, Yes. Then I go many days learn letters, pray God all the while to help me learn to read his holy word. So, Misse, I learn read good hymn; learn spell out good words in Bible. So every day I take Bible, tell children that be God's word, tell them how Jesus die on cross for sinners; then make them all kneel down, I pray God give them new heart. Pray for husband too. Oh, how I sorry for him till he die. And now, Sarah live a poor Indian widow for great many long years, always find Jesus Friend, Husband, Brother; and he make me willing to suffer, willing to live great while in this bad world, if he see right; but, above all, I pray that he give me great

good hope of glory when I die. So now I wait patient till my change come."

While she was giving this narration, her countenance bore strong testimony to the feelings of her soul: it was evident she meditated much on what little she knew of divine things; and what she knew of God's word, was to her like the honey and the honey-comb.

She used to bring sand in bags to the village, and sell it for food. Sometimes she brought grapes and other kinds of fruit. But as she went along, she took little notice of any thing, except children, whom she seldom passed without an affectionate word of exhortation to be good, say their prayers, learn to read God's word, etc. accompanying this advice with a bunch of grapes, or an apple. Thus she engaged the affection of many a little heart; and you might often observe her hands uplifted as in prayer.

One day I asked her how she could bring such heavy loads, old and feeble as she was.

"Oh," said she, "when I get great load, then I go pray God to give me strength to carry. So I go on, thinking all the

way how good God is, he give his only Son to die for poor sinners; think how good Jesus is, suffer so much for such poor creatures, how good Holy Spirit was, to come in my bad heart, and make it all new. So these sweet thoughts make my mind full of joy; I never think how heavy sand-bag be on my old back."

One day she passed with a bag of sand: on her return, she called on me. I inquired how much Mrs. — gave her for the sand: she was unwilling to tell, but I insisted she should let me see; she at length consented; and I drew from the bag a bone, almost bare of meat, not enough for half a meal. "Is this all? Did that rich woman turn you off so? How cruel, how hard-hearted!" I exclaimed. "Misse," she replied, "this made me afraid to let you see it, I fear you be angry: I hope she have bigger heart next time, only she forgot now, how that Jesus promise to pay her all that she give Sarah. Don't be angry; I pray God to give her a great deal bigger heart."

The conviction that she possessed much of the spirit of Him, who said, "Bless them that curse you," rushed upon my mind.

I think I never felt deeper self-abhorrence and abasement ; I left her for some moments ; and, from the few comforts I possessed, gave her a portion. She received them with the most visible marks of gratitude, arose to depart, went to the door, and then turned, looked me in the face with evident concern. “ Sarah,” said I, “ what would you have ? ” supposing that she wanted something I had not thought of, and feared to ask.

“ Oh, my good Misse,” said she, “ nothing : only afraid your big heart feel proud, because you give more for nothing than Misse —— for sand.”

This faithfulness, added to her piety and gratitude, struck me forcibly, and, bursting into tears, I said, “ Oh, Sarah ! when you pray that Mrs. —— may have a bigger heart, don’t forget to pray that I may have a humbler one.”

“ I will, Misse, I will,” she exclaimed with joy, and hastened on her way.

Another excellence in her character was that she loved God’s house, and often appeared there, when, from bad weather or other causes, many a seat was empty. She was always early, and ever

clean, and her apparel without holes, though sometimes patched all over. She was very old and feeble, yet she generally stood, during public service, with eyes fixed on the preacher.

In the spring of 1818, it was observed by her friends, that she did not appear at public worship as usual, and one of her female benefactors asked her the reason, when she, with streaming eyes, told her, that her clothes had become so old and ragged, that she could not come with comfort and decency; but said she had been praying God to provide for her in this respect a great while, and telling Jesus how much she wanted to go to his house of prayer, and expressed a strong desire to be resigned and submissive to his will. This was soon communicated to a few friends, who furnished her with a decent suit of apparel. This present almost overpowered her grateful heart. She received it as from the hand of her heavenly Father and kind Redeemer, in answer to her prayer; and she said she would go and tell Jesus how good his dear people were to his poor old crea-

ture, and pray her good Father to give them great reward.

The last visit I had from her was in the summer of 1818. She complained of great weariness, and pain in her limbs, and showed me her feet, which were much swollen. I inquired the cause :

“ Oh,” said she, with a serene smile, “ death come creeping on, I think of grave-yard to-day ; Sarah must lie there soon.”

“ Well, are you willing to die ? Do you feel ready ?”

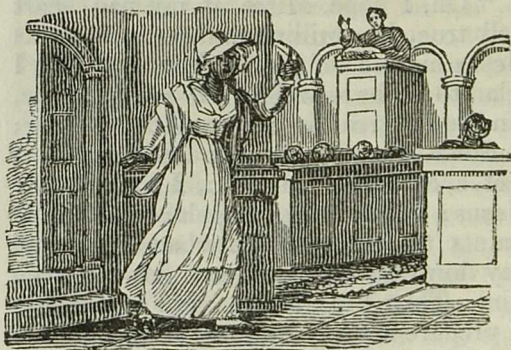
“ Oh, I hope, Misse, if my bad heart tell true, I be willing and ready to do as Jesus bid me : if he say, You must die, I glad to go be with him ; if he say, Live, and suffer great deal more, then I willing ; I think Jesus know best. Sometimes I get such look of heaven, I long to see Jesus ; to see happy angels ; to see holy saints ; to throw away my bad heart ; and lay down my old body, and go where no sin. Then I tell Jesus. He say, Sarah, I prepare a place for you ; and I come to take you to myself ; then I be quite like child, don't want to go till he call me.”

In the course of three weeks from this

time, I heard that Sarah was *removed to a better world*.

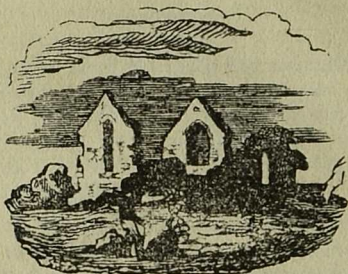
“The subject of the foregoing narrative lived and died in a town in the eastern part of Connecticut. We are acquainted with the writer, and can assure our readers that the account here given is true.”—*Christian Herald*, August 4, 1820. *American Paper*.

N. B. It was impossible to put down her words exactly as spoken, but the sense is always retained, and generally the exact expressions.



KNIGHT, Printer, Upper Holloway, Middlesex.

37131 032 414 062



THIS is the way to know the Lord,
And this will please him too,
To hear and read his holy word,
That tells us what to do.

He lives in heaven, and does not need
Such little ones as we ;
But God is very kind indeed,
And even cares for me.

Then let me love him for his care,
And love his holy word,
Because he teaches children there
To know and please the Lord.