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Little Ann: An Authentic Narrative

Richard Marks

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LITTLE ANN;
AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

BY THE REV. MR. MARKS,
Author of "The Retrospect," &c.

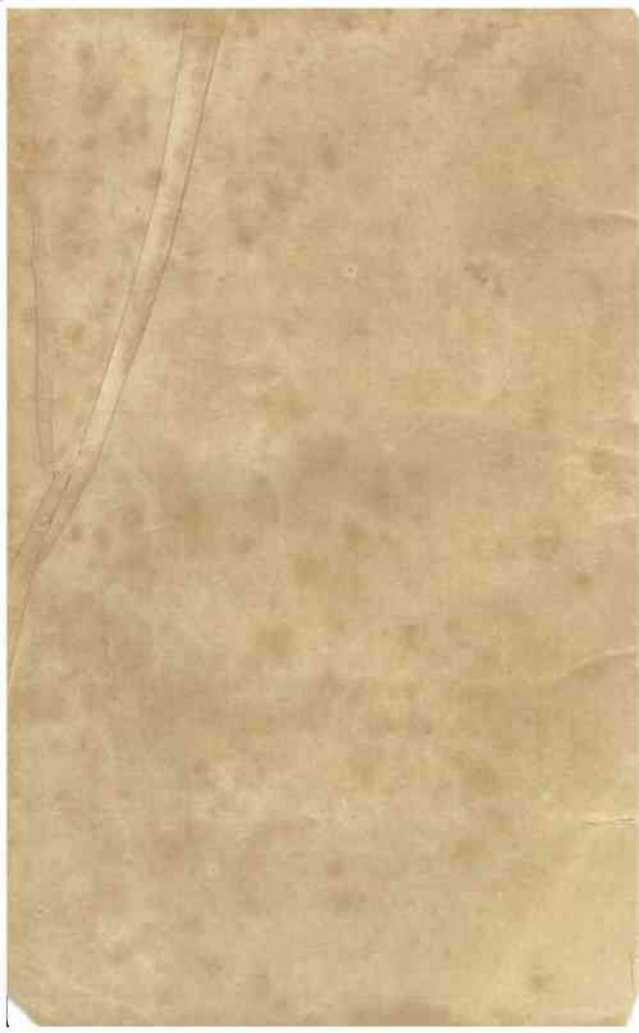


PUBLISHED BY THE
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,
141 Nassau-street, New-York.

SERIES IV.

NO. VIII.





Eloza S. Douglass 14
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LITTLE ANN.



LETTER I.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WILL now endeavour to comply with your request, in transmitting some account of the little girl I named to you on my return from C——. Convinced how much you enter into the spiritual welfare of the poor children of your hamlet, and how much you desire to edify and lead on their young minds to the best of subjects, I shall, here and there, endeavour to unite with you in this good work and labour of love, by dropping a few hints, and making a few reflections, as I proceed with the story of Little Ann.

You were too much interested with my esteemed and invalid friend, the late Mrs. I. to have forgotten her, although your acquaintance was as short as that of a wayfaring man, who calls and tarries but a night. To that friend the last solemn hour of life was fast approaching. On her struggling spirit all the realities of an eternal world were about to open, when I set off from home, if, peradventure, I might once more enjoy communion with her; if so be I might hear her once more expatiate on the theme of redeeming love, before she went that way whence she would no more return. That privilege was granted—we did once more discourse on the attributes, the compassion, the merits,

sacrifice and work of Him who came into the world to save sinners. We endeavoured to praise Him for past mercies, and to commit all future events into his hands: and then we parted to meet and to converse no more together in the body, until death shall be swallowed up in victory, and the earth shall no more cover her slain. These circumstances would have rendered that journey interesting and important to my mind, had no other events mixed with them. But my interviews with this dying friend were accompanied with several unlooked for and edifying conversations with the pious young stranger whose little history is to be the main subject of my communications.

It was in the evening of my arrival at C——, and not long after I had left the sick room of my friend Mrs. I. when her husband Aspasio thus accosted me, "There is a sweet little girl at ——, whose parents superintend our poor-house; she lies in dying circumstances. She is a very pious and intelligent child; I think you would like to see her—shall we go?" It was a well-timed, and I hope, a providential invitation. Providential, if, that the reading of this little account should hereafter benefit but one child; and well-timed, in that it served to divert my mind from a conflict of feelings, which the sight of an esteemed and departing friend had given rise to, and which at that moment bore too heavy on the heart.

On our way to Little Ann's residence, we passed



many people in the streets. Some were carrying branches of holly, and bunches of all the various tribes

of ever-greens, to dress out their windows, and to adorn their chimney-pieces for the approaching Christmas-day; while others were buying or selling these innocent and ancient tokens of joy. The gay and fashionable were either walking abroad for recreation and amusement, or hurrying on to their respective mansions; while not a few, of common-place character, and more ordinary pursuits, were intent on their respective business, or hastening homeward to plain fire-side enjoyments, in the bosom of their less elegant, but oft-times more happy families. Each and all of them seemed intent on some object connected with the present hour. Few or none appeared to be ruminating on the shortness of time, or the vanities of this world! Few seemed to have eternity before them, or to be aware of the interesting life and approaching death of Little Ann; they entered not into her joys, nor did they partake of her sorrows. The greater part of them had never heard her name pronounced; much less did they know how the Lord was conducting her through this vale of tribulation toward the kingdom of heaven. But this was of no consequence. He who clothes the grass of the field, and provides for the fowls of the air, had given this child food and raiment, and having these, she was therewith content and happy; her young, but enlightened mind, had been enabled to discover the pearl of great price; and her soul had grasped it as her own inestimable treasure. The Lord Jesus had given unto her his peace, and the world could not increase or take it away. Hence she could well forego all the attentions and sympathies of the vain and busy tribes of men; of that world which know not God, nor love his Son Jesus Christ.

After awhile we reached the dwelling place of Little Ann. On entering the first room from the street, the couch of the sick child immediately presented itself. It had been brought into that apartment, and placed in one corner, not far from the grate, that she might enjoy the warmth of the fire, and the constant presence and assistance of some of the family. So far all was

well. But as the parents kept a little shop, and sold their articles in this room, it was very public and noisy; so that, to a mind less calm than Ann's, it would have been very distressing. In addition to all the surrounding noise and bustle, an open clock was beating its monotonous vibrations, and ringing its shrill peals continually at the foot of her bed. But though these things not a little discomposed my mind, they were scarcely felt or regarded by the patient sufferer, whose whole mind and thoughts were abstracted from surrounding and visible things, and fixed on those which are invisible and eternal.



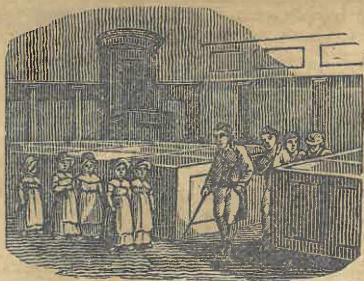
I can hardly tell why it is so, but I seldom can converse with children to my own satisfaction, or to their profit, if others are present. On entering the room where little Ann lay, for some time I felt myself un-

able to do more than silently to gaze on the emaciated, but still sweet-looking child's countenance. I could not request the family to withdraw, and while they were present, I, for awhile, could say nothing. Aspasio at length broke in on our unprofitable silence, by saying, "Well, Ann, I have brought a kind gentleman to talk to you about heaven, and about your soul, and about Jesus Christ. He loves children who love their Saviour. I hope you are glad he is come?" She turned her bright black eyes upon me, and smiled, and moved her lips; but the sounds fell short, they were too faint to reach my ear. "She can only speak in a whisper," said Aspasio; "you must go nearer." I did so, and while the mother was reaching a chair, the repeated smile of little Ann's countenance, and the pleasing look she first cast on Aspasio, and then on myself, spoke plain enough to this effect, "Sir, you are welcome here; I am glad of one more opportunity to hear of my dear Saviour, and to tell to others that I love him." Indeed, there was not one symptom of confusion or fear about her. Her whole manner was calculated to do away all my hesitations, and to lead me on at once to a familiar conversation. Nor did I leave her without having cause to say to myself, "It is good for me that I have both seen and conversed with thee, thou happy and interesting stranger."

It not unfrequently happens, when we visit individuals of whom we have heard some glowing description given by a fond and partial friend, that we come away disappointed. The parties have not realized the character given of them, nor any way interested us as we had expected. But in little Ann's case it was quite the reverse. I set off with but low expectations, and I returned with deep, and, I trust, abiding convictions of the freeness, the richness, and power of that grace of God, which once induced the Creator of men and Angels to exclaim, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

In the course of my different conversations with this

child, I learned that it was a considerable while ago since the Lord had more especially convinced her of her lost and fallen condition, as a child of Adam. She gave a very clear and scriptural account of her experience, and manifested an acquaintance with her own heart, and with the plan of salvation by grace, through faith in a crucified Redeemer, that at once surprised and delighted me. I was anxious to discover what book, or sermon, or individual had been first commissioned to arrest her mind; and by what means the work had been carried on in her soul, to its then advanced state; and the more I inquired, the more I was convinced that the Holy Ghost himself had, from the very first dawn of her spiritual day, been the principal, and, in many instances, the only enlightener of her soul. She had, indeed, been a considerable time in a well-conducted Sunday School, and had received



one of the first prizes, a copy of an elegant edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, as a reward for diligence and good behaviour; but she did not date any particular stage of her Christian experience from what she read or heard there, nor did it appear that her teach-

ers were acquainted with what was passing within her bosom. She had, indeed, requested of them to be permitted to attend my friend Aspasio's Sabbath evening instructions to children, but she was unhappily told that she was too young to profit by them. After the Lord had, himself, convinced her of sin, and directed her soul to Christ Jesus for salvation, she became very earnest in her attendance on every public means of grace, and was much edified under the preaching of the word. Although so young, and never prompted by any one to attempt such a thing, she had, for a good while, been in the habit of writing down the texts and heads of most of the sermons she heard preached. But such was her humility, and fear of being thought too highly of after her decease, that, not long before her death, she took the opportunity of her mother's absence, and prevailed on her sister to burn all these little, interesting papers. The parent came in just time enough to see them consuming, but not in time to rescue any part of them from the devouring flames. I shall not attempt to give the particulars of my conversations with her. Suffice it to say, that through them all she expressed her conviction that she should soon die—that she was a great sinner, and merited no good thing at the hands of God: but that she believed Jesus Christ had died for her—and that she loved him, and longed to depart to be with him. In my next letter I will enter into a somewhat more particular account of her life and conversation. I may just mention here, that she had been received into the Church, and admitted to the Lord's Supper, where, with an understanding and believing heart, she had enjoyed communion with Him “who, the same night that he was betrayed, took bread, and, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me’”—and who, “likewise, after supper, took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament,

which is shed for many, for the remission of sins : Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Some time ago she had many doubts, and fears, and buffetings of Satan, to contend with ; but when I saw her, she was strong in faith, and seemed only to look and long for the coming of her Lord.

There were many circumstances which made it desirable, as well as necessary, for me to hasten back to the people and children of my charge, yet I could not but feel a difficulty in tearing myself away from this interesting child, just as we had begun to be acquainted, and to feel interested and edified in each other's society. I could have wished to have seen her tranquil spirit go down into the valley of the shadow of death—to have been permitted to direct its last attentions to the Lamb of God, and to have watched its last and successful effort to escape from its prison of clay, and to wing its flight into the bosom of its Saviour and its God ; but duty called another way, and I was obliged to take the last look, and to pronounce the last farewell. Short as our acquaintance had been, it was found sufficiently long to call forth the tear of affectionate sorrow at the moment of separation. I thanked the Lord, that I had seen her—that I had witnessed the power of divine grace in her soul—that I had been permitted to converse and to pray with her—I, it is true, was about to go my way, but Aspasio, her dearest Christian friend, yet remained with her—and that circumstance tranquilized my mind. As I turned from her couch and lifted up the latch of the door, I said to myself "Farewell, my younger sister, farewell, until we meet in an undying world, and hail each other in a kingdom

"Unstain'd by wo, unchang'd by years,
"Unlike this gloomy vale of tears."

In the full assurance that she would soon be beyond the reach of every pain and conflict, I felt all that is

expressed in the following hymn, and I wished to express the whole as referring to little Ann.



“Happy soul, thy days near ended,
All thy mourning days below :
Go, by Angel guards attended,
To the sight of Jesus go !
Waiting to receive thy Spirit,
Lo ! the Saviour stands above,
Shows the purchase of his merit,
Reaches out the crown of love.

Struggle through thy latest passion
To thy dear Redeemer’s breast,
To his uttermost salvation,
To his everlasting rest :
For the joy he sets before thee
Bear a momentary pain,
Die, to live the life of glory,
Suffer, with thy Lord to reign.”

In my next letter I will, as I before promised, go back into Ann’s little history, and from the papers of my friend Aspasio select some more particulars of her experience and closing scene. For the present, I must conclude, by assuring you that I remain,

Your’s very truly,

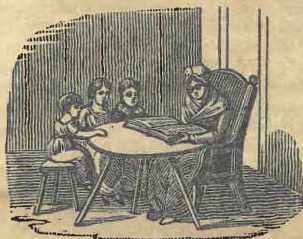


LETTER II.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—In resuming the account of little Ann, I have to state that she was not known to my friend Aspasio until several months of her bright Christian course had passed away—nor, indeed, until the consumption, which finally terminated her earthly career, had made considerable inroads on her constitution. She had been in a lingering state of bodily disease, and under many occasional doubts, and fears, and conflicts of mind, before she obtained what she had long, very long, desired, namely, a Christian friend to whom she could daily tell all her little troubles. A few kind friends had, now and then, called on her; but until the Providence of God directed Aspasio to her dwelling, she did not find any one to whom she could freely unbend her mind; or who, on the whole, seemed to enter into her feelings, as he did. In this she was no way singular. We continually find, that in the midst of kind, and even pious friends, there is here and there an individual whose turn of mind, and peculiar manners, are so formed as to interest, to encourage, and to profit us more than any, or all of the others. This was undoubtedly so much the case in little Ann's instance, that, had not the Lord directed Aspasio to her residence, it is probable this little girl would have passed off the stage of life in comparative silent reserve, and descended to the grave with her real character little known, and little understood. From the first interview which my friend had with her,

to her last and dying hour, she was more unreserved towards him than any other person; and evidently more profited by his conversation, and more happy in his society than she was by the conversation, or in the company of any other.

It had been the laudable practice of her mother to accustom her children to learn and repeat some hymn



or scripture piece before they knelt down to their evening devotions. In this course of Christian training Ann had learnt the words of many verses, and of many hymns. And it pleased the Author and Giver of all grace to draw her serious attention, when very young, to the following lines, so that she clearly understood and solemnly pondered their contents in her mind every day :



“ How long, sometimes, a day appears,
“ And weeks, how long are they ;

" Months move along as if the years
" Would never pass away :

" But months and years are passing by,
" And soon must all be gone ;
" For day by day, as moments fly,
" Eternity comes on.

" Days, months, and years must have an end,
" Eternity has none ;
" 'Twill always have as long to spend
" As when it first begun.

" Great God ! an infant cannot tell
" How such a thing can be ;
" I only pray that I may dwell
" That long, long time with thee."

These verses were among the first things which the Lord applied to her heart ; but, at that time, her parents little knew or imagined how much they had instructed and affected her mind. How should every discovery of this sort encourage parents and teachers to labour and not faint in the good work of training up children in the way they should go ? However barren and unfruitful the field may long appear where they have continued to labour, yet, let none despair of seeing a harvest. Those who labour simply with the view of glorifying God and benefitting the souls of men, shall not, cannot labour in vain. The day will come when the dews of heaven shall descend, and the Sun of Righteousness shine down on the fallow ground, and cause the seed to spring up, and bring forth fruit, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. Bread cast upon the waters is often found after many days.

Little Ann, in her early childhood had, like many other children, been terrified with foolish tales of robbers, and murders, and pretended apparitions ; so that her nightly rest was often much disturbed ; especially after her friends removed to a new residence, where

she feared to be left alone, and dared not go into any dark room. But the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to the soul, does, often, bring a sweet composure, and holy courage to the mind in other matters; this little Ann experienced. Indeed, it was in this deliverance from all her former terrors that the power of divine grace was first visibly displayed in her. She was not more than seven years old, when, one evening, her elder sister observed her go up stairs just as the night commenced. This was so unusual a thing for Ann to do, that it excited the other's surprise; but that surprise was increased and changed into fear, when she found, that Ann continued a good half hour alone, and without any candle; she, therefore, went up stairs and inquired where and how she was, and what she was doing? when it was discovered that Ann was on her knees engaged in prayer. Finding this to be the case, the sister merely asked her whether she would not have a light, to which Ann replied, "No; I am not afraid of being alone *now*—I like it." After awhile, she came down and mixed with the family; when the conversation turning on the subject of prayer, Ann told them that there was one particular verse of a hymn which she had always said as a part of her private prayers. On being asked what it was, she repeated the following lines :



"Lord, teach a little child to pray
"Thy grace betimes impart,

“ And grant thy Holy Spirit may
“ Renew my infant heart.”

The next morning she came to her parent and said, “ Mother, last night I said my prayers !” My dear, replied the mother, you say your prayers every night, don’t you ? “ I have pretended to say them,” answered the child, “ but last night I felt them, when I said them.” Happy child ! Was it not the indwelling Spirit of the most High God, that had delivered thee from all thy infant terrors, and had given thee to love that silence, that solitude, and darkness which are, at times, so suitable to the praying Christian ? Was it not the Holy Ghost, who had taught thee to know the difference between the service and prayers of the lips, and the supplications and devotions of the heart ? It was the light of the eternal Jehovah’s countenance that was lifted up upon thee in thy evening sacrifice, and which made thee to experience what thou hadst not words or understanding to explain fully to others. Oh, that every one, who pretends to approach God in prayer, were more like thee—oh, that all of us could but more frequently rise from our knees and say, “ we had felt our prayers when we said them.” Then would our souls thrive as a watered garden, and we should go on our way rejoicing, even in tribulation, and glorifying God our Saviour. But, alas ! too many condemn all this feeling as enthusiastic madness, and content themselves with the mere form of godliness, when they are utterly destitute of, and strangers to its power. While not a few, who long to give up their souls to Christ, have to mourn over the remains of their sins, and to exclaim,

“ When I attempt to soar above,
“ To view the heights of Jesus’ love ;
“ This monster seems to mount the skies,
“ And veils his glory from my eyes.”

As the tree is best known by its fruits, so, from the

actions of this child, we have the surest authority to say, and truest evidence to prove, that as she advanced in days, so she continued to grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God, her Saviour. The parish in which she resided was large and populous, consequently, the poor house had always within its walls a great number of people, who, from unavoidable misfortunes, the infirmities of old age, or their own improper conduct, were reduced to such circumstances as to make them glad to seek a refuge, and to find an asylum beneath its cover. And it is a pleasing thing to say, that *there* the forlorn and destitute did find, not only those comforts which their bodies required, but they also found means of grace and spiritual instruction for their souls. Once in every week the minister of the parish expounded a portion of Scripture to them, and every evening a chapter and a suitable prayer were read, by the mistress of the house, before the inmates retired to rest. Sometimes, however, it would happen that illness or other unavoidable duties prevented the mistress from taking the lead in the evening domestic worship. It then, of course, became necessary to look round for a substitute to perform this duty. And who do you think was selected for this purpose? Not any



of the elder branches of the family or household: but little Ann was the honoured individual of their choice, who regularly, on all these occasions, went into the large room, and there, in the midst of from twenty to

thirty people, she read a chapter, and then engaged in prayer, with such solemnity as quite to engage the attention, and bring down the veneration and love of the whole house upon her. On the Sabbath-days such of these poor people as were able and disposed to go, went to Ann's church, and sat together in the chancel, where, if possible, one of her parents attended with them, to maintain order, and to direct them to the various parts of the service. But this post of instruction and superintendence often fell on little Ann. And so pleased were the poor people to have her there, that they frequently requested, as a favour, that she might sit with them. Nor were they more happy in having her among them than she was in being so employed. "It is surprising," said her mother, "how the poor people got on whenever Ann was with them." But her Christian labours did not end here. Among those admitted from time to time, into the poor-house, there were people of various characters and circumstances; and Ann seemed to be always on the look-out for access to the ignorant and unhappy, with a view of instructing their minds, and comforting their hearts. Many instances of this nature might be brought forward, but I shall only mention two. Some time ago poor unhappy Jane — was admitted into the poor-house, and became the object of dear Ann's unwearied attentions. The history of this poor magdalen may be comprised in a few words. And, if it is set forth, it must be drawn in dark colours. Vanity, dress, and a love of pleasure, had turned her mind from the paths of virtue and honest labour. The world enticed her, evil men tempted her, and Satan, and her own fallen nature hurried her soul down the broad road of destruction, until she became the poor abandoned street-walker, and quite lost all fear of God, and all sense of shame among men. She had learned to read when a child, but as to a knowledge of Christ Jesus, as the Saviour of sinners, or of her own lost case, and eternal misery without his salvation, these were subjects of which she knew nothing until little Ann became her

teacher. Such a course of life as poor Jane had led, could only be continued for a short time. Her constitution was soon ruined, her health was soon gone, and ere long, all that train of wretchedness and misery followed which is the natural consequence of so wicked a life. Reduced to the lowest stage of wretchedness—quite ignorant of God—and totally unconcerned about her soul—she presented a melancholy figure. This was poor Jane's case, when half famished for want of food, and half naked for want of clothing, she came and implored shelter within the poor-house walls. Hitherto no one had cared for her soul—men had helped to betray, and had then forsaken her, and women had shunned and spurned her from their doors. But God, who is rich in mercy, had not, as yet, quite cast her off—nay, we have a good hope that his providence sent her to the poor-house, as to the place where he had provided food, both for her body and soul. To this forlorn and unhappy creature the compassions of little Ann's heart went forth. She found her extremely ignorant of the Scriptures, and of divine things in general, and rightly considering her a very bad character, she, as often as possible, read the word of God,



and other books to her, and by unwearied kindness and attention, endeavoured to lead her to attend to such instructions as she was able to give—nor were

her labours in vain ; for, after a while, Jane's affections were so far won by her kind and youthful teacher, that she listened, with all submission and attention, to her readings and explanations. To little Ann she would tell all, that was proper to be told, of her past wicked life, and of her present hopes and fears, as to obtaining mercy from God. As her bodily pains and weakness increased, there is room to hope that the work of real repentance toward God, and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, advanced in her soul ; at all events, she now requested the attendance of the visiting clergyman, to whom she, from time to time, unreservedly confessed, and feelingly lamented, her past life ; and in that state she died, and her spirit was summoned into the presence of a righteous Judge, and a merciful Saviour. While an inmate of the poor-house, she had obtained a Bible, and had, through grace, learned to esteem it as her best and most valuable possession. This richest of all her earthly treasures she, on her dying bed, bequeathed to her best and most beloved earthly friend, little Ann, as a token of affection, and as a lasting testimony of the good she had received from her. But now the teacher, as well as the learner, is in a world where the written word is no longer required, nor the aids and helps of a fellow-creature needful to show us our sins, or to urge on us the necessity and privilege of flying to Jesus for mercy and peace. They enjoy that mercy and that peace in its full measure, for they behold their Saviour face to face.



The next object of dear Ann's attention was a little orphan girl, a year and a half younger than herself; who, having lost every relation that either could or would provide her with food and raiment, was sent to the poor-house.

To this little outcast Ann became greatly attached. Mary was always a meek and sweet-tempered child, and they loved and delighted in administering to each other's wants. Ann rejoiced in instructing her orphan scholar, and little Mary delighted in waiting on her kind, but sickly instructor, which she continued to do until the latter was quite confined to her bed.

That little orphan girl, as yet, remains to encounter more of the trials of this life. In Ann's mother she has found a real friend. May the Lord be her Father, and her friend, through every stage of her life, and never leave or forsake her. She did well in administering to the wants of an heir of glory, while she had an opportunity. Jesus will not forget this her little service. It was all she could do, and the cup of water, given in the name of a disciple, shall not be forgotten. May the Lord make her a child of God, and in his own good time receive her into the kingdom of heaven, where her kind and gentle friend is gone before her.

Thus did little Ann bring forth the fruits of Christianity at home. She was seldom out of the presence of her parents. Had her duty called her abroad, there is no room to doubt but her conduct would have been as decidedly Christian as it was within her own doors. This I think is clear from what transpired when she was on a visit at a sister's in London. On a few occasions, the conversation had taken a light and unprofitable turn; at length Ann very seriously rebuked them, firmly declaring that whether they were offended or not, she must speak, and warn them of the evil. Unlooked for as such a rebuke was, and unwelcome as it then might be, it is hoped and believed that it was not altogether in vain.

Here, however, I must conclude my present letter, leaving you to meditate on so much of this young

Christian's history as has hitherto been laid before you, until an opportunity offers for sending you a further account. Meanwhile, I remain,

Your's truly,



LETTER III.

MY DEAR FRIEND.—In my first letter I mentioned, in a general way, that our young disciple had been then admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. I will now turn back to that part of her history, and enter a little into particulars.

Ann was then in the last year of her earthly pilgrimage—young, indeed, in months and days, as we compute time, but far advanced in the divine life; and, when compared to many a hoary-headed grandsire, she was old in grace, and much established in the faith. The Lord had hastened his work in her soul, because he intended soon to complete, and to cut it short in righteousness. She had long known what repentance for sin meant. She had a clear understanding of the Gospel plan of salvation. She could and did receive the divinely consecrated emblems with understanding, with sincerity, and with truth. She did not presume to advance to the Lord's table, trusting in her own righteousness, but in God's manifold mercies in Christ Jesus. She felt herself unworthy so much as to gather up the crumbs from under his table. But then she knew that He was that same God whose property it is always to have mercy and to forgive. It was not a

childish, nor a rash or inconsiderate act on her part. She had experienced many doubts and fears, much exercise of mind, and many longings and desires concerning it. There was a short hymn in her little book on the subject of our blessed Lord's sacrifice and death, with which she was much delighted. She carried the expressions of it not only in her recollection to the Lord's table, but every part of her conduct showed that she felt what it described, when she said,



"Rise, O my soul! with heavenly zeal,
"And wing thy flight to Calvary's hill;
"See where the dear expiring Lamb
"Bears all my burden and my shame.

"See, how the nails his flesh did tear!
"See, how they pierc'd him with a spear!
"O wond'rous love! it was for me
"He bled to death on yonder tree!

"'Tis finish'd!" said his latest breath,
"And sunk beneath the waves of death!
"He fought, and bled, and overcame—
"Salvation to the slaughter'd Lamb!"

Thus prepared by understanding and grace, when she did approach the ordinance, it was in the spirit of meekness and fear, of love and obedience. Nor did she go in vain; for it was then and there she could say that the Lord met with, and blessed her soul to such extent, as to make her exceedingly long for the return of another opportunity of commemorating his dying love.

By this time she was becoming so weak in body, that she justly apprehended she should never be able to walk to church on another communion Sabbath; she, therefore, urged her mother to a promise of having her carried thither, should she, at the return of that season, be living. It pleased the Lord to continue her here until that time, and after it. But, as it was mid-winter, and she was now quite unable to walk to church, and also in the habit of going into a warm bath every morning, her mother advanced many arguments and objections to dissuade her from thinking of quitting the house. Ann's mind, however, rose above all fear. Her desires were fervent and unshaken; and when the last difficulty the parent could present was brought forward, namely, that, perhaps, it might be a wet and stormy day, Ann sighed, and said,

"Well, the Lord knows my desire, and I will trust him to send me a fine day, if he sees fit I should partake of the Lord's Supper."

The long looked-for, and much-desired morning, at length arrived. The sky was clear of storms; and, as the sun arose on the earth, it threw its cheering beams across little Ann's bed-chamber, as a token for good, that her expectations and hopes would not be cast down; so that, when her parent entered her room, she smiled, and said, "See, mother, the Lord has sent me a fine morning."

So animated were her spirits with the prospect before her, that she rose a considerable while before her usual time, and at the proper hour was carried to church, and borne in her mother's arms to the table, where her youthful and devout soul once more "fed

on Christ Jesus by faith," with thanksgiving. To use her own words, "It was as though the hand of heaven supported her soul while she partook of the bread and wine."

Soon after this she was quite confined to her couch, where she lay and read, and meditated, and prayed, enjoying little Christian intercourse with any one, except her mother, for, as yet, few pious friends had so noticed her as to enter into her state of mind, or to visit and communicate that refreshment of soul which she longed for, and which she hoped, almost against hope, would one day be her privilege.

She now requested all her books and trinkets to be brought down stairs; these she divided and gave to different members of the family, as tokens of affectionate love. The Bible, which poor penitent Jane had left her, she now gave to her mother, with particular orders that it should never be parted with, and also that no leaves should be turned down, for she said, "she could not bear to see a leaf turned down that had the Saviour's name upon it." Trifling as this incident may appear to some, yet it highly bespoke her reverence for the Word of God, and her love of that Name which, alas! so few do love, and which so many deride and blaspheme!

Happy child! when that day arrives in which every knee shall bow before the throne of Jesus, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father—in that day when the scorner and the blasphemer of his name shall in vain implore the rocks to fall on them, and the devouring flame to consume them to ashes—in that day thou shalt come forth with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Yes,

Thou, while the stars from heaven shall fall,
And mountains are on mountains hurl'd,
Shalt stand unmov'd amidst them all,
And smile to see a burning world.

She, at the same time, gave directions about her fu-

neral, naming the young people she wished to carry her corpse, and those she should like to attend the ceremony as pall-bearers. All this was done with as much composure as any person would have made arrangements for a journey, or any common event of life.

For many months past her mind had been impressed with the conviction that she should not long continue to be an inhabitant of this lower world. And anxious, if possible, when dead, to benefit her surviving relations, and to proclaim to the world her love to, and confidence in, Christ, she wished to be buried in such a spot, as that her relations might, every time they went to and from church, behold her resting-place, and be reminded of their own approaching end.

From the same pious motive of benefitting survivors, she wished that a monumental inscription, expressive of her faith, and of the desires and feelings of her mind, might be placed over her mouldering dust, to admonish and encourage others to seek the Lord for themselves. With this view she finally chose the following lines for her epitaph :

While thou, my Jesus, still art nigh,
Cheerful I live, and joyful die ;
Secure, when mortal comforts flee,
To find ten thousand worlds in thee.

This done, she told those about her, "that her time was drawing near—that she should soon be gone, but that she had no fear of dying." And when any one expressed a hope of her recovery, she always checked them by saying, "I do not wish to live."

All the foregoing part of her life and Christian experience had passed unobserved and unknown to any except the members of her own family, and the other inmates of the house. Like the choice lily which puts forth its tender leaves, and disp'ays its growing beauties in some secluded vale, casting forth, indeed, its fragrance a little way on every side, but still doomed

to wither and to die unseen by the world, and unlamented by man; so little Ann had put forth and displayed many beauties and graces of the Christian character in the bosom of her family, but secluded from all others, until her short day was nearly ended. Indeed, her sun was hastening to go down; her frail body seemed on the point of returning to the earth from which it was taken, and her soul unto God, who gave it, before the world had become at all acquainted with her little history, her lovely character, or instructive example. But He who doeth all things well, directed Aspasio to her dwelling just in time to see, with his own eyes, and to hear with his own ears, what the Lord had done for her soul. It was his privilege, for a little while, to lead forth and animate her spirit to lay hold on that eternal life which was set before her in the Gospel, and to which she was now drawing so near. For this privilege, I believe, he is truly thankful. Nor can I do otherwise than rejoice, that as a sojourner of a few days in her neighbourhood, I was permitted to enjoy several interviews with her before she quitted the society of men for that of angels, and bade adieu to the means of grace, to partake of an eternal weight of glory.

It was not with the thought or intention of visiting a sick child that Aspasio first entered Ann's room. He went thither with another object in view, and without knowing any thing either of Ann's temporal or spiritual state. Observing the child on the couch, he put a few common-place questions to her mother, and was surprised and delighted to find that there lay one sick whom the Lord loved—one who knew and loved the Lord. Charmed with the hasty and imperfect account her mother had given, he drew a chair, and sitting down by Ann's couch, entered into the following conversation—

“My dear, how long have you been ill?”

“A long time, sir.”

“Have you found out why God has laid you on a bed of sickness?”

"I find I am a great sinner, sir."

"Who told you that you are a great sinner?"

"Nobody, sir, told me so."

"How, then, my child, did you find it out?"

"By prayer, sir."

"Have you loved the Bible?"

"Yes, sir."

"And do you think, my dear, that you have gained any knowledge of its contents?"

"Yes, sir."

"How, my child, did you gain that knowledge?"

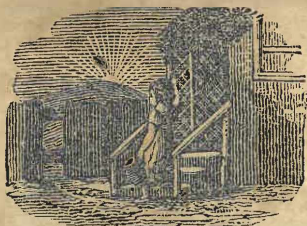
"When I opened the Bible, sir, I prayed to God to give me an understanding heart."

"Have you ever received any instruction or comfort from reading hymns?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell me which have refreshed and instructed you most."

"This is one, sir."



Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone,
He, whom I fix my hopes upon;
The track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till him I view

The way the holy prophets went—
The road that leads from banishment—
The King's highway of holiness—
I'll go—for all his paths are peace.

This is the way I long have sought,
And mourn'd because I found it not ;
My grief and burden long has been,
Because I could not cease from sin.

The more I strove against its power,
I sinn'd and stumbled but the more ;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
" Come hither, soul, I am the way."

Lo, glad I come ! and thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to thee as I am ;
My sinful self to thee I give,
Nothing but love shall I receive.

Then will I tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found ;
I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
And say—" Behold the Lamb of God !"

She then named several others. I will transcribe one more, because it was what she so very often requested Aspasio to read to her when she was too ill to read it herself. It is a comment on that passage, " I will trust, and not be afraid." Isaiah, xii. 2.



" Begone, unbelief! my Saviour is near,
" And, for my relief, will shortly appear;
" By prayer let me wrestle, and he will perform :
" With *Christ* in the vessel, I smile at the storm.

" Though dark be my way, since he is my guide,
" 'Tis *mine* to obey, 'tis *His* to provide :
" Though cisterns be broken, and creatures all fail,
" The word he has spoken shall surely prevail.

" His love, in time past, forbids me to shrink
" He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
" Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,
" Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite thro'.

" Determin'd to save, he watch'd o'er my path,
" When, Satan's blind slave, I sported with death;
" And can he have taught me to trust in his name,
" And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame ?

" Why should I complain of want or distress,
" Temptation, or pain?—he told me no less;
" The heirs of salvation I know, from his word,
" Through much tribulation must follow their Lord.

" How bitter that cup no heart can conceive,
" Which he drank quite up, that sinners might live;
" His way was much rougher and darker than mine,
" Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine ?

" Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
" The bitter is sweet, the med'cine is food;
" Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
" And then, oh, how pleasant the conqueror's song."

As my friend Aspasio's domestic concerns called him away, he was now obliged to bring this first conference to a speedier termination than he otherwise would have done. Before he left her room, he inform'd

ed her that he expected soon to meet his evening class of children, and wished to know whether she had any word of instruction to send them. "Yes," she replied—"tell them to love God in time of health—tell them that Jesus Christ died for them."

From this time to the morning of her death, which happened about eighteen days after, my friend continued to see her, not only every day, but, in general, several times in the day. Of course, much passed on these occasions that cannot be related here.

These eighteen days were, beyond all doubt, the happiest and best days that marked the calendar of Little Ann's life. She had now obtained the earnest desire of her heart. Her first and most fervent earthly wish was now granted. She had at last obtained an affectionate Christian friend and instructor, who could enter into all her feelings, and to whom she could unreservedly converse, and tell all her sorrows and her joys. So long as she was able to read, so long her little Hymn Book was her companion; and as it had pleased the Lord much to edify and comfort her soul by many parts of its contents, she set a great value on it, and finally bequeathed it to Aspasio, because, as she said to her mother, "she wished to leave something that would comfort him when she was gone, and in her Hymn Book he could see those pieces marked which had often comforted her." The last verses she ever pointed out to my friend, as expressing the feelings of her mind, and desires of her heart, were these:—

"Save me, Lord, from sin and fear;
"Bring thy great salvation near
"Bring into my soul thy peace,
"Everlasting righteousness.

"See me the reverse of thee,
"Only sin and misery;
"Make me willing to receive
"All the grace thou hast to give.

"O supply my every want;
"Feed a tender, sickly plant;
"Day and night my keeper be;
"Every moment water me.

"Hide me, gracious Saviour, hide;
"Let me never leave thy side;
"O, 'tis hell from thee to part;
"Press me closer to thy heart."

As some symptoms of a restless nature appeared, Aspasio inquired "if she were quite happy in her mind;" to which she quickly replied, "Yes, quite so." Thus, with little variation, she continued patiently to suffer all the will of her heavenly Father; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of her faith, and receiving out of his fullness "grace for grace." On Tuesday, the 9th of January, she found that the conflict was soon to be over. At an early hour of that day she desired a person to go for Aspasio. When he arrived she was quite sensible, but seemed already to have entered the valley of the Shadow of Death. She made several attempts, but was unable to speak. After some time watching her, Aspasio said, "My dear Ann, if you are happy—if you are satisfied that Jesus loves you, lift up your hand." No sooner was this request made, than she raised her poor, emaciated arm, in token that she was happy in the assurance of the love of Christ. From that moment she lay in the arms of her gentle and good Shepherd, who carried her, in sweet composure, through those waters which have alarmed many an older Christian than little Ann; nor did He leave her until her happy spirit had clean escaped the prison of the body, and fled to the assembly of angels, and mingled with those who compose the church triumphant above. This event happened about 10 o'clock that morning.

On the Sunday following her body was consigned to the grave, as near as possible to the chancel door of her parish church, the spot she herself had pre-



viously fixed upon, as being the most likely to present her grave to the eyes of her brothers and sisters as they approached the house of God. The young people, whom she had named for that purpose, carried and attended her corpse to its long home, agreeably to her wish ; and then the mourners returned to their respective houses. Thus ended the brief pilgrimage of Little Ann. In the short period of eleven years, she had run the race appointed for her ; and at its conclusion, we doubt not but she obtained the crown of victory. Her's was a short, but certainly it was not a useless life. It was long enough to bring forth those fruits of the Spirit which were to the glory of God, and to the substantial, nay, we trust, to the eternal good of some of her fellow-creatures. Through her long and painful illness she was exceedingly patient and submissive, and often turned to the following lines in her Hymn-book ; and as her end drew nearer and nearer, she was enabled to repeat them for herself with increasing confidence and delight of soul.

" I come, ye messengers of love, I come ;
" I see the passage open to my home ;
" The massy gates of glory are unbarr'd ;
" I see the mansion for my rest prepared.

" No longer need your flaming chariots stay ;
" My chains drop off, I leave this falling clay :
" Joyful I leave this cumb'rous load behind,
" No more to fetter the immortal mind.

"Through Jesus' righteousness I soar above,
"And seize a harp to chant redeeming love."

In this child's little history we are again brought to see, and compelled to acknowledge, the riches of sovereign grace. Oh! that the same spirit of conviction, of prayer, and of faith, may rest on those children to whom you, my dear friend, may read the tale. He who delivered Little Ann from the fears and terrors of a dark-room, of a dying chamber, and of a day of judgment, can, with equal ease, work on the understandings and hearts of the objects of your bounty and attention, and make them children of grace. Yes, he can make them lambs of the Redeemer's flock, and pillars in the temple of God.

"Young as they are, with pilgrim feet,
"Oh! may they travel to his seat;
"And leaning on the Saviour's hand,
"Prepare to leave this barren land.

"While o'er this desert world they roam,
"Oh! may they seek a better home;
"Unstained by wo, unchanged by years,
"Unlike this gloomy vale of tears."

Should any of their elder brethren listen to the story of Little Ann, Oh! fail not to urge on them the necessity and the duty of prayer. Tell them how this child retired to pour out her soul to the Lord; tell them, that when she opened the Bible, she prayed to God to give her an understanding heart. Oh! tell them how, that while thus seeking wisdom from above, she did obtain the blessing, and was made wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Jesus Christ. And then assure the aged listeners, that though their sins are many in number beyond those of little Ann's, yet, that the blood of Christ Jesus can cleanse from all; and that he is the way, the truth, and the life; that none, whether old or young, can come unto the Father but by him. Farewell, my dear friend. May Little Ann's

Saviour be your Saviour—may her God be your God,
and the God and Saviour of all your Sabbath school
children, and of every child that names the name of
Jesus, and desires to love and serve him.

Your's truly,



UNVEIL thy bosom, faithful tomb,
Take this new treasure to thy trust;
And give these sacred relics room,
To seek a slumber in the dust.

Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear
Invade thy bounds. No mortal woes
Can reach the peaceful sleeper here,
While angels watch the soft repose.

So Jesus slept; God's dying Son
Pass'd through the grave, and blest the bed;
Rest here, blest saint, till from his throne
The morning break, and pierce the shade.

Break from his throne, illustrious morn;
Attend, O earth! his sov'reign word;
Restore thy trust—a glorious form—
Call'd to ascend and meet the Lord.

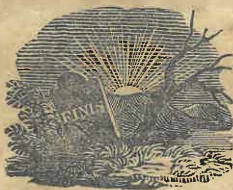


FROM her low bed of mortal dust
Escap'd the prison of her clay,
The new inhabitant of bliss
To heav'n directs her wond'rous way.

Ye fields, that witness'd once her tears,
Ye winds, that wafted oft her sighs,
Ye mountains, where she breath'd her prayers
When sorrow's shadows veil'd her eyes;

No more the weary pilgrim mourns,
No more affliction wrings her heart;
Th' unfetter'd soul to God returns—
For ever she and anguish part!—

Receive, O earth, her faded form;
In thy cold bosom let it lie;
Safe let it rest from every storm,
Soon must it rise, no more to die!





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