

Mary Elizabeth Thornton

was born on the 16th of December
1831 in the little village of Tong.

At the age of about four years she
learned to read with great facility,
and indeed began early to give indi-
cations of an ardent thirst for knowledge
and intense delight in reading.

Half a year afterwards her parents
removed to Culm, but previously
to that she had lodged there with
^{some} several kind friends, that she might
have the benefit of the day schools.

For seven years she remained there,

though not attending ^{school} regularly, as
her mother required her assistance in
the household duties.

The pleasure she seemed to feel in her
studies while at school, and the
progress she made during that
short period, together with her affec-
tion for teachers & companions, were
gratifying proofs to her dear parents
that she was under the fixed influ-
ence of correct principles, in enea-
mouring to redeem the time she
felt of so great value.

In her 16th year she went to
Brook, where she remained for
months, but owing to her health
& the removal of the family to

London she was obliged to return
home. While there she enjoyed
the society of a Christian minister
of the Established Church, of whom
she often spoke & from whose conver-
sations she derived great benefit.
Her health improving, she went to
Lancashire; but as in the course
of a few months, a change seemed
desirable both by her parents &
B^r. Miller, the latter took her
into his own house, where she
remained about a year & nine
months.

During her stay in Salem, she
experienced much blessing, by
occasion of her reception into the
Church (of Christ) by the rite

of confirmation.

Though we were not with her at the time, the remembrance she left behind her with a few friends, leads us to believe, that there existed a feeling of Christian fellowship between her and the little flock in Salem, with which ^{she} was connected, which affords a pleasing recollection to her surviving relatives.

owing to circumstances her return home, was thought desirable by her parents, she having a large family also requiring her assistance. Beautiful instances might be given of her new chartered delight in the society of her parents & friends, and her deep solicitude

for the welfare of her brothers & sisters. — The Sabbath services were enjoyed with a keener relish, never had home been ^{so} sweet, or the wishes of her parents met with such a warm response ^{as} at this time, for it was her delight, to do everything in her power to assist them in their various duties, as long as her health would permit.

In December 1853 she took a violent cold & cough, which never left her, but gradually brought on the lingering disease which terminated her life.

Owing to the peculiar nature of her complaint, she always entertained the hope that she was better, which her

friends were always glad to admit,
as they wanted it to be so, as much
as she herself did. But finding
it was the Lord's will that she should
not be restored, it was pleasing to
see her calm resignation to Him,
'tho' she said 'did all things well.'
She res many times asked during her
illness, if she could resign herself to
the Lord's will, whether He should
take her or restore her, but she
always replied, that she tried to do
so, & being naturally of a reserved
disposition, her friends took it for
granted that she did so, and her
calm & happy death afforded a
sufficient proof. A few evenings

before her departure, her little
brother having gone in to bid her
good night, she asked him, if he
prayed to our Savior to take her to
himself, when he innocently replied
'yes,' and she appeared quite pleased
that he did so.

The day before she died her father
read the texts, and the passage for
the day from Bogatzke's Golden
treasury, and the verses attached to
them were, 'Let me but hear my
Savior say, - Strength shall be
equal to thy day, - Then I re-
joice in deep distress, - Learning
on all sufficient grace -
I glory in infirmity, - That
Christ's own power may rest on me,

When Sam weep, then Sam strong-
Grace is my shield, & Christ my song.

On hearing these, she exclaimed,
'Oh! that is enough for me!'

On the day she died her brothers &
sisters were called into her room
at her request, that she might
take leave of them, which she did
in a manner that will not easily
be erased from their memory.

A short time before she expired, she
requested her friends to sing for her
the hymn, "For ever with the Lord".

Being very anxious to have it sung,
she began herself & joined in the
singing of the whole hymn as well
as she was able. When it was con-
cluded, she wished the evening-

hymn to be sung, during which she
sank into unconscious slumber, and
we believe sweetly fell asleep in
Jesus.

From this brief narrative drawn up
by her relations it is evident that our
late Sister was acquainted with our Lord,
& that the instructions she received in
childhood were blessed to her soul.

The time of her residence in Salem, espe-
cially in the family of Mr. & J. Miller was
an important period of her life for then
the Lord opened her heart that she
attended to the things that make for our
peace. On her return home about
4 years ago, and for some time after,
she showed an humble teachable spirit,
and an eager desire for spiritual conversation.

Latterly, tho' her conduct was always correct, she did not evince the same openheartedness, and that desire after spiritual food, which caused an anxious fear on her account, that a spiritual decline had taken place, and that the Lord was drawing her aside from the simplicity of Christ.

On this she herself spoke in the latter days of her life, and sorrowed over the bad effects of unisness in watchfulness & prayer.

This together with her naturally very reserved disposition, made it difficult at first to draw her out into conversation on the state of her heart.

She clung to life and from the flattering nature of her complaint, she cherished the hope of recovery till within a few weeks of her dissolution, nor after it was apparent to her friends from her increasing weakness that she would not

recover.

Latterly she showed a greater desire after spiritual conversation - and exceedingly desired that prayer should be offered up in her room. Once she said, "I often reflect on what you say, tho' I cannot express my feelings, & when I lift my heart up to our Saviour, he meets me."

On Saturday 7th she expressed a strong desire once more to enjoy the holy Communion. - and said, "now I have given up the hope of being able to go to Chapel, & I should feel it a favour to have it administered in my room."

On that occasion she spoke freely of the state of her heart, and expressed a wish that any the most searching question should be put to her, as she felt the great importance of being prepared. What she said, confirmed the hope

... on, & she had a restful
But the following day she was
cheerful & composed - and spoke with joy

he had entertained, that Jesus was not an
unknown Saviour to her - and that the
ray of peace & happiness thro' faith in his
blood, was one in which she had walked.

Yet a mist seemed to hang over her path -
and she had not a cheerful bright prospect.
Knowing that she had forsaken the Lord &
grieved his holy Spirit, she felt confused &
afraid.

The confidence of faith
had left her, & like many others she was
looking for the evidences of her justification
in her own feelings, and expecting to see
these before she could lay hold of the hope
of the Gospel. Looking for the fruits be-
fore the branch was grafted into the vine,
or the tree planted.

Being directed to turn to our Saviour
just as she felt and assured of his mercy &
readiness to forgive & to heal our backsliding,
her mind was much comforted. The texts
of Scripture that were repeated were blessed

by the Holy Spirit to her soul. These
were the words of Jesus, I am the resurrection
& the life - He that believeth in me, etc
and I am he that liveth & was dead and
behold I am etc - and I have set
before thee an open door etc.

These texts and this conversation she referred
to several times in the following week and
wished the texts to be read.

On Sunday 3rd the St. Com. - was
administered to her & the family in presence
of a few friends. It proved a great re-
freshment to her - and tho' the service
had as we feared, exhausted her, yet she was
able to take the air in the evening - her
dear father driving her out in a gig.
But this proved the last time of her leaving
the sick chamber. The following
night she became much worse, difficulty
of breathing came on, & she had a restless
night. But the following day she was
cheerful & composed - and spoke with joy

of the prospect of going home - saying -
'I have refused - I can give all up - Jesus
will receive me.'

On Tuesday however her mind was
not so composed, and that she said led us
to see, that the St. Ghost was deepening
his own work on her heart, probing the
wounds - and showing her more of her
own wickedness, that he might thus prepare
her for richer displays of the Grace of Jesus.

On Friday morning the writer of
this witnessed a scene of the most solemn
& affecting nature. The dear patient felt
that the time of her departure was
drawing nigh - and desired to see &
take leave of all the family.
With composure of mind she gave each of
her brothers & sisters words of admonition,
that retrust will not be easily forgotten.
Earnestly did she exhort them to love our
Saviour - to walk in his ways, that they

might all meet ^{again} in heaven.

After this with upfolded hands, she com-
mended them in prayer to our Saviour and
was heard in broken accents saying, 'dear
Savior bless them.' - bless all - and bless all
my kind friends who have been so kind to
me - bless them. O Jesus!'

It was good to be there - for the
presence of Jesus was powerfully felt -
of this the dear patient testified saying -
'I feel his nearness - I am his - he is mine
he will not leave me.'

At her request we then sang a few verses
in which she joined, expressive of the
happiness of the redeemed around the
throne. And having in prayer commended
her departing spirit to Jesus - the blessing
of the Lord was imparted to her - she joined
in the singing of the words 'In the name

of Jesus. Amen!

In the after part of the day she revives a little - till about 11 O'Clock at night, when a change was perceptible.

She requested that some verses might be sung - & selected them herself - and was so collected & interested in the service, that once she began the tune, and corrected her dear father who had read a word wrong. The Concluding verses of the hymn sung, were we believe expressive of the state of her mind, and of the bliss ~~that~~ she now enjoys.

125^y - v. 7 - 10.

"Re-
for ever with the Lord!" etc.