

A. E. Marychurch!

After a careful search through my dear Sister's papers I regret to say, that we have been unable to find any distinct memoir of her past life; there are however short diaries written even in a very early period of her life containing statements of deep religious feeling; and even spiritual experience, but she seems to have shrank from the task of compiling any thing like a regular memoir what she declined to do for herself from a feeling of rising probably from her extreme humility, her brother and her friends have endeavoured in some degree to supply. Her life was not crowded with exciting events, yet it was one of unusual usefulness, and her energies became more active as her bodily strength declined; her light shone more & more until she reached the perfect day: Ann Elizabeth Marychurch was born Sept^r 24th 1804 & was baptized in the Brethrens Church in Bristol Thus her earthly course began in that

church which she loved through
life more than any other portion
of God's heritage, she imbued its spirit
in early childhood and cherished it
to the last. Her parents were esteemed
members of the congregation & her
Father was for many years, most
faithfully zealous and active in pro-
moting its interests. On the mother
- side, her Grandmother was one
of the first members when the congre-
gation was settled in 1755. She was
brought up by a very affectionate and
tender mother, who trained her early
in the ways of God's people. In due
time she was sent to school, but her
School days were not happy; she
suffered much from those peculiar
school troubles which are often very
heavily felt by young sensitive children, - Speaking of her school days
she once said I was a poor little timid
thing and the unkind ridicule
of some of the older girls made me

very unhappy, and pressed down my spirits, so that my childhood was not so happy as it might have been.

Her mother being an invalid, she became very early useful in the family and the active habits which were thus formed continued through life.

In 1821 she was confirmed by the Rev'd D^r O'Kelly the minister of the Congregation, and in 1822 she became a received member. A dangerous illness had excited solemn thoughts made her feel it right to take these important steps but had not at that time received any deep religious impressions, she had not as yet felt the burden of sin, nor the inexpressible love of Jesus. She was indeed faithful in prayer and had earnest desires that every thought should be brought into captivity to Christ. She often retired for prayer, and she wrote out a solemn dedication of herself to her Saviour, but her heart was not yet decided, and she could not yet say

Lord I will follow thee whither soever
thou goest." But the Holy Spirit led her
into clearer views of her own ruined state
by nature, her sinfulness & depravity in
the sight of God, and often in later years
did she bewail herself almost in the
language of St Paul, "O wretched man
that I am who shall deliver me from
the body of this death?" This deep conviction
of the corruption of her heart com-
bined at times with what she deplored
as a natural tendency to scepticism
frequently robbed her soul of the peace
to be found in simply looking to the
blood & righteousness of Christ as the
sinners only hope. It was one of her
greatest sources of disquietude among
-ing at times to distracting torment,
that Sarah was permitted to infuse
doubts into her mind of those great
and sacred truths which she cherished
most dearly.
Possibly her active intellect aided the
temptation. But he who permitted it

made a way to escape. Her harassed mind sought comfort in the word of God & in prayer; and through the Holy Spirit's help she became established strengthened & settled in the faith. Still through life she at times complained of her hardness of heart & slowness to believe. was "her thorn in the flesh" often producing poignant distress, but like St Paul she heard the voice of comfort saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee." There were however times especially at the Holy Communion, when she realized the saving love of her Lord, & when her heart was filled with rapture & joy. Thus as life progressed she obtained deeper spiritual experience - her faith was not a dead faith, but brought forth good fruit. It led her to work - to work heartily in the Lord's service. Her natural energy of character would not allow her to rest in inactivity. She felt religion to be an vital matter and she became anxious to communicate

it. In her early youth she was a zealous Sunday School teacher, & even in later years, when her infirmities would have proved a sufficient excuse for refusing, she undertook the Bible class, whenever a difficulty of supply was experienced. She became also a faithful and valued district visitor, first in the Parish of St. James under the guidance of the Rev. Dr. Weddell, and afterward in the Parish of St. Michael. Failing health alone compelled her to relinquish these duties, which she had performed during many years with conscientious regretterity. She took deep interest also in the work of the Bible Society and faithfully filled the office of Association Secretary to the end of her life. In connection with the general work of the Bible Society, she watched with especial interest the origin and growth of the branch connected with the Brethren congregation in Bristol of which her revered Father had been treasurer. These were labours of love invigorating her spiritual

life, and with drawing her mind from
dwelling too much upon her peculiar
tendency to despondency, to which her
nervous constitution made her constantly
liable. But it was especially to the
advancement of the Brethren's Mission
in connection with this congregation
that she devoted her strength both of body
& mind. Her persevering self denying
labours in behalf of this great work
will not easily be forgotten. For upward
of 30 years dating from the early part
of Mr. Remfitter's ministry in this
place, she held the office of Secretary
of the Ladies Association, an office which
she filled with increasing delight
& increasing efficiency. In the last
year of her life she would gladly have
resigned it into younger & stronger
hands, but her services were too valuable
to be lost and she was shewn with
difficulty, persuaded to continue them.
And never did her energies flag,
never with drooping health did she
omit any effort to increase the efficiency

of the branch under her charge to add
to the comforts of the Missionaries or to
extend the sphere of their labours.

Her knowledge of the special circum-
stances of various Mission Stations
especially those of the West Indies
and the peculiar difficulties which
Missionaries have to encounter, was
enlarged by an extensive correspondence
which she held with those devoted
servants of God; and this intimate
knowledge of their state she turned
to good account by enlisting for them
the sympathies of children of God in
the various Christian denominations
wound her. She has ceased from her
blessed labours, but her works follow
her and in many a distant land
the announcement of her death will
be received with heartfelt sorrow.
May the Lord of the Vineyard raise
up from this congregation a suitable
and devoted successor. These were evi-
dences external to herself that she was
in possession of true saving faith.

which in seasons of temptation she sometimes doubted. She loved the Lord's people of every name and she had a heart ever ready to sympathise in their joys & sorrows.

To her own church she was warmly attached. Few have possessed the true Brethrens spirit in a larger degree. She loved the pious practices & habits of her Forefathers, she opposed innovation, she sorrowed much over what seemed to her a declension from the good old way, which so beautifully distinguish her church from other less favoured Christian bodies. Several papers were found in her desk, in which she had expressed her feelings on these subjects.

Nevertheless she fervently loved the people of God amongst whom her lot was cast, they were the people of her choice, & her church was to her as her earthly home. It was the strength of her love & attachment to the Brethrens church, which made her peculiarly sensitive as to any change in its tates & customs.

In 1852 her venerable & beloved Father was removed from her by sudden death. The shock which her nervous system received by this event, she never fully recovered. The great enemy of souls took advantage of her weak state to strengthen old doubts and fears and to infuse new ones, so that she was at times led to question whether she had ever experienced real saving grace. Her condition for a time was most unhappy, it was evidently in a great degree the result of a morbid state of the nervous system & excessive bodily weakness. But as her health gradually improved, she was enabled to overcome these temptations to despondency and to prove more than conqueror through him that loved her. In 1860 her health received another shock by the fracture of a leg, whilst on a visit at Llaner. Under this severe affliction she manifested the true spirit of the child of God, by her extreme patience & resignation. Indeed all these troubles seemed to ripen her for her heavenly home. She even then

of the state of her soul, with humility
and fear, but her faith and love were
growing stronger & stronger.

In reference to her illness at Calne she wrote
thus, "Feel that I must be satisfied to be
an invalid, but it is all right, I feel more
about it for my dear sympathizing friends,
than for myself. I only want the work of
grace of Christ to be more manifested
within me & by me, and my coldness
& deadness to be absorbed in the warmth
and life of Christ." Again she wrote in
prospect of a change for her health's sake:
"It may do me good if the Lord pleases,
but I wish to leave it without any anxiety
& without a choice. I expect to go halting
to the end of my days, but I trust a
cheerful mind & patience will be given
me." Though so long in sufferer, her death
seemed to come suddenly. In the summer
of 1862 she had spent four happy weeks
with her Brother & Sister in the North
of England who accompanied her to
Fulhee —

She was always cheerful, delighted,

to meet old friends, but without indicating great bodily weakness, & great difficulty breathing.

On the way homewards she paid a week's visit to a dear & valued friend in Staffordshire.

On her arrival at home, she seemed rather improved in health than otherwise by her long journey. But as the winter advanced increased symptoms of weakness appeared especially in the region of the heart & the lung.

Friend friends were around her, one especially watched over tenderly & anxiously until the close of life. She received also the incessant attention of an attached servant who had lived in her family more than 20 years.

But God had thoughts of peace concerning her. — She had at times expressed fears of death, but she never knew what death was. She departed in sleep.

The above is a sketch of a very uneventful life, but yet one of unusual Christi-

an activity. She possessed a strong
mind in a very weak body. Her love
for Christ and for Christ's people was
great, and her labours in His cause
were unremitting. She now rests in
peace, she has realized what she wrote
in 1860 concerning a happy depart
ed and beloved Sister in Christ. The
blood Saint is with Christ, no longer
clad in weakness, and faint with suf
fering, but clothed in the bright robes
of our Saviour's righteousness, and
rejoicing in the presence of God for
ever" "We may truly say this of
herself, she is with that Saviour, for
whom she felt it an honour to labour.
Friends will indeed mourn her
place on earth may not easily be
filled up; but we cannot wish to
bring her back, we would withdraw
her an instant from the presence of
him, with whom there is fulness
of joy, life for evermore.

H. W. M.

A few loving words of remembrance, are added to the above, by one whose intimate association with the beloved subject of this little sketch, renders it a most touching but filial duty to add her testimony of deep appreciation of and respect for the character of one, so justly endeared to all who had the privilege of her intimate friendship, and perhaps none of those who now tenderly mourn her loss can speak of the departed, with so much real knowledge of her both as an individual & a Christian, having shared the same home for 13 or 14 years. Her mental powers were of no common order. She possessed naturally an unusual amount of sound judgment, fortitude & self sacrificing generosity as well as consistency of action, together with a true ardor & depth of affection, which when once bestowed, was rarely if ever withdrawn. As a Christian her light shone with unwavering steadfastness, though a feeble body and of late shattered

nerves, - often bedouling her otherwise strong mind, giving a morbid tone to her own expressions concerning her spiritual experiences, but to those who had before them such an undeviating pattern of consistancy, there remained nothing but the precept, "I speaking by example, Go ye and do likewise." Her humility before God was a marked feature of her high attainments in the Christian life. In her last letter to the writer of those few lines she says "I feel a mass of sin & weakness: but follows on to say, that the all wise burden bearer will enable her to cast it all on Him. Nearness to her Saviour was the one thing her soul most ardently craved. About two months ago she wrote. "Do pray dear that the Lord may be more near than ever. He is very gracious, but I want to see Him face to face, to touch him as it were." To these remarks little need be added to prove that though her spiritual life was a warfare, yet

that in the apostle's words her weapons
were not carnal but mighty through
God to the pulling down of strongholds.
Of a truth she was clad in the armour
of God and her spirit was found
ready waiting - when she for the
last time unconsciously closed her
eyes in sleep, to wake in that glorious
world, where conflict & strife & suffering
are known no more.

The church of which our beloved
one, was so devoted a member, has
paid its tribute to the worthiness of one
of its brightest ornaments. Yet her
works do follow her. And we must
add from our own knowledge, that
its glorious Missionary Society has lost
in this place, its most energetic and
pains-taking supporter. Neither were
her efforts confined alone to the Moravian
church, but her well grounded and
large hearted Christianity taught
her that wherever good was to be
done & she felt called upon to give her

aid. - whether she went and with all
her power & even beyond her power work
ed with loving zeal in her masters
cause. Amongst the rest the Ladies
Association of the British & Foreign
Bible Society would warmly respond
to the acknowledgement of her most
valuable and long continued
help. The Lord ordereth all things
well for His children & it is a comfort-
ing thought that this dear Servant
of God who so often ministered to the
needs of others, was also herself abund-
antly comforted both by her intimate
relatives and friends as well as
by her Brethren & Sisters in Christ
and it is especially sweet to think
that for the last fortnight one was
constantly beside her administering
with tender solicitude to her every
want. These services were continu-
ally acknowledged as were those
of her faithful servant who has serv-
ed her with an affectionate interest
for a period of 20 years May the

Lord reward them, I give to them
of us the answer to those prayers
which the dear departed so earnest-
ly and believingly offered on their
and our behalf until we all meet
in the mansions prepared in our
Father's home in heaven.

Bristol
Jan^{ur} 18th /63