Mrs Schimmelpenninck

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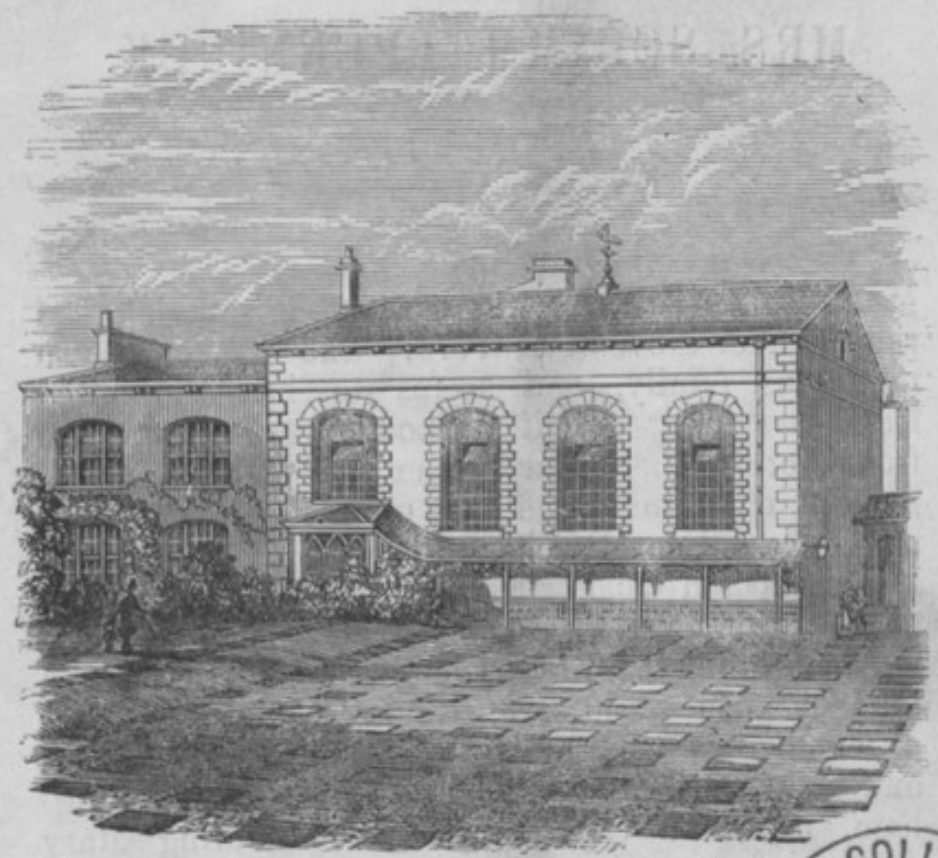
MRS. SCHIMMELPENNINCK.



MORAVIAN CHAPEL, BRISTOL.

LONDON:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;
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No. 992.

MRS. SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

Mary Anne Galton was born at Birmingham on the 25th of November, 1778. She was one of a numerous family, and seems to have inherited from *one* parent a delicate bodily constitution, and from both father and mother, an inheritance of mental endowments of no ordinary kind. Her mother was Lucy Barclay, a descendant of the well known Scotch Quaker family of that name, and her father (Samuel Galton) was a person of considerable note in the literary circles of his day, as a man of science and extensive knowledge. He was a member of the Royal and Linnæan Societies; and at Barr, the country mansion near Birmingham, to which the family removed during Mary Ann's infancy, there were frequent gatherings of such men as James Watt, Edgeworth, Drs. Darwin and Priestley, Sir William Herschel, and Sir Joseph Banks—each of whom was himself the centre of a circle of intellectual friends, as well foreign as English. Mary Anne felt the mental stimulus of these gatherings. From the delicate state of her health she was unfit for the bustle and noise of the nursery, and was brought up mostly with her parents and their friends; while the other children, according to the custom of the time, lived almost entirely apart

from their elder relatives, under the care of nurse and governess.

We must not, however, picture Mary Anne as the smart child of the family—praised, admired, and petted by her father's distinguished visitors. Her intellect was of that higher type which is seldom marked by childish smartness, but the reverse. And the wholesome rule of those times, that children in the presence of their seniors should remain silent till spoken to, was therefore no burden to the timid little one, and only afforded scope for her remarkable powers of observation and reflection.

The Galton family belonged nominally to the religious society of Friends, but it was at a time when it is confessed that many members of that Society had fallen under the influence of a cold unbelief, or dead formalism. The religious instruction imparted by Mrs. Galton to her little girl was very incomplete; but, such as it was, it told with considerable power on the child's mind for many years. Mrs. Galton was a woman of beautiful and commanding person, vigorous judgment, perfect self-control, and high literary culture; and her character, though sadly in want of the softening and mellowing influences of gospel truth, was yet strong and truthful, with a firm and practical conviction of that portion of Divine truth which she did believe; and to that extent therefore she was a successful teacher.

Referring to her earliest recollection of her mother's teaching, Mary Anne writes: "Amongst the deepest remembrances of that time, is that of my mother's first telling me of God. She was very fond of instructing me to inquire into the cause of things; as, for example, of light as coming from the sun, or water from the sea or clouds; so that I was led to inquire of her—'But where did the sun and the sea come from?' She told me to think for a day, and endeavour to find out, but that, if I could not, at the end of that time she would tell me. The day seemed

interminable; and failing in my endeavour, the next morning I renewed my inquiry. She answered very solemnly that she would take me into a room where we should be alone, and there she would tell me. She took me upstairs through her bed-room, into a little dressing-room, into which I was not habitually allowed to enter, but which from that time I as distinctly remember as though I now saw everything in it. She shut the door, and said she was now going to answer my question; that that answer would be the most important thing I should ever hear in my life, for that it would involve everything I should hereafter feel, or think, or do; that if I made a good use of it, I should have such happiness, that nothing whatever could make me completely miserable; but that if, on the contrary, I made a bad use of this knowledge, nothing could make me happy.

"She then spoke to me of God—of his omnipotence; of his omnipresence; of his great wisdom shown in all he had made; of his great love to all his creatures, whether human beings or animals. She told me that God had given to every person a voice in the interior of their hearts, and that this voice was called conscience; that it had spoken to me the other day, when I was so obstinate in spelling my lessons, and had made me feel that I had done wrong. She then said, that God had invited all to speak to him, and to tell him their wants, and that this was called prayer; and to thank him for all his goodness, and that this was called thanksgiving; and that we should never begin or end the day without both the one and the other. She said, also, that when she saw I was going to be naughty, she should give me five minutes to sit still and recollect myself, before she proceeded to punish my disobedience."

From that time Mrs. Galton devoted some time every Sunday to the religious instruction of her child, —an explanation of one of the Ten Commandments or clause of the Lord's Prayer, or a verse from the

Sermon on the Mount, and a question or two from Dr. Priestley's catechism, forming the groundwork of her lessons. She would also take the opportunity of those Sunday talkings to tell Mary Anne of her faults, with an assurance, encouraging to the timid child, that she knew it to be her highest wish to do well and improve.

The daily maternal teachings, both of lip and life, comprehended these two invaluable lessons: first, that of prompt unquestioning obedience, secured by unvarying evenness of temper, dignity of manner, and orders prompt, definite but *few*, and wholly free from worry and petty details. She would sometimes say "Now thou hast been a good girl, and I shall tell thee the reason for this or that;" or "when old enough, I shall tell thee: thou canst not understand now." Secondly, she taught her daughter that we are to value things not at what they *seem*, but at what they *are;* that personally our grand aim should be to *be*, not to *seem*.

Mary Anne was brought up in the midst of wealth; but the result of her mother's teaching was, according to her own testimony in old age, that she never felt the pressure of fictitious or conventional wants. She was taught likewise both by father and mother to bear physical pain and all outward inconveniences with unflinching patience and serenity—a habit which, though at that time based on merely stoical principles, became valuable in the after trials of her mature Christian life.

The immediate effects of such maternal influence on a child of fine intellect and high moral aspirations may be anticipated. One of common mould would have been simply repelled by an intellectual severity which repressed all manifestations of an emotional kind as symptoms of weakness, and which looked down on feebler natures in the serene consciousness of superior strength. But this little one (sensitive and timid though she was) believed in the

motherly kindness that dwelt within a cold exterior, reverenced her mother's unbending integrity, and, indeed, clung to her with a devotion akin to worship. And when sudden and severe illness obliged Mrs. Galton to leave home for a time, when Mary Ann was about nine years of age, she felt as if the light and life of that home were passed away. Those quiet Sunday evening talks were then gone, and with them the one link of connexion which the little one had formed between her every day life, which even then she found unsatisfying, and the life unseen. "These instructions," she writes, "had deeply impressed me with a sense of duty to God, and accountability to him, as also of his omnipresence and his love. My mother had also taught me that the true object of life was to aim at being perfect, even as, or because God is perfect. But there she left me." Alas for the hungering, thirsting, sinning little one! She heard neither of sin nor of a Saviour; for that mother, in her self-sufficiency, neither knew the one, in its power, nor the other, in his Divine and infinite compassion. And thus, though the seed of Divine truth communicated bore its appropriate fruit in the heart of this young inquirer, and impressed her deeply with a sense of the Divine presence and of her own responsibility, the omission of the more potent and precious truths of the gospel left a fatal blank, and caused many a dark year of mental perplexity and suffering.

Another influence must be mentioned which affected her early religious development. She was a frequent visitor at the house of her grandfather Galton, whose household was regulated much more strictly on Friends' principles than that of her father. The whole atmosphere of the house was one of kindliness and repose; and, though little was said to her in the way of doctrinal teaching, the habitual serenity, gentleness, and quiet self-denying benevolence of these Friends spoke to the child, far more eloquently than words could have done, of the power of that faith

which inspired them. A Quakers' silent meeting would be uninteresting enough to most children; but to Mary Anne it was one of the greatest pleasures to be taken to the Friends' Meeting. "And, scarcely knowing it," she writes, "I felt the influence of that holy presence of God, visibly recognised by so many persons whose garb marked them as withdrawn from the world, and whose countenances for the most part bore the impress of love and peace. I felt as one entering an overshadowing summer cloud, where the presence of light is felt, though no distinct object is seen; and I well remember, after my own childish 'meeting' was over, as I used to watch the progress of the sunbeam as it successively illuminated the countenances of those on the benches before me, how often did I say to myself, 'Oh that a ray of light from God like that sunbeam would come to me, and teach me truly to know him!'"

Mrs. Galton's sudden removal from home left her large family under the care of nurse and governesses, young, and otherwise very unfit for the charge. And shortly afterwards, during a long family visit to Bath, the little Quakeress came under influences which severely tested her. Bath was then at the height of its popularity, as the resort of fashionable and luxurious idleness, and the family with whom she spent most of her time well exemplified the spirit of the place. The grand questions asked were no longer, as at home, "What shall I *be*, but what shall I *appear?*" Not, "What is the true value of this or that, but how is it thought of in the world?" The mistress of this household was a maternal aunt, wife of Sir William Watson, a man of large fortune, and an eminent physician. Lady Watson's favourite motto was, "We live amongst fools; we have to make use of them, to act upon them for their good and our own; and if they are only to be caught with gold, why we must gild our nets if we mean to catch them." The little Galtons

during their visit to this family shared in the full license that was so freely given to their cousins, as to books, amusements, and everything else. And yet, with all this freedom, there was the restlessness and dissatisfaction ever associated both in young and old with a self-indulgent life. In after years the amusements in which hour after hour was wasted presented to her recollection a mere chaos, without any chain of association linking them to the mind or memory; whilst "many of the least incidents of a walk, a flower, or a casual conversation at home with her mother, or father, fixed information in her mind which she could never forget."

Ever seeking after some guiding principle of action, she now resolved to make the pleasing of others her standard of virtue. "I believed," she says, "that God was infinitely good. I thought that the more I pleased others, the more I resembled Him who is love, and fulfilled his will. I thought that all depended on lovingness and kindness; and in endeavouring to cherish these, I very much slackened in seeking after truth. My dear mother had always especially insisted upon truth for its own sake; but I now began to doubt if there were any such thing. I felt it the part of love never to thwart those I was with, and considered that chiming in with them, both in acting and speaking, was a necessary part of giving them pleasure. Thus truth appeared to me as a harsh, inflexible tyrant, whom it was necessary to cast overboard in order to preserve love; for I constantly repeated to myself, that he who loves God above all, and his neighbour as himself, fulfils all the law and the prophets."

We can now understand how it was that she returned to her home at the close of the year 1788, in a very different state of mind from that in which she had left it. The first principles of religion and morality had been unsettled, and there ensued a long period of mental conflict, proportionate, in its intensity,

to the strength of her intellect and the deeply felt wants of her heart. Her mother's Bible teaching was resumed, and with a greater fulness than formerly. But she no longer, as in infancy, invited the child to a confession of her faults; and this omission was keenly felt, "for," she says, "it was a real unburdening of my soul when she invited me to open my conscience to her." At this time her father began to superintend her classical and other studies; but she quailed beneath his intellectual severity, and suffered greatly in body and spirit from all attempts to fulfil tasks which a more discerning teacher would have seen to be quite unsuited for her.

Just about this period, 1789, occurred the French Revolution, filling many minds even in England with romantic expectations of a grand epoch of light and freedom about to dawn on the earth. The literary circle which held its meetings at Barr House was amongst the first to be carried away by political enthusiasm; and the child, Mary Anne, soon learned to show her practical interest in the new doctrines of liberty and equality, which she heard so highly exalted. She became careless and heedless of all her duties, turbulent, contradictory, and disputatious against the authority of all about her, and told her governess, that the idea of years conferring sense was a mere popular prejudice, and that she had learned to despise popular prejudices. She now began to listen intently to the semi-infidel speculations that were afloat amongst her father's literary friends. Dr. Darwin's opinions were almost too outrageous to do her much injury. He was accustomed to speak of conscience and sentiment as mere figments of the imagination, and of the material world as quite sufficient for all the wants of the human animal. There were others, however, who, while they spoke of our Lord and gospel morality with much respect, yet treated the Bible, in its character as an inspired and unerring guide, with such irreverence,

that in reflecting on such conversations she began to imagine, that perhaps all her scriptural instruction was not given her as true, but merely as beautiful; "and now," she says, "I was shorn of the last vestige of strength." It was just two years since the time of her first grief, when her mother had been taken so ill; but now she had not the consolation she possessed then. "I knew not," she says, "if there was a God, and I knew not right from wrong: darkness brooded over the deep, and my misery seemed hopeless."

Nevertheless there were (to use her own phrase) "oases of refreshment" permitted to her even in that dark and desert land. Amongst these, strange as it may seem, were occasional visits to a rural Roman Catholic chapel, in the neighbourhood of her father's house. The child, now budding into womanhood, and knowing little or nothing of the errors and superstition of Rome, found here a temporary rest to her distracted mind. Away from the influence of that brilliant throng of cavillers at her father's house, and amidst a company of humble rustics, who assembled not to discuss and to judge but to worship, she forgot for awhile to doubt, in the joy and excitement of devotion. And these impressions, having for a time arrested her unbelief, she afterwards regarded as a "signal mercy."

The religious books which she had hitherto read, either at her grandfather's house or at home, were simply expressions of experimental piety, without any distinct explanations of the basis on which this piety rested. Consequently, she, in the pride of her intellect (though now only in her fourteenth year), began to despise as weak and senseless what she had formerly venerated. She turned to the writings of Dr. Priestley, which professed to give instruction in the elements of Christianity. He had endeared himself to her not only as her mother's special friend, but by the gentleness of his manners and his pure moral character; and he was besides the only religious

teacher whom she ever heard spoken of with respect in the home circle. She solemnly resolved therefore to take him as her spiritual guide, and trust in his conclusions as the limit of her theological researches. But rest was not to be found in the system of one who looked on Jesus of Nazareth as only one among many good men who have walked this earth, and who denied a Saviour to the sin-burdened and sin-sick soul.

Can we wonder at the conflict which ensued, and which will be best described in her own graphic words?—"The principles Dr. Priestley's writings set forth produced on me at this time an evil effect, which total infidelity had never fully achieved; for infidelity I could not altogether accept. His teaching of Christianity I supposed must be true, and I found it wholly unsuitable to my wants, and powerless to assist and sustain. I was isolated and separated from God and man. I felt my heart full of conflicting evil passions, and my soul was prostrate in the midst of enemies stronger than myself. I needed a Saviour who to human sympathy added Divine strength, to bestow life as well as consolation. I was wholly perplexed, amidst intricate doctrines and teachings I was unable to unravel, and precepts I could not definitely understand. Vain was it to me to have revelation put into my hand, unless the Divine Author were himself near to explain it, by the communication of his Holy Spirit of life, love, and knowledge. Nor did I only need the truth as set forth by a mere inaccessible lawgiver; but, above all, I needed the love of it, and fervent zeal for it to be kindled in my lonely heart. Oh what a vivifying cordial would it have been, had I then known assuredly that the Good Shepherd had given his life for his sheep!

"My mind was thoroughly perplexed by the difficulty of reconciling what appeared the contrary requirements of the holiness and the mercy of God.

If he enforced the implacable law of holiness before which I shrank, where was his mercy? If he did not enforce it, then where was the use or object of promulgating any law at all?

Her character and tastes now seemed wholly changed. Stories that tended to nothing, full of improbable wonders, mawkish sentiment, or exciting incidents, became her favourite reading, anything sufficiently pungent to stimulate, or soporific to lull her. All useful pursuits no longer attracted, all affectionate and deep interests ceased; the single deep and unquenchable love and admiration of her mother yet burned as the only beacon, still casting one ray of light over the wild and dark chaos of her mind.

This state of things continued more or less till Miss Galton was about one and twenty years of age, when an event took place which altered the whole after current of her life. She was at Bath with her parents, when one morning, being more than usually unhappy, and indisposed for the gaiety of the pump-room, she asked leave, while her mother was with the company, to wait in a bookseller's shop close by. She went into an inner room, and sat down absorbed in her own reflections; and, looking upon the multitude of books which lined the shelves, she questioned with herself if all the knowledge these books contained could help a soul in the wretchedness in which hers was. And then she dwelt on her own ignorance, and the deep unhappiness of her soul, till she became regardless of all around, and she wept bitterly. On looking up, after a while, she saw she was no longer alone; for a pleasing young woman, whose entrance she had not observed, was sitting opposite to her. The young woman said, in a sweet and gentle voice, "I am afraid you are much afflicted: is there anything I can do to assuage your grief?" "Oh," Miss Galton replied, "can you do anything for a wounded spirit, who knows not where or how to

obtain peace?" She paused for a moment, and then said, "There are many kinds of misery which try the hearts of men; but for them all there is one only remedy, the Lord Jesus Christ:" and then she invited her to come to the Saviour, who offered to give the weary and heavy laden rest; and she added that, although hers was a very occupied life, yet, if she would come and read the Scriptures with her, she would gladly set aside an hour twice a week for this purpose.

This friend in need proved to be a Miss Tucker, well known in the place as a "labouress" in connexion with the Moravian church, and who had been a great blessing to many in Bath. Miss Galton dreaded to mention to her parents the proposal thus made to her; and things remained as they were till an event took place which led to her finding a home among these Moravians during the six months following. The state of her health made it desirable that she should remain at Bath. After a time her family left; and her parents, being in perplexity as to a place of residence for her, consulted their medical adviser, who, without any knowledge of the circumstances, recommended, as perfectly suitable, the Moravian family of which Miss Tucker was a member. Miss Galton was quite unaware of the coincidence, and her surprise was great when, on arriving at her new home, the first welcoming voice she heard was that of her unknown friend. With her Miss Galton now engaged in a regular and devout study of the Scriptures. Light broke in upon her soul, her bonds were broken, and she was a Christian. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." All the intricate machinery of circumstance, which men blindly call chance, is under his control, and at his bidding; the most trivial event may be made the means of a grand crisis in the human spirit. The cry for light from his wandering children is never made to the Father of lights in vain; but he some-

times delays the blessing till, as in this case, the soul, utterly turned from all human aid, casts itself on the Divine compassion. Never yet has such a suppliant been sent empty away, even though the feeble faith prompts but the half-despairing, half-believing utterance—"If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief."

Such was Miss Galton's state of mind at this time. Her after experience she thus relates: "I had never before associated with professed believers; and the impression produced by the first view of a Christian family was very striking to me. I was astonished to find that this little family, though at that time under heavy trial, lived in an atmosphere of love, peace, and cheerfulness, which could not but be felt. I perceived that they possessed a principle of happiness undiscovered by any persons I had yet known; whilst I gazed in wonder, and as our acquaintance ripened, they spoke continually of the love of Christ our Saviour, in laying down his life for us sinners; and, as I saw his power manifested in their lives, their words came with conviction to my heart. I felt touched to the quick, that one so great, so holy, should vouchsafe to become the brother of so vile a creature as myself, and condescend to listen to the outpoured detail of all my corruptions and follies, and win me by his Spirit with the same love with which he poured out his blood for me on the cross."

She returned home with new motives and new strength for home duties and trials. We hear little of her circumstances from that time till her marriage; but she seems to have devoted herself a good deal to general study, while she nourished her spiritual life by study of the Scriptures, sacred music, and by attendance on those silent Quaker meetings which had been so dear to her as a child. Whatever be the objections to the systematic practice of silent worship, perhaps the other sections of the Christian

church may owe something in this matter to the society of Friends for the distinct, though somewhat exaggerated, testimony they have given to the truth, that the Lord's voice in the soul is often best heard when all other voices are silenced.

In 1806 Miss Galton married Mr. Lambert Schimmelpenninck. This gentleman belonged to a noble Dutch family of that name, the head of which was for many years Stadtholder of Holland. Mrs. Galton seems to have consulted Mrs. Hannah More on the suitableness of this connexion, Mr. Schimmelpenninck having been a personal acquaintance of the More family. The opinion was very favourable, and the marriage seems to have been productive of much happiness to all parties. Mr. Schimmelpenninck was connected with the shipping of Bristol, and, though in easy circumstances at the time of his marriage, was for some years afterwards under the pressure of pecuniary embarrassment. It was now that his wife found the benefit of that indifference to show and fashion in which she had been trained by her mother. She speaks of her cheerful willingness to live in the humblest way, and to exercise any degree of self-denial, so that they might keep out of debt and difficulty. Nor were these mere words; for years after, when her income, by her wisdom and economy, was increased to a comfortable, though moderate, sufficiency, she has often been known to wait for months before she bought a print or a book upon which she had set her heart, because she thought she could not well afford it. And it was delightful to see united with this self-denial and thoughtfulness in the expenditure of money, how freely and nobly she gave to those who needed it. She had not been trained to domestic work, and this deficiency she felt keenly, and took the greatest pains to remedy. For "there was nothing she thought too little to come within the sphere of duty, nothing too minute to mark (as she expressed it) with the stamp-

royal of the Divine character." There were few things in her character more touching to those who knew her well than "her earnest desire to do well in things most opposed to her tastes and habits of mind."

Her husband died in 1840 after a lingering illness. "Till his mind became affected by disease," says her biographer, "he had at command a large fund of information. He was an eminently good historian, was fond of literature and the arts, especially of music and painting, and had a peculiar insight into character: nothing escaped his observation." One who had the opportunity of judging, speaks of "his modest worth and kindliness," and of "his proud delight in his richly endowed wife."

It was during his lifetime that Mrs. Schimmelpenninck engaged in her first literary labours, and about the years 1814-15 they appeared in rapid succession. It is in connexion with the "Memorials of the Port-Royalists" that her name is chiefly known to the public—a work which is deeply interesting to those who love to trace the spirit of truth and life working even in the midst of a corrupt communion.* Mrs. Schimmelpenninck also wrote on the slave question, and on the theory of beauty, a subject interesting to her not merely as an abstraction; for "she believed that the task of unfolding the eternal principles of beauty, though humble compared with that of teaching spiritual truth, was yet of practical importance." She considered "the tastes to be the extreme ramifications of principles," and she held that the arrangement of a house, and of domestic scenery, according to the perceptions of a rightly informed taste, went far towards promoting the cheerfulness

* The Port-Royalists were a body of learned and pious recluses who inhabited a monastery entitled "Port Royal de Paris." They were chiefly distinguished in the seventeenth century; among them were the celebrated names of Lancelot, Pascal, Arnauld, De Sacy, and Tillemont.

and harmonious feelings of those who would receive its influence. But her time was not absorbed in literature; for during a long course of years she took an active part in many of the charitable institutions of Bristol, and devoted much time to the poor, and to classes of young persons who met statedly at her house, and to whom her own finished education and aptness to teach made her a most valuable instructress in the various branches of general knowledge to which she directed their minds. In religious matters she was ever more inclined to be a learner than a teacher, and would often seek spiritual strength and refreshment in the silence of a Friends' Meeting, or in intercourse with some humble child of God amongst the Moravians or Methodists. In the year 1818 she joined that communion (the Moravians) to which she had been indebted for her first knowledge of the gospel, and she seems throughout her long life to have enjoyed much blessing in this connexion.

In 1837, three years before her husband's death, she had an attack of paralysis, from which she never so far recovered as to be able to mix much in general society. But a life of comparative seclusion is no deprivation to a mind accustomed to draw largely on its own resources, and her intimate friends reaped the benefit. She carried on a close correspondence with some of them, and her pen was ever ready to assist those who from time to time sought her advice in various practical matters.

To a lady who had consulted her on the education of her daughters, she thus writes: "Some consider the education of a young lady to consist in learning how to make nets to catch affections, not cages to keep them when caught. Others consider it to be turning the human subject into a living encyclopædia; but neither of these, I am convinced, is your view. I believe you think that education (*educo*) is the drawing forth and cultivating of those powers of body, mind, and heart, which our Lord has

bestowed on each individual, so as to have all the tools he has intrusted to his children burnished, well set, and in good order, to execute whatever work he in his word and providential leading has or may appoint them. . . . In short, whatever she learn, let it be really and truly learned, not built up on high, but dug down deeply."

Speaking of religious society, she expressed regret that so many religious people neglected the cultivation of their minds; that they did not, for example, seek knowledge concerning the works of God in nature as a profitable ground for mutual intercourse, and one by which the devoted and instructed Christian might hope to draw others to spiritual truth. "As in a wheel," she said, "there is but one centre, though many spokes leading to it; so in grace, the heart filled with God's love might go from the circumference to the centre, and seek to lead others by some of the many paths that point to it."

She continued: "But I think more good is to be done by the silent holy influence which imperceptibly surrounds that individual who lives much with God, and which, like unction, falls silently, but surely, on those around, than by all the mere talking in the world. But to taste of this blessedness, to realize this grace, we must daily have far more communion with the Lord of glory, than with the dearest and best beloved of earthly friends. We can only give as we receive. As perfume, however precious, soon exhales, so the most gifted amongst us must continually replenish his vessel with light, and life, and love from above, or his words will be without flavour, and without vitality. Some good people make a parenthesis in their religion, while they give a party, or receive worldly people, and expect to resume it as a garment, when the occasion has passed; but such is not the will of Christ: 'Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'"

To a friend of her youth she writes: "And now, my

dear and long loved friend, though many of our youthful pleasures are ended, many comforts continue, as we descend, still side by side, and step by step, into the deep valley through which the Jordan flows, that separates the wilderness from the blessed Land of Promise. How pleasant, as our sphere below in everything narrows, to feel that, when things on earth fail, those above expand and send forth their roots, in deep evening strength; and how sweet it is to talk with those who, by experience, can say that, in the sliding away of all, they find Him, the Rock, all-sufficient, and, amidst the poverty of health and strength, have his 'unsearchable riches' overflowing! Oh let us cheer ourselves and each other with the thought of such a Saviour."

Some of her most interesting letters are addressed to her early friend and relative, Catherine Gurney of Earlham, the wise sister to whom, after his mother's death, Joseph John Gurney was indebted for his training. In her 72nd year Mrs. Schimmelpenninck writes to this friend: "How striking, how heart-affecting, and yet how consolatory it is, at the close of a long life, to look back upon the course of God's dealings with us, and to recognise, in a manner, the end wrought out through the varied stages of our earthly pilgrimage; what each friendship, each trial, each pursuit was intended to accomplish; what strength each refreshment by the way gave us, and how far it was used to his glory; what wisdom was imparted by each discipline, and whether his message of love and mercy had been kept in our minds and pondered in our hearts; and what fruit it bore to life eternal! How encouraging, and yet how humiliating is the review; humiliating, that we needed such reiterated chastisements, so much discipline, from the hand and heart of Him who is love; and yet encouraging, since that very discipline shews that he will never leave us nor forsake us, but that this God is our God, that He who has been will be our guide,

even unto death, or rather, through the passage of death to life eternal!"

To the same dear friend, then on her death-bed, Mrs. Schimmelpenninck thus touchingly reviewed the past:—"My dear Catherine, my heart seems still to cling to the remembrance of the beloved past, even in the nearing rays of the brighter future. Dost thou remember how often for hours we have walked up and down the drawing-room or ante-room, or sat in thy room or mine, talking of the destiny of man, his hopes, his powers, his duties; and reasoning as best we might from our own stores (or Mr. Search's), or others, upon a theme where all reason must fail, and where revelation alone can teach? Yet, were not those sweet hours unblessed or unproductive, since they effectually taught us that man does know, and can know, nothing of the centre of all truth, if untaught by God. They were the strainings of the soul upwards, the beating of the eagle imprisoned in his cage of earth against the bars of his prison. How did we go on vainly wandering in a chaos of doubts, and involving ourselves in a labyrinth of speculation, till the same God, who at first caused light to rise amid darkness, shone into our hearts to give us the knowledge of his truth, and light, and love, in the face of Jesus Christ! How shall we sufficiently thank him? He taught us the darkness and emptiness of our hearts, and then he illuminated that darkness, and satisfied that hunger. He taught us in measure to trust him, and oh! how has he repaid that trust by overflowing fulfilment.

"We sought light from reason, the candle lighted up by man for time. He bade us find it in revelation, the sunbeam kindled by God, enlightening for eternity as well as time. Truly have we experienced that there is light in the evening.

"Has not our Lord led us through all the steps of our pilgrimage, even now, until its close? We began in doubt, we end in certainty; we began by opinion,

we end by experience; we began in conflict, we end in peace. Oh! shall we end in joyful thanksgiving; and when we compare the past with the present, feel that his gracious and unmerited mercy have indeed encompassed us with songs of deliverance?"

When in her 74th year she occupied some time in writing a little book called "The Voices of the Cross to the hearts of the Disciples." The train of thought pursued will be understood from the following quotation:—"Opposition to one's wishes and will is the very essence of the cross. While, therefore, man—in his triple nature of body, soul, and spirit—has his centre in self, and is opposed to God, this state of things must bring trial, and pain, and suffering. Man may 'kick against the pricks;' but by so doing, he will only make his sufferings the keener. The measure of our alienation from God is thus the measure of our cross; for when we are in perfect accord with the will of God, the cross ceases. The cross is thus the mirror of the soul, by which we see our true state."

There is much rich instruction to be gathered from her experience during long, and often very painful illness between the years 1853 and 1856. She was debarred during those years from joining in the outward fellowship of the church; but in reading the Moravian liturgy, in sacred music, and occasionally in her much loved Quaker custom of "sitting in silence," she enjoyed many happy and refreshing Sundays at home. It was in the early part of the year 1856 that her illness assumed that serious form which terminated, eight months' afterwards, in her death. She was aware from the first of the peculiar bodily suffering that awaited her; and with the sensitiveness to such suffering that marks the nervous temperament, she seems to have had a severe inward struggle before she could bring herself to say heartily in this matter, "Not my will, but thine be done." But He who makes his strength perfect in

his children's weakness gave her the victory, and enabled her not only to acquiesce cheerfully in his arrangements, but to see as she had never seen before the special blessing and intention of suffering, as a means which is to open the heart to a sense and knowledge of what our Saviour suffered for us, and to lead us into communion with him in his sufferings.

Referring to Job's memorable saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away," she said, that no Christian can ever be put to such a trial of faith—that is, in regard to Christ and salvation; for to those who are in Christ God gives, but from them he never takes anything away. "Let us hold fast," she continued, "that which is eternal in his gifts to us, that which is indestructible in them;" and then she added, that it had been shown her that God is the God of all consolation, and that no sorrow could be so deep or so unreachable by man, but that his consolation could go deeper still. She afterwards adverted to the thought and feeling of the humiliating circumstances in human suffering, from which she formerly shrank so exceedingly, and which she never liked to dwell upon even in the sufferings of our Lord; but now, she said, they were the very comfort of her soul. "He was spit upon," she repeated, more than once, as if to reconcile herself to what was so trying to her nature in the circumstances of extreme illness. "I cannot describe," says a friend, "her earnestness in speaking of our Lord's heart of love, and of all the depths of outward vileness to which he stooped for us. 'It was,' she said, 'the depths of her own humiliation, through weakness of body, which had led her to take comfort from the thought of those depths into which love had led our Saviour to descend.'" She said, that she had often in her life being inclined to occupy herself with the prospect close at hand, from finding the bleak hard outline of the eternal hills cold and barren to her sight; but that, as she drew nearer, God had in

mercy made his light to shine full upon them, so that she could now perceive they were covered with magnificent trees of the forest, and were rich in fruits and flowers, far more pleasant than those close at hand, but yet a continuation of them. It was only for want of faith that those eternal hills had ever seemed bleak and bare.

Later in her illness she said, in reference to her hope that the doctors would not adopt a treatment which might cloud her mind, "I have been thinking so much of those words, 'Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord'—and in this way, I earnestly desire, when I yield up my soul to him, to do it willingly, deliberately, and consciously—looking steadfastly up into his face, as to one known, and loved, and trusted." "How teaching," she remarked, "has been this time of sickness to me! I have learned more during the last month, than ever before in my whole life, of the sufferings of our Lord, and of the streams of blessing, and joy, and comfort which flow from them. I know I have cared all my life long too much for my own comfort, and ease, and convenience. God is teaching me, step by step, to give up all these things; for there can be neither ease nor comfort while in constant pain, however much and tenderly those around me try to alleviate my sufferings. And thus my heavenly Father is daily stripping me; but, blessed be his name! he does all things well. May I glorify his holy name more and more!" When a paroxysm of pain came on she often reverted to her mother. "My dear, dear mother," she said, "how little she thought when she taught me, a little child, more than seventy years ago, to bear pain, how her lessons would be called into exercise. I am often impatient, but yet, I seek to bear this suffering, and to take it from my heavenly Father." "And," she continued, "I am ready to meet, and patiently to bear, every part of death, every pang, every suffering that leads to it;

only, O Lord, do thou, who hast tasted death, be very near to support my poor weak heart. Do thou, in thy infinite love and tender compassion, pity me, guide me, sustain me, and afterwards receive me to glory."

"Mine has been a crushed life," she said, one evening, to a friend, "and there have been times when I have keenly felt the absence of sympathy in Divine things, even with God's children; but what then? It was a blessing, though hidden from me; for I am easily touched, and perhaps led away, by love and kindness. And so the absence of sympathy in the things of God, sent me to Him alone. He taught me all I know; and, oh! what a tower of strengh is this in my hour of need. Man could now do nothing for me; my dear, dear Lord does all. He supports and sustains his poor servant, and at last he will receive me to himself." It was shortly before her departure, that suddenly, in the midst of a state in which the power of coherent thought seemed almost extinguished through the extremity of weakness, she lifted up her voice, and said to those about her, "Rejoice with me, rejoice with me! I am entering my Father's house."

Once again, and for the last time, was her voice heard in its accustomed tones, saying, as if listening with delight, "Do you not hear the voices? and the children's are the loudest."

She quietly breathed her last on the evening of the 29th of August, 1856. Her remains rest, according to her wish, in the peaceful burying ground attached to the Moravian chapel in Bristol. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Yea saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

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