1839

Memoir of Mrs. Elizabeth McFarland : Or, the Full Assurance of Hope, the Reward of Diligence in the Christian Life (Part One)

Nathaniel Bouton

MEMOIR

OF

MRS. ELIZABETH McFARLAND;

OR

Full Assurance of Hope

THE REWARD OF DILIGENCE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

BY NATHANIEL BOUTON,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, CONCORD, N. H.

And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to THE FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE unto the end.—*St. Paul.*

CONCORD, N. H.

MARSH, CAPEN AND LYON.

1839.

TO THE

CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NEW-HAMPSHIRE,

This Memoir

OF AN EMINENTLY DEVOUT AND USEFUL

MOTHER IN ISRAEL

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

"We who have been acquainted with Mrs. McFarland more than thirty years," said an intimate friend, "will know whether what shall be written in her Memoir is true." With this remark in view, the author commits the work, with entire confidence, to the inspection and perusal, not only of her particular friends, and those who have known her by reputation, throughout the state; but also of distant strangers. It should, however, be added, that such was the characteristic modesty and humility of Mrs. McFarland, that her excellencies were not all visible even to the eyes of familiar acquaintances. Many things were brought to light after her death, which greatly increase our admiration of her virtues, and which were not fully known before to all the members of her own family. Indeed, the perusal of her Memoir will confirm the impression, that her *self-denial*, *diligence* and *perseverance* in the duties of the christian life, were far greater than her most intimate friends ever supposed.*

* The facts in this Memoir have been collected from every accessible source. Much use has been made of Mrs. McFarland's diary, which she commenced at about the age of 21, and continued, with occasional intervals, nearly 27 years. Many interesting particulars have been furnished by the two eldest daughters, Mrs. McMillan of Conway, and Mrs. Buxton of Boscawen.

The main design of this Memoir is to illustrate the scriptural truth, that "FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE" in regard to one's own salvation, is the *fruit and reward of faith in Jesus Christ—the atoning Saviour—combined with the diligent practice of every christian duty.*

The fervent prayer of the writer is, that this Memoir, in the preparation of which he has found great comfort, amidst numerous parochial duties and deep domestic affliction, may be the means of leading the mothers and daughters of our Zion to a more entire consecration of their hearts and "ministration of their substance" to their adorable Lord—that they may copy the example of the "holy women of old," whose faith and works are recorded for their imitation—and finally, in the "full assurance of hope," triumph over the king of terrors!

CONCORD, March, 1839.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, PARENTAGE AND INCIDENTS IN EARLY LIFE. Childhood—school at Medford—death of her father—"a little plan"—Watts on the mind. 12—25

CHAPTER II.

A MORE PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF HER RELIGIOUS EXERCISES FROM CHILDHOOD TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE. Early impressions—dangerous sickness—prayer-meeting at her mother's—profession of religion diary—accountableness to God—Christ the foundation—season of affliction—views of divine justice—self-examination—sins of the tongue—prayer. 26—41

CHAPTER III.

HER MARRIAGE, AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR HER STATION. Views before marriage—prayer for a blessing on her new relation—character as a wife—domestic habits—desires to be useful—prayers for the people—social character—dress—respect for ministers of the gospel. 41—54

CHAPTER IV.

CHARACTER AS A MOTHER. Dedication of her children to God—early instruction—an example of early rising—her government and instruction—conversation with her daughters—benevolence—Sabbath exercises—

prayer with her children—correction—extracts from diary—mourns the evil propensities of her children—sickness of E. and of S.—concern for temporal support—death of a child—affecting prayer for C. 55—77

CHAPTER V.

TRIBUTE OF AFFECTION TO HER PARENTS AND ONLY BROTHER. Mysterious providences—recollection of her father—her mother's ill health and death—deep mourning—her brother's death. 78—86

CHAPTER VI.

DEVOTIONAL CHARACTER AND EXERCISES. Religion the business of her life—remark concerning distressing views of sin—extracts from her diary—family cares—a wandering sister—good resolves—hope of heaven—social prayer—particular prayer—answers to prayer—prayer for a revival—adoration and petition—preparation for the Sabbath—humbling sense of sin—conference—love to christians—why prayer is not answered—concern for a domestic—her views in sickness—revival of religion—pants after holiness—female prayer meeting—resolves at the beginning of the year—precious bible—sermon to heads of families—sweet season of devotion—joy at the foot of the cross—recovery from sickness—self forgotten, and God glorified—revival in colleges—indwelling sin lamented—birthday—revival in Concord, 1816—Jesus, all—absence from the communion—two young boarders—renewal of covenant—grieving the Holy Spirit—a rainy Sabbath—Sabbath school—prayer for Mrs. Rowell—great

peace in believing—fast day—answer to prayer—her place of devotion, "the north chamber." 87—134

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS WRITTEN DURING HER MARRIED LIFE. Female prayer meeting, Boston—invitation to personal religion—doctrines—the times—death of christians—conformity to the world, millenium—children—fruits of a revival—christian warfare—death of Dea. Thomas W. Thompson—dismission of Dr. M'Farland—his death. 135—161

CHAPTER VIII.

HER INTEREST IN MISSIONARY, CHARITABLE AND RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES. 'The tree is known by its fruit'—New-Hampshire Cent Institution—Concord Female Charitable Society—Foreign Missions, &c.—gives one tenth—"a purse for God"—Concord Female Religious Society—other benevolent objects—attempts to write a tract—extract from it. 161—200

CHAPTER IX.

HER LABORS AS A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER. Reluctance to engage—preparation of lessons—specimens: The Sabbath—blessedness of those who consider the poor—the sin of Nadab and Abihu—duties of wives and husbands. Conversation and prayer with members of her class. 201—234

CHAPTER X.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE LAST SEVEN YEARS OF HER LIFE. To Mrs. E. M., of Boston—reference bible—sailors—zeal for the salvation

of sinners—concern for particular individuals—letters to her daughter S.—to Rev. Mr. Buxton. 235—258

CHAPTER XI.

INTERESTING PARTICULARS ILLUSTRATIVE OF HER RELIGIOUS CHARACTER. Her diary—views of a particular providence—religious meetings—remarks on two occasions—family worship—seasons of sickness before the last—her closet, the garret. 259—279

CHAPTER XII.

"FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE"—OR TRIUMPH IN PROSPECT OF DEATH. The last time she attended public worship—the Sabbath a season of comfort—christian perfection—Watts' hymns—church fast—benefit from prayers—her children visit her—"loving kindness"—bright views of the Saviour—growth in grace—adorable Trinity—government of God—prays with the watchers—fervent prayer for ministers and others—charity and christian simplicity—theological students—*dying grace*—heaven—great joy—Christ precious—preparatory lecture—sacrament administered to her—full assurance—great humiliation—last day—death—monumental inscription. 280—319

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND INCIDENTS IN EARLY LIFE.

Mrs. Elizabeth McFarland, consort of the late Rev. Asa McFarland,* D. D., of Concord, N. H., was born in Boston, March 19, 1780; the only daughter of Mr. Bartholomew and Mrs. Susanna Sewall Kneeland. Her grand father, Samuel Sewall, of York, Maine, was a kinsman of the late chief justice Samuel Sewall, of Massachusetts,—a name no less distinguished for moral excellence and piety than for sound judgment and learning. She had an only brother, William, who died in the island of Jamaica, August 17, 1809.

Her father, Mr. Kneeland, was a merchant in Boston. Though not a professor of religion, he was a man of strict morals; constant in at-

* Died 18 February, 1827, aged 57.

tending public worship, and family prayer by the use of an approved form. He died April 19, 1792. Her mother was the subject of religious impressions in early childhood. On Mr. Whitefield's visit at Portsmouth, she heard him preach "with great delight," from the words in Jude, 21 v., "Keep yourselves in the love of God." She made a public profession of religion at about the age of 21. During her residence in Boston, Mrs. Kneeland was one of the precious band of women who meet weekly for prayer—of whom it has been said, they were 'kindred spirits with those of our own time—pioneers, on whose steps ours are pressing—who prepared the way and smoothed some of the roughnesses of the path, even of the minister and the missionary of our own day. Yes—theirs was a day of *asking* for what we receive, for the spread of the gospel and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.'

This Society of praying women was formed after Mr. Whitefield's visit to New-England, in 1740, and is continued to the present time. Mrs. Waters, whose life has been published, was the last of the original members. "Here the wealthy, the talented, the daughters of poverty

but rich in faith, delighted to meet and pour out their requests at the throne of grace; believing that they should receive the things they asked for—speedily, if best; but sure, if distant returns."*

The following particulars respecting the childhood of Mrs. McFarland were furnished the compiler by her daughter, Mrs. Buxton.

"*Mr. Bouton*,—You requested me to communicate what I know of my mother's early history. I have learned most of this from her own lips, and some from such of her early friends as I have been acquainted with. Her parents were fond and indulgent, yet firm and decided in their government. They had but two children, William and Eliza. She always recollected, with lively interest, the instructions and prayers of her mother. This excellent parent would often take them from their childish amusements to her place of retirement, and there plead for their salvation. A person who resided in the family states, that she took them, in their earliest infancy, to this sacred spot, and present-

* MS. by Mrs. McFarland. See, also, Memoir of Mrs. Waters, by Rev. Mr. Huntington, of Boston.

ed them in her arms to the Friend of children, dedicating them to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"They were remarkably regular in all their domestic arrangements, especially in those which pertained to the keeping of the Sabbath and to public worship. They attended the Old South Church,—never going to any other from motives of curiosity or convenience. Between my mother and her brother there existed a very strong attachment. When in childhood, they attended school together, it was remarked by their teacher that when he was punished for any violation of the rules of school, she was the greatest sufferer of the two.

"She was fond of beholding the beauties of nature,—always preferring a prospect of the ocean, or a ride into the country, to all the various objects afforded by the shops of Boston. She was occasionally indulged with a visit to her maternal relations, who lived in the state of Maine; and through life, even in her last illness, loved to tell of the pleasant sights she beheld during these excursions. A present from a friend, of a nosegay, or even a single rose, always filled her with pleasure. She said to me,

a few summers since, 'I don't know but it is because I grow childish, but the flowers seem to me more beautiful and fragrant every year.'

"She sometimes made a visit to Portsmouth, at the house of her uncle Penhallow, who married her father's sister. She always remembered the faithfulness of this excellent man. He would often come to her in the forenoon, saying, 'Have you prayed in secret to-day?' If she had not, he would say, 'Why not, my child?' She would sometimes tell him that her aunt was busy, and she stayed to help her. 'Oh, that will not do,' he would say, 'Go right away, leave any thing and every thing, till you have attended to this duty.'

"It was the intention of her parents to provide her with the best means of education which were then afforded. She appears to have been diligent, and fond of study, though she always felt that her early school education was superficial. She regretted that so much of her time was spent in attending to needle work, though she never discountenanced the exercise of taste and ingenuity, to a moderate extent, in this branch of industry. She was sent to a boarding school at Medford, kept by Mr. Woodbridge, the

father of William C. Woodbridge, who is now distinguished for his efforts to promote the cause of education. Here she remained some time, and seems to have made good progress in mental discipline and the acquisition of knowledge. When she left school her teacher gave her a present, and his thanks, for the good example she had set. Her attention was directed to instrumental music; and though she felt that her ear was not sufficiently accurate for her to become a skilful performer, yet by patient attention and perseverance she made considerable proficiency. After leaving school she read with avidity such works on the improvement of the mind as were then extant. The valuable treatise by Dr. Watts fell into her hands, and she made it her endeavor to pursue the course recommended by that excellent author.

"Her mind seems always to have been susceptible of religious impressions, and her conscience to have been very tender. She recollected, through life, *one direct falsehood* which she told when a child, and said that it cost her many a tear.

"At the age of twelve years, she lost her father. His death was sudden, caused by dropsy

in the chest, symptoms of which appeared a few weeks before. It was in the month of April; and she, with a young friend, had been amusing herself during the beautiful moonlight evening, sometimes sitting in a little arbor, to which they had access, anticipating an increase of their enjoyments when summer should come; and sometimes sitting down in the family circle. Towards the close of the evening, her father prepared to retire for the night. He went up stairs, supported by his wife. On reaching the top he faltered —and in less than an hour was dead.

"This event made a deep impression upon her tender mind, and increased her concern respecting her spiritual state. She was surprised and comforted to see how her dear mother was supported through the various trying scenes occasioned by this afflictive event: exhibiting the deep humility of the chastened christian, and at the same time attending with fortitude and cheerfulness to the settlement of affairs, and then resuming the business in which they had been engaged during his life."

The manner in which she spent the youthful period of life, while her religious character was

forming, may be judged of by the following paper, found among her writings. Whether 'THE LITTLE PLAN' was *original* or not, we have not the means of knowing; but it was *adopted*, by signing her name to it.

"A LITTLE PLAN—to regulate the life of a very indolent girl.

"Rise in the morning at half past five—spend the first hour in devotion—in reading some short passage of scripture, and meditating upon it. Accustom yourself to *express* your best thoughts on the sentences you read. This will prove a means of expanding your mind, and will assist you in conversation. Then seek earnestly to God, by prayer, for the blessings you need; for the influences of his Spirit, to convince you of sin; your undone condition by nature; the infinitely evil nature of sin, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; for his sanctifying, saving grace; for the temporal blessings you need; for health of body and cheerfulness of mind. Commit yourself to God—to preserve, guide, and assist you through the day—to enable you to perform the common duties of it with diligence and alacrity—with an eye to his glory. When the devotions of the morning are ended, enter with

cautious steps into the world—earnestly endeavoring to keep up the fear and reverence of the Deity on your mind. Attend family devotion with fixed attention.—To domestic concerns for the first hour after breakfast, with *diligence* and *perseverance*. Here beware of a morose, unsocial habit. Remember you were not formed for yourself alone, but for society. Labor to maintain a cheerfulness in your manners and conversation. Observe respect and attention to superiors—affability and kindness to inferiors—condescension and kindness to all with whom you may associate. Under this head I would recommend that you endeavor to suppress pride, and a tenaciousness of your own opinions. The next *half hour* to writing; either copying from some favorite author (which will give you ease of style and assist you in spelling) or writing letters, or in committing to writing some of your own best observations. When this is done, spend the remainder of the forenoon in sewing, at the same time in endeavoring to bring the mind into a regular train of *thinking*. The first *whole* or *half* hour after dinner in reading. Visiting and receiving good company is no loss of time. Before you make your visits, recollect

with what temptations you will be most likely to meet, and guard against them. In the evening, retire if possible, and review the actions, words, and thoughts of the day; return thanks for the mercies received in the day, and commit yourself to the protection of heaven. Let your last thoughts be as much as possible on your entire dependence upon God for every blessing; your own unworthiness, the merits and offered salvation of Christ. This PLAN observe every day in the week (excepting the Sabbath), only on Saturday evenings devote an *hour* to prayer, in returning thanks for the mercies of the past week—for the influence of the Spirit on your own, and the souls of all your relations, and those who are dear to you by any ties or connection, and for a blessing on the means of grace you may enjoy on the following day. On Sabbath morning endeavor to rise half an hour earlier than on other days; spend the first hour as usual; the time after, until divine service begins, as much as is convenient, in reading. After service, some time in committing to writing what you have heard, and likewise in the afternoon. The remainder of the day as much as

possible in reading. In the evening review the actions of the day. Close it with prayer."

"ELIZA KNEELAND."

This paper is without date. It was evidently drawn up before her marriage, and presents the MODEL of her life. Among her papers is a collection of "Extracts" from the best authors, such as Addison, Watts, Cowper, Thomson, Newton, Zimmerman, Mason on Self Knowledge; also from various Sermons and Books of History. The extracts are of a devotional and literary character. The following from "Watts on the Improvement of the Mind," are so descriptive of her own habits, and so worthy of regard by the young, that I cannot forbear quoting them:

"Offer *your daily requests to the Father of Lights*, that he would bless all your attempts and labors in reading, study and conversation. Think with yourself how easily and insensibly, by one turn of thought, he can lead you into a large scene of ideas. He can teach you to lay hold on a clew which may guide your thoughts with safety and ease through all the difficulties of an intricate subject. Think how easily the

Author of your being can direct your motions by his providence, so that a glance of the eye, or a word striking the ear, or a sudden turn of the fancy, shall conduct you to a train of happy sentiments. By his secret and supreme method of government, he can draw you to read such a treatise, or converse with such a person, who may give you more light upon some deep subject in an hour, than you could obtain by a month of your own solitary labor. Think with yourself, with how much ease the God of your spirits can cast into your mind some useful suggestions, and give a happy turn to your own thoughts, or the thoughts of those with whom you may converse, whence you may derive unspeakable delight and satisfaction in a matter that has long puzzled and entangled you. He can shew you a path which the vulture's eye hath not seen, and lead you, by some unknown gate or portal, out of a wilderness or labyrinth of difficulties, wherein you have been long wandering. Fetch down some knowledge from the clouds, the stars, the sun, the moon, and the revolution of all the planets; dig and draw up some valuable meditations from the depths of the earth, and search them through the vast ocean of waters; extract

some intellectual improvement from the minerals and metals; from the wonders of nature among the vegetables, the herbs, the trees and the flowers. Learn some lesson from the birds, and the beasts, and the meanest insect. Read the wisdom of God, and his admirable contrivance in them all; read his almighty power; his rich and varied goodness in all the works of his hands. From the days and nights, the hours and the flying minutes, learn a wise improvement of time, and be watchful to seize every opportunity to increase in knowledge."

CHAPTER II.

A MORE PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF HER RELIGIOUS EXERCISES FROM CHILDHOOD TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

As the PIETY of Mrs. McFarland was the crowning excellence of her character, I deem it important to state all the particulars we know, of the commencement, growth and maturity of it: "*First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.*" Mark 4 : 28. Happily, our information on this part of her history is as full and explicit as could reasonably be expected. From her own pen, under date of *March* 10, 1811, we have the following unfinished account of her early religious impressions:

"Having for some time been exercised with many distressing doubts respecting my spiritual estate, I have resolved, by divine grace, to pen down some account of my life, with the exercises of my mind—the better to enable me to know whether I have passed from death unto

life, or whether I have deceived myself with a 'name to live while I am dead.'

"The first recollection that I have of any thing, was at about the age of three or four years, when my dear mother, with her arms about me, would tell me of God—his omniscience—my accountability to him—of heaven and hell. These truths would strongly impress my mind, and commonly affect me in such a manner as to draw tears from my eyes, and induce me to go alone and pray to God. My seasons for prayer, however, were accidental: as when any calamity threatened myself, or the town—as an alarming sickness, or the talk of national calamity. Then I would pray for the preservation of myself and friends. Commonly when reading or hearing of pious children, as the Lives in what is called the 'Token for Children,' or Edwards' 'Phebe Bartlett,' I was very much affected, and earnestly wished, as I thought, to be like them.

"When about eight years old, I was carried by my mother to visit her friends in the District of Maine, York being her native place. I several times heard the Rev. Mr. Lyman preach. His earnest exhortations to his hearers to choose

the ways of religion would forcibly impress my mind, and lead me to resolve that I would be religious. At that time I had no ideas of my own insufficiency to be truly so; but thought it would be effected by much prayer to God—by abstaining from vanity, and my childish companions and amusements, and reading the bible. But these resolutions, as they were made in my own strength, did not abide much temptation. On returning to my native place, my companions claimed my attention, and my determination to be religious was relinquished for that time.

"At twelve years old I was called to bury my dear and very affectionate father; but notwithstanding God's visitations toward me, I fell again into courses of vanity and folly. My mother was continually laboring with me and for me, that I might become truly pious, and devote myself to God. I was about that time much engaged and affected with reading 'Alleine's Alarm to the Unconverted,' 'Boston's Fourfold State,' and some other books of the like description; but had no just ideas of the character of God. The adorable attributes of his justice, mercy and holiness were beyond my comprehension.

This was at the age of from fourteen to sixteen. I was laboriously working out a righteousness of my own,—which from time to time I found incomplete and insufficient. O astonishing stupidity!—that at the very time I was reading 'Boston's Fourfold State,' where this subject is so fully and plainly described, and the variety of the works of the law pointed out, that I should so repeatedly and earnestly endeavor to weave a garment of my own righteousness, in which to appear before God as a Christian. I am astonished to review my own stupidity and God's forbearance with me. Somewhere about this time I attempted to enter into what I called a Covenant with God: which was to this effect. I acknowledged myself a great sinner; endeavored to confess all the sins of my life; confessed to God that I had often resolved against sinning, but had broken these resolutions;—that now I did more earnestly resolve against transgression, and promised to avoid all sins of thought, word and action—and solemnly, on my knees, devoted myself to God; and, if I recollect aright, telling the Divine Being that if I did again return to sin he might justly cast me off. This Covenant with God, as I called it, did not, however,

bring me any solid peace. I found that I daily broke God's holy law; and on examining my heart more closely, I found that it was wholly sinful—filled with sinful thoughts or desires. In this way I continued till about the age of twenty—sometimes praying, or observing the form of private prayer; at another, neglecting it for weeks. I then thought that I was religious; but now I can see that my heart was supremely devoted to the world. About nineteen or twenty, I was visited with the yellow fever, which then prevailed in Boston. Many of my acquaintance were dying on the right hand and on the left, which greatly terrified me. My life was despaired of. I thought, one night in particular, that I should die and certainly go to hell; but oh! God was pleased to spare me, again to return to life."

Here her narrative abruptly closes; but it may be added, that this sickness greatly deepened her religious impressions. During the continuance of it, though she knew that death was making great ravages, yet she was not permitted to know *who* were among its victims, till after her recovery—when a list of the deaths was put into her hands. Here she saw the names of

many whom she knew and loved, and the inquiry arose in her mind, "Why am I spared?" She was much affected by hearing a sermon from the words, "*Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*" Luke 17: 17, 18. It was applied particularly to those who had recovered from the fever. It was, however, some time after this before she obtained a hope of salvation: "Often," said she, "have I gone home from meeting, after hearing our minister, Dr. ECKLEY, preach, saying to myself, 'Well, his skirts will be clear of my blood. If I do not regard these warnings and invitations, my condemnation will be just.'" One reason, she observed, that she remained so long in the dark, was, "We did not have meetings for inquiry then, and I was afraid to open my mind to others. I was ignorant of the nature of true religion, and especially of the way of salvation through Christ."

"How did you finally obtain comfort?"—"Very gradually; and among other means I remember these:—My mother used to invite me into the female prayer meeting, which, after my father's death was held at her house. Among

those who attended, were Mrs. Eustis, wife of Gov. Eustis, also the wife of Lt. Gov. Phillips, Mrs. Waters and Mrs. Mason. I was so ignorant as to think they were free from sin, and were perfect. But one day Mrs. Eustis was praying for her children. After she had thanked the Lord for them, and permitting her to present them to him in covenant, she began to plead for their conversion. She besought God, for the sake of his covenant, and for the love of the Savior in dying for them, not to withhold his Spirit on account of her unworthiness and sins. I never heard such confessions before. Her tears flowed so freely that she could hardly proceed. I then thought that if such a good woman had reason to lament her sins in such strains, what ought I to do. This gave me quite a new view of myself and of the nature of religion." "At another time, I heard a Christian woman say, *There is a righteousness wrought out for us by Christ.* Thus I gradually learnt my weakness and sins, and where to find strength and righteousness. I did not profess religion till I was twenty-one; though probably I should have done it sooner, if there had been any means, such as are now used, to bring young Christians for-

ward." She united with the Old South church, in Boston, in 1801.

From the foregoing, we cannot fix the *date* of her conversion: nor is that essential in a sound religious experience. She was so constantly the subject of religious impressions from early childhood, that the transition from a state of nature to a state of grace, was less distinctly visible to herself, than under other circumstances it might have been. But the genuineness of her piety at this period, may be judged of from the following extracts from her diary—which was commenced apparently about the time of her making a public profession of religion.

ACCOUNTABLENESS TO GOD—PRAYER.

"*June* 19, 1801.—This day I have heard two most excellent sermons from Dr. Tappan. O may I profit by the means of grace so bountifully afforded me. O my soul! thou art now about to enter on another week of temptations. Remember thou must live as a pilgrim and stranger, journeying to another world. Remember thou must also give an account of the deeds that are done in the body. Remember also that an omniscient God not only sees thy most minute actions, but witnesses the most secret

thoughts and intentions of the heart. O may that grace which has kept me from all open and infamous crimes, keep me from those sins of the mind which are equally odious in the sight of a God of spotless purity. O help me, great God, to suppress the pride of my heart, to subdue my hasty temper, and not give way to anger or malice. Keep me, great God, in thy fear; wash me in the fountain of Christ's blood, and accept me for his sake who died for the vilest and most guilty."

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION—PRECIOUS—PRAYER.

"*Oct.* 18, 1801.—I trust through the mercy of God, this day has not been wholly lost, though I have not made that improvement which my God might justly expect and demand of me. O most gracious God, I beseech thee not to suffer me to deceive myself in the greatest concern that can possibly interest a mortal—a probationer for eternity. Let me not build my hopes of salvation on my prayers or tears; any supposed degree of attainments, fervor of devotion, or reformation of life. But oh! let my hopes be built on the merits, sufferings and death of Christ. O! may his name be more precious to

my soul than any thing beside. May this eternal Rock of Ages be *my* foundation. Here I will build my hopes, and they shall not be shaken, for the eternal God hath said it. And have I such a refuge, and can the *frowns* or flatteries of my fellow worms so much affect me? Why do I not feel a perfect indifference to either? Such is my nature, that I require the soothings of affection to draw me to my duty. Is not thy God, O my soul, more merciful than thy fellow creatures can possibly be? Perhaps he permits them to frown on thee that thou mayest be weaned from this world more than thou wouldst be were thy smiles courted by them, and thou thyself caressed. Estimate not above its worth any earthly good. Live a pilgrim amid strangers here. Be ready to depart whenever thy eternal Sovereign shall call thee home."

SEASON OF AFFLICTION—PRAYER.

"*June* 29, 1802.—O my soul, blush and be ashamed to view thy life for the year past. Little progress hast thou made in thy journey to the heavenly world; and there is yet doubt whether thou art set forward on a journey to heaven. Well may a faithful God visit thee with affliction

for thy sluggishness. Thou art now called to trials. How dost thou support them? Art thou murmuring at the sovereign hand that smites thee? or art thou humbling thyself before him? O bless the Lord, my soul, that he condescends to chasten thee. Thou dost need chastening. O my God! for the sake of Jesus Christ, thy Son, sanctify this affliction; give and deny me what thou art pleased else, only do not deny me the influences of thy Spirit, and an interest in thy favor."*

VIEWS OF DIVINE JUSTICE—SHORTNESS OF TIME—PRAYER.

"*August* 15, 1802.—O my soul, retire now from the busy world and all its cares, and take a view of thyself. Thou art the breath of an eternal God. Thy being will have no end; but thou wilt forever live in an eternity of happiness or misery! Think how greatly aggravated will be thy misery, since thou hast been indulged with such means of grace. How just will be thy condemnation. If thou dost miss of salvation, surely the lowest hell will be thy place. Art thou fitted for the society of holy beings

* The kind of affliction here alluded to, is not known.

and for God? Oh! search and try thy ways; search thy heart, and see whether thou hast any love to the character of an holy God, or whether all thy endeavors are only to be freed from punishment. Time is ever on the wing! eternity will soon absorb it. Hasten to make thy calling and election sure; leave not thy greatest interest in an uncertainty. O! almighty God, deign to look with an eye of tender pity upon me. Shouldst thou say, What is thy petition? It is not the riches, the honors, or the pleasures of life: Give or deny me what of these thou art pleased; but my earnest desire is that thou wouldst form my heart for thyself, sanctify it with the influences of thy Spirit, shew me the infinite evil of sin, and give me true faith in Jesus Christ."

SELF EXAMINATION—PRAYER FOR PARDON—SANCTIFICATION.

"*Feb.* 6, 1803.—I have a part on the great stage of life to act for him who made me, and to him must give an account. Twenty-three years have nearly elapsed since I began this part. How have I performed it! O my soul, blush and be ashamed to answer this important question as

thou must. The duties I owe to God I have neglected. I have refused to love him, though he is worthy of the highest love and adoration of every created being, from the seraph that burns at his throne to the meanest mortal worm of the dust. I have refused obedience to him, though my rightful sovereign. I have erred and strayed from him, and have been glad when he was farthest from my thoughts. The duties I owe to Jesus Christ, as my Saviour, whom I have professed to follow, I have neglected in such a manner as might bring odium on his religion. The duties I owe to my fellow creatures, I have basely neglected. Superiors, inferiors and equals have not received from me what I owe them, and what my conscience dictates I should perform. O! almighty God, I acknowledge my sinfulness. Thou mightest justly cut me down as a cumberer of thy ground. But where shall I go but unto thee? O grant me the influences of thy Spirit, to convince me of sin; to illuminate my understanding, that I may contemplate thy character and perfection; to make me feel more sensibly my distance from thee—the ruins of my nature—the depravity of my heart, and the odiousness of sin, as opposed to the purity

of thy nature. Restore thy lost image upon my soul; write thy laws and imprint thy statutes upon my heart; renew my nature; sanctify all the powers and faculties of my soul; give me to feel my wretchedness; give me faith in the merits of Christ, and for his sake accept me."

LAMENTS SINS OF THE TONGUE---PRAYER FOR GRACE.

"*March* 12, 1803.—Oh my soul, take a view of the sins and follies into which thou hast fallen since the above was written, that thou mayest the better avoid them for time to come. Secret prayer frequently omitted—consequently many errors in my conduct towards my fellow creatures. Oh! detraction has dwelt on my tongue! I have secretly wounded the reputation of my neighbor; and though I only assented to what others said, at first, yet by degrees was led to mention several things to the disadvantage of the absent,—which perhaps were true, yet why should I repeat them? By so doing, I only impressed them more strongly on my mind, which lessened my love and esteem for the person, and injured my own happiness. O let me learn in future to be as tender of the reputation of an

injured brother as of his life; and rather be thought unsocial, than *speak* to the injury of any. O my God! look with a pitying eye on the weakest and most unworthy of thy creatures —and for Christ's sake extend me thy gracious aid."

CHAPTER III.

HER MARRIAGE—AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR HER STATION.

In September, 1803, she was united in marriage with the Rev. Dr. McFarland,* and immediately removed from Boston to the residence of her husband, in Concord. Her views previous to entering into this connection were such as became a young Christian, and may properly be

* She was the *third* wife of Dr. McFarland. He first married Miss Clarissa Dwight, of Belchertown, Mass.,—who died October 23d, 1799, of puerperal fever, aged thirty-two years, her child surviving but a few days. His second wife was Miss Nancy Dwight, of the same place,—who died in about two months after their marriage. They were both excellent women and much esteemed.

mentioned, as worthy of imitation. Under date of *July* 3, 1803, she writes in her diary—

"Now it seems the will of Divine Providence that I should connect myself with one who appears to be his real and faithful servant. This great change I hope I have maturely deliberated upon; and think I have followed the leadings of Providence in deciding. But O, I dread, by being placed in a more conspicuous station, to bring greater odium on religion.

"O almighty God, whose omnipresent eye witnesses this transaction, I entreat thee to look with pity upon me, through Jesus, thy Son, and accept my thanks for the blessing of the friendship of thy servant; and teach me my dependence upon thee for the continuance of this and every other blessing. In thine own time perfect what appears to be thy begun work concerning us—unite us in the nearest and tenderest connection.

"But O, let me appeal to thee: Is not the language of my heart, *Bring me not into it, unless thou make me a blessing to thy servant, and wilt enable me to honor thy name!* 'Hold thou me up and I shall be safe.' Come over the mountains of my guilt and the hills of my ini-

quity, and grant me thy blessing for thy great name's sake, through Jesus Christ. Accept the dedication that I make of myself to thee; of all that I am and have, to advance thy glory. Give or deny me what thou seest best for me; only deny me not thy favor, and form me for thyself."

Entering the marriage relation with such views, we should be greatly disappointed were she not a "BLESSING" to her husband, and an "HONOR" to religion! Her new connection placed her in the midst of a large parish, which then extended over the whole town, and introduced her to an acquaintance with ministers of the gospel in every part of the state. To fulfil all her duties as a CHRISTIAN, in this station, was her constant aim and earnest prayer.

In the first entrance in her diary, after her marriage, *June* 30, 1805, she says: "I must adore the faithfulness and patience of an unchanging God, in whom I hope I have trusted, and (by his grace) at times sincerely desired to honor and serve. Notwithstanding my innumerable backslidings, and sins of thought, word and action, he has been a faithful, covenant-keeping God. He has united me with his servant, whose office it is to dispense the word of

life, and to be an ambassador for Christ; and though I have reason to be ashamed of my ignorance and misimprovement of advantages, yet I hope it has been a source of some improvement, through the divine blessing. Unto my other mercies God has added this desired one, of giving me a son; making me the living mother of a living and perfect child; sparing his life to this time. O God, help me by thy grace to devote this and all my other possessions to thee; to view them as thine—my husband, my child, myself, and all that I hold in life, I now desire to dedicate to thee. I will trust thy grace through the blessed Jesus to enable me to be faithful to every relative in society, and to enable me to live more devoted to thee than I have ever been."

During the twenty-four years of her married life, she was a pattern of conjugal fidelity, love and obedience. In conformity with scripture examples and precepts, *she reverenced her husband*, and *sought in all things to please him.* 1 Pet. 3: 1—6. Eph. 5: 33. 1 Cor. 7: 44. 'She did him good and not evil, all the days of his life.' She was truly 'a crown unto her husband',—and on her account, not less than on his

own, was 'he known in the gates, as he sat among the elders of the land." Prov. 12 : 4. 31 : 12, 13. The whole of Solomon's description of a virtuous woman (Prov. 31 : 10—31) aptly applies to her. Generally, when in health, she rose as early as 4 o'clock in the morning, and after her season of private devotion, engaged in domestic duties. Her industry, economy and frugality were almost proverbial among the people. But these were as much the fruit of her religious principles, as was her strict attendance on devotional exercises. She thought it a *sin* to be idle or wasteful, and often laments, in her diary, a proneness to self-indulgence and sloth. It was a rule with Dr. McFarland to bring his expenses within his income, and never run in debt; and as his salary was moderate,* rigid economy was requisite, in order to defray necessary expenses, and at the same time practice the hospitality which his public situation rendered suitable. With these views of her husband she coincided,—and she labored by industry on her part to *gain*, and by economy to *save*, all she could, in order that their hospitality

* Three hundred and fifty dollars a year—to which, towards the close of his ministry, one hundred dollars were added.

and charity might be coëxtensive with their possible means.

But her greatest desire was to be a "*help-meet*" to her husband in the duties and trials of his office as a minister of Christ. Her diary affords abundant evidence that he was the subject of her daily prayers—especially, that on the Sabbath, she was very importunate in her petitions that the Holy Spirit might aid him in preaching, and crown the word with success. At one time she says: "Why am I desirous to be made faithful to my husband and the society with which I am connected? Surely if I desire any thing, I do that a preached gospel may be blessed in this place; and that God will work by whom he will work, and by what means: yet I must desire and do heartily, that my dear husband may be the instrument—nevertheless, not my will, but God's."

Again: "Be pleased, O Lord, to give me grace that I may honor thee in life; that I may receive wisdom from thee, to form me a help-meet for my companion—a faithful head of a family, and a blessing to the society with which I am connected."

"Have found much enlargement in praying

for my dear husband—that he may be more and more faithful to the people committed to his charge; that he may *clear his skirt from the blood of souls.*"———"Have been engaged for a blessing on our conjugal relation. O that I might be the companion and help-meet of this servant of Christ—a joy and crown to him. If left to myself, I shall be 'as rottenness in the bones.'"

These are specimens of the prayers which she habitually offered to God in behalf of her husband.

Similar were her desires and prayers, that she might be a blessing to the church and society with which she was connected. These were not confined to a few of the first years of her residence among them, nor called forth on particular occasions, but were habitual, and as lasting as her life.

In a letter to a friend, Miss H——, of Boston, *Aug.* 3, 1805, she says: "Since I have been introduced to a new circle of friends, my time has been so wholly engrossed, that, although my thoughts are much with those I have left, yet I have felt that I could not spend the time in writing them, without neglecting some more imme-

diate duty. I am situated with a society that is in many respects very agreeable. There are many whom I think excellent examples of piety; but it is here as is generally the case—religion is almost confined to the aged.* I feel our dependence on the divine Spirit, to breathe his blessed influence on my own heart and those around me. Could I see these *dry bones* standing up to praise God, and many coming forward to join themselves in covenant with him, I think it would put more gladness in my heart than the acquisition of any worldly good. I have, of all others, to lament my barrenness and unprofitableness in our Lord's vineyard. Oh! my friend, will you pray for me, that while placed as 'a city on a hill,' I may not bring odium on religion."

Aug. 17, 1806, she says: "I resolve, through divine grace assisting me, to maintain a more constant watch over myself, that my conversation at all times may be such as becomes my profession. I desire of God wisdom that I may walk before this people in a right way. I am as a little child, not knowing how to come in or to

* Happily this state of things was greatly changed before her death.

go out. Almighty God, enable me to look by faith to Jesus Christ, as my *righteousness*, and *strength*, and ALL."

The following from her diary at a later period, *Sept.* 6, 1815, is a precious and affecting specimen of her love to the souls around her; and cannot fail to touch cords of tenderness in the hearts of those who still live, that were then the subjects of her prayers. "To day I resolved to devote some time to prayer for this dear people, and think God has enabled me to *wrestle* with him again for them;—for a fresh unction on my very dear husband, as their pastor; who will one day appear with them at the awful tribunal of God, as a witness for or against every soul which has been committed to his care;—for God's own children, that he would pour upon them a spirit of grace and supplication, that they may be crying in secret places for the abominations of the land and for a revival here;—for the dear young people who are seeking their chief good from the vanities of the world, insensible that their feet stand on slippery places, ready to slide into eternal ruin. And I think God has enabled me to plead with him for the dear children and youth in our schools, and for

their instructors. Blessed be his name for the freedom and importunity afforded. I seemed straitened by nothing but the feeble state of my body. Some particular friends were much on my heart, and shared largely in my requests, both in this and my native place." * * *

Mrs. McFarland greatly endeared herself to the society with which she was connected, by her social qualities. Modest and unassuming in her deportment; simple and affable in her manners; in conversation easy, instructive and often sprightly; with the law of kindness on her tongue, and the charity which "thinketh no evil," in her heart, her company was agreeable to every class. She could converse, as an equal, with the educated and affluent; and with the poor and ignorant, without seeming to be their superior. In consequence of her domestic cares and duties she could visit but little among the families of the parish, with her husband; yet when she did, there was so much gentleness and kindness in her manners; such true sympathy with them in all their joys and sorrows; such an evident regard for their spiritual welfare, that her visits were remembered with pleasure, and a renewal of them eagerly desired. Though as a

christian she valued conversation on religious subjects above all others, yet she thought it right to maintain a free social intercourse with those among whom she was placed. She accordingly made and received social visits, and seemed to enjoy much happiness in them; but here, as every where else, she appeared as a christian: carefully avoiding levity and vain and trifling conversation, and *never speaking evil of the absent.* It was a striking trait in her social character, that without seeming, or intending to flatter, she would always leave an impression on the minds of those with whom she conversed, that she thought well of them. This, in the fashionable world, might be called *politeness;* but with her it was CHARITY. As she felt kindly towards others; was guileless and unsuspicious herself —so her conversation awakened no other than pleasing associations in their minds.

In DRESS she was a pattern of christian simplicity; strictly following the apostolic injunction, "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness,) with good works." 1 Tim. 2: 9, 10.

1 Pet. 3 : 3, 4. The ornament which she always wore—and the only one which ever attracted the notice of others, was that "*of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*"

HER RESPECT FOR MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.

It has already been observed that her station in life introduced her to an acquaintance with ministers of the gospel in every part of the state. This was owing to the circumstance, that as Dr. McFarland was for many years the only clergyman in Concord, those ministers who attended the annual Convention in June, and those who had business to transact with the New-Hampshire Missionary Society, found it convenient to call at his house. As treasuress, moreover, of the *New-Hampshire Cent Institution*, of which a particular account will be given hereafter, Mrs. McFarland was personally known to most of the older ministers in the state. How highly she valued their society, and how humble her estimate of herself, will appear from the following extracts from her diary.

July 23, 1809. "I am continually mourning that I have not *courage* to converse with the

ministers of Christ. They have different gifts, and had I power to make suitable inquiries, might gain much improvement from them. Heavenly Father, may it please thee to give me this grace."

June 10, 1815. "I bless God for this week, in which I have been indulged with an opportunity of waiting on some of the servants of Jesus Christ;—of hearing much improving conversation, and sharing largely in an interest in their prayers. O! when I see how much is acquired of intellectual improvement, I feel abased to the dust, and seem more properly to rank among a species of the brute creation, than the human. May I be truly penitent before God, for the misimprovement of early advantages. O! for quickening grace. This afternoon a precious opportunity to converse with christian friends; sweet season—O what will heaven be! All day improving society—a week of delight."

June 8, 1817. "In the past week have had the privilege of waiting on some of the servants and ministers of Christ—a season for improvement:—But I am often ready to question the wisdom of my heavenly Father in placing one so stupid and ignorant in a situation that might

have been occupied by one that would do much for his honor. This has been an occasion for discovering much of my innate depravity—how much envy towards those endowed with superior gifts and attainments—how much ignorance and pride have I found to hinder improvement. O, thou great Source of wisdom and grace, condescend to illuminate my mind with some ray of divine light, sufficient to dissipate the mist that envelopes my understanding. Thou hast promised this gift to those who ask it: manifest thyself in this a prayer-hearing God, to this most unworthy of thy creatures!"

On these extracts it may be remarked, that Mrs. McFarland was doubtless the only one who discovered the deficiencies which she so humbly deplores. Though in conversation with ministers she usually appeared like a *learner*, seeking instruction by questions; yet so sensible were her own remarks on topics of a practical and experimental character, that ministers felt themselves edified; and often remembered, in order to repeat them, for the benefit of others.

CHAPTER IV.

CHARACTER AS A MOTHER.

Mrs. McFarland was the mother of eight children; three sons and five daughters—seven of whom still survive. The first act, after the birth of a child, was to express devout gratitude to God and devote it to him: Then she desired her husband to be called and offer a prayer of thanksgiving. As soon as circumstances would permit, the child was presented in the church for baptism. As God was her God in covenant, she also claimed a covenant relation for her children, esteeming it a sacred duty, as well as great privilege, to make a public consecration of them to him. This was done in some instances before she had recovered sufficient strength to attend public worship herself; and at others as soon as she was able to go out.* But it was

* One of her children was born on Saturday night, when she pleasantly remarked,—'How I should rejoice to have my dear babe carried to the house of God to receive the seal of the covenant on its first Sabbath in this world.'

never deferred, as is too often done by many parents, for several months, or even some years after the birth.

In delineating the character of Mrs. McF. as a mother, I am particularly indebted to the two oldest daughters, for most of the facts; and shall first present their "recollections" of her, in their own language, and then add such other particulars as may be relied on.

Mrs. Buxton says: "She began to talk to her children about God, in their infancy, before she was certain that they could understand any thing on the subject. She would sit down at the table, with her child in her arms, and her large bible before her, and seek to convey to its mind, by simple language, some instruction. Finding it was easy to render bible stories interesting to children, she endeavored to draw out some instruction from every one she told us. She spent some time with us, every Sabbath, after meeting, when we read the bible, recited a portion of the Assembly's Catechism, and gave some account of the sermons. This practice was not discontinued after the Sabbath School was established; —for though she felt that this institution afforded

children and youth a precious opportunity for receiving instruction, she thought it was still the duty and privilege of parents to retain their hold upon the tender mind, and to be no less diligent in their efforts. She remarked, that Sabbath Schools should not supersede parental instruction, though parents might feel themselves very poorly qualified for the performance of their appropriate duties. When we attended a week-day school, she went over our lessons with us every morning. And when we advanced to higher studies than were taught in schools when she was young, she endeavored to qualify herself, by study, for the same duty; and she succeeded so well, that there was no danger of our getting the impression that we knew more than our mother, upon any subject.

"So far as her health would permit, she was uniformly *an early riser*. She found it easier to do this, when her system was braced by the cold of winter, than when enfeebled by the heat of summer. I do not know that she was ever able to rise at a fixed hour, for any length of time; but think that, till within a few years, from four to six was her time during the cold season. In summer, she generally rose before the sun, though

she was often too feeble for much mental or bodily effort. It is already understood, that a large portion of these early hours was devoted to prayer and reading the scriptures. When she began the day in this manner, she said she was sweetly prepared for its cares and its trials. After this preparation, her first business was generally to call her children. I seem even now, to hear her light step, as she came to our chamber, and her animated, cheerful voice calling us,—'Come little girls, don't you want to get up;'—accompanying her invitation with some quotation, perhaps from our infant hymns, or from Thomson, or her favorite Cowper, or from the bible, appropriate to the morning. Once, when she was obliged to come the second time, she said, 'You will make but a cipher in society if you do not rise early.' A few years ago, her attention was directed to the various examples of early rising, found in the bible. She was greatly interested in the fact, that in most of the instances given, the individual rose to the performance of some great or good action. She examined all these examples, from that of Abraham, when he commenced his painful journey to the land of Moriah, to the women who went early to the sepul-

chre, to pay the tribute of affection to their crucified Lord.

"On the Sabbath, she rose at an earlier hour; and I believe that at these seasons she never failed to have the presence of her risen Saviour, very often to comfort her, by his Spirit, and if not, to awaken her to greater earnestness in prayer, and more fervent desires for his sanctifying grace. Owing to this habit of rising, she was enabled to arrange her domestic concerns so as to secure order and quiet during the sacred hours of the day. Even while her children were young, and her cares numerous, we were never late at meeting, or hurried and confused in order to be there in season. I do not remember the time, except when our dear mother was confined to her room by sickness, that we were not quietly seated with our books, some time before the ringing of the bell. Every thing necessary to our cleanliness and comfort was done the evening before.

"The winter after my father's death she was persuaded to omit the practice of rising thus early, for several successive Sabbaths. Her friends represented to her, that as the weather was very cold, and her family required less of

her time and attention than formerly, it was her duty to take more hours for rest. She soon began to feel the want of these preparatory seasons, and said she should not again conform to our wishes. The next Sabbath she rose before four in the morning, and afterwards told us, with much satisfaction, how different the day seemed; how pleasant the faces of the people of God, and how sweet the voice of the preacher. 'I could in truth say,' she remarked,

> 'How charming was his voice,
> 'How sweet the tidings were.'

"The time for retiring was not far from ten in the evening, and much of the time, earlier. She loved the quiet enjoyment she could have when the labors of the day were ended; but it was my father's wish that the family should retire early, and she loved to conform to his wishes, as long as she lived.

"In her government, she was firm, and I think would generally be considered strict. She made more use of the rod, in the management of her older children, than afterwards; though she never thought it could be entirely dispensed with. When about to administer corporeal punishment, she sometimes represented to us the necessity of

it, by saying that if these evil tempers were not checked in season they *might* lead to the commission of dreadful crimes. We were governed, much of the time, by her *eye*, which followed us with a gentle, yet commanding influence. Her portrait is said by her friends generally to be wanting in sweetness of expression. Perhaps it is so, but it will speak, I think, to her children, of the care and solicitude with which she watched over them. In her conversation with us, she endeavored always to interest us, and to lead to some profitable reflections. She was always ready to enter into our amusements, and she made it her object to render them a source of improvement. In this way, she kept up so much familiarity with us, that I think we were never backward to make her our 'confidential friend.'

"She, of course, told us much about Boston and its vicinity; its early history; invasion by the British; desecration of the Old South church, &c., together with an account of her journeys from Boston to York, which we thought were full of wonderful incidents; the history of great and good men,—pointing out what was worthy of imitation in their character. She sometimes related to us the history of ungodly families that

had come within the sphere of her observation, which seemed prosperous for a time, though they neglected the commands and ordinances of God —but in a few years, all, or nearly all, were swept away; illustrating the words of the Psalmist, '*I have seen the wicked*,' &c. And it was with lively satisfaction that she told us of the permanent happiness of families that were brought up in the fear of the Lord. She often spoke of the early piety for which some of her youthful associates were distinguished, and would portray these characters in all their loveliness.

"When alone with her daughters, she was careful to give them such instruction as was more particularly adapted to them. She taught them that an intercourse with refined society was highly desirable, and that in order to secure it many things were requisite which might seem unimportant, were it not for the consideration that an attention to little things was highly necessary in the formation of character. She endeavored to form a correct taste for dress. Any improper arrangement of colors in a lady's dress she considered a defect, and would speak of it to us, thinking it right to do so, though she was very careful about saying any thing calculated to lessen our

respect for any of her acquaintance. Any deviation from the rules of propriety she would notice in the same manner. But I ought to say, she much oftener pointed out what was beautiful and worthy of imitation, than what was to be avoided.

"The feeble state of her health led her to feel that she might be taken from us; and she often told how she wished us to conduct should such an event take place; while we heard such instructions with aching hearts, wishing she would never allude to such a subject.

"She endeavored to lead us all to the performance of benevolent acts, by putting us in a way to do something for the relief of the needy and suffering. When she visited the houses of the poor, she would take some of us with her. If she was sent by the Charitable Society to visit a poor family at a distance, she would go on Saturday afternoon, taking as many of us as she could; and afterwards would hush many a childish complaint, by telling us to compare our situation with that of the boys and girls we had seen in these excursions. She encouraged us to acts of self-denial for the sake of doing good,—such as giving up the use of sugar

or some other comfort, and appropriating the money allowed for it to some benevolent object. She joined us in these acts of self-denial, and if any one did not feel equal to such a sacrifice, there was no compulsion. She once encouraged two of us to put our names to a subscription paper, obligating ourselves to pay the sum subscribed in the course of a few weeks. We happened to have no pocket money at the time, and she was careful to give us none, while we were left to wonder how we were to discharge the obligation. If we said any thing to her, she would say, 'You must pray for the money, and perhaps God will answer your prayer.' At last, she inquired if we were willing to do something by which we might earn the sum required. We said, 'Oh, yes;' and she told us of something we might do in the family, for which she would pay us, and in this way we were enabled to meet the subscription.

"But in all her intercourse with us, she sought most earnestly to lead us to a right understanding of the truths of the gospel, and to a conviction that nothing but an interest in the pardoning blood of Christ could give us peace. She presented these subjects in every point of light;

she is better: Blessed be his faithfulness, who has mingled so much mercy with this trial. May this spared life be devoted to thee, O my compassionate Father! I would renewedly dedicate this child: She is thine by every obligation but that of her own voluntary surrender;—and as the head and guardian of my child, I would now act for her. I give her to thee, to dispose of as thine infinite wisdom and mercy sees fit. I ask not for her *riches* or *honors*, the pleasures of this world, or long life; but I ask for thy grace to renovate her soul. This is my request."

Nov. 7. "I have found some comfort in instructing my children and witnessing their improvement. How easy for omnipotent grace to change the hearts of these dear babes, and to perfect his praise from their lips. O my God, I present them to thee; make them thine by a gracious act of sanctification."

June 21, 1814. "The chastening rod of my heavenly Father has been exercised over me, and I have learned someting of his sovereignty and power. My dear S. (this pleasant child) has been laid on a bed of sickness, which we all expected would be the bed of death. My God seemed to design that my trial should be suffi-

cient to subdue all my obduracy: For several days she was given over by our physician, when *His* power was displayed in rescuing her from the jaws of death, and restoring to me this dear object of my affection. O, I pray that her spared life may be devoted to him. O, that this dispensation might be sanctified to each of my children."

Sept. 6, 1815. "The Lord knows with what anguish and bitterness of soul I have endeavored this day to confess my own sins and those of my children, who seem to inherit all theirs from their mother. I consider myself as the root from whence they have derived those tempers and passions which I often witness in them. How can I remain one moment at ease, while viewing them or any member of my family alienated from God? I bring them all this day, and place them at the mercy seat of God, in the arms of my faith."

March 19, 1816. "I feel dissatisfied with every part of my character; with the manner in which I sustain every relation—but with none more than maternal duties. O, how little do I perform for my children, of what I ought to do. O, thou great Jehovah, God of all grace, make

me faithful; make me holy, and I shall be happy."

During the years 1816 and 1817, Mrs. McFarland repeatedly alludes in her diary to her concern for temporal comforts, and clothing for her children. It will be remembered that these were years of great scarcity throughout New England. Provisions were cut off by the frost, and prices were very high. Yet the *salary* of the minister remained the same. The consequence was that Dr. McFarland's rule to make 'the ends of the year meet,' straitened them in temporal support. His practice was to commit to his wife a given sum, each year, with which she was to purchase clothing for herself and children. This sum, in ordinary years, was sufficient; but in times of scarcity and high prices, it fell short.

April 13, 1816. "I have been tempted to question God's faithfulness in providing for my large family, and am still much exercised with anxious cares respecting it. *Infinite Parent!* help me to confide in that unmerited goodness which has always provided for me and mine. May thine opening hand, which feeds the ravens and supplies thy whole creation, be extended for my dear family. Let not *my* ingratitude provoke

thee to forsake *them.* Oh, in this time of scarcity, may I adopt the language of Habakkuk 3: 17, 18: '*Although the fig-tree shall not blossom,*' &c. When most emptied of creature enjoyments, may I enjoy my God the most!"

Feb. 16, 1817. "By viewing the foregoing paper, I am led to recollect a season of much anxiety which I experienced for the clothing and provision of our dear family. I must acknowledge the goodness and faithfulness of God in appearing for us. Although this is a winter of unusual scarcity of provisions, yet I do not recollect one in which we have been more comfortable for food and clothing. May the goodness of God, which I thus experience, bind my ungrateful heart so strongly that I shall never again be guilty of distrusting him."

June 8. "To-day, shut out from God's house, I think I have not been wholly denied the sensible presence of my God and Saviour. I trust I have had some assistance in instructing and praying with two of my children; and freedom in presenting all of them before the throne of grace, in and through the merits of my adorable Saviour, mine and their Mediator and Intercessor."

Nov. 20, 1820. "Pleading for my children this evening, it seems to me that my unworthiness is so great that God will not send them his renewing grace, until my influence is removed. Here I think again of what was said of my Saviour in a certain case, '*He could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief.*' O, could my divine Saviour, in his sovereign mercy, come and visit my family, though *my* heart were too cold to praise him, yet angels, who rejoice at the conversion of one sinner, here might have much occasion to rejoice!"

In *April*, 1821, her seventh child, *Miriam Phillips*, died, aged 15 months. It had all the usual symptoms of consumption which appear in adults. Being the first bereavement in her family, it was a great trial of her christian character. Her feelings on the occasion are thus recorded:

April 15, 1821. "I would desire to record God's dealings with me for some time past. He has brought me into the furnace of affliction. My dear babe is taken from my bosom and committed to the silent grave. She was exercised with lingering disease. How very trying to human nature and parental affection has it been,

to see this dear creature wasting with consumption. But God has 'remembered mercy.' I trust I have had divine supports in my trouble—I think I was resigned prevailingly to his will. I thought I could say, 'it is the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good;' 'though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' But O! I have not found such abundant consolation as at some seasons of trial. May the God of all grace and consolation lift upon me the light of his reconciled countenance. May this trial humble me, and make me just what my heavenly Father wishes me to be. Cleanse me from secret faults. O, how must one of the sinful children of men appear in the view of a holy, sin-hating God. How precious is that Saviour by whose blood and righteousness we may be accepted. O that all the sinful race of Adam could see the preciousness of this Saviour.

"O God, I pray thee to sanctify this correction to me and all of this family. May I be more faithful to my children; feel more the worth of their souls. May they remember that they must die—may we all consider this a loud call to be also ready; may I be quickened. I have for some days given myself up to grief; the

world appeared almost a blank; I could feel but little interest in any thing relating to this life. Blessed be God for some more comfortable feelings. Though it is not with me as in months past, I desire to trust in God, and wait upon him for the light of his countenance."

The last record in her diary, which has particular reference to her children, is the following beautiful and affecting prayer, under date, *May* 20, 1822, after the birth of her youngest daughter.

"Enable me, O thou Spirit of all grace and mercy, to record the goodness of God, which has been so abundantly manifested towards me in the last week, in making me again the mother of a living and proper child. This season has been so distinguished with mercies,—they have been so complicated and numerous, that I know not how to begin a recital of them. In the hour of danger, when the most appalling dread was upon me, my heavenly Father sweetly drew near me; removed my fears; comforted me with his presence; mitigated my pains in a surprising degree, and speedily put a song of praise in my mouth. How shall I make a suitable return? O thou, whose mercies have been so great, give this:—grace sufficient to enable me to live to

thy praise. O, how painful the thought of ever being ungrateful again! May this gift, O my God, which thou hast now bestowed, be a new bond of union between thee and my soul. Accept my thanks for this little immortal committed to my arms. Sanctify her by thy spirit—purify her in that fountain which cleanseth from all sin; direct and enable me to bring her up better than I have done any one before. Accept my thanks for a dear, sympathizing and faithful partner of my bosom. O that I might never deviate one step from the path of conjugal duty. Accept my thanks for all my other children—obedient and attentive; may I be more faithful to them. Give me a new supply of love and patience. These are thy gifts. Accept my thanks for friends, sympathizing, tender and faithful, whom thou hast raised up for a poor, ungrateful stranger; and for a tender physician. These are all thy gifts, and not a thousandth part of what thou hast recently bestowed upon me.

'Thyself the crown!
Without thee I am *poor*, give what thou wilt;
And with thee *rich*, take what thou wilt away.' "

The influence of *such* a mother's example, instructions and prayers could not be otherwise

than salutary on her children. Before her death, she had the happiness of seeing four of them the professed followers of Christ. But as seven are yet living, and their eyes will read these pages, it may be unsuitable to pen further particulars. I would only repeat in their behalf the prayer which she fervently offered for them, in her last sickness, That they may all, through the mercy of her covenant God, meet at the right hand of the Saviour; and she be permitted to present them to him, saying, *Here, Lord, am I, and the children which thou hast given me!*

AMEN.

CHAPTER V.

TRIBUTE OF AFFECTION TO HER PARENTS AND ONLY BROTHER.

It was a frequent prayer of Mrs. McFarland, that she *might perform every duty to every relative in society*. How faithfully and conscientiously she performed her duties as a WIFE and MOTHER, we have already seen. But she was also herself a daughter and a sister. Though her father died when she was a child, and she was most of the time separated from her brother; yet she honored the memory of the one, and dearly loved the other. But her widowed mother was to her an object of very tender affection.

This excellent parent, for several years before her death, was the subject of deep mental depression; she lost her religious comfort and hope—and was filled at times with the most gloomy fears, both in regard to the present and future life. In consequence of her melancholy state of mind, Mrs. Kneeland closed her business in Boston, and came to Concord, in June,

1809, where she remained in the family of Dr. McFarland till her death, in August following. The love, kindness and assiduous attention which she received from her daughter, during this gloomy period, and the mingled grief and gratitude with which she was long after remembered, cannot fail to interest every reader.

It may here be observed that the providences of God towards his children often appear dark and mysterious. But in respect of temporal calamities, *All things come alike to all. There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* The loss of reason, being often the result of causes over which we have no control, is, in itself, no more evidence against christian character, than is a fever or a broken bone: but as it is a greater calamity than any which merely affects the body, it ought to excite in us a greater commiseration towards those who are providentially deprived of it. The idea, which to some extent prevails, that God will never leave a true christian to die in a state of mental gloom, is neither authorized by general principles of scripture nor by particular facts. Blessed be his name, such cases do not often occur; but

when they do, we must bow with submission to his sovereign will!

The following references to her parents and brother exhibit pleasing traits in her character.

HER FATHER.

April 19, 1807. "This day is fifteen years since the death of my dear father. Do I remember his kindness and tenderness with gratitude and affection; and feel sincerely sorry for every instance of childish disobedience? How much greater cause have I for repentance towards God, who is the author of my being—who has ever supported me; in whom I 'live and move.' How manifold are thy mercies towards me, O God! How often hast thou raised me from the gates of death, sparing that life which was so justly forfeited. Grant that I may be devoted to thine honor. May I walk humbly with thee in every relation: give me wisdom and grace to be a faithful wife, parent, and head of a family."

HER MOTHER.

In a letter to her mother, *Aug.* 31, 1806, she says: "I think, my dear mother, that if there

is any blessing that I properly estimate, it is that of having a pious parent. We daily meet with those who have no esteem for religion; who 'see no form or comeliness' in the Saviour, and who are seeking their supreme happiness in a worldly portion. Such a character had I been, were it not for your exertions. How unwearied were you in endeavoring to draw me to a love of religion! Your precepts, example and prayers, all seemed to conspire in drawing me to a pious course. Accept, my dear mother, my affectionate thanks for all your endeavors."

In her diary, *April* 9, 1809: "I have heard of the ill health of my dear mother. She is laboring under bodily indisposition, accompanied with a distressing malady of the mind, which renders her unfit to act for herself. It appears my duty to act for her, and if possible take her off from care. O! my heavenly Father, I have never trusted thee in vain. Be thou the God of this thy widowed handmaid, and Father of the fatherless. Enable me to cast this my burden upon thee. Do thou direct me to the means which I ought to use, and give all needed wisdom, resolution and strength to accomplish them. Thou art able to do for me abundantly beyond

what I can ask or even think. Help me to wait upon thee."

June 2. "My dear mother is with me. O how unfit I am for this new charge. Surely there is more than ever need for me to apply continually to a throne of mercy for help."

June 9. "My dear mother's illness is peculiarly trying—her mind clouded—her body exercised with almost constant extreme pain. But O, it is good for me to be in the furnace of affliction, when my Saviour sits by as the refiner. Blessed Saviour, condescend to be with me, and I will bid welcome to every cross."

June 17. "My dear mother very ill. O for divine support:

> 'Could I but hear my Saviour say,
> Strength shall be equal to thy day;
> Then I'll rejoice in deep distress,
> Leaning on all-sufficient grace.'"

Sept. 24. "God has removed my dear mother from me by death. O, that I might suitably feel this affliction. Those lips, which have so often warned me of danger; so often solicited and entreated me to become religious;

so often been opened to soothe my disquiet, and encourage me in virtue, are sealed by the unrelenting hand of death. O my God! thou being of infinite compassion and grace: I entreat that this dispensation may be abundantly sanctified to me. Pardon my stupidity. Have I hitherto continued insensible to such a chastisement—may I now be awakened to a sense of my loss—to a suitable temper toward thee. Give me a filial, childlike and submissive disposition. How shall I be consoled under the loss of a *pious mother?* How acquiesce in the deprivation of her watchful solicitude over my wavering footsteps!—the loss of those petitions which she daily put up for this, her needy child! Teach me,—for I know not in what way I may seek a compensation. I know that this event could not take place without thy direction—that thy government is unerring. I desire to praise thee that she was, I trust, secured by thy grace;—that she was spared to me so long, till I had formed the most endearing connection in life—and for many seasons of happiness which we have enjoyed together. *Thy will be done.* But O! when and how shall I enough repent and mourn for the instances of childish disobedience toward

her—for the pains and anxious solicitude I have occasioned her. My Father, *Give me repentance.*"

Feb. 11, 1810. "In the last week I have been humbled and refreshed with reading some parts of my dear mother's diary. It affords the sweetest assurance that she is now in glory, beyond this vale of tears; drinking at the fountain of eternal love and happiness. How far below her example do I live! How self-denying, how active when in health, was she in every christian duty. O God, I thank thee for these precious papers which thy providence has brought me.* Bless them to me, and enable me by thy grace to imitate her, so far as she followed Christ."

Mrs. McFarland mourned deeply—perhaps too deeply—for her deceased mother. She remarked, that 'she seemed to have no power to repress her tears, especially if she recollected any particular manifestation of her mother's tenderness, or any childish act of disobedience on her own part.' Eleven years afterwards, alluding to this, she said in a letter to a friend who had lost her

*The diary kept by Mrs. Kneeland is very copious and interesting, and is still preserved. Mrs. McFarland undertook to prepare a brief Memoir of her mother, the last year of her life; but was unable to complete it, on account of sickness.

mother, "I sincerely sympathize with you in the deep affliction of parting with an affectionate and pious mother. None know the bitterness of such a cup but those who have drank it. I thought for two years after the death of mine, that my sorrow increased by time. I never found my affliction blunted in the least till at the expiration of that time. I then earnestly besought my heavenly Father to dry my tears, and give me consolation. Ever merciful to one of the most unworthy supplicants, he heard and answered the request. My tears were dried; I could calmly look into the grave; I could view, by faith, the happy Canaan to which she was admitted, and cheerfully acquiesce in the separation."

HER BROTHER.

She often alluded in her diary to her "dear and only brother," and offered suitable prayers in his behalf. The following facts respecting him are derived from Mrs. Buxton: "My mother's thoughts often turned to her brother, the companion of her childhood. He had taken a voyage to Jamaica, as mate of a vessel; but the time had elapsed during which he expected to be absent. His friends expected his arrival;

but weeks passed away, and no tidings came respecting him. My father and mother went to Boston, in the month of October, 1809, and found their friends there nearly as anxious as themselves; for nothing had been heard of the vessel, or any of the crew. They called on the owner of the vessel, who told them that he considered its loss so certain, that he would gladly take $100 for it. The day before they left Boston, however, they saw an account of its arrival in New York. They returned to Concord, expecting their dear brother to visit them, in a very short time; but instead of this, they received a letter from the captain, informing them of his sickness and death, which was the cause of their detention. He had died of consumption, just ten days after his mother, and found a stranger's grave, in Kingston, Jamaica."

She thus alludes to his death: *Nov.* 12, 1809. "I am again called to drink of the cup of affliction. God in his providence has seen fit to remove my only brother by death. May I be suitably affected under these bereavements. Almighty God, be pleased to enable me to honor thee at this time—prepare me for my own dissolution."

CHAPTER VI.

HER DEVOTIONAL CHARACTER AND EXERCISES.

THAT Mrs. McFarland was a truly devout woman, every one acquainted with her believed; but few, even of her nearest friends, knew the *manner* in which she maintained so close a walk with God. This chapter in her Memoir will disclose the secret. Here we learn that RELIGION WAS THE BUSINESS OF HER LIFE. She '*sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.*' Matt. 6: 33. Here we are made acquainted with her exercises on the Sabbath; in the house of God; at the communion table, and on days of fasting and prayer; we are introduced into her closet; witness her prayers and tears; can listen to her ejaculatory petitions, as well as to her songs of praise and thanksgiving. We are allowed to enter even the sanctuary of her heart, and be spectators of the sacrifices daily offered there! *Every exercise of the christian seems to be exemplified in her experience.* To those who may read these extracts, and who are ignorant

of those humbling and painful views of sin which she often expresses, I would say,—That such views are not at all inconsistent with the highest evidences of piety, and the sweetest comforts in religion;—rather they result from clear apprehensions of the holiness of God and the spirituality of his law. President Edwards, in his "Religious Affections," says: "The eminent saint, having a view of the high degree in which he ought to love God, perceives more clearly, not only the smallness of his grace, but the greatness of his remaining corruption. In order to ascertain how much depravity or sin remains within us, we must regard that height to which the rule of duty extends. The whole of the distance between that elevation and our affections, is sin; for in exact proportion as we fall short of our duty, we sin and evidence the depravity of our hearts. Sin is an abominable defect, and appears so to the saints, especially to those who are eminent saints." Hence, those whose sins appear few and small to themselves; who have no heart-broken confessions to make, and no tears of contrition before God, may justly suspect the genuineness of their piety.

It should, moreover, be observed, that true

sorrow for sin leads the believer to place a high value upon the atonement and righteousness of Christ. This will explain the fact frequently brought to view in her diary, that Mrs. McFarland's most humble confessions of sin, and lamentations over her own depravity, are sometimes followed with expressions of great joy and peace in view of the Saviour.

To the christian who shall peruse these passages, I would say—*Thou walkest on holy ground;* be serious; be devout; let thy prayers ascend to God, that thou mayest be partaker, not only of like precious faith and love, of like penitence and humility;—but also of like DILIGENCE and PERSEVERANCE in christian duty.

FAMILY CARES.

July 20, 1806. "Almost all my time is engrossed with the business of this life. Such is the situation of my family at this time, that I find but a few moments in a day for private devotion. I have set apart a little time this afternoon to prepare for the sabbath and for self-examination. Respecting the mercies I have received, I have the greatest cause for gratitude of any creature; situated as I am, with so many means of improvement in knowledge and virtue; my

husband happy with his people; my family in health and peace. With regard to myself, what great reason have I to bless God that he has laid his restraints upon me. When I see a glimpse of my own heart, by some act of unkindness to others, or some sinful secret thoughts, I am astonished that I am not cut off. O God, grant me grace to be humble. Behold, I am vile! May I not rejoice that thou Lord seest me; and though infinitely impure, that thou art my physician, and canst heal my backslidings, is cause of joy."

A WANDERING SISTER.

The duty of admonition and reproof is one of the most difficult which a christian is ever required to perform. Few can do it without giving offence. Mrs. McFarland was known to succeed in it better than most persons; but probably the secret of her success is not understood. The following will disclose it:

Sabbath evening, July 21. "I spent some time alone in reading the word and in prayer. I thought the path plain respecting conversing with a wandering sister. Resolved, in the course of the week to converse with her. Desire to wait upon God for an opportunity; and that he would dispose the hearts of herself and friends

(should they know it) in such a manner as that it may not make me appear her enemy, and may not injure the comfort of my husband. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.*"

On the next sabbath evening, she writes: "I endeavored yesterday to converse faithfully with a wandering sister. I desire to thank God that she did not appear to be angry with me, but took it kindly. O almighty God, who seest and knowest all my actions and their motives,—I beseech thee do not let me be a deceived hypocrite. Search me and try me; let nothing but a sincere desire to promote thy glory be my design in what I do. When I see something of my heart, I am ready to give up my hope:—but Jesus is allsufficient. Give me faith: draw out my heart in love to thee. O God, I give up myself and all that I have, to be disposed of as thou seest best."

GOOD RESOLVES.

Sept. 13. "I resolve, through divine grace assisting me, to aim higher in my life; to do more for God; to be watchful over my heart and conversation; not to give way to angry passions; to endeavor to do justice to the bodies and souls

of those who are committed to my care; and to exercise myself in a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men: putting in practice the exhortation I have heard this day on doing to others as I would they should do to me. Let me call myself to an account in this particular: In the past week I went to pass an afternoon with a professor of religion. Did we not unnecessarily speak ill of others? I think I did not say all in favor of the absent that I might."

HOPE OF HEAVEN.

Friday, Sept. 19. "Yesterday was laboring under weakness of body; had some pleasing views of heaven;—no separation from friends there. Our dearest friends are there. There I hope, through the merits and mercy of Jesus, my Saviour, to dwell with Christ the Lamb; my dear mother; and many earthly christian friends, whom I trust are already worshipping there. O let me lay aside every weight, and run so as to win the prize."

SOCIAL PRAYER.

Mrs. McFarland, having been trained up in the prayer meeting held in her mother's house in Boston, was very desirous to establish a similar meeting in Concord. She loved *social* prayer,

next to private, and as often as she could, she sought to enjoy the privilege. When she came to Concord, such a thing as a *female* prayer meeting was unknown. She proposed to hold one, at various times, but for many years could find no more than *two* persons to unite with her. The meeting here mentioned, was, it is believed, the first of the kind ever held in town.

Monday afternoon, Oct. 13. The two last sabbath evenings have been devoted to prayer with a christian friend. Last evening, by request, another was admitted. I think we experienced the fulfilment of that blessed promise, that 'where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, there he is in the midst of them.' We resolve, by divine permission, to continue these meetings. Our object is to desire the influences of the Holy Spirit on our own souls and those of our relations; the town at large, and our dear minister. God be pleased to grant that we may experience the happiness of those who enjoy thy presence; that thou art the God of truth.

AMEN."

PARTICULAR PRAYER.

Mrs. McFarland was much in the habit of praying for particular persons and objects. This

we shall see illustrated in the subsequent parts of her diary. She regarded, as *answers* to prayer, what afterwards took place in accordance with her petitions; and hence found occasion for gratitude and confidence in God when the things prayed for were granted; and for submission, when they were withheld. "*Thy will be done*," was always one part of her prayer.

Dec. 27. "In the past week have experienced much benefit and peace from devoting all the time I could get in one day from necessary business, to prayer. Designed to pray particularly for a neighbor; found much pleasure and considerable freedom in praying for this people, and friends at Boston. In one particular, thought I had almost an *immediate* answer. That evening and the fore part of the next day enjoyed a peace worth thousands; but where shall I find the cause that deprived me of it? Believe I trusted in my own strength to retain it; left watching, and soon fell into doubts and unbelief. Almighty God, help me to rely wholly on thee for grace to do any thing acceptable to thy infinite purity. Meet with me on the approaching sabbath; give me desires after thee; open my mouth wide, and do thou fill it."

PRAYER FOR A REVIVAL.

Jan. 4, 1807. "How melancholy the truth, that among this great people but one, in the year past, has publicly professed Christ. O, my God, my eyes are up unto thee; my expectation is from thee. Do grant us an effusion of thy Holy Spirit; do grant a spirit of prayer to thy own children; do purify this church; do awaken sleeping professors, and the careless and secure. Bow the stout-hearted; let us see thy foot-steps here. O, may this year be a year of jubilee to many who are now the captives of Satan. Lord, thy power is infinite. Thou art able to do abundantly beyond what we can ask or think."

ADORATION AND PETITION.

Jan. 13, 1808. "O the adorable riches of *free grace.* This plan of salvation is worthy of God! Deign, almighty God, to look in compassion on my ignorance, and teach me with the teachings of thy spirit. I acknowledge that my ignorance is criminal. I am surrounded by the means of instruction, but have shut my eyes to the knowledge of thy character. The heavens and the earth are full of thy glory; sanctify the means of wisdom; open my eyes to behold thee in the works of *Creation*, of *Providence*, and of

Redemption; may I see wondrous things out of thy law. O, my God, I covenanted to be thine in my early days, and have never wished to retract the engagement, although my continual backslidings testify so much against me."

REWARD OF PREPARATION FOR THE SABBATH.

Wednesday evening, Feb. 17. "This week I feel a little more alive to spiritual things than I sometimes do; cold and dead enough at best.

'The little ants, for one poor grain,
Labor, and tug, and strive;
Yet *I*, who have a *heaven* to obtain,
How negligent I live.'

I see how much I loose by my sloth. Almighty God, without thy grace I can do nothing. Be pleased to warm my heart with the blessed influences of thy Spirit. Any degree of engagedness more than usual, under God, I impute to a more exact observance of the Sabbath. I endeavored to remember it before it came, and to prepare for it in such a way as that worldly cares might occupy but a very small portion. On Monday retained something of its peace—yesterday had some humbling sense of my own vileness and impotence. Blessed be God for the unspeakable gift of Jesus Christ. Blessed be his free grace offered to sinners. May my

soul forever bless his name for the influence of that Spirit, who I humbly trust has enlightened me to see something of the wretchedness of my nature, and the preciousness of Christ. My sins are a constant cause of my shame. O God, I desire to resign my soul to thee, entreating that thou wouldst have mercy on this thy wandering creature. Restore me to thy fold; enable me to live near to thee; to be more watchful, *meek*, and wise. Help me to walk before my family in a perfect way; to walk humbly with thee. Draw me, and I shall run unto thee."

HUMBLING SENSE OF SIN.

Oct. 9. "O what views have I had of the vileness of my heart! Is it possible that one who has ever experienced the special influences of the Holy Spirit, and been born again, should fall so low—so frequently in sin as I do? Almighty God, be pleased to search me and try me; discover me unto myself, and enable me to fly to the ark of safety. O help me to render to thee according to what I receive. '*Hold thou me up and I shall be safe.*'

'Look gently down, almighty grace,
Prison me round in thine embrace;
Pity the heart that would be thine,
And let thy power my love confine.'"

CONFERENCE MEETING—LOVE TO CHRISTIANS—PRAYER.

Dec. 2, 1809. "I desire to praise God for his mercy in giving me a pleasant interview with christian friends, and for what he has done for them and by them. A number are meeting together statedly in christian conference. May the Lord, who has taught me my dependence on himself for such blessed privileges, bless these meetings, that the piety of these females may be leaven, which shall spread and increase much —to the salvation of many souls. Have I not obtained this evidence that I belong to Christ, viz: that I do in sincerity love those persons who I think belong to him, and appear the most engaged in his service?

"A female parishioner lies at the point of death —my Father, sanctify this event to all concerned. O, is she a subject of prayer, appear for her; manifest thy power—the power of thy grace; almighty Redeemer, save her. I cast her upon thee; at thy feet none ever perished. May it please thee to give me some answer to this prayer, to strengthen my faith in thee. AMEN."

WHY PRAYER IS NOT ANSWERED.

March 7, 1810. "'*Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss.*' Methinks this is my own

case. I do not receive the answers to my petitions which I expect. Let me seek the cause of this disappointment. Does there remain any root of bitterness in my heart toward a fellow creature? '*If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*' Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts. Lead me in the right way. O enable me to be as tender of the reputation of others, as of their life. I think one cause why I do not see the answer to my prayers, is my *carelessness.* I do not look out for the answers—and another cause is, my insincerity. The hour allotted for my private devotions sometimes arrives when I feel no heart for prayer, and attend to the form without the spirit; how dull the duty when this is the case. Shall I approach the eternal Majesty of heaven with my lips, when he sees my heart wandering after the trifles of time? Let me remember that God abhors this hypocritical service. Blessed Jesus,

> 'Be thou my pattern, make me bear
> More of thy gracious image here.'"

CONCERN FOR A DOMESTIC.

Mrs. M'Farland's concern for the spiritual welfare of her family, extended to every member.

Every change of domestics is noted in her diary, and a suitable prayer offered for each. When she had a young girl as help in her family, she gave her the same instructions that she did her own children; and young boarders, which she sometimes had, received the same attention.

April 8. "In the past week I have experienced a change in my domestics. May I feel my dependence on God to make this person a blessing to my family. O, my Father, enable me to bring the immortal soul of this person to thee in prayer. Do thou visit it with thy special grace. Enable me by thy grace to recommend religion to my family and friends. Keep me this week. Enable me to lean on Jesus."

SICKNESS—HER VIEWS.

Sept. 1. "I have again been brought very low by sickness. I thought for a few hours at one time that it would be my last sickness. My evidences of an interest in the divine favor were clouded. I seemed on the verge of eternity!—O how vastly important did it appear to have an interest in Christ. Ten thousand worlds were but a straw when compared to this! Why do I live so much in doubt of my state and condition

—am I united to Christ? or am I yet an alien from him? Surely I take delight when I hear of the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom. I delight to hear the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel preached, such as man's total depravity, the divinity of Christ, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, &c. &c.

"This day I had an opportunity to sit down at the table of the Lord. Shall I, the meanest of his servants, unworthy to approach unto him, be united to him in an everlasting covenant? Shall I dare to hope for an admission into his kingdom, to be a joint heir with Christ? O God, help me to live answerably to such a profession. Do keep me near to thee. May I plead with thee for my dear friends. O remember the stranger who is dear to me. Bring her nigh to thyself; help her to show forth thy praise."

REVIVAL.

July 14, 1811. "I desire to thank God for his distinguishing goodness in visiting this people with the present refreshing shower of divine grace. Twenty-eight have been recently added to the church, who give satisfactory evidence of a change of heart. Many more have obtained a hope in Christ; many are inquiring the way.

May my dear husband be strengthened for his abundant labors. O may this revival extend to this part of the town. AMEN."

Oct. 4. "To-day I have had an opportunity of attending public worship and the ordinance of the Supper—and have witnessed the solemn scene of a child, under twelve years, taking God's gracious covenant upon her, and receiving the ordinance of baptism. May this event, which was so affecting to the congregation, be sanctified. May converts here be multiplied like drops of morning dew. I have had some longing desires for this people. O may my desires be enlarged."

PANTS AFTER HOLINESS.

Jan. 10, 1813. "O that I could use this world as not abusing it—that I could do common actions with holy aims. I do most certainly experience the truth of this assertion, 'I sin in all that I do, and come short of glorifying God.' When shall I be holy? When shall I love God supremely, and do all that I do, for him? Must I be separated from this body—shall I never be holy till disencumbered of this clog? Well then, let me be preparing for the event; let me lessen my hold on earth. Some strong

ties are already broken; it seems there are but few remaining that fasten me here. But O, am I ready to enter that abode of rest which is prepared alone for the just and faithful; where nothing that defileth or maketh a lie shall enter?—O blessed and ever animating words, 'He that *believeth* shall be saved.' 'He hath fulfilled the law, and died the *just* for the *unjust*.'

'A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my *strength* and *righteousness*;
My *Jesus* and my ALL.'"

FEMALE PRAYER MEETING.

How much her heart was set on establishing a female prayer meeting, will appear from the following extracts.

June 21. "In the last week I enjoyed a privilege I have not been indulged with for a long time. A dear young friend called upon me in an afternoon a part of which I had devoted to prayer. I mentioned my design to her, who agreed to join with me. While we were engaged in the important business of uniting our petitions to the throne of grace, another christian friend came providentially among us, and joined in our requests. I thought I found some sweetness in this duty, and comfort from it for many

days. How easy is it with God to effect what I have long desired—to have a society of females formed for religious purposes. My proud heart revolts at the idea of appearing forward to introduce customs which are new among my professing christian friends in this place. O God! I pray thee, in thine own time and way, to appear for us in this part of the town, and to work a work of grace among us."

Aug. 1. "I have been favored with many mercies the past week. Have been indulged with the privilege of uniting with a religious, female praying society in Pembroke. I desire to thank and praise God for raising up such a society. O, may he appear in like manner also for this dear people. O my Father, thou knowest my desires. Have I not been longing for such a favor? O, thou art able to do abundantly beyond what I can ask or think; help me to wait upon thee still. May my longing expectation be from thee."

DEATH OF MRS. BURNHAM.*

Oct. 18. "Have heard to-day of the death of dear Mrs. Burnham. A surprising event, in-

* The second wife of Rev. Abraham Burnham of Pembroke.

deed! Well, I trust she has long been habitually ready for death. Will God be pleased to sanctify this event to all concerned. O God of mercies, pity and comfort thine afflicted servant; take his dear children under thy peculiar care. May this event serve to quicken me, thine unworthy worm, that I may be ready for the approaching summons."

Oct. 24. "In the last week I have been called to attend the funeral of dear Mrs. Burnham. O may her falling mantle rest on me. May I catch the spirit of meekness, patience, and zeal which she exhibited, and be a follower of her wherein she followed Christ."

PRAISE FOR GOD'S GOODNESS TO ANGELS AND SAINTS.

Perhaps the following is as good an illustration of *disinterested benevolence* as can easily be found in the records of christian experience. Though the phrase may be unhappily chosen, yet it expresses an important doctrinal truth, which accords with the experience of true christians.

Nov. 28. "This evening I have had some comfort in prayer. Although I could not say with assurance, *My sins are forgiven me*, yet I think I was enabled to bless and praise God for what communications of happiness are bestowed on

angels, and saints made perfect in heaven; and for those blissful moments which saints enjoy on earth from time to time. Some of them have declared that they could bear no more, and have even prayed that God would withhold such raptures from them as seemed to threaten the dissolution of the body. Why should my selfishness withhold from him the praise due to his grace, because I am not the recipient of this particular mercy. I receive infinitely more than I deserve."

REFLECTIONS AND EXCELLENT RESOLVES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR.

Jan. 2, 1814. "When I review the past year, I am astonished at the forbearance and mercy of God toward me. I am filled with shame and remorse, to consider my extreme barrenness, and unprofitable life. How long I have borne the profession of religion; how little I have done for God! I desire to lie low at the feet of God this evening, and confess some of the many sins which I have committed the last year. My extreme ignorance of the character of God, and of my own character; my distance from God; my ensnaring fear of my fellow worms; my unfaithfulness and want of sympathy for precious souls;

my propensity to anger and impatience; want of love to God and Christ. *God be merciful to me a sinner!* Look, O my Saviour, with a pitying eye upon me. Thou knowest my frame; remember that I am but dust; help me to open my mouth wide for spiritual mercies with the importunity of faith. Thou knowest that this short probation is all that I have, to prepare for a vast eternity. If I am deceiving myself, search me and undeceive me! O, forgive my sins, thou blessed Jesus; hide me in thy wounds; clothe me in thy righteousness; give me an assurance of thy love; help me to be more acquainted with thee; help me to commune with thee. May I live upon thee by faith; may I walk closely and humbly before God; may I be more watchful and prayerful—more meek and forbearing.

"I resolve by divine grace assisting me (knowing that I can do nothing good of myself) to deny myself every sinful indulgence; every thing that may impede my progress toward heaven; resolve to cultivate and strengthen my hope of attaining the reward of those who endure unto the end; resolve to walk more closely with God—and to cultivate ejaculatory prayer; resolve to endeavor after a more faithful spirit; to exhort

my christian friends as I may have opportunity; to put away flattering words, and to speak truth with my neighbor; to cultivate a tender sympathy for the souls of sinners, and to be faithful in admonishing them. Resolve to be watchful against angry passions,—and speaking unadvisedly with my lips; to cultivate a kind and friendly disposition to all—doing good to all as I have opportunity, especially they of the household of faith; resolve to read the word of God more diligently, prayerfully, and reverently. These resolves I pray God to enable me by his grace to keep."

PRECIOUS BIBLE.

Jan. 9. "I desire to thank and praise God for the resolves which he enabled me to make the last Sabbath evening. I think they have been a great restraint upon me. I have had a more comfortable week than many preceding. I think I have seen more of the excellence, loveliness and glory of God, the Father, and more of the beauty, allsufficiency and freeness of Jesus, the Saviour, than I have ever before experienced. I have likewise enjoyed stronger hopes of heaven than ever before—and have been fully convinced from my *dear, precious bible*, that the

hope of salvation is the indispensable duty of the christian, and a part of his armour, 'putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the *hope* of salvation.' I pray God that I may be enabled to practice more and more the preceding resolutions."

ABSTRACT OF A SERMON TO HEADS OF FAMILIES.

Jan. 30. "To-day have been indulged with an opportunity of going to God's house and hearing one of his faithful servants dispense the word of life, from Psalms, 101 : 2 : *I will walk before my house with a perfect heart.* A 'perfect heart' is one of sincere, upright intentions. The 'walk' spoken of by the Psalmist implies the conduct and general deportment of the man. The import of walking in a perfect way before an household explained; the importance of such a walk enforced by many powerful arguments and persuasions. A man who is the head of a family must consider himself the guardian of his family, both as it respects their spiritual and temporal interests. He will present their wants before God in prayer; he will pray with them, assembling morning and evening about the family altar. As a husband, he will be affectionate and forbearing, remembering the apostolic in-

junction, '*Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.*' As a father, he will be affectionate and faithful; he will remember that he was once himself a child, and will not expect too much from his children; he will convince them by his whole conduct that his heart is filled with tenderness for them. Though they may sometimes require the rod, they will know that he seeks their good. As a master, he will be mild and gentle towards his servants, and will give unto them that which is just and equal. He will attend to his servants, to know what characters they are forming. In short, the master of a family will be concerned to exhibit such an example as will be safe for others; watchful that himself is governed by a right temper at all times; for if he is unable to govern himself, how can he govern others? An interesting anecdote was related, respecting the conversion of a boy who was at first affected by reading the scriptures at school, for the encouragement of parents to exert themselves to continue the bible as a school book. Much was said respecting the duty of dedicating children and families to God. Many promises and encouragements produced from scripture. God's conduct toward

Abraham, &c. &c. May this excellent sermon be deeply impressed on my memory—some of the ideas of which I have endeavored to pen down. I have not done it, however, in their original order. May I bring it forth in my life and conversation."

SWEET SEASON OF DEVOTION.

It was a remark of the devout BRADFORD, that "he would not give over confessing any sin, till he felt some brokenness of heart for it; and would not cease praying for a particular blessing, till he felt some relish of it in his soul." Let those christians, whose seasons of devotion are governed by their *feelings* merely, read the following beautiful extract, and be admonished and instructed as to their duty:

Feb. 23. "To-day I have had some minutes of sweetness and freedom in prayer, which *I must record* for my future encouragement. Burdened with care, and sighing with a sense of my extreme deadness to any spiritual exercises, I retired to my chamber, unfitted, as I thought, for prayer, but intending to cherish for a few moments the painful emotions occasioned by a sense of my barrenness of life. There it pleased my gracious heavenly Father to meet me with

his presence, and to draw forth the most ardent aspirations of my soul in broken sobs, and I trust penitent confessions, for the vanities and sins of my childhood and youth; the aggravated offences and unprofitableness of maturer years; in longing desire for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, particularly in some neighboring towns, and among this dear people. There, methought, I had '*meat to eat of which the world knew not*'—the least morsel of which I would not exchange for all the gilded trappings and deceitful honors it could offer. My dear children and family were much on my heart —that God would visit them with his salvation. May I never forget this day. May I never, from this time, measure the grace and mercy of my heavenly Father by my own deceitful, backsliding conduct toward him."

JOY AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

May 1. "I desire to ascribe to the free grace and mercy of God what I have enjoyed to-day. It has been a happy season to my soul. Hitherto the Lord has helped me; have enjoyed more engagedness in prayer and hearing the word than for a long time; and humbly hope that I had the presence and blessing of Christ in the

season of commemorating his sufferings and death. I felt that I needed the pardon of a Magdalen: no creature on earth so vile as myself. Yet I had a view of the willingness and allsufficiency of Christ, that was consoling beyond what any confidence in myself could ever afford. The way of salvation appeared delightful to me. Methought I was sitting at the foot of the cross, with a broken heart—accepted, through infinite mercy in Christ, and bade welcome! O, that all the world could see by faith the preciousness of this condescending, allsufficient Saviour. Have been longing to be freed from this body of sin and death;

> 'When shall that day, dear Lord, appear,
> When I shall mount to dwell above;
> And stand and bow among them there,
> And see thy face, and sing thy love.'

"I am afraid the desire I have lately felt to be freed from the body arises from an unwillingness to suffer, or work for God in this world. My bodily indisposition is so constant that I am unable to discharge the duties of my station with engagedness,—and feel in a manner useless. O my heavenly Father, save me from a useless and indolent life. Help me to keep near to thee, thou Shepherd of my soul."

RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS.

May 22.

"'O who hath tasted of his clemency
In greater measure or more oft than I;
Which way soe'er I turn my face or feet,
I see his wonders and his goodness meet.'

I am again raised from a bed of sickness to so much health (though still extremely feeble) as to be restored to the society of my dear husband and children, and to resume some portion of my cares for them. My heavenly Father triumphs over my ingratitude with his love and faithfulness. I shall want an eternity to celebrate his praises."

SELF FORGOTTON—GOD GLORIFIED.

April 23, 1815. "For some time I have been much indisposed in body, and in darkness of mind; much distressed with doubts respecting my interest in the merits and atonement of Christ; and am now far from possessing assurance. But within a short time I have been so engrossed with a view of what God is doing in the world for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause; with hearing of the increasing exertions which good people are making to send the gospel to the heathen, and to promote piety in every part of the world, that I seem to have lost

sight of myself, and sometimes rejoice in the idea that God will be glorified by all his creatures. And if, with respect to me, it should be in the manifestation of his justice in my condemnation and eternal punishment, I must say 'thy will be done.' For I have sinned against such mercy—such endearing restraints—such repeated admonitions—such a bountiful share of the means of knowing and serving him—that it would be just should he now say, *Let her alone, she is joined unto idols. Why should ye be stricken any more: ye will revolt more and more. Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth forever.* But O, I am yet a probationer. I pray that I may not live to heap up wrath against the day of retribution. I will fly to the fountain opened —I will recollect the freeness of the offer of salvation, *Whosoever will, let him come.* Though the greatest of sinners, Jesus, I come to thee, my only refuge—*a sure foundation—a shadow of a great rock in a weary land—the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, mighty to save.* O, I want to live answerably to a profession of the religion of Jesus, who was meek and lowly. I want to feel the worth of souls—and to have a sympathy and tender con-

cern for those who are in an unconverted state, as really under condemnation and wrath. I want to do something for God. O, that I did pay him the entire homage of my heart."

REVIVAL IN COLLEGES.

May 21. "Adored be the sovereign grace and mercy of God, that he is now pouring out of his Spirit on some of our colleges. Blessed be his name for what my ears have heard with respect to Dartmouth. O that this shower might extend to Concord. Come, O blessed Spirit, breathe on us here. O may we see the goings of God, our king, as others see it."

INDWELLING SIN LAMENTED.

Aug. 14. "Of late I have experienced occasionally some comfortable hopes of an interest in the blessed friend of sinners; but O, such a depth of iniquity in my heart! new corruptions seem to be springing up from time to time, and sins which I had thought subdued and slain, sometimes appear to rise with increased force. My only hope and resort is to Jesus, the conqueror. The constant conviction I have of my own weakness must drive me to him. Some sweetness of late in social prayer with two young

disciples of Christ. Blessed be my heavenly father for these companions in my pilgrimage. May our souls be watered with dews of heavenly grace. May a spirit of prayer be poured out upon us. May we experience the divine presence."

BIRTH-DAY.

March 19, 1816. "My birth-day! O, what contrition and shame have I felt to-day. The review of so large a portion of time (which has passed since this last anniversary) being added to those years which are never to return, filled up with vanity, or what is of little profit, has pained me extremely. Have I lived so long and done nothing for God? O why did I not improve the season of youth to more advantage? Why have I not obtained a more decisive and energetic character? Where am I? and to what kingdom do I belong?

"The hope I have of an interest in the blessed Redeemer I would not part with for the crowns and riches of the earth. Nay, ten thousand such worlds as this I know would not be *a portion satisfactory to an immortal soul.* I want no portion but an interest in Jesus Christ. His smiles can cheer the darkest gloom, and

create heaven in my soul, when all the world is frowning. But why do I not enjoy a more confirmed hope, and more love to God? Surely I do not live and feel as other christians do. I know that God is a source of love and happiness to his children. There must be some wrong in me that my hopes are constantly mingled with so much doubting.

"How accumulated and great have been the mercies of the last year. Another immortal soul committed to my care. Much pain and sickness was allotted me the last summer and autumn. I can say with the Psalmist, *I was brought low and he helped me.* O how aggravated have been my sins the year past, and by what parental tenderness has God brought back my wanderings, when I have most ungratefully strayed from him. O that I could render according to what I have received.

'Dear Lord, I give myself away,—
'Tis all that I can do.' "

REVIVAL IN CONCORD, 1816.

Sept. 14. "I have long omitted writing in my diary; have much that I ought to record of God's goodness to me and to our dear people, in pouring out of his Spirit upon this town, and in

bringing many, as I trust, out of nature's darkness into his light. It must be a work for eternity to render a suitable return of praise, adoration, and love, for such unmerited mercy. O that I could live as I ought, after such experience of infinite goodness to me. Some of the very persons for whom I have been most interested, and have for years been pleading that God would bring into his kingdom, have been the subjects of conviction and conversion, as I hope—and have associated themselves with God's professing people."

JESUS—ALL!

June 1, 1817. "Have again had the privilege of commemorating the sufferings and death of my Lord and Saviour. Although my affections have been dull to day, yet I trust God has enabled me to give myself renewedly away to him; humbly receiving him as my reconciled Father in Jesus Christ,—and renouncing every other portion but an interest in his most gracious and well ordered covenant, for time and eternity; rejoicing to accept Jesus Christ as my only Saviour,—my Prophet, Priest, and King—my *Surety*, my *Shepherd, Guide, Counsel-*

lor, Advocate, Righteousness, Wisdom, Strength, my ALL!!"

ABSENCE FROM THE COMMUNION.

July 7. "I have long been laboring under dullness and sloth, both spiritual and temporal,—some bodily weakness—and the expectation of soon passing through an hour of nature's distress and danger. I cannot avoid the frequent apprehension, in view of my extreme sinfulness and ingratitude, that God will come out in judgment against me; that he will withhold from me the light of his countenance, and perhaps leave me to pass through the valley and shadow of death, without his rod or staff; to all the buffetings of Satan's rage. But O, may I not hope in that mercy that has been so frequently afforded me. God's thoughts are not as mine—nor his ways to be measured by my ways. Yesterday a season of commemorating the sufferings and death of my adorable Saviour, by this church. Though not present with the dear members at the table, yet I thought I partook some tokens of his presence and love. Blessed be God for my lot in a gospel land. Blessed be God for my hopes of salvation. I long to be separated from sin. I loathe myself on account

of my vileness. My happiness is in Christ Jesus. AMEN."

AFFECTION AND PRAYER FOR TWO YOUNG BOARDERS IN THE FAMILY.

Aug. 1, 1818. "God has been placing me in a situation of great responsibility, by committing, in some measure to my trust, the care of two precious immortals. When I think that they have probably received from me some impressions that may help to give a direction to their eternal character, I tremble. I have not been faithful. I have rather, I fear, been disposed to soothe and flatter them in error than to attempt any thing like faithful dealing with their souls.

"O my Father, have I ever dropped one word for thine honor before them? Have I ever carried them to the throne of thy grace, in the arms of my faith and prayer? O hear and accept. O help me to do it now. Let them not rise up in judgment to testify against my unfaithfulness. O let not these dear young friends (to whom my heart is so tenderly attached) be found among those who shall be calling to the rocks and mountains to hide them from thy presence. May I improve these sensibilities in importunity and

wrestling for their salvation. O, do not deny me. Thou hast bid me ask what I will."

SOLEMN RENEWAL OF COVENANT.

Oct. 4. "Have been engaged to-day in the most solemn and interesting transaction that can claim the attention of a sinful mortal—even that of renewing my covenant with the eternal God. I have availed myself of the help of Hugh Knox's form of renewing covenant, and think I have found it a most excellent assistant. I thought I felt every word of it at my heart. Last evening and this morning I had an abasing view of my backsliding and treacherous departure from my God; some new and deeper views of the *defiling* nature of sin; and, I trust, some manifestations of the excellency of Christ Jesus, as an allsufficient Saviour of sinners. In his office as a *priest*, I have had much delightful contemplation. How comforting the thought that my cause is in the hands of such an advocate; not an high priest who must first atone for his own sins, but a *spotless one*, ever at the throne, always acceptable,—who can be touched with a feeling of my infirmities. And although I have been troubled with wandering thoughts, on the whole have had a comfortable day. O! may I

be bound by this day's transactions to my divine Lord in a manner never to stray again. O Jesus, help me to remember the bitterness which I have tasted in my late departure from thee. Do give me to feel from this time 'the slightest touches of sin quick as the apple of an eye.' 'Can I touch pitch and not be defiled?' no more can I commit the smallest sin without losing some spiritual comfort in proportion. O make me, by thy grace, a more humble and close walker with God. O make me to live more entirely and constantly by faith in Christ. O may the practice of ejaculatory prayer be revived with me. And in relative duties help me to walk in newness of life.

'My bright *example* and my guide,
I would be walking near thy side;
O never let me run astray,
Nor follow the forbidden way.

I love my *Shepherd;* he shall keep
My wandering soul amongst his sheep;
He feeds his flock, he calls their names,
And in his bosom bears the lambs.'"

GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The following is inserted to illustrate the interest she felt in sermons on the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel.

Nov. 17. "On Sabbath day comforted and

refreshed by the preaching of Rev. Mr. Patrick. Forenoon text, Ephesians, 4, 30: '*Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*' Some remarks on the equality of the three persons of the adorable Trinity—or different offices and characters maintained by the divine being. God the Father, the Creator; God the Son, the Saviour and Redeemer; God the Spirit, the Sanctifier and Comforter. Sinners and saints both grieve the Holy Spirit. He often strives with sinners to induce them to attend to the things of religion; they seem to be almost persuaded to become christians, but soon return to their business or pleasures, and lose their impressions. They often hear the word with some application to themselves, but riches, cares, &c., soon choke the seed, and it becomes unfruitful. Christians grieve the Spirit by departure from their first love, by conformity to the maxims and customs of this world, &c. &c.

Sealed unto the day of redemption:—this expression sufficient to confute the idea of falling from grace—a christian to-day and a sinner to-morrow—not '*sealed*' for a day, or a month, or a year—but '*unto redemption.*' May God in

mercy quicken me to a prayful attention when hearing sermons."

A RAINY SABBATH.

Nov. 29. "Very rainy day; some doubt this morning respecting the path of duty—whether to attend public worship. When God's house is forsaken he is dishonored. Shall I join those who wound my adorable Saviour, whose compassion and forbearance is so unwearied toward me? No, sooner will I suffer some inconvenience and hardship to attend on the ministration of his word—some sacrifice of ease?—some exposure of health.

'Angels, who make the Church their care,
Shall witness my attendance there.'"

SABBATH SCHOOL.

Sabbath Schools were commenced in this town about the year 1817. In the fall of 1818, all the children who had attended the Sabbath school assembled at the meeting house, for the purpose of being publicly addressed. The deep interest which Mrs. McFarland felt at the sight is expressed is the subjoined extract. Her own labors in the Sabbath school will be the subject of a subsequent chapter.

"A delightful view to-day of the children and

youths assembled, who have attended the Sabbath schools. What a crowd of thoughts! Immortals! Probationers! Some bearing the seal of God's gracious covenant; others equally engaging and promising have been denied the privilege! by whom? the author of their life! Agents to advance the millenium! Harriet Newells! faithful missionaries to heathen lands! Others, more laborious and self-denying, patiently performing the arduous routine of parochial duties, where the prophet is almost without honor! Must some finally, with all these privileges, sink down into eternal sorrow? *God forbid!* O make these means effectual. Sanctify them through thy truth."

PRAYER FOR MRS. ROWELL.

The person here named is still living,—but in a state of extreme bodily and mental weakness. It must be gratifying to her family, friends and relations to read the following prayer in her behalf.

Nov. 20, 1820. "I have had (or thought so) sweet enlargement in prayer this evening for Mrs. Rowell, very sick. O what a dear privilege is a throne of grace to repair to with all our wants. I cannot see this sick friend, whom I

love and esteem; but I can ask for her the supports of almighty grace and love,—the smiles of my heavenly Father, the least glimpse of which will fill the soul with ineffable delight. May heaven be open to the view of her faith,—and an abundant entrance administered to her soul when she shall be called hence."

GREAT PEACE IN BELIEVING.

June 20, 1821. "Since the death of my dear little Miriam I have for many weeks walked in extreme darkness; bodily health very low; spiritual comforts still more sunken; for many days almost without hope. But blessed be God, the Father of mercies, for the dawning of a happier day! I begin to take some hold of the hope set before me in the gospel, and to see again the preciousness of redeeming love, displayed in the character of my adorable Saviour, *Jesus Christ*. I can now look with delight on him as my *prophet*, *priest* and *king*, and renewedly enter into covenant with him, (which in my darkest seasons I did not wish to retract, although my evidence was so much obscured.) I would hail thee once more, my great High Priest, whom I know can be touched with a feeling of my infirmities. I have experienced much sympa-

thy from dear christian friends, but I know that thy tenderness is infinitely more endearing. Theirs, through thy blessing, has been sweetly salutary and helpful. Thine I desire to receive, as satisfying, efficient, allsufficient. I rejoice in thee as my only portion for time and eternity; and would renounce more entirely every idol, and entreat thee to captivate every faculty and power of my soul. Not only my prophet, priest, and king, but the espoused head and husband of my heart forever.

> 'Infinite love! almighty grace,
> Prison me round in thine embrace.'

O how ineffable the bliss of being pervaded by infinite love, in every space which I inhabit. What an enrapturing thought, that a holy God is *every where!*

> 'Lives through all life,
> Extends through all extent.'

Nothing but the repulsive power of sin prevents every soul of man from being filled with the essence of deity. My King, subdue my hateful sins. When shall I bask in the sunbeams of the eternal love of God? O divine Spirit, breathe upon me something of this flame; let me, O my Father, God, feel for one hour as those do who are thus privileged—as the redeemed in

heaven feel, or as angels. I know the time when I had no such desires. Hast thou not created them? satisfy them, thou exhaustless Fountain:

> 'For thee I pine, and am for thee undone;
> As drooping flowers, that want their parent sun.'

What is earth? what are all the endearing connections of life, without my God! With his love, and his blessing, they are sweet streams. When I do not receive them from him, they bring me many a sorrow. It distresses me to think of again departing from my Saviour. My treacherous heart I fear will soon lose this relish of a Saviour's love. 'Give me to feel the slightest touches of sin, quick as the apple of an eye.'

The last Sabbath a sweet season, privileged beyond the common. 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies toward me?' May this be the inquiry of my heart."

FAST DAY.

Mrs. McFarland very conscientiously observed the days of fasting and prayer, appointed by the chief magistrate of the state. She usually recorded in her diary her exercises on these occasions. The following is a specimen.

April 4, 1822. "This day has been set apart by our first magistrate as the annual season for

fasting, humiliation, and prayer. By God's grace I have endeavored to spend it, as much as my bodily health and circumstances would permit, in reading the word of God, and in prayer —in confessing my individual sins,—those of every member of my family, and people; in confessing them, with all their aggravations, and spreading them again and again before God; and in pleading with him for the mercies which we need. I desire humbly to thank and praise him for the assistance which I trust he has afforded me at this time, in bestowing something of that brokenness of heart and contrition which he will not despise;—in setting before me in an affecting point of view many particular sins, and enabling me to wrestle with him, who hath all hearts in his hands, and can turn them as the rivers of water are turned, that he will give me true repentance, and turn me from them so effectually, as that in these particulars I may walk in newness of life,—for the freedom and importunity in wrestling for the souls of my children, and for all my dear professing christians in this place; and for those who are walking in the broad road to eternal ruin. I think I have had more freedom and enlargement than I have found for

a long time. O my dear children! My Father, make them thine. My dear christian friends! make them wrestling and prevailing ones with thee! O for those who are dear by ties of gratitude and affection! O for devoted missionaries of the cross! O for the universal spread of the Redeemer's cause! May the hearer of prayer hear and answer these my requests."

ANSWER TO PRAYER.

Dec. 24. "I was much comforted yesterday by hearing of one, (Dr. B**d,) who has gone a distance from this place, and has publicly owned Christ in the place where he resides. My heart rejoiced at the intelligence, because he had been a subject of particular prayer with me. Shall I dare to conclude that I am a coworker with God? and that I was inclined to these desires of salvation for that soul, by the ever blessed Spirit of God? And when my heart longs for the conversion of any acquaintance, shall I think it is a motion of the Holy Spirit, and pray and wait till I find the desire accomplished? O may the Lord enable me so to do!"

In closing these extracts from her diary, it

must be gratifying to the christian reader to be introduced to the PLACE of her devotions—and to know the hours of the day in which they were usually performed.

Besides her stated times for private devotion, early in the morning and in the evening, she often retired for prayer about the middle of the forenoon. Though it was sometimes difficult for her then to leave her business, yet she would break away from it—once remarking to some one, 'that this was the very time when she most needed prayer,—when the perplexing cares of life were most liable to trouble her, or to absorb her mind and heart.'

Sometimes when her care of a young child prevented her evening season of devotion, she would rise from bed, after her husband and child were asleep, and spend her hour in prayer.

"For many years," says Mrs. Buxton, "her place of retirement was the 'north chamber.' This was the most retired room in the house, and in summer the most comfortable. It was endeared to her by its being so often the resting place of the wayfaring missionary or minister, when he turned aside to tarry for a night. She felt that the prayers of such visitors had made it

a consecrated spot. She had sometimes occupied the room herself, in seasons of sickness, and afterwards loved to call to mind the support and comfort she had there received. It was a large, airy chamber, well shaded in front by the tall poplars in the yard, and generally was kept rather dark, by the shutters being closed. The furniture was simple, and not of modern date. At the side of the bed stood the low arm chair in which she sat, and her shawl or old cloak were generally thrown over it. Near her chair stood an old fashioned stand, on which was her bible, and sometimes her hymn book, or implements for writing. This place of her retirement had a comfortable and inviting appearance. One of the earliest of my recollections is of going there with her, when too young to attend school. There, standing at the side of her chair while she knelt before it, I tried to get some conceptions of the unseen Being whom she was addressing. Here we were taken Sabbath afternoons in summer, for our catechetical exercise. We always went into this room treading softly, and suppressing our voices, so often had we been told that we must keep still, or be sent out; and from these early habits the room has always had

an air of stillness and quiet. It was the place where the female prayer meeting was held for several years after its establishment. Since that time, it has often been the scene of social prayer —my mother inviting one friend to go up there with her, and sometimes several. I believe that by more blessed saints than one, the *north chamber* 'will be remembered in heaven.' "

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS WRITTEN DURING HER MARRIED LIFE.

MRS. MCFARLAND'S epistolary correspondence was never very extensive. She cherished a strong attachment to her native city; visited it as often as circumstances would permit, and kept up a correspondence with a few friends of her youth and family connections in that place. After the death of her husband, her letters were more frequent, and to a greater number of individuals. The extracts which follow, from letters written during her married life, will serve to illustrate still more fully the various traits of her character:—especially, they will show the *ruling passion of her heart*—THE LOVE OF CHRIST. It is pleasing also to trace in them the influence of the female prayer meeting, which she attended in her youth; and in which she felt the liveliest interest, until her death. If the present members of that prayer meeting shall read these pages, may they thank God and take courage, in view of the influences which have

flowed out from the hallowed place of their meeting, in streams of mercy upon the world.

FEMALE PRAYER MEETING.

To Miss F. H. of Boston.

"CONCORD, N. H., Oct. 9, 1806.

"*My dear friend:*

"Your last friendly letter has often refreshed and animated my spirits. Your progress in knowledge and piety makes me ashamed of my own deficiency and indolence in all the noble pursuits of life.

"My friend, we know not what is before us; what trials our God will see best to appoint us. Let us be careful to secure our interest in 'the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,' and all will be safe. How rich and free the gospel offers of salvation are? Surely, every mouth will be stopped and all the impenitent remain guilty before God. Jesus Christ has not only died to make it *possible* that some may be saved, but *all men*, every where, are *commanded* to repent; and this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but men have loved darkness rather than light. We are prom-

ised grace for grace. O, let us 'gird up the loins of our minds,' and 'lay aside every weight,' and so run as to obtain the prize. May we be helpers together here—furtherers of each other in our way to the kingdom; and through the infinite riches of free grace, be admitted to spend an eternity together in praising and serving our divine Master.

"I am happy to hear that you still meet with our christian friends at my dear mother's; a 'privilege' indeed, to enjoy their friendship and be interested in their petitions. None owes them more (under God) than your unworthy friend. There, in early life, I witnessed the power of religion in the hearts of its votaries; there I witnessed the faithfulness and mercy of God, as a prayer-hearing and answering God; and from the example and influence of such, I hope I have been constrained to believe in, and seek, their God and Saviour, as my allsufficient portion.

"Go on, my dear friend, in the path you are now walking, and I trust it will prove that of the 'just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day.'

"Yours with esteem and affection,

 E. McFarland."

INVITATION TO PERSONAL RELIGION.

To Mrs. S. H., of Boston.

"CONCORD, Nov. 20, 1806.

"*My dear friend:*

"Your situation in life is calculated to produce much comfort to yourself; and I hope while you share so many temporal blessings, you desire and experience the happiness of those 'whose souls are in health and prosperity.' My friend, you have been the subject of many prayers; and I hope that divine grace which has been implored for you, will induce you to present yourself an acceptable sacrifice to God, whose you are by every possible obligation. Jesus is waiting to be gracious to you, and witnesses the first motion towards him. The parent of every returning prodigal, while we are *yet a great way off*, is represented as hastening to welcome us *with the best robe.* O! may you be the joyful receiver of this allsufficient righteousness—and set your face Zionward.

"Yours with affection, E. McFARLAND."

VIEWS IN SICKNESS—DOCTRINES.

To Miss F. H., of Boston.

"CONCORD, Sept. 2, 1810.

"*My dear friend:*

"I have recently experienced very largely of

the divine goodness, in restoring me again from sickness to a comfortable share of health. I have been brought very low. For a few hours at one time I thought it would be my last sickness. O, how vastly important then did religion appear to my view. I wanted to have all my friends earnestly engaged in a preparation for death. My complaints were of a kind that reduced me very rapidly; and when it seemed that the foundation for life was *almost* spent, I fainted for some time, and the disposition to faint continued for two hours. Eternity never appeared so immediately in view; an interest in the righteousness of Christ precious beyond expression. Let me have an interest in your prayers, my dear friend, that this reprieve from death may not eventually enhance my condemnation.

"I am happy to hear that you are settled under the preaching of Rev. Dr. Griffin. I think it important what sentiments we adopt; and in the present state of religious affairs it becomes us decidedly to espouse the interest of our injured Redeemer. I am at a loss to know how any can read the scriptures, candidly and impartially, and still deny the divinity of Christ; and is it not alarming that any of the preachers

of the gospel do openly declare their indifference to the doctrines of total depravity—personal election—of the final perseverance of the believer, &c.? I find, by a sermon lately printed at Boston, that *one* does, if no more. I think, my friend, in order to have faith in Jesus Christ, it is necessary to be acquainted with his character. The first attempt of this kind must introduce us to these doctrines. But O let me, with much humility and caution, speak of the errors of any. I have many fears respecting my own sincerity, and need the prayers of my friends in order that I may not be deceived at last.

"I had a very agreeable interview with my dear friends of the society when last in Boston. I cannot describe to you my emotions when I first entered the room where this truly respectable number of christians were assembled. I had never met with them before, without my dear mother. It brought the scene of her death immediately to my recollection. The pious petitions of our dear, aged Mrs. Winslow, which were ascending at the time, impressed me forcibly with a sense of my unworthiness. I felt that God was there, and I must shrink from such purity.

"Yours truly, E. McFarland."

THE TIMES.

To the same.

"CONCORD, Aug. 26, 1812.

"*My very dear friend:*

"Your letters express a degree of piety to which I have not attained. In one of them you inform me that you have been brought low and apparently near death; that you felt an entire resignation, and even a wish to leave this world. I think much of death, but have never been devoid of a dread of its approach. I have many fears of the sincerity of my professions and the foundation of my hopes. O, may I not be deceived in so momentous an affair. Should I be found among the *many* who will say, Lord, Lord, have we, &c.,—to whom the Judge will answer 'I never knew you'—how, beyond description aggravated will be the condemnation of such an one!

"What is the opinion of my friend respecting the times? Do you not think that clouds of the most threatening aspect are gathering about America? Perhaps I am prone to view the darkest shades of the prospect exclusively; but as a nation are not our sins aggravated. Does not the breach of the Sabbath, the lukewarmness and neglect of discipline in our churches, with the

spirit of infidelity which prevails so much in our land, call loudly for the divine vengeance? All this, too, from the descendants of that race who were landed in this wilderness—who were nourished with so much care, and prospered beyond example. I feel that we deserve the severest chastisements. May infinite mercy mitigate or avert them.

"I believe that I informed you the last summer of the attention to religion which prevailed in some parts of this town. Within about fourteen months there have been more than eighty added to the church under the care of Mr. McFarland. These persons generally reside about six miles from us. There have been some very agreeble additions, however, from the street in which we live, though the number is small. I have reason to blush and mourn, under a sense of my own stupidity and unprofitableness; but for this I desire to be grateful, namely,—that I do feel a sense of my coldness—that I have some desires for quickening influences—that I do long for christian communion, and to be made useful in the vineyard of my Lord and Master, if it is in the meanest office. May my portion be among the followers of Jesus Christ,

however poor and despised they may be. Yet I know that more are for them than against them, and that his cause will finally prevail, even should persecutions arise. Yet his promises are suited to every trial. As our day is so shall our strength be; and if called to suffer and die, he will make his people more than conquerors.

"My children are healthy—the number has risen to four. I feel inadequate to the task of rearing plants of such inestimable value as these immortals. I can say, *Hitherto the Lord has helped me.* When you write me, do suggest some hints respecting this part of my duty.

"Your truly affectionate friend,

E. McFARLAND."

DEATH OF CHRISTIANS, &c.

To the same.

"CONCORD, July 2, 1813.

"*My dear friend:*

"Your account of Mrs. Homes' death is calculated to animate the hopes and strengthen the confidence of the christian in the Redeemer. In the death of christians we may see much of the sovereignty of God; the beams of light and joy which are abundantly bestowed on some, we find are wholly withheld from others, for whom we

must indulge hopes equally strong. God doubtless has important designs, both toward the dying christian and surviving friends, in his dealings at such a time. I thought that in the death of my dear mother I was taught more of the sovereignty of God, and our entire dependence on him, than I had ever learned before, or could have learned in any other way.

"I hope, my dear friend, that we both realize that we are living for eternity. O let us conduct always in a manner answerable to the hopes and expectations of the christian.

> 'His hand, the good man fastens to the skies,
> And bids the earth roll on,
> Nor heeds her idle whirl.'

Nothing but religion is a support sufficient in view of convulsing nations and the divine judgments which are evidently abroad in the earth at this time. I want to feel more alive to the divine dealings with us. A strange insensibility seems to pervade all my powers toward this subject—but I fear that it is not *strange* for me; I fear it is habitual. Pray for me, my friend, that divine grace may be afforded sufficient to my necessities.

"Your affectionate friend,

ELIZABETH McFARLAND."

CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD—MILLENIUM.

To the same.

"CONCORD, August 20, 1815.

"*My dear friend:*

"Your letters have often warmed my heart and quickened me in my course. When I had the pleasure to see you in January, you flattered me with the hope of having a visit from you in the spring; but like many other earthly hopes, it has proved delusive. Will you write me soon, and communicate some of your spiritual comforts and sorrows; say something to animate my sluggish heart. I am filled with confusion when I think of the barrenness of my life; my conformity to the maxims and customs of this vain world; that I am actuated so much by its spirit and temper. Is there not, my friend, a very criminal conformity to the world among professing christians? At such a time as the present, when God is working such wonders in the earth, would it not become us to be working entirely for him? O I seem to do nothing for him. If I have one talent I fear it is buried in a napkin, and I shall merit the reward of the slothful servant. Do pray for me, that I may be quickened to do something as I ought to do. You are again in the enjoyment of mingling in the dear social

circle for prayer. Distinguished privilege! I was, when thus indulged, insensible of its magnitude,—but now consider it as among the greatest blessings of my life. It was there I witnessed the fervor of devotion, and the prayers of faith, before I could feel them my own; and by witnessing the consistent lives of those engaged, I could see that religion possessed an intrinsic excellence; and, by the blessing of God, I think I was drawn to pursue it as the chief good. I doubt not but that praying society has been an instrument of the greatest good to the world. How much it has done in procuring the late and present revivals in our colleges, and of sending missionaries to the heathen, we never shall know till the judgment of the great day. I believe it will be found to have a large share. Will you think that I *complain* too much, when I tell you that I have been favored but very seldom with an opportunity of uniting in private prayer with any females since I have lived in this place? I have repeatedly made the proposal of commencing a society of this description, to some professors, but a plan so novel has not been pleasing to them—but God appears at present to be stirring up some in different parts of the town to

this effect. Two little meetings are begun at parts of the town distant from us, and I have the satisfaction of uniting with two young female disciples of Christ in my chamber on Wednesday evenings. Pray for us, that we may have an unction of the blessed Spirit, and that this may be as leaven that shall spread far and wide. There is at present something of a revival in the town of Boscawen, adjoining us on the north. I hope we shall not be passed by.

"What an interesting age is the present! Are you not filled with wonder and delight to behold what God is doing in the earth? Do not the times seem to indicate that the millenial glory is already dawning upon us? Every week, almost, produces some new plan for active benevolence. O that I had the ability to engage in them all. How animating is the encouragement afforded to the foreign mission! Already is Ethiopia stretching forth her hands unto God, and various parts of the wilderness blossoming as the rose. The last autumn I had the privilege of attending the meeting of the General Association of this State, where were delegates from other States. I was pleased to hear the communications of revivals in different parts of

our land—female prayer meetings were honorably spoken of by a number of the gentlemen—and the returns being made from our bible and missionary societies at the same time, rendered the meeting highly interesting. It appears that God is not only exciting women to take an active part in building the Redeemer's kingdom, but in several instances little children have *associated*, to present their infant offerings.

"My paper reminds me that I must hasten to a conclusion. Do, my dear F., write me soon; and when you get access to a throne of grace, remember your unworthy friend. O think likewise of my dear children. The care of these dear immortals is constantly on my heart. O may I find grace to be faithful. My dear S., (who was last year brought apparently to the gate of the grave, and raised again, to the astonishment of her physicians) is somewhat companionable for me. She sews and reads with me; and the memoirs of Mrs. Newell and Miss Woodbury excite considerable interest in her heart. Will you remember me respectfully to your mother, affectionately to your sisters, and any members of the dear society who you think remember

"Your unworthy friend, E. McFarland."

CHILDREN—HOPEFUL CONVERSIONS—THE TIMES.

To the same.

"CONCORD, Dec. 21, 1815.

"*My very dear friend:*

"Your favor of the 25th ult., and congratulations on the birth of an infant, I have received with much affection for you, and I hope gratitude to God, the giver of every good gift, for his goodness in bestowing such a friend.

"I feel that my responsibility is augmented by this new charge. When I am continually exercised with the requisite care of the bodies of my children, and consider that the immortal part is of infinitely more importance; that in every hour they are receiving some impression from me which will serve to give a complexion to a character through a boundless eternity, I tremblingly ask, Who is sufficient for this duty? Were it not that the meanest of God's creatures may have access to a throne of grace, I must despair. It is from thence I derive all my strength; for in me there dwelleth no good thing.

"I rejoice that I am not forgotten by dear Mrs. Waters and Mrs. Mason. I consider them among my spiritual mothers, and blush that from such advantages as their society affords I have

made no greater improvement. Mr. McFarland and myself have lately been made happy by the hopeful conversion of three young ladies in our society. They have been among, the gay and thoughtless, somewhat distinguished. Two of them were for some time in great distress, but now express a hope, founded on the righteousness of Christ. The serious impressions of the other are of an earlier date. Her mind for a year has been much exercised on religious subjects; her opposition to the divine character very apparent to herself; the doctrine of election very offensive. She said the idea of annihilation was much more comfortable. I have had repeated opportunities of conversing with the two first mentioned; have increasing hope that it is a real change wrought in them by the Holy Spirit.

"Our God is indeed a wonder-working God. Are you not delighted with what he is doing in the world?—missionaries multiplying, and going to the benighted corners of the earth; revivals in our colleges, in number and degree almost unprecedented,—and an increasing disposition to settle ministers of the gospel in all parts of our country. This is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our view.

"With assurances of esteem, E. McFarland."

FRUITS OF A REVIVAL.

To the same.

"CONCORD, April 30, 1817.

"*My dear friend:*

"I have heard you say you were fond of passing the month of June in the country. This is a time when Concord appears perhaps to the best advantage, as the General Court hold a session in that month. I hope I shall see you here at that time, if not before. The revival of religion has abated in some measure, but our society is such as I think would afford you pleasure. O my friend, my obligations to our heavenly Father have been much increased by the work of grace he has been pleased to perform among this dear people by two seasons of harvest since my residence here. The former was the first the town ever knew. In the latter, many of the young and gay have had their course arrested, and I trust and believe their feet turned into the path of life. Only a little more than two years, and there were no prayer or conference meetings among us; now there are several stated ones—and three societies for missionary and other benevolent purposes. How salutary is the influence of true religion to ameliorate the condition of human life! May its benign effects

be known in every part of the earth. Are you not delighted with the accounts which we receive from time to time of the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the hitherto benighted corners of the earth! This is surely the Lord's doings and marvellous in our eyes. How sweetly are the prayers of our dear mothers answered at this time. They were dictated by the Holy Spirit. What a privilege to have been trained up with such examples of piety before us; to have had opportunity of witnessing the wrestling of these female Elijahs. O what will my condemnation be, if I am lost from such advantages? Yours with affection,

ELIZABETH McFARLAND."

CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

To Mrs. S. H., Boston.

"CONCORD, Dec. 4, 1818.

"*My dear friend:*

"I wish to be remembered to your sisters. Is L. with you? Has she sought and found the Saviour of sinners? If she has not, entreat her from me to lay aside every other concern until she can say, 'I have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write.' This friend will never forsake her; he will bring consolations to her that will solace every sorrow.

"Does my dear Mrs. H. find herself advancing in the divine life. Amidst her worldly prosperity and numerous blessings, is her soul 'flourishing in the courts of our God?' You doubtless find this a *warfare*. The sinner unawakened is led an easy captive in the bonds of Satan. When once the soul is convinced of its ruined state by nature, and is brought by grace to enlist in the service of Jesus Christ, then the conflict begins; Satan opposes, with all his legions, the salvation of that soul. And when we think of the weakness of our nature, is it not a wonder that we are not overcome? But our strength in the Lord Jesus is sufficient for the contest, and he has assured that every true believer shall be more than *conqueror*. Let us strive, not as those who beat the air, but as resisting principalities and powers.

"May we keep heaven in our eye—may we be stimulated by the recollections of what our divine Master has done and suffered. Let us not shrink from danger or hardship in his cause—let us study and prize his word, and live in habitual readiness for the summons of death.

"O, my dear friend, how formidable are the three grand enemies of our soul—the world, the

flesh, and the devil. How prone we are to forget watching, and give them advantage. O may we have the christian armor always on, and be always useful.

ELIZABETH McFARLAND."

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHILDHOOD.

To the same.

"CONCORD, Oct. 26, 1819.

"*My dear friend:*

"A favorable opportunity presents of writing to Boston, which I readily embrace to address a few lines to my dear Mrs. H., the companion of my childhood and friend of every age. Do you not often recollect the pastimes of our youth, and sometimes heave a sigh of regret that the time thus spent was not more advantageously employed? A friend, in conversation the other day, asked me whether I should be willing to live my life over again? My reply was, that if I could perform every duty just as it ought to be done, instead of doing it as I *had done*, I should be willing; otherways not for a thousand worlds. This remark I can now apply to those past scenes. O that we could inspire the rising generation around us with a sense of the importance and worth of time, and the certainty that every action

of every day helps to fix a character for *eternity*. Yours, E. McFARLAND."

SICKNESS—CONSOLATION.

To Mrs. E. M., Boston.

"CONCORD, March 15, 1820.

"*My dear friend:*

"Through the goodness and mercy of God I am again able to address a line to you; a pleasure with which I did not expect, four weeks since, ever again to be privileged. I was at that time brought very low, and in the view of physicians and other friends, at the brink of the Jordan of death. Perhaps you may wish to know what my feelings were at that time. For one or two days my sins seemed to be set in order before me—they appeared innumerable, and of the most aggravated description. I could look at nothing but my sins. This I think was Friday and Saturday. On Sabbath morning I began to meditate on the crucifixion and resurrection of our Saviour, and his work of redemption. These subjects sweetly occupied my mind for several days. I thought of the character of some of his followers and attendants at that time. There was Mary, out of whom were cast seven devils. There was Peter, who denied him with oaths and

cursing; and although my sins appeared more aggravated than those of any other, yet I saw that these would not shut me out of heaven, if I had but repentance and faith in this adorable Saviour. His character appeared infinitely lovely. The words from Watts' hymns:

'Jesus, my God, I know his name,'

were charming, and filled me with delight. O how can any one deny the full divinity of Jesus Christ? Methought my whole foundation of happiness would be removed if this doctrine was not that of the bible. I thought I could cheerfully follow such a master, even should I be denied an evidence of my own interest in his mediation. 'Though he slay me, I will trust in him.' When I found I was recovering, at some times I felt disappointed; at others, pleased with the prospect of being returned to my family and friends, hoping I should do better than I had done before. Yours,

E. McFarland."

DEATH OF DEA. THOMAS W. THOMPSON.

To Miss F. H., Boston.

"Concord, Dec. 14, 1821.

"I am really mortified, my dear F., to think how much time has elapsed since I saw you

without having written you one letter. I have no apology to offer, and you must impute this ungrateful silence to an extreme indolence of mind: of *mind*, I say, for although my pen has not been employed as much as it ought to have been, yet of *bodily exercise* I have generally enough to prevent any remorse of conscience.

"Our dear friend, Deacon Thompson, has been removed from us to brighter scenes, as I suppose you have been informed. 'The chamber where the good man meets his fate is privileged beyond the common walks of life.' This privilege was mine when he took his flight. I received a request from Mrs. T., at about twelve o'clock, to come to the house; he expired at seven in the evening—tranquil, and firmly expressing his confidence in God through the merits of Jesus Christ. He had for many months been apprized that the grim messenger was advancing, and steadfastly prepared to meet the event, by 'setting his house in order;' which I believe he did in spiritual and temporal concerns, so that he had nothing to do but to die. Mrs. T. exhibited the christian by her deportment—calmly reposing on the widow's God.

"I am at present exercised with very sore eyes

which I am endeavoring to relieve by blisters. These little alloys to our comfort serve to teach us that this is not our rest. May our title be secure to that state

> 'Where pleasures all sincere
> Glide on in crystal rills;
> Where not a dreg of guilt defiles,
> Or grief disturbs the stream.'

Yours, ELIZABETH MCFARLAND."

DISMISSION OF DR. M'FARLAND.

To the same.

"CONCORD, Nov. 1825.

"*My dear F.:* Your favor in March merited an earlier answer. It may gratify you to be informed that it came at a season peculiarly needful, and was consoling in an hour of trial which I was then experiencing. It was just at the time of ordaining our young minister, successor to my dear husband—whose uniform health and firm constitution in former years had been such as never to lead me to an expectation that for want of it a separation from this beloved people would ever take place. But such, my dear friend, is the case. It is God's will, and I ought to say, 'Let him do as seemeth him good.' I think I desire to say it; and sometimes I have thought that it was by divine grace the language

of my heart;—at other times I find much that seems like wishing it might have been otherwise; and for a number of days have been engrossed in reviewing former privileges, and saying, 'O that it were with me as in days that are past.'

"Mr. B—— has married and brought an interesting, pious, and intelligent young lady to us from Connecticut. She is under nineteen. We are much pleased with her. Pray for me, that I may have wisdom and grace to feel and conduct in a right way under this change. At present I feel quite as though I had gained a prize; her conduct toward Mr. McFarland and myself has been so agreeable. I desire to lean on God; pray for me, that all unworthy as I am, I may be enabled to be stayed upon him in all conditions. In much affliction,

ELIZABETH McFARLAND."

DEATH OF DR. M'FARLAND.

To the same.

"CONCORD, May 23, 1827.

"*My dear friend:*

"Your last letter was truly valuable and comforting to the sorrowful bosom of your friend Elizabeth, whom an allwise God has seen fit to

deprive of the companion of her life. Yes, my dear F., I now address you a bereaved widow. The arm on which I have leaned for so many years, is cold in death! The voice which has so often cheered me is forever silent; and the eyes which have looked serenely upon me for many years, are closed!

"But, my dear friend, I have been comforted in this affliction. I have kept about my family cares, and in general am composed. Sometimes a burst of sorrow overtakes me. I have thought I had divine support. I have found at times, if I am not deceived, strength equal to my day—and could testify to the faithfulness of God's promises. I have endeavored to take hold of them, yes, to *grasp* them, as all my hope; have found them all yea and amen, sweet, delightful. Sometimes a view of Canaan seems a near prospect; the Jordan but a step. Sometimes a view by faith of a crucified, an almighty Sacrifice,—a glimpse of the reconciled face of my heavenly Father, removes every sorrow, and I feel as though I could bare my heart anew to the vicissitudes of life, and welcome the cross. Again I plunge in sorrow, despond, and almost complain of my Father's dispensations. What

ingratitude! When I look back on all the way by which he has led me, I know it is the *right* way; and were it not for an incorrigible temper, it would all have been a pleasant path through life. I should have received every change with calm submission and grateful love. O that I might *now* have a right frame of spirit; that this severest stroke might produce the most entire effect upon me, and that from henceforth I might walk in newness of life.

"Yours, ELIZABETH McFARLAND."

CHAPTER VIII.

HER INTEREST IN MISSIONARY, CHARITABLE AND RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

THE remark of our Saviour, *that the tree is known by its fruit*, was, perhaps, never more beautifully illustrated than by the abundant "good works" which Mrs. McFarland performed, in order to promote the temporal and spiritual happiness of her fellow men, and to extend