

A
SERMON,

DELIVERED IN THE

WESLEYAN CHAPEL, CITY SAINT JOHN,

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

MRS. ELIZABETH BENNETT.

WIFE OF THE REV. WILLIAM BENNETT, WESLEYAN
MINISTER, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, AT NEWPORT,
NOVA-SCOTIA, FEBRUARY 12TH, 1825.



BY

ROBERT ALDER,

RESIDENT WESLEYAN MISSIONARY IN SAINT JOHN.



“ It is not fancy’s ardour, wildly fond,
Nor transient intercourse that thee endears;—
But thoughts and feelings, that respond
In tri’d reality; and chequered years
Of prov’d regard.”



PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.



SAINT JOHN:

PRINTED BY HENRY CHUBB, MARKET-SQUARE,

1825.

I. By the fear of the Lord is meant, not a slavish and degrading feeling, but a gracious disposition which is the offspring of genuine faith, and is perfectly compatible with the exercise of hope and love. It is an active operative principle which excites us to cherish those sentiments and affections towards the Supreme Being which a saving knowledge of his peerless character is calculated to produce in the soul, and to walk circumspectly and unblameably before him. "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but in sobriety, purity and meekness." "For the fear of the Lord is clean," and restrains us as well from "secret faults" as from "presumptuous sins." And again, "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil"; therefore the love and practice of sin are incompatible with it. This gracious principle prompts us to obey the divine will; to serve the Lord in sincerity and in truth—to invoke his presence and blessing—to sing his praises—to hear and read his holy word—to come to his sacred table and to declare what he has done for our souls. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." It also teaches us how we are to regulate our conduct towards others in the various relations in which we stand united to them—"to do justly and to love mercy," as well as to walk humbly before God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments."

Such are the nature and effects of the fear of the Lord. Hence this phrase is used in the Old, as the love of God is in the New Testament, to denote the whole of religion; and as in the gospel believers are called lovers of God, in the law and the prophets they are generally described as those who feared the Lord. The reason of this may be found in the difference of character between the Law and the Gospel; and the different views which they afford of the Divine Being. God was manifested under the law as a sovereign commanding and enforcing obedience by temporal sanctions; but in the gospel he is displayed under the endearing character of a parent who ought to be obeyed from a principle of love and gratitude. Hence "a pious Jew as a servant of God sincerely obeyed him out of fear; whereas a christian as a child of God sincerely obeys him out of love." The civil and ecclesiastical system under which the Jews were placed, though admirably adapted to their character and circumstances, and to accomplish the grand designs of heaven, was rigid and severe, "a yoke" of which they complained in every age; whereas the gospel is a system, not of

rigour, but of benevolence, and affords to us and “to principalities and powers” a display of the manifold wisdom and goodness of God, in the amazing scheme of redemption which it unfolds. The point of view in which the Deity displayed his character under the Law was calculated to produce feelings of awe and terror in the minds of the Jews; for he “came from Sinai and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousand of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.” “Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. The mountains saw him and they trembled: the deep uttered his voice and lifted up his hands on high.” But the Gospel so displays the transcendent glories of the divine character in the person of our adorable Redeemer, that we are enabled to behold them not only without fearful apprehensions but with pleasurable feeling. Hence though religion was substantially the same under the Mosaic, that it is under the Christian dispensation, as the unmerited goodness of God has placed us in more favourable circumstances than he did the Jews, it is our privilege not only to fear him as a sovereign, but to delight in him as a parent.

Whatever degree of importance may be attached to “favour” or “beauty” by those who possess these gifts, or by their professed admirers, the fear of the Lord, or true religion, for we use them as equivalent terms, is a brighter ornament to the female character, and throws a degree of splendour around it that no other qualifications can communicate. “For favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised,”

A truly religious woman has experienced a divine change in her spiritual state and character, and has been “translated from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.” She has heard the quickening voice of the Saviour, and has been awakened to a sense of her danger by nature and practice. Her heart has been affected with a godly sorrow on account of sin in general, but especially by reason of the natural enmity of her mind against God, the misimprovement of her time, and her neglect of the “great salvation.” But the tears of penitence have been changed into the shouts of praise; and though she was once “far off” from God, and sorely depressed by the “spirit of bondage and fear,” she has been “brought nigh” and has received the “spirit of adoption,” whereby she cries “Abba, Father.” She has also experienced “the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” having been “born, not of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” What an honourable state! What a glorious change! From

a child of wrath, to become a child of God; and to be brought from a state of nature into a state of grace! Such an one is "no more a stranger and a foreigner; but a fellow citizen with the saints and of the household of God;" and though once dead in sins, she is now "quickened together with Christ, and is made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The gracious influence that religion exercises over the conduct of those who possess it, exalts and dignifies the female character. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Hence "*a woman that feareth the Lord*" acts with prudence and propriety in the conjugal relation. The union that is formed between a man and a woman when they enter into the conjugal state, is of the most intimate kind, and is of the utmost importance to both during every subsequent period of their existence. After this "they are no more twain but one." "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." Hence the conjugal state is pregnant with good or evil to those who enter into it; and is either the best or the worst in which an individual can be placed. As much of the happiness or misery of wedded life results from the conduct of the wedded pair towards each other, a good woman studies to make herself acquainted with her duty, as a wife, and is emulous to perform it. She loves her husband with the utmost sincerity, and gives him a place in her affections next to that which is occupied by the Supreme Being. "It is generally allowed that the female heart is abundantly more susceptible of all the softer passions than that of man; and therefore when this susceptibility is wanting, there is reason to suspect that a woman who has married a man by her own consent, and does not love him in preference to all others has a heart greatly depraved." A good woman is prompted by her conjugal affection to display the good qualities, to conceal the defects, and to palliate the errors of her husband; to perform a thousand nameless acts of kindness to promote his comfort, which, though trifling in themselves, are of no small importance to a man's domestic happiness.

The nature of a husband's situation and the command of God confer upon him an indisputable right to govern his own household, and the woman who from ignorance, obstinacy or caprice, refuses to submit to her "own husband in the Lord," not only sets his authority at defiance, but opposes the order of nature, and the precepts of religion. "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." And

as the woman was first in the transgression which "brought death into the world, and all our woe," unto her the Lord God said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee." A man has not indeed any right to tyrannize over his wife, or to treat her as if she belonged to an inferior species; nor will a man who deserves the name do so, or exercise any power over her that is incompatible with the purest affection. For it is obvious from the feminine qualities of "the weaker vessel" that it is the design of Providence that the conjugal yoke should be easy, and its burden light. Hence a pious woman submits to the lawful authority of her husband; and when it is—as it ought always to be—founded in affection, she obeys him, not from fear, but from love. To her the command of the Apostle is not grievous, "Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word, be won by the conversation of their wives, while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands, even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord; whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church."

A good woman is methodical and diligent in the performance of her domestic duties. It has been observed, that if a man would be rich and prosperous, he must ask his wife's consent. The truth of this observation must be apparent to the most superficial observer of men and things; for it is perfectly obvious that however diligent a man may be in business, or frugal in his personal expences, if his wife do not by her domestic industry and economy husband their resources, that his solitary efforts will be useless and unavailing. Hence "a woman that feareth the Lord" is an invaluable treasure to her husband, and "his heart doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." Instead of wasting the produce of his exertions by affecting a style of living that ill befits their station in life, she strives to increase it by her domestic management, and by devoting that time to the superintendance of her family which others spend in paying useless and unnecessary visits. "She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She layeth her hands to the spindle; and her hands holdeth a distaff. Her husband is known in the gates when he

sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing and she shall rejoice in time to come."

"*A woman that feareth the Lord*" is neat, plain and modest in her apparel. Extravagance in dress betrays a vain and shallow mind, and the total absence, or at most but a small degree of religious principle and feeling; for although religion is not always found associated with plainness of apparel, when it rules in the heart of a female, its influence will be apparent in her dress, as well as in the whole of her behaviour. Many females not only deprive themselves of the luxury of doing good to others, but greatly embarrass the affairs of their husbands by the large sums which they expend in the purchase of "costly apparel" and useless ornaments to gratify their personal vanity; or to attract the notice and win the admiration of the gay and superficial part of mankind. But a truly pious woman acts a nobler part, and while she carefully shuns an affected singularity in her appearance, "adorns herself in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

"*A woman that feareth the Lord*" carefully watches over her natural temper. It has been remarked that temper is every thing in a wife; and no doubt the dispositions which a woman indulges are closely connected with the domestick comfort of her household. Whatever other good qualities she may possess, if this be wanting—if she be of a fretful, peevish and impatient temper, happiness must be a stranger to her dwelling; and as "it is better to dwell in a corner on the house top than with a brawling woman in a wide house," her husband in all probability, will be induced to seek that enjoyment elsewhere of which he is deprived at home. "For it is better"—says Solomon—"to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and an angry woman." Hence a religious woman strives to display a placid temper and gentle manners upon every occasion. In managing her domestick affairs she indeed meets with various trials from the ignorance, or wilfulness, or both of those around her, but in the midst of these the impetuosity of passion is restrained by the fear of the Lord, and she is enabled to possess her soul in patience. "The adorning of such is that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves."

"*A woman that feareth the Lord*" cultivates a supreme re-

gard for the house of God; and for all the means of grace.
 “And on the sabbath day we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken off Paul.” Every good woman imitates the conduct of Lydia, and waits upon the Lord that she may renew her strength. While she is careful not to neglect her domestic duties under the pretence of obeying the calls of religion, she does not allow the number or weight of her worldly cares to divert her attention from the “one thing needful,” but so regulates the affairs of her household that she finds time for the duties of the sanctuary and the closet, and to unite with her husband in promoting personal and family godliness. Thus she “behaves” herself “wisely in a perfect way;” and walks within her house “with a perfect heart.” What a blessing is such a woman to her family! What an ornament to the christian profession! How different is her conduct from that of those females who plead their family duties as an excuse for their habitual neglect of the duties of the sanctuary, and the unfavorable change which has taken place in their spiritual state; as if so sacred an ordinance as that of matrimony can be inimical to the growth of personal piety. The very plea which such persons urge for the irregularity of their attendance upon the means of grace shews the folly of their conduct in this particular, as the circumstance of their relative duties having so greatly multiplied, is the very reason why they should be more diligent in the use of the means of grace: for how can they perform those duties unless they receive adequate help, and from whom can they obtain assistance but from “the Father of lights,” and how can they expect it, if they do not apply to him for it. “Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

“*A woman that feareth the Lord*” delights to promote the divine glory and to extend the influence of the gospel. Women are under peculiar obligations to christianity, as in addition to those blessings which it bestows upon them in common with men, it raises them from that degraded state in which they are placed in countries purely pagan, and greatly improves their external circumstances. Enlightened christian females are deeply sensible of this; and many of them are at the present period making exertions in the cause of truth which do

great honour to their zeal, their judgment, and their piety. Hence Bible, Missionary, Sunday School and other religious Societies and Associations are not a little indebted to them for the extensive influence which they now possess, and the unexampled success with which their efforts have been crowned. Women as well as men embark with ardour in the Missionary cause, brave the dangers of the deep and of unwholesome climes, and venture with their husbands beyond the pale of civilized life, to seek the untutored savage and bring him back to God; while others at home are employed with a laudable zeal in raising funds for this and other benevolent purposes. Some persons indeed are averse to these active and public efforts on the part of females, and intimate that such a display of zeal is incompatible with that gentleness and meekness which ought ever to distinguish them. But away with such unnecessary fastidiousness—away with such rigid maxims of worldly prudence as would tend so materially to injure the interests of those institutions which are the glory of our age and nation by depriving them of the active co-operation of females. There is indeed a boundary over which they should not pass, and in the midst of all their efforts to do good they should remember what is due to the dignity, the delicacy, and the sensibility of their sex; nor will any sensible and pious female lose sight of this. But while their hearts glow with love to God why should we attempt to smother or extinguish the sacred flame? While their souls expand with feelings of benevolence, why should we attempt to contract them? If “women that fear the Lord” have the ability and the inclination to assist in promoting the divine glory and the salvation of the world, why should we wish to exclude them from all share in this glorious work, and monopolize it to ourselves, when “neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord.” Did not Deborah the prophetess judge Israel, and assist in the conquest of Sisera? Is it not written, that “your daughters” as well as your “sons shall prophesy”? Did not Anna the prophetess speak of Jesus as the Messiah, “to all those that looked for redemption in Israel”? Did our blessed Lord condemn the conduct of that penitent female, who, in a public company, washed his feet with her tears, wiped them with the hairs of her head, and anointed him with precious ointment? No—he testified his approbation of her conduct, and assured his disciples, that “wheresoever the gospel shall be preached in the whole world there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her.” Did he not appear first to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection, and commission her to announce that glorious event to his disciples?

“Not she with trait’rous kiss her Saviour stung,
 Not she denied him with unholy tongue;
 She, when apostles shrunk, could daggers brave,
 Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave.”

These and many other examples that might be adduced should encourage pious females to persevere in their efforts to bring “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards men.” Many of them of every age and rank are thus employed in various parts of the christian world. May they go on and prosper!

II. If these blessed effects are produced by the fear of the Lord, it is surely the brightest ornament that can adorn the female character, How much it exceeds in real value and beauty the most splendid external decorations. The latter may dazzle and please for a moment; but the former imparts to the happy possessor of it solid and permanent felicity, and shall be rewarded by the universal judge when the glare of worldly splendour is extinguished for ever. “Favour,” that is comeliness of person* “is deceitful,” as a handsome person frequently covers a weak mind and a depraved heart, which many who have been captivated by a graceful and well proportioned exterior have found to their sorrow. What a disappointment—what a proof that appearances are not to be trusted, when we find the utmost comeliness of form concealing the heart of a demon! and if favour be deceitful, “beauty is vain.” It is exposed to a thousand contingencies, any one of which is sufficient to destroy it. Hence it often fades as suddenly as those flowers which breathe forth their fragrance, and unfold their beauties in the morning, but wither and die before the day is closed. A fit of sickness may in a few hours dim the lustre of the brightest eye, change the appearance of the most lovely countenance, and turn “beauty’s self” into a lump of deformity. Riches, which so many covet, and which often procure for the female who possesses them the pretended admiration of sycophants and fortune hunters, may be soon dissipated by extravagance, or taken away by the dispensations of Providence. Wit may please for a moment, but unless it be associated with better qualities, it soon becomes irksome and disagreeable. Therefore neither comeliness nor beauty, nor riches nor wit, is comparable to the fear of the Lord. It is the best patent of nobility—the most certain treasure—and the most lovely ornament that either man or woman can enjoy, as it not only elevates our character here, but is the way to those celestial and imperishable honours which the people of God shall inherit in the New Jerusalem,

* CHAN—“What procures kindness or affection from others, gracefulness, comeliness.

where the murmurings of envy are never heard, and the breathings of calumny are never felt. Hence "a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised."

Her husband—unless he be one of those men who are incapable of appreciating those excellencies in another which they do not themselves enjoy—will acknowledge her good qualities, and praise her who so materially promotes his comfort and respectability. For if a man be bound to love and cherish his wife even when she does not possess those estimable qualities which we have enumerated, how much more ought he to do so, when her spirit and conduct are governed by the will of God. The children who are blessed with such a parent, will rise up and praise her for the maternal care with which she watches over them—the unwearied pains that she takes to promote the health and comfort of their bodies—to instil religious principles into their minds, and to direct them in the paths of wisdom and virtue. Her religious friends, with whom she takes "sweet counsel," and goes "to the house of God in company;" who are encouraged by her example, and edified by her conversation, as well as all those to whom her real worth is known, will admire the grace of God in her, and say as David did of Jonathan, "very pleasant hast thou been unto me." But what is of far greater importance, she shall receive praise and honour from God. "For those that honour" him "he will honour." He will confer upon such the tokens of his approbation—admit them to the enjoyment of the most intimate and endearing intercourse with himself here, and hereafter place them as monuments of the power and riches of his grace in the church triumphant in heaven. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." They shall be enthroned with the Redeemer on the empyreal heights of heaven—shall dwell with "principalities and powers," and with "the spirits of just men made perfect"; and shall enjoy a degree of knowledge, love, and felicity, of which at present we can form no adequate conception. "Glory, honour, and peace to every one that worketh good." "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name." O how great is his goodness which he has laid up for those that fear him! How inconceivably splendid and gratifying are those honours and pleasures which await the pious female in that city, "which hath no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." There she shall serve at

the altar of God for ever, and shall be eternally free from pain, weariness, and satiety. There no unsatisfied desire dwells in the heart, nor does "a single wish remain uncrown'd."

"O ye bless'd scenes of permanent delight,
Full beyond measure! lasting beyond bounds!
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss indeed."

This subject addresses itself with peculiar force to every member of this congregation, but especially to the female part of it. While it sets a good example before you, it affords you encouragement to imitate it. It teaches you that religion is designed for your sex as well as for ours, and that you are capable of knowing and fearing the Lord. Indeed it has been observed, "that as a general rule the female sex are more religious than the male. Examine the proportion between the different sexes in the communions of different churches, and you will find women far exceed men in numbers; perhaps they are double the number. The great truths of religion meet in the affections of women, if I may so express myself, a soil which is more congenial to their nature, more adapted for their reception than the state of mind in men. In this their constitution, the wisdom as well as the goodness of God appears. They readily, through the grace of God receive the word, which peculiarly qualifies them for acting the part, and discharging the important duties of mothers, which supports them under all the trials they are called to sustain, and in the frequent solitariness of domestic life, from the absence of a husband or the bereavement of children, constitutes their solace and joy."*

This subject teaches you how religion exalts and adorns the character of women. While every system of false religion tends to degrade the female sex, the Sacred Scriptures place them in their proper station, and represent them as designed to be the friends and companions, and not the slaves of man—as partakers of the same nature and heirs of the same hopes with him. Thus when the first of men awoke out of his deep sleep, and saw the help meet that his benevolent Creator had made for him, he recognized in her his second self, and impelled by the social feelings of his heart exclaimed, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." Under the Jewish economy men enjoyed peculiar and exclusive privileges, but under the gospel dispensation these marks of inferiority are removed, and women are entitled to equal privileges and blessings with men. For "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." O then make religion the great business of

* Romeyn's Sermons, vol. II.

your lives. "Acquaint yourselves with God and be at peace, that good may come unto you." Compared with the claims, privileges and duties of religion, every thing else appears trifling and insignificant. Riches—beauty—honour—domestic enjoyments—all are perishing, and can afford no adequate support to the mind amidst the loss of friends, the languors of sickness, the gloom of death, or the solemnities of a judgment day. Heaven born religion can alone sustain the soul during these solemn seasons. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Seek it. Seek it *now*. Seek it first in order of time, because it is first in point of importance. Like the Anna's—the Lydia's—the Dorcas' and the Priscillas' of old, "choose the Lord for your God," and "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." "For favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised."

As example is more powerful than precept, permit me to direct your attention to the character and latter end of one whose memory will always be dear to me, and who was well known and much respected by many of you, that from observing the correspondence between her character and that which we have drawn, and the blessed influence which religion shed around her dying bed, you may be induced to follow her as she followed the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not know the precise period when Mrs. BENNETT obtained an experimental acquaintance with divine truth, nor the particular means which led to it; but this I know that it was when she was in the bloom of youth; and that at an age when the world appears most fascinating to the human mind, she renounced its illusive pleasures, and was led by "the God of her fathers" to choose "that good part which shall not be taken from her." Hence in a letter dated May, 1805, written to a religious friend, she observes, "I once had strong convictions of sin and earnest desires for the salvation of my soul. I have felt sin to be a great burden; and at times, blessed be God, I thought I was entirely willing to give up all on earth for Christ, and could look up to him with hope and love. My soul was drawn near to Jesus." From the above extract it appears that her soul had been awakened before that time; and since then her conduct has afforded ample evidence that she had learned "the fear of the Lord."

We might speak of the influence which this principle exer-

cised over her temper and disposition, for although these were naturally good, religion made them still more amiable and agreeable. Hence during the eighteen months that I was an inmate in her family, I never saw even the appearance of peevishness or anger in her upon any occasion, and greatly admired the kindness of her disposition, and the suavity of her manners. I might enlarge upon the benevolence of her feelings which was so apparent in her conduct towards the poor and the afflicted, wherever her lot was cast. "For she stretched out her hand to the poor, yea she reached forth her hands to the needy." Her deeds of charity were, it is true, performed in an unostentatious manner, but they were not unobserved by Him who commands us "to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked," and are engraven upon the memory of those persons who have experienced her bounty. During her residence in this City several individuals were assisted by her in their temporal circumstances, as is well known to some who now hear me. I might speak of the charitable spirit that she indulged towards such as differed from her in their views of the doctrines of the gospel, for although she was "fully persuaded" in her own mind of the agreement between the doctrines which are taught by the Methodists and the Sacred Scriptures, and lived and died in the stedfast belief of them, she knew how to respect the sincerity, piety and usefulness of the followers of Christ in other churches. I might also speak of the neatness and plainness of her apparel, so becoming her station—of the exemplary manner in which she performed her domestic duties, frequently exerting herself even beyond her ability to promote the comfort and happiness of all around her, and like the virtuous woman mentioned in the context, "working diligently with her hands." "She looked well to the ways of her household and eat not the bread of idleness." But we shall pass over these excellent traits in her character, and proceed to observe—

That the influence which the fear of the Lord exercised over her was seen *in the sacrifices which she made when she entered on an itinerant life.* At that period she enjoyed many domestic comforts under the paternal roof, which she well knew she would lose when she became the wife of a Methodist Missionary. But this consideration did not move her, and having "counted the cost" she left an extensive circle of friends, and became literally "a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth." Nor was she prompted to do this by any splenetic feeling or unworthy motive but from a conviction that it was her duty.

That she feared the Lord was apparent *in the cheerfulness with which she encountered those difficulties, and submitted to*

those privations which are connected with an itinerant life. Our situation in this world is a mixed and mutable one. The gloom of sorrow as well as the smile of joy is seen upon the same countenance, and hope and fear alternately prevail in the same bosom. Hence every situation in life has its peculiar difficulties, and trouble is found associated with all the splendours of royalty, as well as in the hovels of the poor. But it may easily be supposed that an itinerant life is peculiarly trying and difficult, even under the most favourable circumstances, and necessarily requires on the part of those who are engaged in it, a great sacrifice of personal feeling and domestic comfort. When Mrs. BENNETT became the wife of a Missionary, the difficulties connected with such a situation in this District were far more formidable than they are at present. Methodism was at that time but in its incipient state in many places where we have now flourishing Societies—the Circuits were more extensive than they are at present—the travelling more difficult, and the inhabitants more scattered, which circumstances made it necessary for the Preacher to be much from home. Hence the care of the family chiefly devolved upon his wife. What a trying situation for a female to be placed in. Those only who have been placed in similar circumstances can form an adequate idea of the difficulties which are connected with it. But to all these trials our dear departed Sister patiently submitted, and cheerfully accommodated herself to every change of circumstance. Often have I heard her remark with great pleasure, that she never attempted to prevent Mr. B. from fulfilling his Circuit appointments, nor ever opposed his leaving home at any time to discharge his official duties.

That she feared the Lord was evident *from her great regard for the ordinances of religion, and the sentiments of esteem and affection that she cherished for the Ministers of Christ.* She loved the house of the Lord, and rejoiced to hear his servants speak of his glory in the sanctuary. Nor did she neglect those prudential means of grace which are peculiar to the Methodists, but rejoiced to hear those that feared the Lord “tell what he had done for their souls.” Hence though her family cares were great, and her health at all times delicate, these things did not prevent her from drawing nigh to God in the assemblies of his people. Nor did she wait upon the Lord in vain, as I have often witnessed with pleasure, when to use the expression of Bunyan, “I have seen the springs that were in her head, send the water down her cheeks,” and have heard her speak of the spiritual profit that she reaped from the means of grace; for though she was remarkably diffident in speaking of her religious attainments and was generally lamenting her unfaithfulness, at

times her heart was much enlarged while she spoke of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and of the preciousness of Jesus to her soul. Her affection for the Preachers was sincere and ardent, as was apparent from her conduct towards them when under her hospitable roof, and from the pleasure which she took in their company and conversation. But this is a topic upon which I dare not trust myself to enlarge. The intimate friendship that existed between us from the period that I first had the happiness of becoming acquainted with her till the close of her life—the truly maternal kindness with which she always treated me, produce feelings and associations that will always be dear to me, but which will not allow me to say all that might be said upon this occasion.

The blessed influence of divine grace was conspicuously displayed *in the fortitude with which she endured her last sufferings, and the triumphant manner in which she finished her earthly career.* She had been long afflicted with a pulmonic complaint, which at different periods brought her very low. But no serious apprehensions were entertained by her friends that her latter end was so near, until last summer, when, in consequence of a cold which she then caught, the strength of her disease was greatly increased, and manifested all the symptoms of a confirmed consumption. From that time till she breathed her last, her health and strength gradually declined, and the ravages of disease in a short time became so apparent as to impress the mind of a most affectionate husband with a conviction, that the “desire of his eyes” would soon be removed from him. Hence in a letter which I received from Mr. BENNETT, dated September 20, he writes:—“Mrs. BENNETT is very ill, and seems to be going fast to the grave”; and in another dated October 25, he observes:—“Mrs. B. is in a very declining state, and I fear will not long survive the shock which her constitution has sustained.” Her debility continued to increase until the 19th of February, when she breathed her last in the forty-first year of her age. About a week before her death, one of her daughters, aged five years, suddenly expired, and the evening before, her tender infant fell a victim to the king of terrors. During these severe afflictions, Mrs. BENNETT’S mind was kept in a state of tranquillity by God her Saviour, and her whole demeanour shewed that she had learned how to suffer patiently. “I think” says Mr. B. in one of his letters to me, “that Mrs. BENNETT’S mind is much more at rest and peace. The Lord has repeatedly manifested himself to her in the most encouraging manner, and life or death I hope all will be well.” His pious hope was fully realized. As her latter end approached her faith and hope were greatly

strengthened, and she was enabled to look upon death with an undismayed countenance. The feelings of nature were subordinated to higher principles, and in the agonies of dissolution, and surrounded by an affectionate husband and six beloved children, the living pledges of their mutual affection, she "rejoiced in hope of the glory of God." In a letter which I have received from Mr. B. since her death, he writes:—"The morning she was struck with death she was perfectly sensible, and said to me, 'this is death, do you not think so?' I replied, 'yes my dear, I think it is.' I then enquired, 'are you afraid to die?' her answer was strong and unequivocal, 'No, I have no fear.' After a short time, and while I was encouraging her to rely on the mercy of God in our Redeemer, she with a faltering voice exclaimed—"Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" This was her last end on earth." O! blessed end! O glorious consummation! To die praising the Lord. To cease singing the Lamb in hymns on earth, that she might go to sing his praise in strains of highest rapture in heaven!

"'Tis done, and now she's happy!"

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." What a proof did Mrs. BENNETT'S death bed present of the blessed effects of religion. What will beauty, or wealth, or wit do for us amidst the solemnities of a dying hour? What support can they afford the soul under such circumstances? What satisfaction will it then afford us to know that we have been admired and applauded by others, if we do not possess "the fear of the Lord." Alas! "Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain." What but religion could thus have turned "the shadow of death into the morning," and have enabled our departed Sister to praise the Lord even in the jaws of death? Her triumphant end is the more deserving of notice, as during the whole of her christian pilgrimage, she was much harrassed by the fear of death. Often have I heard her speak on this subject, and express her dread of the dark and gloomy grave. Yet glory be to God, at even-tide it was light, and her fears were vanquished by the power of faith. To her death was stingless, and the grave was stripped of its terrors.

"How calm her exit,
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn out winds expire so soft."

Such were the proofs which the life and death of ELIZABETH BENNETT afforded that she was a woman who feared the Lord, and surely we may venture to say that "she shall be praised." He who by this trying dispensation of Providence has been deprived of the wife of his youth—of one who was so well qualified to manage his domestic concerns—to soothe his sor-

rows and to aid him in his labours, will keenly feel the loss which he has sustained, and bless her memory. Her offspring—to whom she was one of the best of mothers—will rise up and praise her. Her numerous friends to whom she has been long endeared—the Members of our Societies and others on those Circuits where she has sojourned, will no doubt shed the silent tear while they review “the times of old, and the days of former years.” A proof of this is furnished in the prompt and voluntary manner in which you have put this Chapel in mourning on the present occasion, which circumstance not only affords a tribute of respect to the deceased, but is indicative of feelings and principles that reflect great credit on this Society. Nor will the poor whose wants she has relieved forget to praise her for her benevolent deeds. But above all she has received the approbation of her Saviour and Judge, for although “after we have done all we are unprofitable servants,” God has been pleased to assure us, that he “is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love which we shew toward his name.” Hence says the great Apostle of the Gentiles, “Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” With such assurances as these we may reasonably conclude, that Mrs. BENNETT has received through the divinely appointed medium, a portion of that honour which cometh from God, and compared with which all the pomp and splendour of earthly royalty are lighter than the small dust of the balance. Yes, though her name be not enrolled in the annals of fame—though it may not be associated in the pages of European publications with that of a HARRIET NEWELL and other females who have engaged in Missionary undertakings in Heathen lands; yet he “whose judgment is according to truth,” has already wiped away all tears from her eyes, and on that day of final decision and tremendous interest, when the Great Head of the Church, “shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,” she shall be honoured by Him before an assembled universe, and shall be for ever rewarded, according to the riches of his grace, although she lived and died in NOVA-SCOTIA. “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”