

**MEMOIR OF MRS. MARTHA
INNES, EDINBURGH;
WITH EXTRACTS FROM
HER DIARY AND LETTERS**

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Memoir of Mrs. Martha Innes, Edinburgh; With Extracts from Her Diary and Letters by W. Innes

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W. INNES

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OF
MRS MARTHA INNES,
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WITH EXTRACTS FROM HER DIARY AND LETTERS.

COMPILED AND EDITED
BY HER HUSBAND



“Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?”—*Young.*

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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the writer of the biographical portion of these pages first engaged in the perusal of the "Diary,"—after the occurrence of the sad event that deprived him of his dearest earthly companion,—the publication of any part of it was quite foreign to his intention. Though aware that the subject of the following sketch was occasionally in the practice of noting down thoughts that occurred to her, illustrative of her religious experience, he was not prepared to find so large a portion of M.S. as was discovered in her repositories. While reading it, his mind became impressed with the conviction that many parts of the exercises contained in the papers before him, were superior in point of interest, and more fitted to be useful, than much that issues from the press bearing the character of religious biography. Fearing, at the same time, that partiality biassed his judgment, it was not till he consulted friends more competent than himself to give an unprejudiced and judicious opinion, that he adopted the resolution of submitting to the public a selection from the Diary.

The author is aware, that by some it is deemed a

violation of confidence for surviving friends to give to the world what was evidently never designed for public inspection ; but when he takes into account, that very many of the dear children of God have declared themselves to have often been excited to duty, and strengthened for trial, by the perusal of religious biography, and that this volume may fall into the hands of some, whose trials may be similar in kind to those described, he does not feel at liberty to withhold what may be termed so signal an instance of the teaching of the Divine Spirit. And if one of the family of God shall be aided in his, or her, course Zionward, or one careless sinner led to serious thought, the labour will not have been in vain.

On one point the writer has felt much at a loss. Had he consulted his own inclination, he would have excluded as far as possible any reference to himself, involving matters of domestic interest. But in acting on this plan, he must have omitted much that was highly instructive and exemplary, in depicting her habits of thought and feeling as a wife. He would thus have been doing less than justice to the memory of one, of whose conduct in that important relation he desires to convey some idea (though a very inadequate one), and of whom the only opinion he could express, must be withheld, lest it should wear the aspect of fulsome panegyric. Several passages—which, from the self-devotement of character they exhibit, could not fail to awaken a chord of sympathy in every generous mind—have been most unwillingly excluded, as being of too private and sacred a nature to be exposed to any eye but that of

intimate and endeared friendship. Many to whom she was but slightly known, and who formed their opinion of her character from her natural reserve and quiet deportment, will be surprised to find that there existed an under current of strong feeling, whether displayed in communion with her God, or in the less exalted, but not less divinely sanctioned, enjoyments of social and domestic life.

The author has a mournful satisfaction in adding the testimony of some valued friends, who knew and appreciated the subject of those pages, and is unwilling to close this prefatory notice, without expressing the obligation he feels for the favour (superadded to many previous ones) of a notice from one who had ample opportunity of forming a judgment of his lamented partner, on whose *faith* her *life* may be considered as the best comment. He had requested Dr Beilby, whom she had long regarded as a beloved and attached friend, to furnish him with any information which his observation, during her last hours, might enable him to supply. But, as he remarked, she had, from the nature of her illness, spoken but little ; and from the almost suddenness of the final change, not as in the immediate prospect of death, until within a very short time of her losing the power of speech. Of the little she did say, some remembrance has been preserved in a letter written to an endeared relative. (See page 201.) The sketch of her character given by Dr Beilby—a highly esteemed friend of the family—will be received with less distrust, than if it had been drawn by one more nearly connected with her.

In preparing those pages for the press, the writer has found himself placed in unfavourable circumstances for supplying such additional information as might be desirable in the *first* part of the volume, from his being unacquainted with the subject of this Memoir, when the earlier portion of the Diary was written. This inability is the less to be regretted, as,—from her habit of viewing every incident in her earthly life, as bearing upon her advancement in the Divine life,—there will be found in the Diary a tolerably circumstantial record of the transition steps of her uneventful,—but perhaps not uninteresting history.

It is more than probable that occasional carelessness in composition, in what was intended as a record of private experience and feelings, will be detected by the critical reader. As for the biographer's share of the following pages, it may perhaps be admitted in part as an excuse for their many imperfections, that his portion of the labour was accomplished amidst much interruption, chiefly during the occasional intervals of business hours.

MEMOIR AND DIARY.

CHAPTER I.

“ I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.”—HOSEA II. 14.

THE object of the writer being not the composition of an elaborate memoir, but merely the introduction of such connecting links as shall make the Diary intelligible, he deems it unnecessary to give more than a passing notice of the early history of the subject of this biographical sketch.

Martha, the eldest daughter of Mr Magnus Fea, merchant, Hull, and of Mrs Ann King, was born about the beginning of the present century, and, when about seven years old, was deprived by death of the benefit of a mother's care. This deprivation was compensated in a great measure by the tender regard of her paternal aunt, who still survives, and of whom she often used to speak as “ a second mother.” Her early years were spent in the vicinity of Hull, in the usual amusements and avocations of childhood and youth; and though amiable and correct in her external deportment, we learn from her own statement, that it was not till a part of the family went to reside in Shetland, in the