

**MEMOIR OF SARAH  
LIDBETTER, AGED NINE  
YEARS AND A HALF**

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Memoir of Sarah Lidbetter, Aged Nine Years and a Half by Elizabeth Lidbetter

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**ELIZABETH LIDBETTER**

**MEMOIR OF SARAH  
LIDBETTER, AGED NINE  
YEARS AND A HALF**



MEMOIR  
OF  
SARAH LIDBETTER,

Æged Nine Years and a Half,

BY HER

AFFECTIONATE MOTHER.

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*"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."*  
Matt. chap. xxi. ver. 18.

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THIRD EDITION.

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AND

EDMUND FRY, HOUNDSDITCH.

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1832.

## PREFACE.

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SARAH LIDBETTER, the interesting subject of the following Memoir, was the daughter of Bridger and Elizabeth Lidbetter, (of the religious Society of Friends,) now residing in Brighton, but formerly at a farm in the county of Sussex; which they were obliged to leave during the general distress that the agriculturists met with. Since that time they have had to struggle with many difficulties to gain a livelihood for their increasing family, in which this dear child, although so young, participated, by sympathising with her parents in their various trials.

Sarah was born at Denton on the 3rd of third month 1822. The following pages are mostly written by her affectionate mother; yet many of her relations and

friends well remember her agreeable deportment when in health, as well as the patient and heavenly state of her mind at different times during her illness.

This precious child was indeed lovely both in mind and person, and, I doubt not, has been early transplanted to bloom in a better soil, and to join with purified spirits in singing songs of praise unto the Lord God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

S. B.

*Brighton, 22<sup>nd</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> Mo. 1831.*

\*.\* The terms, as well as the sense of the expressions, are retained in the following pages, although some verbal inaccuracies are corrected.

## MEMOIR.

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THE beloved subject of this Memoir was, from a very little child, fond of reading the Holy Scriptures, and showed a decided preference for religious publications. "Piety Promoted," "Guide to True Peace," "Baxter's Saint's Rest," and "The Pilgrim's Progress," were among her favourite choice; and if at any time, as a reward for many useful services, which she cheerfully performed and took delight in, I presented her with an interesting book of tales, that were amusing and entertaining, although they were gratefully accepted, yet it was easily perceived, that unless the tales were strictly authentic, or the anecdotes of a religious tendency, they were laid aside, and seldom read a second time. She was of a very unassuming, diffident turn of mind, yet from occasional remarks made to me when alone, on any subject that had been discussed in her hearing, I soon found



that her understanding was good, and that she was a child of quick perception and matured judgment. She much enjoyed our religious meetings, and spoke of having received comfort and instruction in attending them, even when held in silence. She was fond of retirement, and early experienced the comfort and advantage of secret prayer, endeavouring to bear in mind that she was always in the presence of her Heavenly Father. She was obedient, obliging, and affectionate to her parents, and orderly in her behaviour; and although a child of few words, she was beloved and respected by all who knew her, some of the neighbours holding her up as an example to their children. Her affectionate attentions to our other children; her tender manner of pleading with them, and reproving them when naughty, was truly instructive: her usual expression was, "Thou wilt displease thy Heavenly Father." And her kind manner of encouraging them in well-doing, by giving them some little thing to stimulate them to be good, was very helpful to me, and often relieved me from the constant care I otherwise must have had over them. She was, in fact, like a little mother to them; her conduct, more than words, evincing a mind guided and supported by Divine help and direction; and that the love and goodness of her Heavenly Father were shed abroad in her heart.

I never remember her to have needed correction; but when at any time she detected herself in error, her sorrow and grief were such as to require all the consolation and comfort I could give.

From the age of seven years, it was her daily practice to read a portion of the Holy Scriptures to the other children, endeavouring to impress it on their minds by asking them questions upon what they had heard; this she continued until within about two months of her decease, having them around her bed, exhorting them (as she was become too weak herself longer to do so) that they should continue in the frequent practice of reading the Bible; "which," she added, "is the best of books."

That she was, from early life, a child of prayer, I have no doubt, not only by remarks which she made in her illness, but from recollecting circumstances that occurred when very young and in health, which were not taken much notice of at the time. I remember her once asking me if I thought the Almighty always required that we should kneel when we pray. I said, "My dear, what makes thee ask me that?" She replied, "When I go to bed, and am in company with others, I do not like they should know when I pray." I said, "I believe every prayer that comes from a sincere heart is

accepted, whether with or without form." She meekly answered, "So I think, mother."

When about eight years of age she was attacked with inflammation in her side, attended with a cough and other symptoms of a threatening nature, of which she seemed fully aware; remarking one evening to a neighbour's daughter, who came to sit with her, that although she should have liked to live and help her mother, and be a comfort to her; "yet," she added, "if I die, I shall only go out of a wicked world, where there are many troubles and temptations." Her patience during this illness was remarked by all who witnessed it, and proved an alleviation and comfort to my mind under this afflicting dispensation.

My dear child so far recovered at this time, that her countenance had the appearance of health, and she was able to go with the other children to the British school, which being in a large room and airy situation, appeared, for a short time, to improve her health. She took great pleasure in attending this school, and enjoyed looking at the Scripture lessons which are hung round the room, telling me they often cheered and comforted her when left by herself during the dinner and play hour, as she was too weak and delicate to join the other children in their