

**EXTRACTS FROM A MANUSCRIPT
LEFT BY THE LATE MARY RECKITT OF
WOODBIDGE, WITH AN ACCOUNT
OF HER EXPERIENCE AND EXERCISES
OF MIND DURING HER LAST ILLNESS**

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Extracts from a Manuscript Left by the Late Mary Reckitt of Woodbridge, with an account of her experience and exercises of mind during her last illness by Mary Reckitt

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MARY RECKITT

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EXTRACTS

FROM A MANUSCRIPT LEFT BY

THE LATE

MARY RECKITT,

OF WOODBRIDGE,

CONTAINING

REMARKS ON HER RELIGIOUS PROGRESS

FROM EARLY LIFE;

WITH

An Account of her**EXPERIENCE AND EXERCISES OF MIND**

DURING HER LAST ILLNESS :

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HER MOTHER.

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1826.

MEMOIR OF
MARY RECKITT.

MARY RECKITT, the subject of the following memoir, was a daughter of Joseph and Mary Reckitt, of Woodbridge, in the county of Suffolk ; and granddaughter of William Reckitt, of Wainfleet in Lincolnshire, an approved minister in the religious Society of Friends ; of whose life and gospel labours in this country and in America, a valuable and instructive account was published, shortly after his decease.

She was born at Woodbridge, the 15th of 8th month, 1770. The death of her father when she was about three years of age, left her, with a younger and only sister, under the care of a widowed mother, of whose piety and maternal tenderness she has penned the following memorandum. "Great as this loss might be considered, [speaking of her father's death,] it was abundantly compensated by the watchful and

tender care of our beloved mother ; with whom we continued to live on the most endearing terms of mutual affection, until she arrived at the 77th year of her age : when, after a life of complicated trials, one of which was great bodily affliction, she was mercifully favoured to experience that 'the end crowns all : ' as set forth in a printed memorial, entitled 'Divine Mercy commemorated.'"

Mary Reckitt's mind was early imbued with the tendering influence of Divine grace ; which, however imperceptible in its beginnings, and gradual in its progress, wrought in her submissive soul, like the leaven "hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened," a blessed and permanent effect.

At this youthful period, when, as she acknowledged, she was a stranger to the deceitfulness of the human heart, and not fully aware of the source from whence the impressions on her mind proceeded, she appears to have derived much help and encouragement from the gospel labours of some of the Lord's servants ; who were imbued with a sense of her condition, and manifested a lively interest in her spiritual welfare. In reference to

this part of her life she writes thus: "By the renewings of the Holy Ghost, the work of regeneration was carried on in my soul; and never having had such strong propensities to evil as many others, the way did not appear so strait; and I was preserved in a good degree of consistency of conduct and conversation."

Her humble, Christian deportment, her love to the cause of Truth, and desire for the promotion of vital godliness, rendered her a good example to others, and qualified her for usefulness in religious society; particularly in our Women's Meetings for discipline. For nearly twenty years she filled, with acceptance to her friends, the office of Clerk in these meetings; and when prevented by declining health from attending them, it afforded her comfort that she had endeavoured in this way to render herself useful, observing: "Though such an exposure was very repugnant to my feelings, I have thankfully to acknowledge that I seldom failed of being strengthened to conduct the business in a manner so as to afford satisfaction to my friends; and, for the encouragement of the dear youth, I desire to testify that the retro-

spect of the prime of my days having been thus far devoted to the service of the church, has afforded me peaceful satisfaction."

For many years she stood in the station of an elder, which she endeavoured to fill with propriety, entertaining a just conception of its nature and importance. Her meek submission to the dispensations of Providence, and patient endurance of bodily disease, often attended with great suffering, were instructive to those around her. In such seasons her mind was often remarkably supported; and she was enabled to give evidence that her trust and confidence were placed on Him who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." On one of these occasions she writes as follows: "Under a deep sense of my unworthiness of that holy help which alone can enable me to bear with Christian fortitude, patience, and resignation, those afflictions attendant on frail humanity, a feeling of discouragement pervaded my mind; but I remembered that so great was the love of God to poor lost man, that 'He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' and that those who have been made

willing to accept the terms on which this salvation is freely offered, and are looking unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of their faith, may rest in humble confidence that strength will be afforded proportioned to every trial. Under these considerations my mind felt sweet consolation." 1820.

At another time she says: "Being again permitted to feel myself recovering from an illness of some weeks continuance, I have felt a desire to commemorate the same; having been, I think, evidently favoured with the extension of holy help, strengthening and supporting my mind under the pressure of great bodily weakness: on which account I have been at times enabled to offer a tribute of thanksgiving and praise to the great Dispenser of every blessing. With respect to the state of my mind, I think I never experienced more stripping seasons than of late, wherein I have felt so entirely destitute of all sense of a divine principle, as to feel a total incapacity availingly to seek after it, or even livingly to desire it; so that my state has been truly comparable to a stone at the bottom of Jordan. How deeply humiliating and abasing have these seasons been! but thereby we

become convinced that whatever we possess of heavenly treasure in our 'earthen vessels,' is all of free grace; dispensed in unmerited mercy, and wholly unattainable by any creaturely effort. After abiding for a time under these trials, I was favoured with a renewal of strength and ability to get to a state of waiting upon the Lord, as in the 'quiet habitation;' and although I have not at times felt much sensible consolation, yet I have had cause to rejoice in feeling the sufficiency of that Almighty power which alone is able to cause the 'dry bones' again to live, and the 'barren wilderness to become as a fruitful field.' And I wish to add to this memorandum, that I have been deeply convinced of the insufficiency of man, by any effort of his own, to effect any thing towards the great work of salvation; but that it must be wholly wrought out and effected by and through the glorious plan of redemption by Jesus Christ; and that those who happily become subjects of this redemption, will for ever renounce all claim to merit; and will therefore ascribe the glory where it is, and will be everlastingly, due." 10th of 9th Mo. 1822.