

**A DIARY OF
RELIGIOUS
EXPERIENCES**

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A Diary of Religious Experiences by Joseph Fisher

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JOSEPH FISHER

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A DIARY
OF
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES
BY
JOSEPH FISHER,
LATE OF
YOUGHAL.
WITH OBSERVATIONS
ON
ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

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INTRODUCTION.

JOSEPH FISHER, the writer of the following Diary, was the son of Reuben and Jenepher Fisher, of Youghal, deceased; by whom he received a guarded and religious education. He was, from a child, dutiful and respectful to them, and careful to keep to truth. He spoke of their pious care towards him, with satisfaction and thankfulness; and as having been instrumental in preserving him from many of the dangers incident to youth. He appeared to be preserved in innocency of life; and as he advanced in years, by submitting to the operations of Divine Grace upon his mind, he became a useful member both of religious and civil society.

He had many close trials and proving dispensations to pass through; but by endeavouring to maintain his integrity, and trusting in the Almighty Power, he experienced support under them.

He manifested a firm attachment to the religious principles of the Society of Friends, to which he be-

longed ; not from education merely, but from a strong conviction of their soundness and rectitude.

He was diligent in the attendance of religious meetings, and zealously concerned for the support of Christian discipline, and good order ; particularly useful in composing, as well as in preventing differences ; prompt in communicating caution and advice ; and always desirous of promoting a spirit of harmony and peace.

In the year 1806 he married Mary Ann Boardman ; and in about six years was left a widower with two children.

On the 19th of 12th month, 1815, whilst passing through his store in the morning, he was suddenly taken ill. One of the men observing it, endeavoured to support him ; but life was nearly gone ; and after two easy moans, he expired, his spirit departing as in a moment to Him who gave it.

In contemplating the awfulness of such a sudden transition from the active scenes and cares of this life, to a state of eternal duration, the mind seems arrested with a degree of silent astonishment. And in pondering the dealings of Almighty Providence, with the children of men, we are induced to acknowledge, that

“ His judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out ;” and yet, in a firm persuasion of the unerring wisdom of all his dispensations, the righteous can humbly acquiesce therein, and is enabled to say : “ Good is His will, and perfect all He does.”

A remark found in the pocket-book of the deceased, and which appears in the Diary, seems particularly striking, viz. : “ In the midst of life we are in death.” How appropriate to his end ! for in the midst of life and of health, he was taken away as in a moment : yet we humbly and consolingly believe, that through redeeming love and mercy, he was prepared to receive the awful summons ; and that his spirit called from its earthly tabernacle, entered into the joy of his Lord, and into everlasting rest.

It was with satisfaction, the following memorandums were found after his decease, by way of Diary ; and though not regularly kept, the remarks being instructive, and evincing the state of his mind at different periods, during the last few years of his life, it is hoped that the perusal of them will prove useful, and that the awful suddenness of the event, may make a profitable impression upon the minds of survivors, and evince the necessity of attending to the injunction of

the Great Master : " Therefore be ye also ready ; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

The remarks subjoined, on Election and Reprobation, have in one remarkable instance produced conviction of the unsoundness of that doctrine, which teaches that any are excluded by an irrevocable decree, from working out their salvation with fear and trembling. It is, however, proper to state, that being the observations of an individual, and written altogether in his private capacity, he only, and not the Society of which he was a member, can be implicated in any thing he has said on that or any other subject.

A DIARY, &c.

6th Month, 19th, 1813.

“I WILL turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin.”* So be it, O Lord, saith my soul!

23d. In an opportunity this evening, I was afresh convinced of the benefit of silence above words. No remark was made by any Friend on the state of the individual case, until I at last ventured to encourage her, by a few words, to express herself, if she felt any thing to communicate; and after some pause, she made an acknowledgment for her conduct, in a broken manner, far more satisfactory than she had be-

* Is. i. 25.