

**SOME PARTICULARS OF THE
LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH OF
JANE WHEELER, DAUGHTER
OF THE LATE DANIEL WHEELER**

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Some Particulars of the Last Illness and Death of Jane Wheeler, Daughter of the Late Daniel Wheeler by Sarah Wheeler

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SARAH WHEELER

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PHILADELPHIA:
WILLIAM H. PILE, PRINTER,
1867.

INTRODUCTION.

For the information of such as had no personal knowledge of the subject of the following imperfect sketch, it may be proper to remark, that there was much in her natural character to render that patient acquiescence in the Lord's will, which the latter part of her illness displayed, peculiarly difficult, and to make the triumph of Divine grace most striking. She possessed an original and vigorous mind, combined with a very lively and playful imagination, and extreme buoyancy of spirits. These rendered her the charm of the social circle, and she had just attained an age when such advantages are felt in their full force. Life,—in the dreams of her ardent fancy,—was decked with every charm, and, at the period when the hand of disease arrested her, she had nearly completed her

twenty-first year, and looked brightly forward to a lengthened term of earthly enjoyments. She had known little of the chastening hand of affliction, and her will, naturally strong, had been but imperfectly subjected. About four years before her decease, she had an alarming attack of illness, which for some time threatened her life; and when stretched on the bed of sickness, she became the subject of strong convictions. Her sins were set in order before her, and she was roused to a sense of the danger of her unregenerate state. Thus convicted and brought to repentance, she was enabled to find reconciliation with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. A blessed calm succeeded, and for some months subsequently, she steadfastly pursued a religious course; but as health and spirits returned, she gradually declined; the world and its temptations,—acting with peculiar force on a lively and interesting girl of seventeen,—drew her mind from higher objects; and though from time to time a sense of the power and obligations of religion was evidently felt, the general tenor of her daily course was not such as to leave the minds of those most deeply interested in her welfare at ease respecting her. She was far too

noble-minded to affect what she did not really feel; and for several years, she remained apparently halting between two opinions,—at seasons softened and contrited, remembering her former visitations,—but more frequently seeking enjoyment from the unsatisfying trifles of life, and anxious rather for the gratification of self, than to be found striving to know and to do the Lord's will. Promiscuous reading, and especially that of an imaginative character, was at this time a great snare to her. Bitterly did she afterwards lament the precious hours thus wasted, and it was striking to observe how sedulously she avoided whatever was calculated to revive her interest in subjects of this nature. One day, in the early part of her illness, a friend sent her a volume of poems of the class she had most delighted in: she requested it might be returned, with the assurance that she *then* regarded such works as a most unprofitable employment of time, even in health, but that in *her* circumstances, she should feel the perusal of them highly culpable.

It is, perhaps, necessary to remark, that the following very imperfect account of her last illness was penned for the satisfaction of some

absent members of her family,—several of whom were far distant at the time of its occurrence. A more extensive circulation is now given to it, in the fervent hope that it may be made instrumental in leading some,—and especially those of her own age,—wisely to consider their doings in time of health, and to press after a conformity of heart and conduct to the will of Him, whom they will find to be the only availing Comforter when stretched upon a bed of sickness, that they may thus happily spare themselves that season of distress and anguish of soul which she underwent, through a consciousness of disobedience, and unfaithfulness to the light received. To her, indeed, through the aboundings of a Saviour's compassion, a place of repentance was mercifully granted, after a long night of conflict,—but let us not forget, that the opportunity of seeking reconciliation with God, which her lengthened illness presented, may not be afforded to us; and let us call to mind, with application to ourselves individually, the emphatic declaration of the Apostle: “Behold, *now* is the accepted time,—behold, *now* is the day of salvation.”

S. W.

Ninth month, 1840.

THE LAST DAYS

OF

JANE WHEELER.

It was on one of the closing days of the year 1836, that our dear Jane took the cold which brought on consumption, and terminated in her decease on the 15th of the 7th month following. For some weeks little alarm was felt; but the cough continuing violent, accompanied by night perspirations, and severe chills in the early part of each day, some of us began to feel very anxious respecting her. Dr. H., however, thought our fears groundless; and it was not till the 16th of the 3rd month, that he manifested any apprehensions respecting the serious nature of her disorder. Her appearance on that day shocked him a good deal, and he urged her immediate removal to town, (Petersburgh,) in order that he

might be able to see her daily. The next day she was conveyed thither, and he immediately began to take active measures for her relief. These, however, produced little alleviation of her symptoms, and it was concluded, in a few days, to consult Dr. R. It was not, I believe, till the 10th of the 5th month, that she made any allusion to the state of her feelings, and the formidable nature of her disorder. For some days her spirits had been in a state of extreme depression, which had been very much aggravated by a mistimed remonstrance on the subject. The morning after this, I found her weeping bitterly, when for the first time she referred to her critical situation. "How can I," said she, "keep up my spirits, when I see my danger, and all looks dark before me?" I tried to comfort her, by reminding her that there was One who would never forsake her, and whose goodness she had known in times past. "Ah!" said she, "but he hides his face." I told her I had often feared, that in health her obedience had not kept pace with her knowledge; but that she had acted in many things contrary to what she knew to be right; and this might be one cause of her present distress. To this, she fully as-