

**A BRIEF MEMOIR OF MRS.
LYDIA M. MALCOM,
LATE OF BOSTON, MASS.**

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A Brief Memoir of Mrs. Lydia M. Malcom, Late of Boston, Mass. by Mrs. Lydia M. Malcom

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LATE OF BOSTON, MASS.**



M^{RS} LYDIA M. MALCOM.

A
BRIEF MEMOIR.
OF
MRS. LYDIA M. MALCOM,
LATE OF BOSTON, MASS.

WIFE OF
REV. HOWARD MALCOM, D.D.

*"Not unto us, O Lord! not unto us, but unto THY NAME give glory,
for thy mercy, and thy truth's sake."*—Psalm CXX. 1.

TWELFTH THOUSAND.

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M243
M244b MEMOIR.

Mrs. MALOOM was the eldest daughter of ROBERT SHIELDS, of Philadelphia, and eldest grand-daughter of THOMAS SHIELDS, who, for more than fifty years, was deacon of the first Baptist church in that city, and after the organization of the Triennial Convention, was Vice-President of its Board till his death. He was a man of great wealth, great simplicity of manners, and great reputation for wisdom, firmness, and benevolence.*

She was born July 17, 1797, and enjoyed the best advantages of education which Philadelphia afforded. In her youth, she was remarkable for a love of natural scenery, a taste for reading, and a mind of uncommon vigor; but chiefly for the ardor with which she engaged in the amusements and pleasures of a numerous gay acquaintance. At this period she kept no diary, and few of her letters are extant.

In the year 1816, a small party was formed

* See an obituary notice in the American Baptist Magazine for March, 1829; and in vol. II. of the Latter-Day Luminary, published at Philadelphia.

to spend a few weeks at Great Egg Harbor, on the sea shore. Of this party, among the young persons, who had never seen each other before, were Miss Shields, and Mr. M., a member of Dr. Staughton's church in Philadelphia, and studying Divinity under his care. Mr. M. took frequent opportunities of conversing with the two young ladies of the party, on the subject of religion. In a few days, it became apparent that these conversations had produced a deep effect on the mind of Miss S., while to the other, the subject seemed rather to become repulsive.

Among other walks in the neighborhood, one led to a retired, private burial-ground. There, on a rude seat, almost daily conversations occurred between the new inquirer and her young spiritual adviser. Her mind seemed to embrace with avidity the glorious truths of revelation. Surprising as it may seem, they had never before been urged upon her, personally, by any Christian friend. A diary, which she was now persuaded to commence, exhibits the genuine feelings of evangelical conviction.

The following extract from it shews her fondness for the contemplation of nature, and that, like too many others, she was prone to mistake it for religious feeling.

"Esteem and affection form the basis of a

friendship such as had never penetrated my heart until Howard taught me to love God.—And that love is the cement which will ever hold it firm to him. I was always a passionate admirer of the beauties of nature, when on a visit to my grand-papa's* at the age of fourteen, I thought myself supremely happy whilst climbing the mountain's rocky height, pausing to admire the beauties of the little wild flower, culling the fruit that hung in fragrant clusters amidst the thick arched trees, listening to the cheerful song of the birds, welcoming the appearance of the day, observing the dewy flowers glistening in the beams of the morning, and after having gained the summit of the mountain, the Delaware proudly rolling its waves along the green banks, or dashing with a white foam and washing the base of the frowning rocks—this to a mind light with joy, and totally unacquainted with sorrow, was enchanting. From viewing a scene magnificently sublime, in mingled admira-

* In Wayne County, Pennsylvania, where deacon Shields owned some thousands of acres of land. He had laid out the town of Damascus, and erected for himself a mansion, house, mill, barn, &c. He also erected a meeting house, at his individual expense; and deeded it, with two acres of land, to Mr. Yerkes, his miller; in trust, for the use of a Baptist church, if any should ever be constituted there. In the meantime it was to be free to all.

tion and astonishment my mind would ascend from nature's works to nature's God, and my childish imagination endeavor to portray the supreme beauty of a God, whose power, wisdom and greatness is so unbounded, and is so strikingly displayed in his works. At the recollection of those much-loved scenes, my mind thrills with joy, and with pleasure I dwell on the kindness of a beloved grand-father and grand-mother, who with fond delight indulged my childish caprices, and with watchful care, assisted in forming my mind and instilling into it the principles of virtue—All, all, with sacred gratitude is remembered, and never, until life ceases, will be forgotten.

“After having left school I was introduced to scenes of fashionable gaiety, and plunged in a vortex of pleasure. All was novel, and of course pleasing. The winter was spent in dissipation. Inexperienced and unacquainted with the deceit of human nature, I believed the heart of every one expressed in their countenance; if I received a smile, I believed them my friends, and thought it a sufficient claim to my esteem.

“After indulging deep and serious reflection, caused by the display, of God's glorious power of creation, my mind would swell with adoration, but it was my *friend* who taught me to