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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF MRS. SARAH RATHBURN.

By Rev. William Wilson.

MRS. SARAH RATHBURN was the daughter of the late Mr. John Allison, and was born on the 7th September, 1780, in the township of Cornwallis, Nova Scotia.

The first serious impressions made on her mind were under a Sermon preached by the late Rev. Wm. Black, when she was at the early age of between ten and twelve years. But by her intermixture with gay company; and giving way to a volatile disposition, which was peculiar to her, those impressions gradually wore away, and she continued indifferent as to her everlasting interests until just about the time of her marriage with Mr. Chas. Rathburn, which took place in the year 1802. The circumstance which then impressed her mind with the vanity of this world, and the importance of being ready for the next, was the sudden death of a young female with whom she had been intimate, and who was called away in the bloom of youth to her eternal home. These impressions were deepened by the close and heart-searching sermons that she heard from the Wesleyan Missionaries, who occasionally visited Horton, the place where she then resided. She began to feel that she was born for higher pleasures than the world could give; but in order to the enjoyment thereof, she must forsake sin, turn to God, and believe with her heart unto righteousness. Under the influence of these impressions, she resolved to give her heart to God, and she found "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." This event took place in the year 1804. She then joined the Wesleyan Society, of which she continued a member until her death. "But the word of the Lord was precious in those days;" the number of ministers was small, consequently she had comparatively few opportunities of hearing the word preached, and of christian fellowship and communion. These circumstances, together with her own inexperience and her trials, had a paralyzing effect upon her mind, and although she continued a member of society, and constantly received the ministers in her house whenever they came into that part of the country; yet she fell into a spiritual lethargy, and lost her sense of the Divine favour. She continued in this state until the year 1820, at which time she resided at Falmouth, where a most gracious outpouring of the Spirit, and revival of religion took place, under the ministry of the Rev. William Burt. During the revival, her soul became quickened, she was led to bewail her backslidings, and again to venture her soul by faith on Christ. The Lord again spoke peace to her soul, and "sent forth the spirit of his son into" her heart "crying Abba

Father." From this time she continued to retain a sense of her acceptance until her death. About this time her husband also enjoyed experimental religion. Her house was then opened for preaching, and, as one of her children writes, "they fondly hoped to spend a few years in each other's society, and in helping each other to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling." But she was soon after called to sustain a most severe trial, for her pious and excellent partner, was taken away from her by death, in the month of May following. Severe as this stroke was, she bore it with patience, because he died trusting in God, and therefore she hoped to meet him again in Heaven.

A few years after this, she removed to Newport, and here, in her widowed state, she was called to sustain further trials by the bereaving hand of death.

In the year 1825, she lost a child, an interesting girl of twelve years of age. In 1831, she lost another daughter, a young woman who had been married about a year and a half, leaving a babe only a few hours old. To this infant, Mrs. Rathburn clung with the most fond affection, but in six months, it also was torn from them by death's resistless aim.

Her complicated trials had a powerful effect upon her mind, and seemed to undermine her constitution. But although she felt these things deeply, yet she did not "sorrow as others which have no hope;" she felt her trials as coming from the hand of her heavenly father, who "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men;" and she was often heard to say, she needed them all, to wean her affections from earthly things.

In the month of March, 1833, she was taken ill, and continued so during the summer. In the month of September following, she got a little better, and was enabled to go out for the last time; but her complaint soon returned, she was from that time confined to her room, and for the last two years of her life, was entirely confined to her bed.

During her long affliction, she never expressed a doubt of her interest in Christ.

Her nervous system was much affected, so that her disposition, which was naturally cheerful, was sometimes so influenced thereby, that even the kindness of her friends seemed to distress her. A visit, however, from a minister, or the prayers of any other Christian friend, were always grateful to her, and frequently seemed to dissipate the clouds, that had encircled her mind. The repeated visits of the Rev. Henry Pope, the resident minister in Newport, were peculiarly blessed to her.

She also derived great comfort from hearing the Scriptures read, and particularly the Psalms of David. It was her constant practice to have a portion of the