

Practical Papers.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF HESTER ANN ROGERS.

BY REV. J. RIDLEY.



AMONGST the numerous biographies that enrich the literature of Methodism, few have greater attractions, or have been more widely circulated, than the interesting memoirs of Hester Ann Rogers. So impressive are the memoirs, and so entertaining are the letters, that one can hardly lay aside the book, without regretting that it is not twice as long. Indeed, it is always readable, and one may read it through again and again, and still be entertained.

There is such a Christ-like simplicity in her memoirs, and such a deep spirituality in her letters, that no one can peruse them carefully without being benefitted. In the beginning of the year 1756, in a parsonage in Cheshire, Hester Ann Rogers was born. Trained up with rigid strictness in the Church of England, of which her father was a minister, she very early manifested a profound reverence and ardent attachment for things spiritual; so that at five years of age she "took great delight in the Bible," and "received manifest answers to prayer." When nine years old, her father died, and her record of that event is very pathetic,—“He took me by the hand and said,—‘My dear Hetty, you look dejected. You must not let your spirits be cast down; God hath ever cared for me, and he will take care of mine. He will bless you, my dear, when I am gone. I hope you will be a good child, and then you will be happy.’ Then laying his hand on my head, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and, with a solemnity I shall never forget, said,—‘Unto God’s gracious mercy I commend thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, and make thee his child and faithful servant, to thy life’s end.’”

She was greatly affected by the loss of her father, and such was the gratitude that she felt at receiving such a blessing from his dying lips, that she says:—“I cannot find words to express what were the feelings of my heart on this occasion. Love for my valuable and affectionate parent, grief to reflect I was now losing him, and gratitude that his dying lips had pronounced such a blessing on my head, quite overpowered me.”