THE FERRAR FAMILY,

A TALE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

BY MRS. LUNDY.

To my Daughters this little Work is affectionately inscribed,...By A. E. LUNDY. Lockington Rectory, Epiphany, 1847.

PREFACE.

characters, eminent for their piety, talents, and worldly trials. In one period of that era we have Ferrar, Herbert, Morley, Walton, Ken, Taylor, and many others cellent men are well known to the scholar and historian, but their lives being mostly confined to voluminous and expensive works, preclude many young not increase in my heart." persons from becoming acquainted with them. The ciety at Little Gidding has been written with a view world cannot give: set your whole heart upon prayer were separated into three services, and the Clergyman Gidding, a day of holy quiet, and rest, free from the to shew that the forms and ceremonies of our Church may be kept up, free from Romish errors and superstitions. Mr. Ferrar's tenets in the 17th century were very similar to those of many of our Clergy in the 19th century: he had the same enemies to contend with which they have now, and he combatted with them on all sides with holy and fervent zeal .-To the young reader the account of the females of the society at Little Gidding may be instructive; their piety, their active duties, their elegant acquirements, far-famed religious society of Little Gidding. industry and charity, are worthy of imitation in such a degree as change of time and circumstances allow. and to such this little work is addressed by a member of the true Church.

CHAPTER L

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," the discourse of their elder companions, and on this built his future works. occasion the conversation was solely between them.

by working for His Majesty King Charles; I only hope time at Leipsic, where many eminent scholars courted

to be looked at occasionally."

he is staunch if he dared but avow it.

ridicule? Think you that the retirement from public everything worthy of remark. From Rome our tra- with their needles, and they made them, as well as see such a colony of ascetics as we form. Depend great difficulties, and this good son abandoned his stores, which they distributed freely, and would with conversation for the court for a week at least."

vanities, I should say its vices."

Alice, "I do not wish to mix in its follies, its vices I mankind. shrink from, yet I think it possible to live in the world without being either weak or dissipated."

the pleasures of the world are a temptation which time Mr. Ferrar the elder died in a good old age, leav- and praise, they repaired to a large apartment where those who can should fly from. Does not the prayer ing his son Nicholas sole executor and guardian to a a cheerful fire in winter was ready for them: there of prayers express this, 'Lead us not into temptation?' large family of children and grand-children. Just was Mr. Ferrar, to whom the younger people repeated Happy are those who, like every member of this house- as the business connected with these affairs was settled, the psalms and chapters they had learnt, till seven; innocent recreations for leisure hours."

you are, but I know I never can be."

deathbed, - 'May my last end be like bers.' "

when engaged in it; fly for refuge to that Being who of Little Gidding was ever ready to assist. can change the hearts of those who seek him aright; Thus the family spent the autumn of 1625 and the cannot do better than give the opinion of Mr. Ferrar

Royal, in France; the same good motives inspired him so many striking deliverances from so many perilthe various members of both, and the abolition of both ous attemps of the devil or man upon his soul and was somewhat similar. Mr. Nicholas Ferrar was body, and since his family was now rescued from a In the year 1636, four young ladies were seated at born in the year 1592: he was the third son of a ruin so deplorable that, but for God's infinite goodness a table in a large wainscoated apartment in the old wealthy merchant, and his mother was eminent for her to them, they had fallen, he would separate himself to manor-house of Little Gidding, near Huntingdon, virtues. In his childhood he was remarked for his serve God in this holy calling, namely, to be the Leengaged in a work of no common kind, and on which great beauty, though ever of a delicate constitution; vite himself in his own house, and to make his relatheir whole attention appeared to be rivetted; yet | yet his vigorous temper of mind overcame his bodily | tions his cure of souls, adding, that he had that day ever and anon a lighter conversation than that which infirmities, and his talents developed themselves at the received episcopal authority to do so. His pious mocomments on their task drew forth, passed amongst early age of six, when he studied history and the bible ther and other relations present were overjoyed at this these industrious and devoted young women, who so as to occupy most of his time; and three years were all nieces of the pious master of the house where made him acquainted with the historical part, and long to be a blessing to the whole family, who would they dwelt, though, in regard to each other, they were enabled him to commit the whole of the Psalms to henceforth aid him in all his exertions for the "one only cousins, being the children of different parents. memory, while other boys were at play. He was thing needful." No sooner was it known he had ta-These young ladies were all dressed alike, in robes of placed at a school near Newbury, in Berkshire, under ken orders, than several noblemen offered him valuable plain black stuff, formed in the simplest manner of the the care of Mr. Brooks, an excellent man, from whom times, and had very much the appearance of a con- he probably received the first impression of that selfventual costume, but instead of the head gear of a denying and religious course of life, which he, after nun, they had their hair neatly arranged in the manner many years, illustrated in his own family. At thirteen of maidens of the better class at that period. Isabella he was admitted at Clare Hall, Cambridge, as a fellow Morley, the eldest of the party, was about twenty-five commoner, and, when he had taken his degree, was years of age, and the sedateness of her manner, and chosen by unanimous consent a fellow of his College. the lead she took in the work before them, entitled His life was without reproach, and his literary acquireher to be considered a kind of monitor to her com- ments beyond all competition; his industry was repanions, who were all much younger: her fine and markable, but above all, his piety for a youth of twenty pensive features had something of the Madonna char- was beyond all praise. But with the enlargement of acter, and the calm expression of her countenance his mind, the health of his body failed, and, after seven spoke of the pure and refined spirit that reigned within. years' residence at Cambridge, his physician advised Alice Weston was a decided contrast to her cousin: him to seek renewed health in foreign travel. Mr. covered with blue silk, embroidered with gold; the she had just reached her eighteenth year, and no one and Mrs. Ferrar were very unwilling to part with a could look upon her without being struck by her rare son so deservedly dear to them, but the hoped-for same colour, laced and fringed, with vallance about beauty; and what rendered this fair girl still more benefit induced them to submit to this trial, and they fascinating, was the total unconsciousness of her own commended him to the care of that Being who can attractions. Her laughing eyes and fair hair contrasted send the angel of health with healing in his wings. taffeta, and all was suitable and very noble: but these well with the dark eyes and ebon tresses of Isabella; They were both eminent for their piety, and Bishop were only used on Sundays and Holy-days; there and the simple black dress tended to set off the daz- Linsell used to say of Mrs. Ferrar, 'he knew few wo- | were carpets of coarser material for the week-days.zling freshness of her complexion. Of the other two men who could equal her in wisdom, charity, and piety; A goodly font was placed in a suitable part of the cousins, Maud and Mary Ferrar, nothing particular and we may well imagine the early lessons of childhood appeared in regard to personal attractions: they were both younger than Alice, and listened attentively to Nicholas, and proved the foundation upon which he

"Well," said Alice, in a lively tone, "I shall not be after visiting the Hague, and other towns of note in sorry when this work is finished, though we be honoured Holland, he passed into Germany, and remained some he will duly appreciate our labours, though, most pro- his acquaintance; but his popularity drawing around bably, that which we have taken such pains to accom- him too many visitors, he retired to a neighbouring plish will be placed as a curiosity amongst many others village, and studied the German language and its most choice authors. After visiting the Imperial Court and virtue as well as grammar, music and arithmetic, to-Fie upon thee, cousin Alice," said Isabella Morley, city, he bent his course from thence to Italy. Many "'Judge not, lest ye be judged:' I am of a different German towns were at this time infected with the opinion, and I augur much good from His Majesty's plague, so that when he came upon the frontiers of God, as will be hereafter seen. Mr. Ferrar assigned visit to my worthy uncle. Why should he turn out Italy, he was compelled at one place to perform quar- to all his female relatives, according to their age and of his road to visit our humble society, if he had not antine. This occurred during Lent, and he employed condition, "chambers, closets, gardens, and walks of had a good motive for it? Why should he wish for this season of solitude and fasting to good pursuch a work as this, if he did not intend to make a pose: he had now leisure to revise his notes, and for the schoolmasters and scholars, and placed his good use of it? How know we but the perusal of reduce his observations to method. In the morning own lodging in the centre of the house, so that he this very book may impress him with thoughts which he went up into a neighbouring mountain, where great he may not yet have felt! Yea, with the Divine bles- abundance of wild thyme and rosemary grew, and where sing, this humble work of our hands may lead him to with a book and with his Creator, whom he met at of his household might lodge; and as every thing at reflections which may comfort him in that hour when every turn in the closest walks of his mind, he spent Little Gidding was done decently and in order, he the world is passing away. Alas! these are troublous the day in reading, prayer, and meditation, coming times, when those devoted to God and the true Church down in the evening to an early supper of fish, which are obliged to retire, as it were, into distant places to was his only set meal. We next find Mr. Ferrar at As Little Gidding partook somewhat of the conventual worship. As to the court, there is little true religion Padus, where, after some stay, he had a severe fit of system, without its defects, we are assured by a Bishop there, except in the heart of the king, and I do believe sickness; but it was the will of God to raise him from it, and he went on to Rome. But this city was not "You are such an orator, Isabella," said Alice, "I so safe a place for protestant travellers in the seven- always the same:" and he adds, "if ever women cannot argue with you, nevertheless I think the king's teenth century as it is in the nineteenth, and he was merited the title of the devout sex, these gentlewomen visit to our retired habitation was one of curiosity obliged to change his lodging every night, and shorten won it by their carriage, and deserved to wear it." Think you that a society like ours can escape his stay to ten days; yet in that time he took note of These good Protestant Sisters of Charity were expert life for so many years of such a man as our uncle, once veller went to Marseilles, and took shipping for a port so esteemed in high places, can escape notice? And in Spain, from whence he went to Madrid, where he methinks it were no great trouble for the king and his found many of his countrymen. But a letter from his herbs for the cure of simple maladies; they distilled gallant train to ride a few miles out of their road to father informed him that his family were involved in cordial waters, and had a room on purpose for their upon it our sayings and doings will afford subject of purpose of visiting France, and hastened to set off for their own hands dress the wounds of the poor, and England, and, after a tedious journey over the Spanish "Alice Weston," said Isabella, "I am truly grieved Mountains, on foot, he arrived at St. Sebastian, and, for the soul's health. Of these young ladies, for there to hear you speak in such a tone of levity of a society after few days' sail, put into Dover, whence he hurried were nine or ten, four were selected to take the charge which stands unrivalled in this kingdom, or in any with an anxious heart to London. The fluctuation of the household affairs, but in such a manner as to other protestant country, for its simple and humble between hope and fear, on his approach to his father's piety. What would our worthy uncle say to hear a house, may be imagined: the door stood invitingly member of his own family speak in terms so disre- open, he rushed into his father's apartment, and fell spectful? But it seemeth to me, Alice Weston, that at his feet, who, seeing a man in a Spanish habit beg- vile, but her office required reflection, and judicious you have got a new light; you did not use to talk in ging his blessing, demanded who he was; but soon management of servants; she was required to enter this way; I flattered myself you were one of us in was he raised to his father's bosom, who was all thank- all household expenses in an account book; and these heart and spirit! Surely the sight of our good king fulness for this unexpected pleasure. Thus, after five domestic exercises fitted Mr. Ferrar's nieces for being and his gallant train has not infected you with a wish years of unwearied travel of body and mind, Ferrar what many of them afterwards became, wives and good to live in the world again, to mix in its follies and returned home with an improved constitution, an managers of their own establishments. As "order is increase of knowledge and useful information, and with the soul of business," so all was conducted at the "You accuse me wrongfully, dear cousin," said a heart devoted to the service of God and the good of manor-house with such exactness as might be compared

In the year 1624 Mr. Ferrar was elected a member there, for every one had his or her stated duties. of the House of Commons, but soon became tired of "Perhaps so," replied Isabella, "but in my opinion, the intricacies of a political career; and about this five, and having made their private sacrifice of prayer hold, may live in the daily preparation for a better the great plague of 1625 broke out in all its horrors: breakfast and private reading till nine, when the bell world, amidst employments for the industrious and the infection reached the house next to that of Mr. summoned them to prayers in the church; then all Ferrar, and one person died, but great hopes were en- came together again in the chamber, where a hymn "It would ill become me," said Alice, "to express tertained that the disease of which he died was not was sung, accompanied by the organ, after which they myself ungraciously of anything my excellent uncle the plague, and the family attended the funeral. - proceeded by a covered way from the house to the thinks it right to do or to teach; he is a bright ex. Another person sickened in the same house, and Mr. church in orderly procession, the three school-masters ample, and would fain have all that he cares for like Ferrar, in pious care for his aged mother, removed her leading the way in gowns, the youths in caps and gowns himself. But alas! we are not all formed alike in and all his household to the residence of his sister, following; then came Mr. Ferrar and his aged mother, disposition, and I feel that I am not worthy to be one Mrs. Collett, at Bourne, in Cambridgeshire, while he his brothers, their children, and the servants. The of such a holy society. The thoughts of my own remained in the city till the weekly victims amounted masters took their places, the boys kneeled on the backsliding make me very unhappy, for, though I try to four thousand, in order that he might clear off all upper steps, and the women sat by themselves: as to banish the recollection, I still feel pleasure in re- debts on his father's estate, and place the remains to was the custom in the antient Church, the readingverting to the days when I lived in London and par- the best advantage for his brothers and sisters. Mr. desk and pulpit stood opposite each other, of equal took of some of the amusements of that gay city: the Ferrar had recently purchased a mansion in an obscure height, and Mr. Ferrar, in his surplice and hood, conpageants which from the windows I used to gaze upon, village in Huntingdonshire, named Little Gidding, and ducted the service. On returning home his elder

"Tame me not as an example, dear Alice," said pairs, the good old lady, her worthy son, and the other had learnt in the past week. At half-past ten the her ousin, "I am but a humble imitation of our re- members of the family here took up their abode. The minister of the next parish came with his own flock to veredgrandmother; she was indeed a saint upon earth, sacrilege and profaneness of a former proprietor had Little Gidding to preach; Mr. Ferrar read the second A Sketch of the Religious Society of Little Gidding. and now we can have no doubt she is a saint in heaven! tempted him to turn the village church into a barn, service at the communion table, when a psalm being I hat the great privilege, Alice, of being brought up which was now filled with hay; on seeing which Mr. sung, the minister preached, and all retired in order under her care, of assisting her in works of piety and Ferrar ordered all the workmen who were engaged to the house. In a large apartment the poor children usefilness, and of witnessing her happy and peaceful no the repairs of the house, to fling the hay out of the ranged themselves at long narrow tables placed on windows, and clean it as well as they could. The trestles, where they stood while they took their dinner; "It was, indeed, a privilege," said Alice, "and per- ruinous state of the dwelling scarce afforded a dry some of the family remained to establish order and hap, had I been brought up 'at the feet of Gamaliel' room for the old lady to rest in; yet she was content good conduct; and then the bell rang for the family as you were, I might have been more like you; but I, to wait till the church was restored to a state suitable dinner in the great dining room, when a hymn was unlappily, lost my mother in my infancy, and being to the sacred purpose of its erection. It required both sung; and while the meal proceeded, one of the party anonly child, my father indulged me in all my foolish time and cost to make the old manor-house a fitting read a chapter in the bible, that their hearts and ears After the study of the Holy Scriptures, there is no wishes, and before I was fit for society I was allowed residence for a large family; but in a few months all might not lack spiritual food. After dinner the family reading so beneficial to young people as the biography to enter into scenes of dissipation but too dazzling to was accomplished, and Mrs. Ferrar drew round her dispersed, some to the gardens or orchard, others to of those whose lives have been exemplary while on the youthful and uncducated child. My father was hearth children, grandchildren, nephews and nieces, their chambers, till two o'clock, when the bell called earth: and the 17th century abounds with many such reported wealthy, and not till his death, two years ago, amongst whom were many orphans, who were brought them to evening service at Steeple Gidding Church, had I ever known a sorrow: then I became an orphan up to serve the Lord. And now they all engaged in about a mile from the manor-house; on their return and penniless; then my good uncle took me into his the pleasing work of enlarging and adorning the church: the children repeated the psalms and other exercises house, and has ever treated me as a daughter. Here Mr. Ferrar obtained leave of the Lord Bishop of the till six, when the supper bell rang, when an authem who were contemporaries, and lived to the glory of I have learnt to feel my own unworthiness; here I have Diocese, Bishop Williams, an old college friend, and was sung to the sound of the organ, and after grace, God and the true Church. The names of these exemples of the endeavoured to walk in your footsteps, Isabella, and now his neighbour at Buckden, in consideration of the on! how fruitless has been the attempt. I am no plague raging in the devoted city, to use the Litany those who refreshed themselves with needful food .hypocrite, and I freely confess that religious zeal does every day in the church; and having introduced it, he At eight o'clock they were summoned to the oratory, had licence to retain it after the plague, and thus in- where family prayers and an evening hymn concluded "I admire your candour, Alice," said her cousin, terceding for the sins of the whole world, the cause of the holy duties of the day: after which they retired following short history of the pious founder of the so- and will assist you in seeking that peace which the all its misery. The public prayers of the Church to their own apartments. Such was Sunday at Little

> confess your secret sins and vain wanderings, and most following winter in retirement and peace, the religious himself respecting the proper observance of that saassuredly you will find strength; 'Cast your whole exercises, works of charity, and domestic occupations cred day: "It is a day of rest, not of pleasure; it care on Him, for He careth for you." At this mo- engaging all their time : and early in the spring Mr. frees us from bodily labour, but it the more produces ment the bell rang for evening prayers, and the young Ferrar determined (what he had long meditated,) to the exercises of the mind: God blessed and sanctified ladies adjourned to the oratory, where their uncle was enter into holy orders, and devote himself to a reli- it,—they must both go together,—if we would have it surrounded by his whole household, and where we will gious course of life, which he had for years thirsted happy we must make it holy, and that can be done by leave them to give the reader a slight sketch of the after. On Trinity Sunday, in the year 1626, in the nothing better than by taking a survey of all God's thirty-fifth year of his age, he was ordained a Deacon works according to the two divisions of heaven and Before describing Little Gidding or its society, it by Bishop Laud, and towards evening returned to his earth, whereunto he hath reduced all sorts of generawill be necessary to give a brief history of the pious mother, and read to her a document written on vellum tions, -and if it seem too long and too hard a matter founder of a protestant religious society which had no and signed with his own hand, recording a solemn vow to go through all, we must but return to ourselves, parallel but that of the Roman Catholic society of Port | made to Almighty God, that since God had afforded | where we shall find an epitome of all." discourse, and the old lady prayed that he might live livings, in the persuasion that he would be an honour to the Church, both for his talents and holy zeal; but hereturned them grateful acknowledgments, and told them that as he had parted with his temporal estate, sharing it with his kindred for the common good, so

would he be partaker with them in true spiritual trea-Mrs. Ferrar was not satisfied that the House of God should wear a decent appearance, she would have it adorned also; she ordered the walls to be wainscoated and the floor boarded, not only for cleanliness, but because warmth was necessary in a place where so much time was spent. The communion-table was pulpit and reading-desk hung with fine cloth of the each of them; the altar floor was covered with skyblue silk, the benches round the chancel with blue church, near the entrance, and a great eagle of brass to support a large bible : in short, all the appointments or this so long neglected place of worship were numbered to the satisfaction of Mr. Ferrar and his family, and

Mr. Ferrar set sail and landed at Flushing, and, the admiration of all their neighbours. Mrs. Ferrar and her son now turned their thoughts to the establishment of a school: an ancient pigeonnouse was transformed into a commodious school-room where not only the children of the family were instructed, but those of adjoining parishes were admitted on the request of their parents: here they might learn gether with fair writing, for which they had three masters; music was taught to the praise and glory of pleasure; he fitted up convenient accommodations could maintain good order." He fitted up a room which he called the infirmary, where any sick member appointed places of recreation for the young, where they might use bows and arrows, or manly exercises. who was a frequent visitor, that "the habit of the young women was a black stuff, all of one grave fashion, and their scissors, serve the altar and the poor: they were fine surgeons, and kept by them balsams, and oils, and were ever ready to administer good counsel and prayers prove more a recreation than a labour, every one being sole directress of the household for one month in four: she was not to apply her hands to anything serto clock-work; no bustle, no confusion ever entered

On the Lord's Day they rose at the usual hour of you would turn away from! but these delighted me, in this retirement he determined to spend the rest o nieces catechised the children who came from surand I thought no harm in them. Often and often, his days. The manor-house and some cottages were rounding villages, who, by way of reward, had each dear Isabella, have I wished I were half as good as the only habitations in the parish, but the situation a penny and their Sunday dinner; and as many as was healthy, and, though the house was in want of re- forty and fifty would assemble to repeat what they Toronto, August 24th, 1848.

petty cares and turmoils of the past week; but we No. 2, temple to temple round the back of

(To be continued.)

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WM. WATERS, Clarke's Mills, Camden East, wishes, through The Church Newspaper, if possible, to find out the residence of his Sister, Joanah Waters, who, some 12 or 14 years ago, was married to a man of the name of Thomas Butler. It is believed that Butler and his wife are now residing in Wisconsin,

. S.
If the said Joanah Butler would address her brother, Wm. Waters, above directed, she would receive from him pleasing intelligence.

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All losses promptly adjusted. Letters by mail m July 5, 1843. The Church

IS PUBLISHED by the Subscriber every THURSDAY, at his off in the rear of The Church Society's House, (No. 5, King Sure West) City of Toronto, entrance from Yonge Street. Thos. Champion,
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