

tive, given to levity, and rather witty, she directed her ridicule and sarcasm with considerable force against those who manifested any serious concern for the salvation of their souls. The pride of her heart was likewise manifested in her great fondness for dress.

At the time when it pleased God truly to awaken her to a sense of the vast importance of eternal things, and the necessity of caring for her deathless soul, she was living at Southampton, as a servant in the R— family. The Methodists had at that time no chapel in that town, but worshipped in a room which they had hired for that purpose in Hanover buildings, and which was supplied once a fortnight by the Travelling Preachers from the Portsmouth Circuit. In the year 1795 the Rev. Messrs. Algar, Deverell, Crabb, Jones, and Brookhouse were stationed in the Circuit, which then included what were called "two Missions,"—one of which comprised part of Sussex and Surrey, while the other embraced the back and east parts of the Isle of Wight. In this latter section of the Circuit it was that Mr. Crabb principally laboured, changing occasionally with the Southampton Preachers. Mr. Crabb was deeply devoted to his Master's cause, and was very useful, and at the same time very popular; so that when it was known that the Missionary from the Isle of Wight was coming to Southampton, the little Methodist circle of that place was all pleasurable expectation.

Elizabeth had three fellow-servants; namely, Robert Taylor, Elizabeth Cox, and Elizabeth Groves. Robert Taylor and Elizabeth Cox were attendants at the Methodist place of worship. The latter had once professed to know something of religion by personal experience, but was now not a member of the society. She was subsequently restored to the enjoyment of the blessings she had lost, and again united herself to the people of God, through the affectionate exhortations of Elizabeth Wallbridge, and lived forty years a member of the Methodist society, adorning her Christian profession by an exemplary life, and at last dying in the triumph of faith and hope. Robert Taylor, at the time of which I write, was a truly pious member of the society, and zealous for the salvation of his fellow-servants. Elizabeth Groves and Elizabeth Wallbridge both went to the established Church, and had never yet heard a Methodist Preacher. By the latter, Methodism was viewed with much contempt, and even angry dislike, especially after her brother had connected himself with a sect every where spoken against, and had even ventured to address an admonitory letter to his sister, affectionately exhorting her to seek the salvation of her soul.

Mr. Crabb being about to preach at the room one week-day evening, Robert Taylor, happening in the course of the day to enter a room where Elizabeth Wallbridge and Elizabeth Groves were at work together, he said to them, "Maids, will you go this evening, and hear preaching at the Methodist chapel?"—so they called the little room: "Mr. Crabb, the Missionary from the Isle of Wight, is to preach. He is very much liked as a Preacher; and I think if you were to go, and hear for yourselves, you would be pleased with him." Elizabeth Wallbridge, with her

characteristic levity and vivacity, gave Robert such a reply as left him no ground on which to rest any anticipations of a favourable result. But there was an overruling power at work. Curiosity was excited; and as Elizabeth and her companion talked over the strange proposal that had been made to them, (so they considered it,) they became influenced by a strong desire to agree to it, and to hear Mr. Crabb; and eventually they were found that evening among his hearers. This step was not in itself decisive, but still it was a most important one; it was the step which, in their case, led to salvation. Prejudice was overcome; a degree of respect was gained both for the Preacher and the service; and they both resolved to attend again.* Mr. Crabb soon returned to Southampton for the services of an entire Sabbath, and Elizabeth heard him in the morning. Still a captive to the vanity of the carnal mind, she was led to put on her gayest attire, that her foolish heart might be gratified by her utmost display among the poor humble Methodists. The text was taken from the fourth chapter of the Prophet Zechariah: "Who art thou, O great mountain?" &c. It was a memorable time, and the mountains soon flowed down at the presence of the Lord. While the Preacher, with the authority of an ambassador for Christ, bore hard on the sins of vanity, self, and pride, the light of truth enabled Elizabeth Wallbridge to see that she was the very reverse of being clothed with ~~guilt~~ *guilt*. Wounded by the sword of the spirit, she returned home in silence, indignant at herself. There was now no foolish talking and jesting about things sacred; her mouth was stopped; she felt herself guilty before God, and trembled in his presence. Ignorant of the great change that was taking place in her mind, her fellow-servants were astonished that the giddy, trifling, and talkative "Betty Wallbridge" had become serious, and "slow to speak;" but their astonishment was greater when they saw her sit down in a chair, and actually tear off those parts of her dress which she deemed most expressive of the foolish ambition of her vain and wicked heart. Refraining from her ordinary food, she retired to her own room to complete the demolition of her idols, and to converse with God and her own heart; and in the evening, divested of her foolish and outward adorning, but full of eagerness for the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, she once more appeared among the hearers of this heart-searching Preacher. This contempt and dread of every thing in dress unsanctioned by Christian propriety, she retained to the end of her life without change. From this memorable Sabbath, indeed, Elizabeth was "a new creature." The full stream of nature's tide was turned, and from henceforth her desires, her words, her actions, all tended towards God and heavenly objects. All parties concur in testifying that from the day of her conversion she was entirely and steadily devoted to God. She seemed to be actuated literally

* Elizabeth Groves (now Mrs. Y—) is a native of the Isle of Wight, and still lives there. She has, through grace, still held on in that good way on which she entered at the same time with Elizabeth Wallbridge; and it is from her that some valuable portions of the present narrative have been received.

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