

around him reminds him that he is in a land of benighted heathen. No quiet throngs are seen assembling for worship. No Sabbath-bell sends its inviting tones over the landscape. It is as other days to the careless idolaters around him. Instead of the sacred exercise that once reminded him of God and Heaven, perhaps he is compelled to witness the symbols of superstition and cruelty, or the degrading worship of some rudely-carved image. On that day more than any other he feels that he is alone. Tocher its pensive moments, perhaps he indulges in some favorite sacred air; but it only reminds him of happy seasons departed, and of friends with whom he once chaunted it in his distant native land. Gladly would he take wings, and fly, for a single hour, to the loved circle that, perhaps, at that moment are remembering him, while bowed at the shrine so dear to him far away.

O! how should we prize the blessed Sabbath of a Christian land!

This religious festival is unlike any other ever instituted. It bears the impress of the religion of the Bible. Its observance by the early Christians must have produced a striking and favourable impression among the surrounding heathen. The enlightened pagans of Greece and Rome had never before been accustomed to anything like the Christian Sabbath.

Unlike their celebrations of the mysteries of Eleusis, or the feasts of Bacchus, its holy rites of prayer and praise were as pure and spiritual as the heaven to which they ascended. They were so unostentatious, and yet so fervid, that they seemed to afford a lively example of the spirit and genius of the religion of Jesus. Refreshing as the Sabbath is, even now when we enjoy so many blessings unmolested, it must have been still more so to the first oppressed disciples of the Saviour. If the wrath of rulers or emperors threatened a storm of more fierce persecution, it was doubtless the set time when they met together to make special prayer and intercession, with "one accord, in one place."

In order to form a proper estimate of its value to them, let us picture to ourselves, for a moment, what we may suppose to have been some of the Sabbath exercises of the first Christians.

For fear of being disturbed by the violence of their enemies, they met in some secluded spot. There they comforted each other, and sweetly conversed of their departed Lord. The miracles they had so lately witnessed, and all the touching incidents connected with the ministry and death of the Redeemer, must have been themes upon which they dwelt with deepest interest. The tones of Him, who spoke as "never man spake," had scarcely died away in the ears of those devoted followers. One could speak of the time when he approached his Saviour as a trembling leper, and was healed. Another, who had been blind, rejoiced to think of the happy hour when the balmy touch of the Son of God first revealed to him the light of heaven. Many still remembered the affecting scene when Jesus wept by the grave, and the involuntary exclamation burst forth, "Behold, how he loved him!" Others discoursed of the time when their hearts burned within them, while He talked with them by the way.

As they again partook of the bread and wine, in memory of his sufferings and death, so they seemed to keep the "first day of the week" in memory of his glorious resurrection. On that blessed day some of their company had gone early in the morning to the sepulchre. It seemed still to remind them of the time when an angelic messenger was sent to tell them, "He is risen; he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him!"

Each time of meeting must also have seemed more deeply interesting from the consideration that it might very likely be their last. Surrounded by bloody persecutors, they knew not but before another should come they should purchase the crown of martyrdom with their blood. They seemed to spend their Sabbaths in preparing for the heavenly mansion which the Saviour had promised them. On these occasions were doubtless read these comforting and edifying letters which they had received from their distant brethren in bonds and affliction. One had cheered them by writing, "Behold, I shew you a mystery!"—and anticipa-

ting the resurrection of the just, with exulting faith exclaimed, "O death! where is thy sting?" Another had caught a prophetic vision of the New Jerusalem itself, and saw the white-robed throng "which came out of great tribulation." And he had learned that the Lamb should "feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters," and that God should "wipe away all tears from their eyes." He had even listened to the songs of the redeemed before the throne.

Amid such dangers, and blessed with such holy exercise, the Sabbaths of the early Christians must have been truly welcome seasons.

If ever there has been a *time-honoured* institution, it has been this holy day. It gladdened the hearts of the ancient patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs; and it still remains as the portion of God's children to the end of the world. Indeed, it would seem as though God had designed to impress us with a reverence for this day, by the most solemn and momentous acts. It was first consecrated, as a crowning gift, by the Deity himself, amid the song of the morning stars at the birth of creation. The command to keep it was engraved upon the tables of stone, and reiterated in the thunders of Sinai. We now observe it as the time when the Saviour triumphed over the grave, and arose from the dead.

Surely we devoutly respect and love the day that has been so distinguished by God, and has been thus a season of consolation to the saints of all ages.

Brooklyn, Nov., 1842.

J. W. C.

BIOGRAPHY.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE LATE LADY HUNTINGDON.

THE noble and elect Lady Huntingdon, had lived in the highest circle of fashion; by birth a daughter of the House of Shirley, by marriage united with the Earl of Huntingdon, both bearing the royal arms of England, as descendants from her ancient monarchs.

In very early infancy, when only nine years old, the sight of a corpse about her own age conveying to the grave, engaged her to attend the burial. There the first impressions of deep seriousness about an eternal world laid hold on her conscience; and with many tears, she cried earnestly to God on the spot, that whenever he should be pleased to take her away, he would deliver her from all her fears, and give her a happy departure. She often afterwards visited the grave, and always preserved a lively sense of the affecting scene.

Though no views of evangelical truth had hitherto opened on her mind, yet even during her juvenile days, she frequently retired for prayer to a particular closet where she could not be observed; and in all her little troubles found relief in pouring out her requests unto God. When she grew up, and was introduced into the world, she continued to pray that she might marry into a serious family. None kept up more of the ancient dignity and decency than the house of Huntingdon. With the head of that family she accordingly became united. Lady Betty and Lady Margaret Hastings, his lordship's sisters, were women of singular excellence.

In this high estate she maintained a peculiar seriousness of conduct.—Though sometimes at court, and visiting in the high circles, she took no pleasure in the fashionable follies of the great. In the country she was the lady bountiful among her neighbours and dependents; and going still about to establish her own righteousness, she endeavoured by prayer, and fasting, and alms-deeds, to commend herself to the favour of the Most High and Most Holy.

The zealous preachers, who had been branded with the name of Methodists, had now awakened great attention in the land. Lady Margaret Hastings happening to hear them, received the truth as it is in Jesus from their ministry; and was some years after united with the excellent Mr. Ingham, one of the first labourers in this plentiful harvest. Conversing with Lady Margaret one day on this subject, Lady Huntingdon was exceedingly struck with a sentiment she uttered, "that since she had known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, she had been as happy as an angel." To any

such sensation of happiness Lady Huntingdon felt that she was as yet an utter stranger.

A dangerous illness having soon after this brought her to the brink of the grave, the fear of death fell terribly upon her, and her conscience was greatly distressed. Hereupon she meditated sending for Bishop Benson, of Gloucester, who had been Lord Huntingdon's tutor, to consult him, and unburden her mind. Just at that time the words of Lady Margaret returned strongly to her recollection, and she felt an earnest desire, renouncing every other hope, to cast herself wholly upon Christ for life and salvation. She instantly from her bed lifted up her heart to Jesus the Saviour, with this importunate prayer: and immediately all her distress and fear were removed, and she was filled with peace and joy in believing. Her disorder from that moment took a favourable turn; she was restored to perfect health, and what was better, to newness of life. She determined thenceforward, to present herself to God, as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable, which she was now convinced was her reasonable service.

On her recovery, she sent a kind message to the Messrs. Wesleys, who were then preaching in the neighbourhood, that she was one with them in heart, cordially wishing them good speed in the name of the Lord, and assuring them of her determined purpose of living for Him, who had died for her.

The change thus suddenly wrought on her Ladyship, became observable to all, in the open confession she made of the faith once delivered to the saints, and in the zealous support she began to give the work of God, amidst all the reproach with which it was attended.

To the noble circle in which Lady Huntingdon moved, such professions and conduct appeared wondrous strange; but she had set her face as a flint, and refused to be ashamed of Christ and his cross. There were not wanting indeed some who, under the guise of friendship, wished Lord Huntingdon to interpose his authority; but, however he differed from her Ladyship in sentiment, he continued to show her the same affection and respect. He desired, however, she would oblige him, by conversing with Bishop Benson on the subject, to which she readily acquiesced.

The Bishop was accordingly sent for, in order to reason with her Ladyship respecting her opinions and conduct. But she pressed him so hard with articles and homilies; and so plainly and faithfully urged upon him the awful responsibility of his station under the great Head of the Church Jesus Christ, that his temper was ruffled; and he rose up in haste to depart, bitterly lamenting that he had ever laid his hands on George Whitfield, to whom he imputed, though without cause, the charge wrought in her Ladyship. She called him back; "My Lord," said she, "mark my words, when you come upon your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacency."

It deserves remark, that Bishop Benson, on his dying bed, sent ten guineas to Mr. Whitfield, as a token of his favour and approbation, and begged to be remembered by him in his prayers.

I hope the present venerable Bishop of Worcester will not be displeased if I record a similar instance of his candour lately reported to me. As he preaches frequently, he had observed a poor man remarkably attentive, and made him some little presents. After a while he missed his humble auditor, and meeting him, said, "John, how is it that I do not see you in the aisle, as usual?" John, with hesitation, replied, "My Lord, I hope you will not be offended, and I will tell you the truth. I went the other day to hear the Methodists, and I understand their plain words so much better, that I have attended them ever since." The Bishop put his hand into his pocket, and gave him a guinea, with words to this effect, "God bless you, and go where you can receive the greatest profit to your soul."

I know no place more proper to preserve another anecdote, which I received from my excellent friend, the Rev. Mr. Talbot, of St. Giles, Reading. When Archbishop Seeker was laid on his couch with a broken thigh, and sensible of his approaching end, my dear departed friend, who had lived in great intimacy with him, and received his preference from him, visited him at Lambeth. Before they parted, "You will pray with me Talbot," said the Archbishop. Mr. Talbot rose and went to look for a prayer book, "This is not what I want now," said the dying