

TRACTS  
OF THE  
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

General Series.



VOL. X.

PRINTED BY THE  
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,  
150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK

# CONTENTS.

## VOL. X.

No.	PAGES.
351. The Infidel Reclaimed, . . . . .	8
352. The Sabbath, . . . . .	4
353. Marks of Religious Declension, . . . . .	4
354. The Mother's Last Prayer, or George Vining, . . . . .	8
355. The Ringleader, . . . . .	8
356. The act of Faith, . . . . .	4
357. What is it to Believe on Christ? . . . . .	4
358. The Wonderful Escape, . . . . .	4
359. The Child a Hundred Years Old. By Rev. William S. Plumer, D. D., . . . . .	12
360. Redeeming the Time, . . . . .	8
361. Atoning Blood, . . . . .	12
362. Universalism Unscriptural and Absurd, . . . . .	8
363. Come to Jesus, . . . . .	8
364. How to Make the Most of Life, . . . . .	4
365. The Island Planter, . . . . .	8
366. The Beginnings of Evil, . . . . .	8
367. Live for the World, . . . . .	8
368. Don't put it Off, . . . . .	4
369. The Time not Come, . . . . .	8
370. Memoir of Dr. John D. Godman. By Thos. Sewall, M. D.,	20
371. The Sinner his own Destroyer, . . . . .	8
372. Joy in Sorrow, or Comfort for the Bereaved, . . . . .	4
373. Declarations of a Deist. By Rev. Herman Norton, . . . . .	8
374. Short Method with the Sceptic, . . . . .	8
375. A few Thoughts. By a member of the Bar, . . . . .	28
376. The Infidel's Creed, or the Credulity of Infidelity. By Olin- thus Gregory, LL. D., . . . . .	8
377. Fifty Reasons for attending Public Worship, . . . . .	4

No.	PAGES.
378. The False Hope. By Rev. Richard Knill, . . . . .	4
379. Some Memorials of Edward Lee, . . . . .	12
380. The Spirit Grieved, . . . . .	4
381. "We are all Here," . . . . .	4
382. Have me Excused, . . . . .	8
383. Conversion of an aged Deist, . . . . .	8
384. The Day of Trial, . . . . .	4
385. Convictions Stifled, . . . . .	4
386. Sketch of Miss Harriet Patterson, . . . . .	4
387. All in the Ark. A family Tract, . . . . .	16
388. Conversion of Dr. Capadose, a Jewish Physician, . . . . .	24
389. Do you Forgive all your Enemies? . . . . .	4
390. To the Neglecter of Religion, . . . . .	8
391. I am no Hypocrite, . . . . .	4
392. Come and welcome to Jesus Christ. By John Bunyan, . . . . .	8
393. Justification by Faith, . . . . .	24
394. Christian Liberty Explained and Enforced. By Rev. John Harris, . . . . .	48
395. The Eventful Twelve Hours, or the Destitution and Wretch- edness of a Drunkard, . . . . .	16
396. Are you a Sabbath-school Teacher? From Nevins' "Prac- tical Thoughts," . . . . .	4
397. Do you Pray in your Family? From Nevins' "Practical Thoughts," . . . . .	4
398. The Lost Mechanic Restored, . . . . .	4
399. Dialogue between the Bible and a Sinner, . . . . .	4
400. Do thyself no Harm, . . . . .	4
401. The Temptations of Young Men, . . . . .	16
402. Counsels to a Young Man, . . . . .	16
403. "If any Man Thirst, let him come unto Me and Drink," . . . . .	4
404. I have not Time, . . . . .	4
405. "Cut it Down," . . . . .	4
406. Private Devotion, . . . . .	4
407. Self-dedication to God, . . . . .	4
408. I must Pray in Secret, . . . . .	4

# THE CHILD A HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

BY REV. WILLIAM S. PLUMER, D. D.

So long as the work of the Holy Spirit continues on earth, we may expect wonders. Especially may most glorious displays of divine grace be looked for, as the day draws nigh when "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days." Then "the child shall die a hundred years old."

ANN ELIZA, the eldest child of Charles B. and Ann M. Williams, was born January 16, 1820, at Meadsville, Halifax county, Virginia. She had three sisters and one brother, besides a sister and brother who died in infancy. Her mother, who professed religion when she was Miss Hackley, four days after the birth of Ann Eliza, thus wrote :

"On the 16th of this month, I was made the happy mother of a promising daughter. To thee, O Lord, I desire in faith to dedicate her. And I implore the sanctifying influence of thy Spirit to enable me to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—to rear her up as an immortal being, destined to eternal misery or eternal blessedness. O wash her, and grant that as she ripens in years, she may grow in grace."

On the 16th January, 1821, her mother again wrote, "I gave my dear Ann Eliza to God before she was born. I have done it since. On this her birthday I desire, O Lord, to renew the offering; and I beseech thee to cleanse her soul in the blood of Christ, and adopt her into thy family. If by thy will she should long sojourn in this barren wilderness, guide her, and lead her early to seek thy face. Keep her in thy way without weariness or fainting, and enable me to fulfil my solemn obligations as a Christian parent."

At an early period, Ann Eliza was found to have an irascible, obstinate, and ungovernable temper, combined with exquisite nervous sensibility. Her mind was sound and

sprightly, though the incidents of her very early life were not remarkable. In some respects, elements of a more unpromising kind seldom enter into character. Yet, though self-willed, there was a sort of independence which was capable of being turned to good account. It is also a remarkable fact, that she was never detected in any falsehood. She was naturally very timid. She was not naturally generous, or amiable, or confiding. Yet, for one of her age, she always commanded respect.

When Ann Eliza was about seven years of age, she was invited to a dancing-party of little children, and was anxious to attend; and her mother saying she was too young, she replied, that some others were going who were younger than she. Her mother then took her in her arms, and said, "My child, your father and I have both often and solemnly given you to God, and promised to train you up for him. We trust we are Christians. We seek your *eternal* happiness. The parents of the little girls you have named do not profess to think much about another world. We cannot, without sinning against God, permit you to go to the ball."

These things seemed to satisfy her conscience, and retained it on the side of her parents. Yet after her conversion, she confessed, "I was wicked enough to wish that my parents were not Christians, that I might partake of the gayeties in which others engage."

By the blessing of God on a course of mild and firm training, her parents were pleased to find that her judgment and principles were, to some extent, on the side of duty, and that she had some correct *general* views of the truth of the Bible, and of the reality and importance of religion. Yet she gave no evidence of special seriousness or tenderness until she was more than eight years old.

In her ninth year, her heavenly Father began that course of gracious discipline which has clothed her character with such interest, and rendered her history worthy of a place in the annals of redemption. In the winter of 1828, her parents removed to Lynchburgh. Here, in May, 1829, she ruptured a bloodvessel in the lungs. This was succeeded by a

copious bleeding. For some months she remained apparently thoughtless respecting eternal things. Late in the autumn of this year, she accompanied her grandmother on a visit to a maternal aunt in the county of Orange. Here, in March, 1830, she had a second attack of bleeding at the lungs, which was attended with immediate danger, and which cut off nearly all hope of ever regaining permanent health. During this sickness, her alarm was agonizing. Death was to her the king of terrors. Courage in facing such trials was no part of her natural character. It soon became manifest, that she was deeply impressed with a sense of her guilt, and misery, and danger as a sinner. She was found in retirement, bathed in tears, nor did she attempt to conceal the cause of her weeping. She confessed it to be her sinfulness. Her sins of every kind, and above all, the deep pollution of her heart, filled her with grief and self-abasement before God. She said, "How could I be so wicked, and sin against a God so good and so holy."

She now felt the unspeakable value of the friendship, and counsel, and prayers of her excellent grandmother. At one time, her views of sin being very clear, and her convictions very pungent, she said, "Pray with me; ask God to give me a new heart, and to renew a right spirit within me, and to prepare me for death, if he intends to take me now, or for living to his glory, if he shall be pleased to spare me."

It should be observed, that from this time forward her intellect seemed to have a greatly increased vigor, and her language was generally very appropriate. The absence of childish companions in very early life, the constant society of her grandmother, the character of her disease, her familiar acquaintance with scriptural language, and the elevating influence of vital religion, may be assigned as the causes of this seeming precocity. Every sentence of her conversation quoted in these pages, is in the words she herself employed.

By degrees a change in her character became manifest. Her burden of misery seemed to be gone. She was beginning to trust in atoning blood. Her views of the plan of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, and by the renewing of

the Holy Ghost, were clear and consistent. She never ascribed any thing to human merit or human power. She esteemed all her experiences as only calling for praise to the glory of His grace who had made her accepted in the Beloved. Her whole conversation and deportment from this time forward, proved the change to be great and real. Her mind seemed to grasp spiritual truth with vigor, and to feed upon it with zest. Her memory readily retained impressions of the truth, and all she had ever learned seemed now to come to her aid. She often wrote down her thoughts, especially such as occurred in reading the Scriptures. A specimen is here given.

“ 1 John, 4 : 8, 9. O what infinite, great, and amazing love is that described here. How glorious is God, to send his only-begotten Son into the world to die for sinful men. ‘ O Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him ? ’ ”

A few weeks after her hopeful conversion, her life was again brought into extreme jeopardy by a return of bleeding at the lungs. This attack was worse than either of the preceding. Yet all was now tranquil. No violent agitations disturbed her. As soon as she was able, she spoke freely of her feelings, and contrasted them with what they had been under her second attack. *Then*, she was filled with fear. *Now*, with love and peace. She said, “ I am not afraid to die ; I am willing to be in the hands of God.”

As soon as it could be done, she was taken to her parents in Lynchburgh. In the last week of December, 1830, she was received into the communion of the visible church. This step was not taken until she had been well instructed in the nature of the transaction. Much prayer had been offered on the subject, and many conversations held with her respecting her religious exercises. She had also, during about seven months, exhibited a Christian temper and deportment. She was now about ten years and ten months old. On the same day of her admission to the church, she partook of the Lord’s supper. In speaking of this service soon afterwards, she said, “ O it was so delightful. I felt it

was good to be there. I felt as if God, for a little season, had let down heaven to earth." When asked why the communion had been like heaven, she said, "Because God's presence was there—'tis that makes heaven."

Early in her Christian life she began to see why God had afflicted her. Years before her death, she requested that whenever she should die, the text of the sermon at her funeral should be Psalm 94 : 12. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." She said, "I had rather be sick, and suffer all my days, and enjoy religion, than be restored to health, and live as I have done."

During her residence in Lynchburgh there was great attention to religion in that town, and in all the surrounding country. In the progress of this work she felt the most lively interest. She prayed for its extension, and rejoiced whenever she heard of a hopeful conversion. Her interest was so great, that when her pious physician and pastor, meeting in her room, conversed on the work of God, her joy abounded. At the close of this conversation, one asked her how she was. She seemed to forget all her bodily pain, and replied, "O, Jesus is precious ; I am happy in him ; his favor is life, and his loving-kindness is better than life."

Meanwhile her disease advanced, and in the spring of 1832 her parents again removed to Richmond. Here her mind and her gracious affections matured fast. For a long time she had given up all expectation of ever recovering. One day her grandmother inquired if the stillness of the grave produced no alarm. "O no," said she, "'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God.' "

On another occasion she said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." She was often in immediate and imminent danger of sudden death ; and it was feared that her frequent recoveries from violent attacks would leave her mind exposed to surprise when death ap-

proached. Yet any return of health did not make her less devout, or less solemn.

On Saturday preceding her death, there was a marked change in her disease. She was the first to perceive it, and spoke of it with composure, saying, "Mother, you had best not leave me, for I don't know but I am dying." "I hope not," said the mother; "but if you are, I trust you are leaning on a stronger arm than your poor frail mother's." "O yes," said she, "God is the strength of my heart."

A paroxysm of great suffering now brought on, for the first and only time, a momentary delirium. In this state her grandmother said, "Ann Eliza, would you not wish to go to your heavenly home—to Jesus?" The delirium was gone, reason regained its seat, and she said, "O yes, I wish to go to Jesus, he is precious to my soul. Help me to praise him."

One said, "As you approach nearer to eternity, do your views of the glory and excellency of Christ become more clear and precious?" She replied, "He is my *all*, *my all*."

In the evening of this day, after a short conversation and prayer, led by her faithful pastor, she said, in a low but distinct voice, "I love my parents, I love you all, but I love my Saviour more; I long to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better."

She even objected to the usual opiate, saying, "Let me praise God while I have breath." Yet when told that it was thought to be her duty, she readily complied. The day before her death, it became evident that the closing scene was at hand. Her distress for breath, and her danger of suffocation, were extreme, and prevented her saying much. Yet she spoke not of her pains. She said, "I am dying; but death has no sting for me—all is peace. Sing 'When I can read my title clear.'"

Early on the morning of this her last Sabbath on earth, she desired a very dear young friend to be sent for. When she came, Ann Eliza, extending her emaciated arms, received her very cordially, and though unable to speak aloud, whispered a most solemn and tender exhortation; but her strength

failing, she said, "Grandma, I can't talk to her; do *you* say to her what *I* would, if I were able."

Some time during her last night on earth, she awoke from a short slumber, and perceived a cold sweat upon herself. She asked if it was not the cold sweat of death. Her friend replied, "It may be; but if it is, I hope it gives you no concern." She replied, "O no; death is sweet to me."

To her parents, who soon came into the room, she said, "I have perfect peace; we shall now part, but we shall soon meet again." She then took an affectionate leave of them, and seemed concerned at their sufferings only.

During this trying time, her faithful grandmother was able to be with her. As the night began to be far spent, her agony was great, and her spirit seemed to say, as the angel to Jacob, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." But her warfare was not quite accomplished. The sun arose. Her mind was clear. Every look of her eye indicated intelligence and inward peace, though the pain which racked her little frame, was severe beyond all ordinary cases. She was unable to speak much; but just before she ceased to breathe, after a violent struggle, her countenance seemed to "shine as it had been the face of an angel," and her whole appearance seemed to say, "My cup runneth over;" she whispered firmly and audibly, "All is peace, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Then, without another struggle, God set her spirit free, and she fell asleep in Jesus. Thus, on the 18th day of March, 1833, died "the child a hundred years old." She is buried in the new graveyard at Richmond. A small marble tablet, bearing her name and age, and her favorite text, Psalm 94 : 12, in verse, points the wanderer among the tombs to her resting-place.

In the religious character of Ann Eliza Williams, some things claim a more full consideration. The first of these is, *Her faith*. After her conversion, her confidence in God, through Jesus Christ, seldom wavered. Her heart was fixed, trusting in God. Taught by the Spirit, her views and impressions of the truth were vivid and abiding. Eternal things always seemed near. She often spoke of a state of

happiness to come, not only as an undoubted reality, but as at hand. In speaking of heaven one evening, she pointed to a beautiful view of the sky, and said, "If I could break from this clay tabernacle, and burst through that *azure shell*, I should be there." So far as faith regards the person and offices of Christ, hers was dependence on him alone as a complete Saviour. Nor was her faith dead. It wrought with her works, and by works was faith made perfect.

*Her peace was great.* It was "peace in believing," and it was like a river. Those who were in the habit of seeing her, would have been surprised to have found her bereft of calmness of soul. In her case, "the work of righteousness was peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

*Her repentance was thorough, deep, ingenuous, and lasting.* Her sense of personal unworthiness grew from her first attention to religion to her death. She was more than once found weeping, years after conversion. When asked why she wept, her answer was, "I am so wicked." She did not think once sorrowing for sin was enough. As often as she thought of her sins, it was with shame and sorrow. Her frequent prayer was, "Remember not against me the sins of my youth; enter not into judgment with me."

*She rejoiced in hope.* And she held fast her confidence, which had great recompense of reward. The apostle's figure of hope being an anchor to the soul precisely suited her case. She was tossed with tempest, the night was dark, the storm was loud, the wind was rude, the waters roared, but her hope was anchored in heaven, and her bark outrode the storm, and, as we have seen, glided serenely into the haven of rest. Seldom was her hope obscured, and then for a short time only.

*Her love was strong.* She longed after God. She loved all that belonged to God. Her delight was in his saints, the excellent of the earth. His word was sweeter than honey. His Sabbaths were in her eyes honorable. One day in his courts was better than a thousand. She had a most lively sense of the self-denial of remaining at home, when others

went to inquire in God's temple, and there behold his beauty; and when her health permitted her to go, none seemed to enjoy the privilege more.

*She abounded in prayer.* She seemed never to lose the spirit of prayer, but to be continually breathing after communion with God. Nor were her prayers unanswered. God manifested himself unto her as he does not to the world. Two Sabbaths after she joined the church, she was left alone in the afternoon. On her grandmother's return, she said, "I have had a precious season. God has been with me. He has given me such realizing views of the joys of heaven, and the sufferings of my Saviour to purchase them for me, that I could scarcely contain myself for joy."

*Her gratitude was constant and lively.* The least favor at the hands of any person, excited her thankfulness. "I thank you—I thank you much—you are so kind," were expressions often in her mouth. And her gratitude to God was very prominent. If she slept better, or coughed less than usual, she mentioned it with praise; and often did she thank God for having afflicted her. She could say,

"For all I bless thee—most for the severe."

*Being grateful for all, she was of course submissive.* During her whole sickness she was not known to utter one murmuring word, nor was one fretful expression seen on her countenance. Many remember how dreadfully she suffered, yet none remember to have heard one word of impatience. A few days before her death, she said, "I must have more dross to consume than others, that God sees it necessary to keep me so long in this furnace of suffering." Thus she never "charged God foolishly."

*She was strictly conscientious.* She was greatly afraid lest her ignorance, or inexperience, or unsanctified temper, should dishonor religion. Her rule respecting all doubtful things was, to avoid them. She would not go to any place or company, as a show or fair, unless it were of such a kind as to have no *appearance* of evil. The decisions of her conscience were clothed with the majesty of law.

*Her piety was based on the Bible.* It was the rule of her life, the standard of her faith, the end of disputes. During her long sickness she was not able to read much, and wisely confined herself to the holy Scriptures. Her views of the truths of revelation were clear, sound, and consistent. She is remembered to have expressed herself clearly on all the great doctrines, even down to that sublime doctrine of the resurrection.

*She had great strength of religious principle.* Before her conversion she was dreadfully afraid of pain, and the sight of a physician coming to her almost overcame her; but afterwards she never refused medicine, however offensive, nor objected to any operation, however painful.

*Her religion insured good conduct.* She did not so learn Christ as to allow her to set up her own will in opposition to that of her parents. From the time of her conversion she scrupulously honored her parents and others her superiors. She was very careful of the comfort of others. She often exerted herself beyond her strength to avoid giving trouble, and expressed fears lest her own sickness should so multiply her mother's cares, as to injure her health. She often said nothing of her sickness and wants, until others spoke of them to her. She was very industrious, and of great service in maintaining family discipline with the younger children.

*She was engaged in the service of Christ.* She seemed ingenious in making occasions to say something for God. Long before her death, she told her father that the conversion and salvation of souls lay as a heavy burden on her heart; and when near the close of life, refused to have a rocking-chair bought for her, and requested the price of it to be given to the Ceylon mission. Not ten days before her death, she undertook to employ her skilful needle in doing some work for a benevolent society. Among her last efforts she said to one, "Why don't you love Jesus? O do love him—he died for you." To another she said, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Her zeal was well tempered with discretion and gentleness.

*Her religion wore well.* It bore her on—it bore her up—

it bore her through. She came out like gold, purified under every trial. Two years before her death, she said she was not afraid to die. Some months afterwards she said, "Death is a pleasant journey, a sweet release, a stepping from time into eternity." It may be truly said, that death was her familiar acquaintance for years. She said, that as she lay down at night, she often thought she might wake in eternity, nor did the thought give her pain. On one occasion she said, "I have brought death very near to me this evening—he was robbed of his terrors. At times I look at death as a *narrow* stream, which I must pass to get to heaven." During the last forty hours of her life, she often said, when she could say no more, "No fear—no fear."

*Her religion was well-proportioned.* It was not all knowledge, nor all sentiment, nor all practice. It was all these harmoniously combined. One duty or one grace was not allowed to crowd another out of its place. It was uniform. It was dignified. Though she was but a child, and a very humble and unassuming child, it was impossible to be with her and not feel "how awful goodness is."

*Her piety was lovely.* Her humility was not meanness; her firmness was not stubbornness; her solemnity was not sourness; her zeal was not bitterness; her calmness was not stupidity; her speech was well-ordered and gracious. She had self-distrust, but no cunning. Her faith was not presumptuous; her hope was not a vain confidence. Though meek, she was not tame. She feigned nothing; she dissembled nothing. She readily acknowledged her faults, and modestly said nothing to her own praise. Her joys were sober and chastened, though unspeakable.

*Her humility was a robe cast all around.* The attentions shown her were well suited to inflate a carnal mind with pride and self-conceit. But they all seemed to humble her. She preferred to be a hearer rather than a speaker on all important subjects. There was nothing like pertness in her character. She was naturally tenacious of her opinions, yet her great change so deeply impressed her with a sense of her own ignorance as to make her cautious of any opinion

not founded on the clear authority of God. Of the hundreds who saw her, most remarked her great humility. It was no scanty garment. It covered all her graces. She was "clothed with humility."

ARE YOU A PARENT? Behold here, under the divine blessing, the success of a proper religious education in saving the soul. If Ann Eliza had been trained as you are training your children, do you think her end would have been peace?

ARE YOU SCEPTICAL? Behold here the power and the glory of the Gospel. See a little child triumphing over sufferings and death, neither "wearied with the footmen," nor fearing to "contend with horses," neither fainting in "the land of peace," nor dismayed in "the swelling of Jordan." What else besides Christianity, pure and undefiled, can point, in all its annals, to the story of one whose sun went down in such bright effulgence as that which surrounded the departing spirit of Ann Eliza Williams?

This case also shows the possibility of very early piety. The Bible long since taught this. The history of Ann Eliza furnishes an illustrious example of what God can do, when out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he would ordain strength. Jesus Christ, who died for little children, and who said, "Feed my lambs," still cares for them. Himself was once a little child.

ARE YOU A CHILD? O come to Jesus now. Here is a loud call to *all*, to repent, and prepare for death. Perhaps you are unwilling to hear the living. Then listen to the dead. Hear Ann Eliza's last appeal, given in her own words: "Look at me now dying. What should I do, if I had put off repentance till this time? What should I do now, without religion to support me? O don't let the world cheat you out of your soul; if you lean on it, you will find it a broken reed, that will pierce you through with many sorrows." Here her voice failed. Dear reader, are you ready? "Except you be converted, and become as a little child, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."