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**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
JOHN WESLEY, VOLUME 11
THOUGHTS, ADDRESSES,
PRAYERS, LETTERS**

by John Wesley

Books For The Ages
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THE WORKS
OF
JOHN WESLEY

Third Edition

complete and unabridged
1872 Edition

VOLUME XI

Thoughts, Addresses, Prayers, Letters

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SERIOUS THOUGHTS

OCCASIONED BY

THE LATE EARTHQUAKE AT LISBON.

(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1755.)

Tua res agitur, paries quum proximus ardet. ¹

THINKING men generally allow that the greater part of modern Christians are not more virtuous than the ancient Heathens; perhaps less so; since public spirit, love of our country, generous honesty, and simple truth, are scarce anywhere to be found. On the contrary, covetousness, ambition, various injustice, luxury, and falsehood in every kind, have infected every rank and denomination of people, the Clergy themselves not excepted. Now, they who believe there is a God are apt to believe he is not well pleased with this. Nay, they think, he has intimated it very plainly, in many parts of the Christian world. How many hundred thousand men have been swept away by war, in Europe only, within half a century! How many thousands, within little more than this, hath the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up! Numbers sunk at Port-Royal, and rose no more! Many thousands went quick into the pit at Lima! The whole city of Catania, in Sicily, and every inhabitant of it, perished together. Nothing but heaps of ashes and cinders show where it stood. Not so much as one Lot escaped out of Sodom!

And what shall we say of the late accounts from Portugal? That some thousand houses, and many thousand persons, are no more! that a fair city is now in ruinous heaps! Is there indeed a God that judges the world? And is he now making inquisition for blood? If so, it is not surprising, he should begin there, where so much blood has been poured on the ground like water! where so many brave men have been murdered, in the most base and cowardly as well as barbarous manner, almost every day, as well

as every night, while none regarded or laid it to heart. “Let them hunt and destroy the precious life, so we may secure our stores of gold and precious stones.”² How long has their blood been crying from the earth! Yea, how long has that bloody *House of Mercy*,³ the scandal not only of all religion, but even of human nature, stood to insult both heaven and earth! “And shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a city as this?”

It has been the opinion of many, that even this nation has not been without some marks of God’s displeasure. Has not war been let loose even within our own land, so that London itself felt the alarm? Has not a pestilential sickness broken in upon our cattle, and, in many parts, left not one of them alive? And although the earth does not yet open in England or Ireland, has it not shook, and reeled to and fro like a drunken man? and that not in one or two places only, but almost from one end of the kingdom to the other?

Perhaps one might ask, Was there nothing uncommon, nothing more than is usual at this season of the year, in the rains, the hail, the winds, the thunder and lightning which we have lately heard and seen? particularly, in the storm which was the same day and hour that they were playing off Macbeth’s thunder and lightning at the theater. One would almost think they designed this (inasmuch as the entertainment continued, notwithstanding all the artillery of heaven) as a formal answer to that question, “Canst thou thunder with a voice like Him.?”

What shall we say to the affair of Whitson Cliffs? of which, were it not for the unparalleled stupidity of the English, all England would have rang long ago, from one sea to another. And yet, seven miles from the place, they knew little more of it in May last, than if it had happened in China or Japan.

The fact (of the truth of which any who will be at the pains of inquiring may soon be satisfied) is this: On Tuesday, March 25, last, (being the week before Easter,) many persons heard a great noise near a ridge of mountains, called Black Hamilton, in Yorkshire. It was observed chiefly on the southwest side of the mountain, about a mile from the course where

the Hamilton races are run, near a ledge of rocks, commonly called Whitson Cliffs, two miles from Sutton, and about five from Thirsk.

The same noise was heard on Wednesday by all who went that way. On Thursday, about seven in the morning, Edward Abbot, weaver, and Adam Bosomworth, bleacher, both of Sutton, riding under Whitson Cliffs, heard a roaring (so they termed it) like many cannons, or loud and rolling thunder. It seemed to come from the cliffs; looking up to which, they saw a large body of stone, four or five yards broad, split and fly off from the very top of the rock. They thought it strange, but rode on. Between ten and eleven, a larger piece of the rock, about fifteen yards thick, thirty high, and between sixty and seventy broad, was torn off and thrown into the valley.

About seven in the evening, one who was riding by observed the ground to shake exceedingly; and soon after several large stones or rocks, of some tons weight each, rose out of the ground. Others were thrown on one side, others turned upside down, and many rolled over and over. Being a little surprised, and not very curious, he hastened on his way.

On Friday and Saturday the ground continued to shake, and the rocks to roll over one another. The earth also clave asunder in very many places, and continued so to do till Sunday morning.

Being at Osmotherley, seven miles from the Cliffs, on Monday, June 1, and finding Edward Abbot there, I desired him the next morning to show me the way thither. I walked, crept, and climbed round and over great part of the ruins. I could not perceive by any sign, that there was ever any cavity in the rock at all; but one part of the solid stone is cleft from the rest, in a perpendicular line, and as smooth as if cut with instruments. Nor is it barely thrown down, but split into many hundred pieces, some of which lie four or five hundred yards from the main rock.

The ground nearest the cliff is not raised, but sunk considerably beneath the level. But, at some distance, it is raised in a ridge of eight or ten yards high, twelve or fifteen broad, and near a hundred long. Adjoining to this lies an oval piece of ground, thirty or forty yards in diameter, which has

been removed, whole as it is, from beneath the cliff, without the least fissure, with all its load of rocks, some of which were as large as the hull of a small ship. At a little distance is a second piece of ground, forty or fifty yards across, which has also been transplanted entire, with rocks of various sizes upon it, and a tree growing out of one of them. By the removal of one or both of these, I suppose the hollow near the cliff was made.

All round them lay stones and rocks, great and small, some on the surface of the earth, some half sunk into it, some almost covered, in variety of positions. Between these the ground was cleft asunder in a thousand places. Some of the apertures were nearly closed again, some gaping as at first. Between thirty and forty acres of land, as is commonly supposed, (though some reckon above sixty,) are in this condition.

On the skirts of these, I observed, in abundance of places, the green turf (for it was pasture land) as it were pared off, two or three inches thick, and wrapped round like sheets of lead. A little farther it was not cleft or broken at all, but raised in ridges, five or six foot long, exactly resembling the graves in a churchyard. Of these there is a vast number.

That part of the cliff from which the rest is torn, lies so high and is now of so bright a color, that it is plainly visible to all the country round, even at the distance of several miles. We saw it distinctly, not only from the street in Thirsk, but for five or six miles after, as we rode toward York. So we did likewise in the great North Road, between Sandhutton and Northallerton.

But how may we account for this phenomenon? Was it effected by a merely natural cause? If so, that cause must either have been fire, water, or air. It could not be fire; for then some mark of it must have appeared, either at the time, or after it. But no such mark does appear, nor ever did; not so much as the least smoke, either when the first or second rock was removed, or in the whole space between Tuesday and Sunday.

It could not be water; for no water issued out, when the one or the other rock was torn off. Nor had there been any rains for some time before. It

was in that part of the country a remarkable dry season. Neither was there any cavity in that part of the rock, wherein a sufficient quantity of water might have lodged. On the contrary, it was one single, solid mass, which was evenly and smoothly cleft in sunder.

There remains no other natural cause assignable, but imprisoned air. I say imprisoned; for as to the fashionable opinion, that the exterior air is the grand agent in earthquakes, it is so senseless, unmechanical, unphilosophical a dream, as deserves not to be named but to be exploded. But it is hard to conceive, how even imprisoned air could produce such an effect. It might indeed shake, tear, raise, or sink the earth; but how could it cleave a solid rock? Here was not room for a quantity of it sufficient to do anything of this nature; at least, unless it had been suddenly and violently expanded by fire, which was not the case. Could a small quantity of air, without that violent expansion, have torn so large a body of rock from the rest, to which it adhered in one solid mass? Could it have shivered this into pieces, and scattered several of those pieces some hundred yards round? Could it have transported those promontories of earth with their incumbent load, and set them down unbroken, unchanged, at a distance? Truly I am not so great a volunteer in faith as to be able to believe this. He that supposes this, must suppose air to be not only very strong, (which we allow,) but a very wise agent; while it bore its charge with so great caution, as not to hurt or dislocate any part of it.

What, then, could be the cause? What indeed, but God, who arose “to shake terribly the earth;” who purposely chose such a place, where there is so great a concourse of nobility and gentry every year; and wrought in such a manner, that many might see it and fear, — that all who travel one of the most frequented roads in England might see it, almost whether they would or no, for many miles together? It must likewise for many years, maugre all the art of man, be a visible monument of His power; all that ground being now so incumbered with rocks and stones, that it cannot be either ploughed or grazed. Nor can it well serve any use, but to tell all that see it, Who can stand before this great God?

Who can account for the late motion in the waters; not only that of the sea, and rivers communicating therewith, but even that in canals,

fish-ponds, cisterns, and all either large or small bodies of water? It was particularly observed, that while the water itself was so violently agitated, neither did the earth shake at all, nor any of the vessels which contained that water. Was such a thing ever known or heard of before? I know not, but it was spoken of once, near eighteen hundred years ago, in those remarkable words, “There shall be *oeiomo*” (not only “earthquakes,” but various “concussions” or “shakings”) “in diverse places.” And so there have been in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, in Holland, in England, in Ireland; and not improbably in many other places too, which we are not yet informed of. Yet it does not seem that a concussion of this kind has ever been known before, since either the same or some other comet revolved so near the earth. For we know of no other natural cause in the universe which is adequate to such an effect. And that this is the real cause, we may very possibly be convinced in a short time.

But alas! why should we not be convinced sooner, while that conviction may avail, that it is not chance which governs the world? Why should we not now, before London is as Lisbon, Lima, or Catania, acknowledge the hand of the Almighty, arising to maintain his own cause? Why, we have a general answer always ready, to screen us from any such conviction: “All these things are purely natural and accidental; the result of natural causes.” But there are two objections to this answer: First, it is untrue: Secondly, it is uncomfortable.

First. If by affirming, “All this is purely natural,” you mean, it is not providential, or that God has nothing to do with it, this is not true, that is, supposing the Bible to be true. For supposing this, you may descant ever so long on the natural causes of murrain, winds, thunder, lightning, and yet you are altogether wide of the mark, you prove nothing at all, unless you can prove that God never works in or by natural causes. But this you cannot prove; nay, none can doubt of his so working, who allows the Scripture to be of God. For this asserts, in the clearest and strongest terms, that “all things” (in nature) “serve him;” that (by or without a train of natural causes) He “sendeth his rain on the earth;” that He “bringeth the winds out of His treasures,” and “maketh a way for the lightning and the thunder;” in general, that “fire and hail, snow and vapor, wind and storm, fulfill his word.” Therefore, allowing there are natural causes of all these,

they are still under the direction of the Lord of nature: Nay, what is nature itself, but the art of God, or God's method of acting in the material world? True philosophy therefore ascribes all to God, and says, in the beautiful language of the wise and good man, —

Here like a trumpet, loud and strong,
Thy thunder shakes our coast;
While the red lightnings wave along,
The banners of thy host.

A Second objection to your answer is, It is extremely uncomfortable. For if things really be as you affirm; if all these affective incidents entirely depend on the fortuitous concourse and agency of blind, material causes; what hope, what help, what resource is left for the poor sufferers by them? Should the murrain among the cattle continue a few years longer, and consequently produce scarcity or famine, what will there be left for many of the poor to do, but to lie down and die? If tainted air spread a pestilence over our land, where shall they fly for succor? They cannot resist either the one or other; they cannot escape from them. And can they hope to appease

Illachrymabilem Plutona?

Inexorable Pluto, king of shades?

Shall they entreat the famine or the pestilence to show mercy? Alas! they are as senseless as you suppose God to be.

However, you who are men of fortune can shift tolerably well, in spite of these difficulties. Your money will undoubtedly procure you food as long as there is any in the kingdom. And if your Physicians cannot secure you from the epidemic disease, your coaches can carry you from the place of infection. Be it so: But you are not out of all danger yet, unless you can drive faster than the wind. Are you sure of this? And are your horses literally swifter than the lightning? Can they leave the panting storm behind? If not, what will you do when it overtakes you? Try your eloquence on the whirlwind. Will it hear your voice? Will it regard either your money, or prayers, or tears? Call upon the lightning. Cry aloud; see

whether your voice will “divide the flames of fire.” O no! it hath no ears to hear! It devoureth and showeth no pity!

But this is not all. Here is a nearer enemy. The earth threatens to swallow you up. Where is your protection now? What defense do you find from thousands of gold and silver? You cannot fly; for you cannot quit the earth unless you will leave your dear body behind you. And while you are on the earth, you know not where to flee to, neither where to flee from. You may buy intelligence, where the shock was yesterday, but not where it will be tomorrow, — today. It comes! The roof trembles! The beams crack! The ground rocks to and fro! Hoarse thunder resounds from the bowels of the earth! And all these are but the beginning of sorrows. Now, what help? What wisdom can prevent, what strength resist, the blow? What money can purchase, I will not say deliverance, but an hour’s reprieve? Poor honorable fool, where are now thy titles? Wealthy fool, where is now thy golden God? If anything can help, it must be prayer. But what wilt thou pray to? Not to the God of heaven; you suppose him to have nothing to do with earthquakes. No; they proceed in a merely natural way either from the earth itself, or from included air, or from subterraneous fires or waters. If thou prayest, then, (which perhaps you never did before,) it must be to some of these. Begin: “O earth, earth, earth, hear the voice of thy children! Hear, O air, water, fire!” And will they hear? You know it cannot be. How deplorable, then, is his condition, who in such an hour has none else to flee to! How uncomfortable the supposition, which implies this, by direct necessary consequence, namely, that all these things are the pure result of merely natural causes!

But supposing the earthquake which made such havoc at Lisbon should never travel so far as London, is there nothing else which can reach us? What think you of a comet? Are we absolutely out of the reach of this? You cannot say we are; seeing these move in all directions, and through every region of the universe. And would the approach of one of these amazing spheres be of no importance to us? especially in its return from the sun; when that immense body is (according to Sir Isaac Newton’s calculation) heated two thousand times hotter than a red-hot cannonball. The late ingenious and accurate Dr. Halley (never yet suspected of enthusiasm) fixes the return of the great comet in the year 1758; and he

observes that the last time it revolved, it moved in the very same line which the earth describes in her annual course round the sun; but the earth was on the other side of her orbit. Whereas, in this revolution, it will move, not only in the same line, but in the same part of that line wherein the earth moves. And “who can tell,” says that great man, “what the consequences of such a contact may be?”

Who can tell! Any man of common understanding, who knows the very first elements of astronomy. The immediate consequence of such a body of solid fire touching the earth must necessarily be, that it will set the earth on fire, and burn it to a coal, if it do not likewise strike it out of its course; in which case, (so far as we can judge) it must drop down directly into the sun.

But what, if this vast body is already on its way? if it is nearer than we are aware of? What, if these unusual, unprecedented motions of the waters be one effect of its near approach? We cannot be certain that it will be visible to the inhabitants of our globe, till it has imbibed the solar fire. But possibly we may see it sooner than we desire. We may see it, not as Milton speaks, —

From its horrid hair
Shake pestilence and war;

but ushering in far other calamities than these, and of more extensive influence. Probably it will be seen first drawing nearer and nearer, till it appears as another moon in magnitude, though not in color, being of a deep fiery red; then scorching and burning up all the produce of the earth, driving away all clouds, and so cutting off the hope or possibility of any rain or dew; drying, up every fountain, stream, and river, causing all faces to gather blackness, and all men’s hearts to fail; then executing its grand commission on the globe itself, and causing the stars to fall from heaven.⁴ O, who may abide when this is done? Who will then be able to stand?

*Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia coeli
Ardeat; et mundi moles operosa laboret?*⁵

What shall we do? do now, that none of these things may come upon us unawares? We are wisely and diligently providing for our defense against one enemy; with such a watchful wisdom and active diligence, as is a comfort to every honest Englishman. But why should we not show the same wisdom and diligence in providing against all our enemies? And if our wisdom and strength be sufficient to defend us, let us not seek any further. Let us without delay recruit our forces, and guard our coasts against the famine, and murrain, and pestilence; and still more carefully against immoderate rains, and winds, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and comets; that we may no longer be under any painful apprehensions of any present or future danger; but may smile,

Secure, amidst the jar of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!

But if our own wisdom and strength be not sufficient to defend us, let us not be ashamed to seek farther help. Let us even dare to own we believe there is a God; nay, and not a lazy, indolent, epicurean deity, who sits at ease upon the circle of the heavens, and neither knows nor cares what is done below; but one who, as he created heaven and earth, and all the armies of them, as he sustains them all by the word of his power, so cannot neglect the work of his own hands. With pleasure we own there is such a God, whose eye pervades the whole sphere of created beings, who knoweth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names; a God whose wisdom is as the great abyss, deep and wide as eternity;

Who, high in power, in the beginning said,
Let sea, and air, and earth, and heaven be made:
And it was so: And when he shall ordain
In other sort, hath but to speak again,
And they shall be no more:

Yet more; whose mercy riseth above the heavens, and his faithfulness above the clouds; who is loving to every man, and his mercy over all his works. Let us secure him on our side; let us make this wise, this powerful, this gracious God our friend. Then need we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea; no, not though the heavens being on fire are dissolved, and the very elements melt with

fervent heat. It is enough that the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of love is our everlasting refuge.

But how shall we secure the favor of this great God? How, but by worshipping him in spirit and in truth; by uniformly imitating Him we worship, in all his imitable perfections? without which the most accurate systems of opinions, all external modes of religion, are idle cobwebs of the brain, dull farce and empty show. Now, God is love: Love God then, and you are a true worshipper. Love mankind, and God is your God, your Father, and your Friend. But see that you deceive not your own soul; for this is not a point of small importance. And by this you may know: If you love God, then you are happy in God; if you love God, riches, honors, and the pleasures of sense are no more to you than bubbles on the water: You look on dress and equipage, as the tassels of a fool's cap; diversions, as the bells on a fool's coat. If you love God, God is in all your thoughts, and your whole life is a sacrifice to him. And if you love mankind, it is your one design, desire, and endeavor, to spread virtue and happiness all around you, to lessen the present sorrows, and increase the joys, of every child of man; and, if it be possible, to bring them with you to the rivers of pleasure that are at God's right hand for evermore.

But where shall you find one who answers this happy and amiable character? Wherever you find a Christian; for this, and this alone, is real, genuine Christianity. Surely you did not imagine that Christianity was no more than such a system of opinions as is vulgarly called faith; or a strict and regular attendance on any kind of external worship. O no! Were this all that it implied, Christianity were indeed a poor, empty, shallow thing; such as none but half-thinkers could admire, and all who think freely and generously must despise. But this is not the case; the spirit above described, this alone, is Christianity. And, if so, it is no wonder that even a celebrated unbeliever should make that frank declaration, "Well, after all, these Christian dogs are the happiest fellows upon earth!" Indeed they are. Nay, we may say more; they are the only happy men upon earth; and that though we should have no regard at all to the particular circumstances above mentioned; suppose there was no such thing as a comet in the universe, or none that would ever approach the solar system; suppose there had never been an earthquake in the world, or that we were assured

there never would be another; yet what advantage has a Christian (I mean always a real, scriptural Christian) above all other men upon earth!

What advantage has he over you in particular, if you do not believe the Christian system! For suppose you have utterly driven away storms, lightnings, earthquakes, comets, yet there is another grim enemy at the door; and you cannot drive him away. It is death. "O that death," (said a gentleman of large possessions, of good health, and a cheerful natural temper,) "I do not love to think of it! It comes in and spoils all!" So it does indeed. It comes with its "miscreated front," and spoils all your mirth, diversions, pleasures! It turns all into the silence of a tomb, into rottenness and dust; and many times it will not stay till the trembling hand of old age beckons to it; but it leaps upon you while you are in the dawn of life, in the bloom and strength of your years.

The morning flowers display their sweets,
 And gay their silken leaves unfold,
 Unmindful of the noon-tide heats,
 And fearless of the evening cold.
 Nipp'd by the wind's unkindly blast,
 Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,
 The momentary glories waste,
 The short-lived beauties die away.

And where are you then? Does your soul disperse and dissolve into common air? Or does it share the fate of its former companion, and moulder into dust? Or does it remain conscious of its own existence, in some distant, unknown world? It is all unknown! A black, dreary, melancholy scene! Clouds and darkness rest upon it.

But the case is far otherwise with a Christian. To him life and immortality are brought to light. His eye pierces through the vale of the shadow of death, and sees into the glories of eternity. His view does not terminate on that black line,

The verge 'twixt mortal and immortal being;

but extends beyond the bounds of time and place, to the house of God eternal in the heavens. Hence he is so far from looking upon death as an

enemy, that he longs to feel his welcome embrace. He groans (but they are pleasing groans) to have mortality swallowed up of life.

Perhaps you will say, "But this is all a dream. He is only in a fool's paradise!" Supposing he be, it is a pleasing dream.

*Maneat mentis gratissimus error!*⁶

If he is only in a fool's paradise, yet it is a paradise; while you are wandering in a wide, weary, barren world. Be it folly; his folly gives him that present happiness which all your wisdom cannot find. So that he may now turn the tables upon you, and say, —

"Whoe'er can ease by folly get,
With safety may despise
The wretched, unenjoying wit,
The miserable wise."

Such unspeakable advantage (even if there is none beyond death) has a Christian over an Infidel! It is true, he has given up some pleasures before he could attain to this. But what pleasures? That of eating till he is sick; till he weakens a strong, or quite destroys a weak, constitution. He has given up the pleasure of drinking a man into a beast, and that of ranging from one worthless creature to another, till he brings a canker upon his estate, and perhaps rottenness into his bones. But in lieu of these, he has now (whatever may be hereafter) a continual serenity of mind, a constant evenness and composure of temper, "a peace which passeth all understanding." He has learned in every state wherein he is, therewith to be content; nay, to give thanks, as being clearly persuaded, it is better for him than any other. He feels continual gratitude to his supreme Benefactor, Father of Spirits, Parent of Good; and tender, disinterested benevolence to all the children of this common Father. May the Father of your spirit, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, make you such a Christian! May He work in your soul a divine conviction of things not discerned by eyes of flesh and blood! May He give you to see Him that is invisible, and to taste of the powers of the world to come! May He fill you with all peace and joy in believing, that you may be happy in life, in death, in eternity!

FREE THOUGHTS

ON

THE PRESENT STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1768

*Perticulosoe plenum opus aleoe
Tractas; el incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.*⁷ — HORAT.

YOU desire me to give you my thoughts freely on the present state of public affairs. But do you consider? I am no politician; politics lie quite out of my province. Neither have I any acquaintance, at least no intimacy, with any that bear that character. And it is no easy matter to form any judgment concerning things of so complicated a nature. It is the more difficult, because, in order to form our judgment, such a multitude of facts should be known, few of which can be known with tolerable exactness by any but those who are eyewitnesses of them. And how few of these will relate what they have seen precisely as it was, without adding, omitting, or altering any circumstance, either with or without design! And may not a slight addition or alteration give a quite different color to the whole?

And as we cannot easily know, with any accuracy, the facts on which we are chiefly to form our judgment; so, much less can we expect to know the various springs of action which gave rise to those facts, and on which, more than on the bare actions themselves, the characters of the actors depend. It is on this account that an old writer advises us to judge nothing before the time; to abstain, as far as possible, from judging peremptorily, either of things or persons, till the time comes, when “the hidden things of darkness,” the facts now concealed, “will be brought to light,” and the

hidden springs of action will he discovered, — “the thoughts and intents of” every human “heart.”

Perhaps you will say, “Nay, every Englishman is a politician; we suck in politics with our mother’s milk. It is as natural for us to talk politics as to breathe; we can instruct both the King and his Council. We can in a trice reform the State, point out every blunder of this or that Minister, and tell every step they ought to take to be arbiters of all Europe.”

I grant, every cobbler, tinker, porter, and hackney-coachman can do this; but I am not so deep learned: While they are sure of everything, I am in a manner sure of nothing; except of that very little which I see with my own eyes, or hear with my own ears. However, since you desire me to tell you what I think, I will do it with all openness. Only please to remember, I do not take upon me to dictate either to you or to anyone. I only use the privilege of an Englishman, to speak my naked thoughts; setting down just what appears to me to be the truth, till I have better information.

At present, indeed, I have not much information, having read little upon this head but the public papers; and you know these are mostly on one side; in them little is to be seen on the other side; and that little is seldom wrote by masterly writers. How few of them have such a pen as Junius!

But supposing we have ever so much information, how little can one rely on it! on the information given by either party! For is not one as warm as the other? And who does not know how impossible it is for a man to see things right when he is angry? Does not passion blind the eyes of the understanding, as smoke does the bodily eyes? And how little of the truth can we learn from those who see nothing but through a cloud?

This advantage then I have over both parties, — the being angry at neither. So that if I have a little understanding from nature or experience, it is (in this instance at least) unclouded by passion. I wish the same happiness which I wish to myself, to those on one side and on the other. I would not hurt either in the least degree; I would not willingly give them any pain.

I have likewise another advantage, that of having no bias one way or the other. I have no interest depending; I want no man's favor, having no hopes, no fears, from any man; and having no particular attachment of any kind to either of the contending parties.

But am I so weak as to imagine, that because I am not angry at them, they will not be angry at me? No; I do not imagine any such thing. Probably both will be angry enough; that is, the warm men on both sides, were it only for this, — that I am not as warm as themselves. For what is more insufferable to a man in a passion, than to see you keep your temper? And is it not a farther provocation, that I do not behave as he does to his opponent; that I call him no ill names; that I give him no ill words? I expect, therefore, to be abused on all sides; and cannot be disappointed, unless by being treated with common humanity.

This premised, I come to the point, to give you my “free thoughts on the present state of public affairs;” the causes and consequences of the present commotions. But permit me to remind you, that I say nothing peremptorily. I do not take upon me to affirm, that things are thus or thus. I just set down my naked thoughts, and that without any art or coloring.

“What then do you think is the direct and principal cause of the present public commotions, of the amazing ferment among the people, the general discontent of the nation?” which now rises to an higher degree than it has done in the memory of man; insomuch that I have learned it affirmed with my own ears, “King George ought to be treated as King Charles was!” Is it the extraordinary bad character of the king? I do not apprehend it is. Certainly, if he is not, as some think, the best Prince in Europe, he is far from being the worst. One not greatly prejudiced in his favor does not charge him with want of virtue, (of this he judges him to have more than enough,) but with wanting those royal vices, which (with Machiavel and the ingenious Doctor Mandeville) he supposes would be public benefits.

“But does he not likewise want understanding?” So it has been boldly affirmed. And it must be acknowledged, this charge is supported by facts which cannot be denied. The First is, he believes the Bible; the Second, he fears God; the Third, he loves the Queen. Now, suppose the First of

these, considering the prejudice of education might consist with some share of understanding, yet how can this be allowed with regard to the Second? For although, in the times of ignorance and barbarism men imagined, “the fear of God” was “the beginning of wisdom,” our enlightened age has discovered it is the end of it; that whenever the fear of God begins, wisdom is at an end. And with regard to the Third, for a man to love his wife, unless perhaps for a month or two, most argue such utter want of sense, as most men of rank are now ashamed of. But, after all, there are some who, allowing the facts, deny the consequence; who still believe, and that after the most accurate inquiry, from such as have had the best means of information, that there are few noblemen or gentlemen in the nation, (and we have many not inferior to most in Europe,) who have either so good a natural understanding, or so general a knowledge of all the valuable parts of learning.

“But suppose something might be said for His Majesty’s understanding, what can be said in excuse of his bad actions; as, First, his pardoning a murderer?” I really think something may be said on this head also. Can you or I believe that the King knew him to be such? understood him to be a willful murderer? I am not sure of it at all; neither have you any rational proof, even supposing this to have been the case, which is far from being clear. And if he did not know or believe him to be such, how can he be blamed for pardoning him? Not to have pardoned him in this case would have been inexcusable before God and man.

“But what can be said in excuse of his being governed by his mother, and fixing all his measures at Carlton-House?” It may be said, that if it was so, it is past, and so is no matter of present complaint. But who informed you that it was? any eye and ear witness? “O, it is in everybody’s mouth.” Very well; but everybody is nobody; so this proof is no proof at all. And what better proof have you, or any man, of his fixing any of his measures there? This has been affirmed an hundred times, but never was proved yet. “Nay, but is it not undeniable fact, that he spent hour after hour with her; and especially when he was hard pressed, and knew not which way to turn?” And what then? Who loves him better than his parent? And whom has he a right to love better than her? Who is more faithful to him, more steadily desirous of his welfare? And whom can he trust better? Suppose

then it was true, (which is more than any man can prove,) that he did consult her on all occasions, and particularly when he was in trouble and perplexity, who can blame him for so doing?

“Well, be this as it may, who can help blaming him for giving so many pensions?” This is a thing which I do not understand, and can therefore neither praise nor blame. Some indeed, I think, are well bestowed on men eminent in their several professions. All, I believe, are well designed, particularly those given to men who are removed from public employments. Yet, I fear, some of these are ill bestowed on those who not only fly in the face of their benefactor, but avail themselves of his favors to wound the deeper. “For were he not in the wrong, these would never turn against him!” What pity they should enjoy them another day, after such foul and flagrant ingratitude!

This fault (if it were really such) would argue too great easiness of temper. But this is quite the reverse of what is commonly objected, — inflexible stubbornness. “Nay, what else could occasion the settled disregard of so many petitions and remonstrances, signed by so many thousand hands, and declaring the sense of the nation?” *The sense of the nation!* Who can imagine this that knows the manner wherein nine in ten, I might say ninety-nine in an hundred, of those petitions are procured? A Lord or Squire (sometimes two or more) goes, or sends his steward, round the town where his seat is, with a paper, which he tells the honest men is for the good of their King and country. He desires each to set his name or mark to this. And who has the hardiness to gainsay; especially if my Lord keeps open house? Meantime, the contents of it they know nothing about.

I was not long since at a town in Kent, when one of these petitions was carrying about. I asked one and another, “Have you signed the petition?” and found none that had refused it. And yet not one single person to whom I spoke had either read it, or heard it read.

Now, I would ask any man of common sense, what stress is to be laid on these petitions; and how they do declare “the sense of the nation;” nay, of the very persons that have signed them? What a shocking insult is it then

on the whole kingdom, to palm these petitions upon us, of which the very subscribers have not read three lines, as the general “sense of the nation!”

But suppose they had read all that they have subscribed, what judges are they of these matters? To put this beyond dispute, let us only propose one case out of a thousand. Step back a few years, and suppose Mr. Pitt at the head of the administration. Here comes up a petition from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, signed by five hundred hands, begging His Majesty to dismiss that corrupt Minister, who was taking such measures as tended to the utter ruin of the nation. What would Mr. Pitt say to this? Would he not ask, “How came these colliers and keelmen to be so well acquainted with affairs of State? How long have they been judges of public administration? of naval and military operations? How came they to understand the propriety or impropriety of the measures I take? Do they comprehend the balance of Europe? Do they know the weakness and strength of its several kingdoms; the characters of the Monarchs and their Ministers; the springs of this and that public motion? Else, why do they take upon them to scan my conduct? *Ne sutor ultra crepidam!* ‘Let them mind their own work,’ keep to their pits and keels, and leave State affairs to me.”

“But surely you do not place the citizens of London on a level with the colliers of Newcastle!” I do not. And yet I suppose they were equally incompetent judges of the measures which Mr. Pitt took. And I doubt they are full as incompetent judges of the measures taken by the present ministry. To form a tolerable judgment of them requires, not only a good understanding, but more time than common tradesmen can spare, and better information than they can possibly procure. I think, therefore, that the encouraging them to pass their verdict on Ministers of State, yea, on King, Lords, and Commons, is not only putting them out of their way, but doing them more mischief than you are aware of.

“But the remonstrance! Surely the King ought to have paid more regard to the remonstrance of the city of London.” Consider the case: The city had presented a petition which he could by no means approve of, as he judged it was designed not so much to inform him as to inflame his subjects. After he had rejected this, as mildly as could be done, whilst he viewed it in this

light, they present a remonstrance to the same effect, and (as he judged) with the same design. What then could he do less than he did? Could he seem to approve what he did not approve? If not, how could he testify full disapprobation in more inoffensive terms?

As to the idle, shameless tale of his bursting out into laughter at the Magistrates, any who know His Majesty's temper would as soon believe that he spit in their faces, or struck them a box on the ear.

His Majesty's character, then, after all the pains which have been taken to make him odious, as well as contemptible remains unimpeached; and therefore cannot be, in any degree, the cause of the present commotions. His whole conduct, both in public and private, ever since he began his reign, the uniform tenor of his behavior, the general course both of his words and actions, has been worthy of an Englishman, worthy of a Christian, and worthy of a King.

“Are not, then, the present commotions owing to his having extraordinary bad Ministers? Can you say that his Ministers are as blameless as himself?” I do not say this; I do not think so. But I think they are not one jot worse than those that went before them; nor than any set of Ministers who have been in place for at least thirty years last past. I think they are not a jot worse than their opponents, than those who bawl the longest against them either with regard to intellectual or moral abilities, with regard to sense or honesty. Set twenty against twenty, or ten against ten; and is there a pin to choose?

“However, are not these commotions owing to the extraordinary bad measures they have taken? Surely you will not attempt to defend all their measures!” No, indeed. I do not defend General Warrants. But I observe,

1. The giving these, be it good or bad, is no extraordinary measure. Has it not been done by all Ministers for many years, and that with little or no objection?
2. This ordinary measure is of exceeding little importance to the nation in general: So little, that it was never before thought worthy to be put into the list of public grievances: So little, that it never deserved the hundredth part of the outcry which has been made concerning it.

I do not defend the killing of Mr. Allen. But I would have the fact truly represented. By the best information I can gain, I believe it stands just thus: About that time the mob had been very turbulent. On that day they were likely to be more insolent than ever. It was therefore judged proper to send a party of soldiers to prevent or repress their violence. Their presence did not prevent it; the mob went so far as to throw stones at the soldiers themselves. One of them hit and wounded a soldier; two or three pursued him; and fired at one whom, being in the same dress, they supposed to be the same man. But it was not; it was Mr. Allen. Now, though this cannot be excused, yet, was it the most horrid villany that ever was perpetrated? Surely, no. Notwithstanding all the tragical exclamations which have been made concerning it, what is this to the killing a man in cool blood? And was this never heard of in England?

I do not defend the measures which have been taken relative to the Middlesex election. But let it be remembered,

First, that there was full as much violence on the one side as on the other. Secondly, that a right of expulsion, of putting a member out of the House, manifestly implies a right of exclusion, of keeping him out; otherwise that right amounts to just nothing at all.

Thirdly, that consequently, a member expelled is incapable of being re-elected, at least during that session; as incapable as one that is disqualified any other way. It follows,

Fourthly, that the votes given for this disqualified person are null and void, being, in effect, given for nobody. Therefore,

Fifthly, if the other candidate had two hundred votes, he had a majority of two hundred.

Let it be observed farther, if the electors had the liberty of choosing any qualified person, it is absolute nonsense to talk of their being deprived of the liberty of choosing, because they were not permitted to choose a person utterly unqualified.

But suppose a single borough or county were deprived of this in a single instance; (which undoubtedly is the case, whenever a person duly elected does not sit in the House;) how is this depriving the good people of

England, the nations, of their birthright? What an insult upon common sense is this wild way of talking! If Middlesex is wronged (put it so) in this instance, how is Yorkshire or Cumberland affected by it; or twenty counties and forty boroughs besides; much less all the nation? “O, but they may be affected by and by.” Very true! And the sky may fall!

To see this whole matter in the clearest light, let anyone read and consider the speech of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, on a motion, made by Lord Chatham, “to repeal and rescind the Resolutions of the House of Commons, in regard to the expulsion and incapacitation of Mr. Wilkes:”

“In this debate, though it has been already spoken to with great eloquence and perspicuity, I cannot content myself with only giving a single vote; I feel myself under a strong necessity of saying something more. The subject requires it; and though the hour is late,” (it being then near ten o’clock,) “I shall demand your indulgence, while I offer my sentiments on this motion.

“I am sure, my Lords, many of you must remember, from your reading and experience, several persons expelled the House of Commons, without ever this House once pretending to interfere or call in question by what authority they did so. I remember several myself;” (here his Lordship quoted several cases;) “in all which, though most of the candidates were sure to be re-chosen, they never once applied, resting contented with the expulsatory power of the House, as the only self-sufficient, dernier resort of application.

“It has been echoed on all sides, from the partisans of this motion, that the House of Commons acted illegally, in accepting Colonel Luttrell, who had but two hundred and ninety-six votes, in preference to Mr. Wilkes, who had one thousand one hundred and forty-three. But this is a mistake of the grossest nature imaginable, and which nothing but the intemperance of people’s zeal could possibly transport them to, as Mr. Wilkes had been previously considered by the laws as an unqualified person to represent the people in Parliament; therefore it appears very plainly, that Colonel Luttrell had a very great majority, not less than two hundred and

ninety-six, Mr. Wilkes being considered as nobody in the eye of the law; consequently, Colonel Luttrell had no legal opposition.

“In all contested elections, where one of the parties think themselves not legally treated, I should be glad to know to whom it is they resort? Is it to the freeholders of the borough or the county they would represent? Or is it to the people at large? Who cannot see at once the absurdity of such a question? Who so ignorant of our laws, that cannot immediately reply and say, ‘It is the House of Commons who are the only judges to determine every nicety of the laws of election; and from whom there is no appeal, after they have one given their determination?’ All the freeholder has to do is to determine on his object, by giving him his vote; the ultimate power lies with the House of Commons, who is to judge of his being a legal object of representation in the several branches of his qualifications. This, my Lords, I believe, is advancing no new doctrine, nor adding an iota to the privilege of a member of the House of Commons, more than what the constitution long ago has given him; yet here is a cry made, in a case that directly applies to what I have been speaking of, as if it was illegal, arbitrary, and unprecedented.

“I do not remember, my Lords, in either the course of my reading or observation ever to have known an instance of a person’s being re-chosen, after being expelled, till the year 1711; then, indeed, my memory serves me with the case of Sir Robert Walpole. He was expelled the House of Commons, and was afterwards re-chosen: But this last event did not take place till the meeting of the next Parliament; and during that interval, I find no debate about the illegality of his expulsion, no interference of the House of Lords, nor any addresses from the public, to decry that measure by a dissolution of Parliament.

“Indeed, as for a precedent of one House interfering with the rules, orders, or business of another, my memory does not serve me at present with the recollection of a single one. As to the case of Titus Oates, as mentioned by the noble Lord in my eye, (Lord Chatham,) he is very much mistaken in regard to the mode; his was a trial in the King’s Bench, which, on a writ of error, the House of Commons interfered in, and they had an authority for so doing. A Judge certainly may be mistaken in points of law; the wisest

and the best of us may be so at times; and it reflects no discredit, on the contrary, it does particular honor, when he finds himself so mistaken, to reverse his own decree. But for one House of Parliament interfering with the business, and reversing the resolutions, of another, it is not only unprecedented, but unconstitutional to the last degree.

“But suppose, my Lords, that this House coincided with this motion; suppose we all agreed, *nem. con.*, to repeal and rescind the Resolutions of the House of Commons, in regard to the expulsion and incapacitation of Mr. Wilkes; — Good God! what may be the consequence! The people are violent enough already; and to have the superior branch of legislation join them, would be giving such a public encouragement to their proceedings, that I almost tremble while I even suppose such a scene of anarchy and confusion.”

“What then can we think of the violent outcry, that the nation is oppressed, deprived of that liberty which their ancestors bought with so much treasure and blood, and delivered down through so many generations? Do those who raise this cry believe what they say? If so, are they not under the highest infatuation? seeing that England, from the time of William the Conqueror, yea, of Julius Caesar, never enjoyed such liberty, civil and religious, as it does at this day. Nor do we know of any other kingdom or state in Europe or in the world, which enjoys the like.

“I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America: I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence. But whose measures were these? If I do not mistake, Mr. George Grenville’s. Therefore the whole merit of these measures belongs to him, and not to the present ministry.

“But is not the general dissatisfaction owing, if not to any of the preceding causes, to the extraordinary bad conduct of the Parliament, particularly the House of Commons?” This is set in so clear a light by a late writer, that I need only transcribe his words: —

“The last recess of Parliament was a period filled with unprecedented troubles; and the session opened in the midst of tumults. Ambitious men,

with a perseverance uncommon in indolent and luxurious times, rung all the changes of popular noise for the purpose of intimidation. The ignorant, who could not distinguish between real and artificial clamors, were alarmed; the lovers of their own ease wished to sacrifice the just dignity of the House of Commons to a temporary relief, from the grating sound of seditious scurrility.

“Hence the friends of the constitution saw the opening of the session with anxiety and apprehension. They were afraid of the timidity of others, and dreaded nothing more than that panic to which popular assemblies, as well as armies, are sometimes subject. The event has shown that their fears were groundless: The House supported its decisions against the current of popular prejudice; and, in defending their own judicial rights, secured the most solid part of the liberties of their constituents.

“Their firm adherence to their Resolutions was not more noble than their concessions in the matter of their own rights was disinterested and generous. The extensive privileges which, in a series of ages, had accumulated to the members of both Houses, were certainly inconsistent with the impartial distribution of Justice. To sacrifice these privileges was not only diametrically opposite to the idea of self-interest, with which some asperse the Legislature, but it has also thrown a greater weight into the scale of public freedom than any other Act passed since the Revolution. And it has reflected honor on the present administration, that a bill, so very favorable to the liberty of the subject, was brought in and carried through by them.

“The arbitrary manner of determining petitions about elections has been a serious complaint, and of long continuance. I shall not deny to Mr. Grenville the merit of bringing in a bill for remedying this grievance; but its passing as it did is a certain proof that the pretended influence of administration over a majority of the House is a mere bugbear, holden forth for private views by the present opposition.

“During the whole session, the House of Lords behaved with that dignity and unalterable firmness which became the first assembly in a great nation. Attacked with impertinent scurrility, they smiled upon rage, and treated

the ravings of a despotic tribune with contempt. When, with an infamous perversion of his pretended love to freedom, he attempted to extend the control of the Peers to the resolutions of the representatives of the people, they nobly rejected the golden bait; and scorned to raise the dignity of their House upon the ruins of the other. They, in short, throughout the session, showed a spirit that disdained to be braved, a magnanimity that diminished their own personal power for the ease and comfort of the inferior subject.

“If the conduct of Parliament is in any instance blamable, it is in a lenity that is inconsistent with the vulgar idea of political courage. They have been attacked with scurrility in the Lower House; in the Upper, they have been treated with indecency and disrespect. Their prudence and love for the public peace prevailed over their resentment. They knew that legal punishment is in these times the road to popularity; and they were unwilling to raise insignificant men into a consequence that might disturb the State.”

So far we have gained. We have removed the imaginary causes of the present commotions. It plainly appears, they are not owing to the extraordinary badness, either of the King, of his Parliament, of his Ministers, or of the measures which they have taken. To what then are they owing? What are the real causes of this amazing ferment among the people?

Before I say anything you this subject, let me remind you once more, that I do not dictate; I do not take upon me to affirm anything, but simply tell you what I think. I think, the first and principal spring of the whole motion is French gold. “But why do you think so?” I will tell you as plainly as I can: —

A person of a complete, uniform character, encumbered with no religion, with no regard to virtue or morality, squanders away all that he has. He applies for a place, but is disappointed. He is thoroughly exasperated, abuses the ministry, asperses the King’s mother in the grossest manner, is prosecuted, (not for this, but other achievements,) and retires to France. After some time, he suddenly returns to London, sets up for a patriot, and

vehemently inveighs against evil counselors, grievances, and mal-administration. The cry spreads; more and more espouse his cause, and second him with all their might. He becomes head of the party; and not only the vulgar but the world runs after him. He drives on with still increasing numbers, carrying all before him, inflaming the nation more and more, and making their minds evil-affected, in appearance towards the Ministers of State, but in reality towards the King. Now, can any reasonable man believe that the French are ignorant of all this; or that they have no hand at all therein, but are mere unconcerned spectators? Do they not understand their own interest better? If they did not kindle the fire, will they not use all means to prevent its going out? Will they not take care to add fuel to the flame? Will they not think forty or fifty thousand louis-d'ors well bestowed on so important an occasion?

I cannot but think this is (at least) one principal spring of all the present commotions. But may not other causes likewise concur? As, First, covetousness; a love of English as well as of French gold. Do not many hunger after the lucrative employments which their neighbors enjoy? They had rather have them themselves. And will not those that are hungry naturally cry for food? Secondly, ambition. How many desire honor, perhaps more than they do money itself! and how various are the shapes which they will put on in order to attain it! Thirdly, those who are not so much under the power of these, are yet susceptible of pride or envy; and frequently of both together. To these we may, Fourthly, add resentment. Many doubtless look upon themselves as injured, were it only on this account, that they are not regarded, yea, and recompensed, as their merits or services deserve. Others are angry because they are disappointed; because, after all their schemes, which they imagined could not fail of success, they are not able to carry their point.

Now, all these, united by these various motives, some encouraged by good pay in hand, (and perhaps by promises of more,) others animated by covetousness, by ambition, by envy, pride, and resentment, by every means animate all they have access to. They treat both rich and poor, according to their rank, with all elegance and profuseness. They talk largely and vehemently. They write abundantly, having troops enough in their service. They publish addresses, petitions, remonstrances, directed

nominally to the King, (otherwise they would not answer the end,) but really to the people. Herein their orators make use of all the powers of rhetoric. They bring forth their strong reasons, — the very best which the cause will hear. They set them off with all the beauty of language, all the poignancy of wit. They spread their writings in pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, etc., to every corner of the land. They are indefatigable in their work; they never stop to take breath; but as they have tongues and pens at command, when one has done, another begins, and so on and on with a continuance. By this means the flame spreads wider and wider; it runs as fire among the stubble. The madness becomes epidemic, and no medicine hitherto has availed against it. The whole nation sees the State in danger, as they did the Church sixty years ago; and the world now wonders after Mr. Wilkes, as it did then after Dr. Sacheverel.

One means of increasing the ferment is the suffering no contradiction; the hooting at all who labor for peace, and treading them down like dirt; the using them just as they do the King, without either justice or mercy. If any writes on that head, presently the cry is raised, “O, he only writes for pay!” But, if he does, do not those on the other side too? Which are paid best I do not know; but doubtless both are paid, a very few old-fashioned mortals excepted, who, having nothing to hope, and nothing to fear, simply consider the good of their country.

“But what do you think the end will be?” It is easy to foresee this. Supposing things to take their natural course, they must go from bad to worse.

*In stipulam veluti cum flamma furentibus Austris
Incidit, aut rapidus montano flumine torrens
Exiit, oppositasque evicit gurgite moles.*⁸

The people will be inflamed more and more; the torrent will swell higher and higher, till at length it bursts through all opposition, and overflows the land. The consequences of these commotions will be (unless an higher hand interpose) exactly the same as those of the like commotions in the last century. First, the land will become a field of blood; many thousands of poor Englishmen will sheathe their swords in each other's bowels, for

the diversion of their good neighbors. Then either a commonwealth will ensue, or else a second Cromwell. One must be; but it cannot be determined which, King W——, or King Mob.

“But that case is not parallel with this.” It is not, in all particulars. In many respects it is widely different. As, First, with regard to the King himself. Few will affirm the character of King Charles, even allowing the account given by Lord Clarendon to be punctually true in every respect, to be as faultless as that of King George. But other passions, as well as love, are blind. So that when these are raised to a proper height, especially when Junius has thrown a little more of his magic dust into the eyes of the people, and convinced them, that what are virtues in others, are mere vices in him, the good patriots will see no manner of difference between a King George and King Charles, or even a Nero.

The case is also widely different, Secondly, with regard to the ministry. King George has no such furious drivers about him as poor King Charles had. But a skillful painter may easily add a few features, either to one or the other, and by a little coloring make Lord North the very picture of Lord Strafford, and Archbishop Cornwallis of Archbishop Laud.

How different likewise is the case, Thirdly, with regard to the administration of public affairs! The requiring tonnage and poundage, the imposing ship-money, the prosecutions in the Bishops’ Courts, in the High Commission Court, and in the Star Chamber, were real and intolerable grievances. But what is there in the present administration which bears any resemblance to these? Yet if you will view even such an affair as the Middlesex election through Mr. Horne’s magnifying glass, it will appear a more enormous instance of oppression than a hundred Star Chambers put together.

The parallel does not hold, Fourthly, with regard to the opposers of the King and his ministry. Is Mr. Burke the same calm, wise, disinterested man that Mr. Hampden was? And where shall we find twenty noblemen and twenty gentlemen (to name no more) in the present opposition, whom any impartial man will set on a level with the same number of those that opposed King Charles and his ministry.

Nor does the parallel hold, Fifthly, in this respect: That was in great measure a contest about religion; at least, about rites, and ceremonies, and opinions, which many supposed to be religion. But all religion is out of the question now: This is generally allowed, both by the one side and the other, to be so very a trifle, that they do not give themselves the least concern about it.

In one circumstance more there is an obvious difference. The Parliament were then the King's enemies: Now they are his firmest friends. But indeed this difference may easily be removed. Let the King only take Mr. Wilkes's advice, and dissolve Parliament. The Parliament of 1640, the first which sat after the troubles began, although many therein were much dissatisfied with the measures which had been taken, yet would never have been prevailed upon to join in the schemes which afterwards prevailed. But when that Parliament was so seasonably dissolved, and a few men, wise in their generation, practicing with unwearied industry on the heated spirits of the people, had procured a new Parliament to be chosen after their own heart; then it was not long ere the train took fire, and the whole constitution was blown up!

But, notwithstanding the disparity between the present and past times in the preceding respects, yet how surprisingly does the parallel hold in various particulars!

1. An handful of people laid a scheme, which few would have believed had a man then declared it unto them; though indeed it is probable that at the beginning they had no settled scheme at all.
2. These professed great zeal for the good of their country, were vehement contenders for liberty, cried aloud against evil Ministers and the evil measures which they pursued, and were continually declaiming against either real or imaginary grievances.
3. They were soon joined by men eminent for probity as well as for understanding, who undoubtedly *were* what the others *appeared*, lovers of their King and country, and desired nothing but the removal of bad Ministers, and the redress of real grievances.
4. The spirits even of these were gradually sharpened and embittered against the King. And they were drawn farther and farther by the art of

their leaders, till they had gone so far, they knew not how to retreat; yea, till they, passively at least, concurred in those measures which at first their very souls abhorred.

5. Meantime, the nation in general was inflamed with all possible diligence, by addresses, petitions, and remonstrances, admirably well devised for the purpose; which were the most effectual libels that could be imagined against the King and Government, and were continually spread throughout the land, with all care and assiduity.
6. Among the most inflamed and embittered in all England were the people of London, as the managers had the best opportunity of practicing upon them.
7. All this time they professed the highest regard for the King, for his honor as well as safety; an authentic monument whereof we have in the Solemn League and Covenant. And these professions they continued with equal vehemence till within a short time of the cutting off his head!

Now, what man that has the least degree of understanding may not see, in the clearest light, how surprisingly the parallel holds in all these circumstances?

“But do not you think it is in the power of the King to put an end to all these commotions, by only sending his mother away, changing his Ministers, and dissolving the Parliament?” He may send his mother away; and so he may his wife, if they please to rank her among his evil counselors. He may put out his present Ministers, and desire the Lord Mayor to put others in their place. He may likewise dissolve the present Parliament, (as King Charles did that of 1640,) and exchange it for one chosen, animated, and tutored by Mr. Wilkes and his friends. But can you really believe this would mend the matter? would put an end to all these commotions? Certainly the sending his mother to the Indies would avail nothing, unless he removed his Ministers too. Nor would the putting out these, yea, every man of them, avail anything, unless at the same time he put in every man whom Lord Chatham chose. But neither would this avail, unless he struck the finishing-stroke, by dissolving the Parliament. Then indeed he would be as perfectly safe as the “sheep that had given up their dogs.”

It would puzzle the wisest man alive to tell what the King can do. What can he do, that will still the raging of the sea, or the madness of the people? Do you imagine it is in his power to do anything which will please all parties? Can he do anything that will not displease one as much as it will please the other? Shall he drive his mother out of the land?⁹ Will this then please all parties? Nay, will not some be apt to inquire, “How has she deserved it at his hands?” “Why, she is an evil counselor.” How does this appear? Who are the witnesses of it? Indeed we have read as grave and formal accounts of the conferences at Carlton-House, as if the relater had stood all the time behind the curtain, and taken down the whole matter in shorthand. But what shadow of proof of all this? No more than of the conferences related in Tristram Shandy.

“But she is a bad woman.” Whoever said or thought so, even while she was in the flower of her age? From the time she first set foot in England, was there a more faultless character in the nation? Nay, was not her whole behavior as a wife, as a mother, as a mistress, and as a Princess, not only blameless but commendable in the highest degree, till that period of time arrived, when it was judged proper, in order to blacken her (supposed) favorite, to asperse her too? And then she was *illud quod dicere nolo!*¹⁰ One would think that even the *ignobile vulgus*, “the beasts of the people,” the lowest, basest herd who wore the human form, would be ashamed of either advancing or crediting so senseless, shameless a tale. Indeed I can hardly think it is credited by one in an hundred even of those who foul their mouths with repeating it. Let it die and be forgotten! Let it not be remembered that ever any Englishman took so dirty a slander into his mouth.

“However, become what will of his mother, let him put away his bad Ministers.” Suppose they really are bad, do you know where he can find better? Where can he find twenty men, we will not say of Christian but of Roman integrity? Point them out, — men of sound judgment, of clear apprehension, of universal benevolence, lovers of mankind, lovers of their country, lovers of their King; men attached to no party, but simply pursuing the general good of the nation; not haughty or overbearing, not addicted to passion, not of a revengeful temper; superior to covetousness

on the one hand, free from profuseness on the other. I say, show me the men, only this small number; or rather, show them to His Majesty. Let clear and satisfactory proof be given that this is their character; and if these worthy men are not employed in the place of the unworthy ones, you will then have some reason to stretch your throat against evil Ministers.

“But if the matter were wholly left to him, would not Lord — immediately employ twenty such?” That may bear some doubt. It is not certain that he would; perhaps he knows not where to find them. And it is not certain to a demonstration, that he would employ them if he did. It is not altogether clear, that he is such himself, that he perfectly answers this character. Is he free from pride; from anything haughty in his temper, or overbearing in his behavior? Is he neither passionate nor revengeful? Is it indisputably plain, that he is equally clear of covetousness on the one hand, and profuseness on the other? Is he steady and uniform in his conduct; always one thing? Is he attached to no party, but determined at all events singly to pursue the general good of the nation? Is he a lover of the King? Is he remarkably grateful to him, from whom he has received no common favors? If not, though he has a strong understanding, and a large share of manly eloquence, still it may be doubted, whether he and his friends would behave a jot better than the Ministers we have already.

And suppose the King were to dissolve the Parliament, what hope is there of having a better, even though the nation were as quiet and peaceable as it was ten years ago? Are not the present members, generally speaking, men of the greatest property in the land? And are they not, the greater part of them at least, as honest and wise as their neighbors? How then should we mend ourselves at any time; but especially at such a time as this? If a new Parliament were chose during this epidemic madness, what probability of a better than the present? Have we not all the reason in the world to apprehend it would be a much worse? that it would be the Parliament of 1641, instead of the Parliament of 1640? Why, this is the very thing we want, the very point we are aiming at. Then would Junius and his friends quickly say, “Sir King, know your place! *Et es ipse lignum.*”¹¹ Take your choice! Be King log, or to the block!”

Does it not then appear, upon the whole, that it is by no means in the power of the King, by any step which he can possibly take, to put a stop to the present commotions; that especially he cannot make concessions without making a bad matter worse; that the way he has taken, the standing his ground, was as wise a method as he could take, and as likely to restore the peace of the nation, as any the wit of man could devise? If any is more likely, would it not be, vigorously to execute the laws against incendiaries; against those who, by spreading all manner of lies, inflame the people even to madness; to teach them, that there is a difference between liberty, which is the glory of Englishmen, and licentiousness, a wanton abuse of liberty, in contempt of all laws, divine and human? Ought they not to feel, if they will not see, that *scandalum regis*, “scandalizing the King,” is as punishable as *scandalum magnatum*?¹² that for the future none may dare to slander the King, any more than one of his nobles; much less to print and spread that deadly poison among His Majesty’s liege subjects? Is not this little less than high treason? Is it not sowing the seeds of rebellion?

It is possible this might restore peace, but one cannot affirm it would. Perhaps God has “a controversy with the land,” for the general neglect, nay, contempt, of all religion. Perhaps he hath said, “Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” And if this be the case, what can avail, unless his anger be turned away from us? Was there ever a time in which there was a louder call for them that fear God to humble themselves before him? if haply general humiliation and repentance may prevent general destruction!

THOUGHTS UPON LIBERTY.

**I scorn to have my free-born toe
Dragoon'd into a wooden shoe. — PRIOR.**

1. ALL men in the world desire liberty; whoever breathes, breathes after this, and that by a kind of natural instinct antecedent to art or education. Yet at the same time all men of understanding acknowledge it as a rational instinct. For we feel this desire, not in opposition to, but in consequence of, our reason. Therefore it is not found, or in a very low degree, in many species of brutes, which seem, even when they are left to their choice, to prefer servitude before liberty.

2. The love of liberty is then the glory of rational beings; and it is the glory of Britons in particular. Perhaps it would be difficult to find any nation under heaven, who are more tenacious of it; nay, it may be doubted if any nation ever was; not the Spartans, not the Athenians; no, not the Romans themselves, who have been celebrated for this very thing by the poets and historians of all ages.

3. Was it not from this principle, that our British forefathers so violently opposed all foreign invaders; that Julius Caesar himself, with his victorious legions, could make so little impression upon them; that the Generals of the succeeding Emperors sustained so many losses from them; and that, when at length they were overpowered, they rather chose to lose all they had than their liberty; to retire into the Cambrian or Caledonian mountains, where, if they had nothing else, they might at least enjoy their native freedom?

4. Hence arose the vehement struggles of the Cambro-Britons through so many generations against the yoke, which the Saxons first, and afterwards the English, strove to impose upon them; hence the struggles of the English Barons against several of their Kings, lest they should lose the blessing they had received from their forefathers; yea, the Scottish nobles, as all their histories show, would no more bear to be enslaved than the

Romans. All these therefore, however differing from each other in a thousand other respects, agreed in testifying the desirableness of liberty, as one of the greatest blessings under the sun.

5. Such was the sense of all our ancestors, even from the earliest ages. And is it not also the general sense of the nation at this day? Who can deny, that the whole kingdom is panting for liberty? Is not the cry for it gone forth, not only through every part of our vast metropolis, — from the west end of the city to the east, from the north to the south, so that instead of no complaining in our streets, there is nothing but complaining, — but likewise into every corner of our land, born by all the four winds of heaven? Liberty! Liberty! sounds through every county, every city, every town, and every hamlet!

6. Is it not for the sake of this, that the name of our great patriot (perhaps not so admirable in his private character as the man of Ross, or so great a lover of his country as Codrus or old Curtius) is more celebrated than that of any private man has been in England for these thousand years; that his very picture is so joyfully received in every part of England and Ireland; that we stamp his (I had almost said, adored) name on our handkerchiefs, on the cheerful bowl, yea, and on our vessels of various kinds, as well as upon our hearts? Why is all this, but because of the inseparable connection between Wilkes and liberty; liberty that came down, if not fell, from heaven; whom all England and the world worshipping?

7. But meantime might it not be advisable to consider, (if we are yet at leisure to consider anything,) what is liberty? Because it is well known the word is capable of various senses. And possibly it may not be equally desirable in every sense of the word.

8. There are many nations in America, those particularly that border on Georgia and Carolina, wherein if one disapproves of what another says, or perhaps dislikes his looks, he scorns to affront him to his face, neither does he betray the least dissatisfaction. But as soon as opportunity serves, he steps from behind a tree and shoots him. And none calls him that does it to an account. No; this is the liberty he derives from his forefathers.

9. For many ages the free natives of Ireland, as well as the Scottish Highlands, when it was convenient for them, made an excursion from their woods or fastnesses, and carried off, for their own proper use, the sheep, and oxen, and corn of their neighbors. This was the liberty which the O'Neals, the Campbells, and many other sects and clans of venerable antiquity, had received by immemorial tradition from their ancestors.

10. Almost all the soldiers in the Christian world, as well as in the Mahometan and Pagan, have claimed, more especially in time of war, another kind of liberty; that of borrowing the wives and daughters of the men that fell into their hands; sometimes, if they pleaded scruple of conscience or honor, using a little necessary force. Perhaps this may be termed the liberty of war. But I will not positively affirm, that it has never been used in this free country, even in the time of peace.

11. In some countries of Europe, and indeed in England, there have been instances of yet another sort of liberty, that of calling a Monarch to account; and, if need were, taking off his head; that is, if he did not behave in a dutiful manner to our sovereign lords the people.

12. Now, that we may not always be talking at random, but bring the matter to a determinate point, which of these sorts of liberty do you desire? Is it the First sort; the liberty of knocking on the head, or cutting the throats, of those we are out of conceit with? Glorious liberty indeed! What would not king mob do to be gratified with it but for a few weeks? But, I conceive, calm, sensible men do not desire to see them entrusted with it. They apprehend there might be some consequences which, upon the whole, would not redound to the prosperity of the nation.

13. Is the Second more desirable; the liberty of taking, when we see best, the goods and chattels of our neighbors? Undoubtedly, thousands in the good city of London (suppose we made the experiment here first) would be above measure rejoiced thereat, would leap as broke from chains. O how convenient would it be to have free access, without any let or hindrance, to the cellars, the pantries, the larders, yea, and the coffer of their rich, overgrown landlords! But perhaps it would not give altogether

so much joy to the Lord Mayor or Aldermen; no, nor even to those stanch friends of liberty, the Common Councilmen. Not that they regard their own interest at all; but, setting themselves out of the question, they are a little in doubt whether this liberty would be for the good of trade.

14. Is it then the Third kind of liberty we contend for; the liberty of taking our neighbors' wives and daughters? Ye pretty gentlemen, ye *beaux esprits*, will ye not, one and all, give your voices for this natural liberty? Will ye not say, "If we cry out against monopolies of other kinds, shall we tolerate the monopoly of women?" But hold. Are there not some among you too, who have wives, if not daughters, of your own? And are you altogether willing to oblige the first comer with them? I say the first comer; for, observe, as you are to give the liberty you take, so you must not pick and choose your men; you know, by nature, all men are on a level. "Liberty! Liberty! No restraint! We are free-born Englishmen; down with the fences! Lay all the enclosures open!" No; it will not do. Even nature recoils. We are not yet *polished* enough for this.

15. Are we not ripe, however, for the Fourth kind of liberty, that of removing a disobedient King? Would Mr. Wilkes, would Mr. Horne, would any free Briton, have any objection to this? provided only, that, as soon as our present Monarch is removed, we have a better to put in his place. But who is he? King John? That will not sound well, even in the ears of his greatest admirers. And whoever calmly considers the characters and endowments of those other great men, who may think themselves much fitter for the office than His present Majesty, will hardly concur in their opinion; so that a difficulty lies in your way. Whatever claim you may have to this liberty, you must not use it yet, because you cannot tell where to find a better Prince.

16. But to speak seriously. These things being set aside which the bawling mob dignify by that name; what is that liberty, properly so called, which every wise and good man desires? It is either religious or civil. Religious liberty is a liberty to choose our own religion, to worship God according to our own conscience, according to the best light we have. Every man living, as man, has a right to this, as he is a rational creature. The Creator gave him this right when he endowed him with understanding. And every

man must judge for himself, because every man must give an account of himself to God. Consequently, this is an indefeasible right; it is inseparable from humanity. And God did never give authority to any man, or number of men, to deprive any child of man thereof, under any color or pretense whatever. What an amazing thing, is it, then, that the governing part of almost every nation under heaven should have taken upon them, in all ages, to rob all under their power of this liberty! yea, should take upon them, at this day, so to do; to force rational creatures into their own religion! Would one think it possible, that the most sensible men in the world should say to their fellow-creatures, “Either be of my religion, or I will take away your food, and you and your wife and children shall starve: If that will not convince you, I will fetter your hands and feet, and throw you into a dungeon: And if still you will not see as I see, I will burn you alive?”

17. It would not be altogether so astonishing, if this were the manner of American savages. But what shall we say, if numberless instances of it have occurred, in the politest nations of Europe? Have no instances of the kind been seen in Britain? Have not England and Scotland seen the horrid fires? Have not the flames burning the flesh of heretics shone in London as well as in Paris and Lisbon? Have we forgot the days of good Queen Mary? No; they will be had in everlasting remembrance. And although burning was out of fashion in Queen Elizabeth’s days, yet hanging, even for religion, was not. It is true, her successor did not go quite so far. But did even King James allow liberty of conscience? By no means. During his whole reign, what liberty had the Puritans? What liberty had they in the following reign? If they were not persecuted unto death; (although eventually, indeed, many of them were; for they died in their imprisonment;) yet were they not continually harassed by prosecutions in the Bishops’ Courts, or Star Chamber? by fines upon fines, frequently reducing them to the deepest poverty? and by imprisonment for months, yea, for years, together, till many of them, escaping with the skin of their teeth, left their country and friends, fled to seek their bread in the wilds of America? “However, we may suppose all this was at an end under the merry Monarch, King Charles the Second.” Was it indeed? Where have they lived who suppose this? To wave a thousand particular instances; what will you say to those two public monuments, the Act of Uniformity,

and the Act against Conventicles? In the former it is enacted, to the eternal honor of the King, Lords, and Commons, at that memorable period: “Every Parson, Vicar, or other Minister whatever, who has any benefice within these realms, shall, before the next twenty-fourth of August, openly and publicly declare his unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, or shall, *ipso facto*, be deprived of all his benefices! Likewise, if any Dean, Prebendary, Master, Fellow, Chaplain, or Tutor, of any College, Hall, House of Learning, or Hospital, any public Professor, or any other person in Holy Orders, any Schoolmaster, or Teacher, or Tutor in any private family, do not subscribe hereto, he shall be, *ipso facto*, deprived of his place, and shall be utterly disabled from continuing therein.”

Property for ever! See how well English property was secured in those golden days!

So, by this glorious Act, thousands of men, guilty of no crime, nothing contrary either to justice, mercy, or truth, were stripped of all they had, of their houses, lands, revenues, and driven to seek where they could, or beg, their bread. For what? Because they did not dare to worship God according to other men’s consciences! So they and their families were, at one stroke, turned out of house and home, and reduced to little less than beggary, for no other fault, real or pretended, but because they could not assent and consent to that manner of worship which their worthy governors prescribed!

But this was not all. It was further enacted by the same merciful lawgivers: “If any person act as a Teacher, Tutor, or Schoolmaster, in any private family, before he has subscribed hereto, he shall suffer three months’ imprisonment, without bail or main prize.”

Liberty for ever! Here is security for your person, as well as your property.

By virtue of the Act against Conventicles, if any continued to worship God according to their own conscience, they were first robbed of their substance, and, if they persisted, of their liberty; often of their lives also.

For this crime, under this “our most religious and gracious King,” (what were they who publicly told God he was such?) Englishmen were not only spoiled of their goods, but denied even the use of the free air, yea, and the light of the sun, being thrust by hundreds into dark and loathsome prisons!

18. Were matters much better in the neighboring kingdom? Nay, they were inexpressibly worse. Unheard-of cruelties were practiced there, from soon after the Restoration till the Revolution. ¹³ What fining, plundering, beating, maiming, imprisoning, with the most shocking circumstances! For a specimen, look at Dunotter Castle; where young and old, of both sexes, (sick or well, it was all one,) were thrust together between bare walls, and that in the heat of summer, without a possibility of either lying or sitting; yea, without any convenience of any kind; till many of them, through hunger, thirst, heat, and stench, were set at liberty by death! Considering this; considering how many others were hunted over their native mountains, and shot whenever they were overtaken, with no more ceremony than beasts; considering the drowning, hanging, cutting off of limbs, and various arts of torturing, which were practiced by order of King Charles, and often in the presence of King James, who seemed to enjoy such spectacles; it would be no wonder if the very name of an Englishman was had in abomination from the Tweed to the Orkneys.

19. But is this the case at present with us? Are we abridged of our religious liberty? His late Majesty was desired, about thirty years ago, to take a step of this kind. But his answer was worthy of a King, yea, the King of a free people: “I tell you, while I sit on the English throne, no man shall be persecuted for conscience’ sake.” And it is certain he made his promise good from the beginning of his reign to the end. But perhaps the case is altered now. Does His present Majesty tread in his steps? He does: He persecutes no man for conscience’ sake. If he does, where is the man? I do not ask, Whom has he committed to the flames, or caused to die by the common hangman? or, Whom has he caused to die many deaths, by hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness? but, Whom has he tortured or thrust into a dungeon, yea, or imprisoned at all, or fined, for worshipping God according to his own conscience, in the Presbyterian or any other way? O, compare King Charles, gracious Charles the Second, with King George, and you will know the value of the liberty you enjoy.

20. In the name of wonder, what religious liberty can you desire, or even conceive, which you have not already? Where is there a nation in Europe, in the habitable world, which enjoys such liberty of conscience as the English? I will be bold to say there is nothing like it in Holland, in Germany, (Protestant or Popish,) in either the Protestant or Popish cantons of Switzerland; no, nor in any country under the sun. Have we not in England full liberty to choose any religion, yea, or no religion at all? to have no more religion than a Hottentot, shall I say? nay, no more than a bull or a swine? Whoever therefore in England stretches his throat, and bawls for more religious liberty, must be totally void of shame, and can have no excuse but want of understanding.

21. But is not the ground of this vehement outcry, that we are deprived of our civil liberty? What is civil liberty? A liberty to enjoy our lives and fortunes in our own way; to use our property, whatever is legally our own, according to our own choice. And can you deny, “that we are robbed of this liberty?” Who are? Certainly I am not. I pray, do not face me down that I am. Do not argue me out of my senses. If the Great Turk, or the King of France, wills that a man should die, with or without cause, die he must. And instances of the kind continually occur; but no such instances occur in England. I am in no more danger of death from King George, than from the Queen of Hungary. And if I study to be quiet and mind my own business, I am in no more danger of losing my liberty than my life. No, nor my property; I mean, by any act of the King. If this is in any degree invaded, it is not by the King, or his Parliament, or army, but by the good patriots.

Hark! Is hell or Bedlam broke loose? What roaring is that, loud as the waves of the sea? “It is the patriot mob.” What do they want with me? Why do they flock about my house? “Make haste! illuminate your windows in honor of Mr. Wilkes.” I cannot in conscience; I think it is encouraging vice. “Then they will all be broken.” That is, in plain English, Give them twenty shillings, or they will rob you of five pounds. Here are champions for the laws of the land! for liberty and property! O vile horse-guards!

That dared, so grim and terrible, to' advance
 Their miscreated fronts athwart the way!

True, they did nothing and said nothing. Yet, in default of the civil powers, who did not concern themselves with the matter, they hindered the mob from finishing their work.

22. Why, then, these men, instead of anyway abridging it, plainly preserved my liberty and property. And by their benefit, not the care of those to whom it properly belonged, I still enjoy full civil liberty. I am free to live, in every respect, according to my own choice. My life, my person, my property, are safe. I am not murdered, maimed, tortured at any man's pleasure; I am not thrown into prison; I am not manacled; see, I have not one fetter, either on my hands or feet. And are not you as free as I am? Are not you at liberty to enjoy the fruit of your labors? Who hinders you from doing it? Does King George? Does Lord North? Do any of His Majesty's officers or soldiers? No, nor any man living. Perhaps some would hinder you, if you acted contrary to law; but this is not liberty, it is licentiousness. Deny the fact who can; am not I free to use my substance according to my own discretion? And do not you enjoy the selfsame freedom? You cannot, you dare not, deny it. At this hour I am at full liberty to use my property as I please. And so are you; you do, in fact, use your house, your goods, your land, as is right in your own eyes. Does anyone take them from you? No; nor does anyone restrain you from the full enjoyment of them. What then is the matter? What is it you are making all this bother about? Why are you thus wringing your hands, and screaming, to the terror of your quiet neighbors, "Destruction! slavery! bondage! Help, countrymen! Our liberty is destroyed! We are ruined, chained, fettered, undone!" *Fettered!* How? Where are the fetters, but in your own imagination? There are none, either on your hands or mine: Neither you nor I can show to any man in his senses, that we have one chain upon us, even so big as a knitting needle.

23. I do not say, that the ministry are without fault; or that they have done all things well. But still I ask, What is the liberty which we want? It is not civil or religious liberty. These we have in such a degree as was never known before, not from the times of William the Conqueror. ¹⁴ But

all this is nothing; this will never satisfy the *bellua multorum capitum*. That “many-headed beast,” the people, roars for liberty of another kind. Many want Indian liberty, the liberty of cutting throats, or of driving a brace of balls through the head of those ugly-looking fellows, whom they cannot abide the sight of. Many more want the old Highland liberty, the convenient liberty of plundering. Many others there are who want the liberty of war, of borrowing their neighbors’ wives or daughters; and not a few, though they do not always avow it, the liberty of murdering their Prince.

24. If you are a reasonable man, a man of real honor, and consequently want none of these, I beg to know what would you have? Considering the thing calmly, what liberty can you reasonably desire which you do not already enjoy? What is the matter with you, and with multitudes of the good people, both in England and Ireland, that they are crying and groaning as if they were chained to an oar, or barred up in the dungeons of the Inquisition? The plain melancholy truth is this: There is a general infatuation, which spreads, like an overflowing stream, from one end of the land to the other; and a man must have great wisdom and great strength, or he will be carried away by the torrent. But how can we account for this epidemic madness? for it deserves no better name. We must not dare to give the least intimation, that the devil has anything to do with it. No! this enlightened age is too wise to believe that there is any devil in being! Satan, avaunt! we have driven thee back into the land of shadows; keep thou among thy own kindred:

With hydras, gorgons, and chimeras dire.

Suppose it then to be a purely natural phenomenon; I ask again, How can we account for it? I apprehend if we could divest ourselves of prejudice, it might be done very easily; and that without concerning ourselves with the hidden springs of action, the motives or intentions of men. Letting these alone, is there not a visible, undeniable cause, which is quite adequate to the effect? The good people of England have, for some years past, been continually fed with poison. Dose after dose has been administered to them, for fear the first, or second, or tenth, should not suffice, of a poison whose natural effect is to drive men out of their senses. Is “the centaur not

fabulous?" Neither is Circe's cup. See how, in every county, city, and village, it is now turning quiet, reasonable men, into wild bulls, bears, and tigers! But, to lay metaphor aside, how long have the public papers represented one of the best of Princes as if he had been one of the worst, as little better than Caligula, Nero, or Domitian! These were followed by pamphlets of the same kind, and aiming at the same point, — to make the King appear odious as well as contemptible in the eyes of his subjects. Letters succeed, wrote in fine language, and with exquisite art, but filled with the gall of bitterness. "Yes, but not against the King; Junius does not strike at him, but at the evil administration." Thin pretense! Does not everyone see the blow is aimed at the King through the sides of his Ministers? All these are conveyed, week after week, through all London and all the nation. Can any man wonder at the effect of this? What can be more natural? What can be expected, but that they who drink in these papers and letters with all greediness, will be thoroughly embittered and inflamed thereby? will first despise and then abhor the King? What can we expect, but that by the repeated doses of this poison they will be perfectly intoxicated, and only wait for a convenient season to tear in pieces the royal monster, as they think him, and all his adherents?

25. At present there are hindrances in the way, so that they cannot use their teeth as they would. One is an untoward Parliament, who will not look upon the King with the same eyes that they do; but still think he has no more design or desire to enslave the nation, than to burn the city of London. A still greater hindrance is the army; even lions and bears do not choose to encounter them, so that these men of war do really at this time preserve the peace of the nation. What then can be done before the people cools, that this precious opportunity be not lost? What indeed, but to prevail upon the King to dissolve his Parliament and disband his army? Nay, let the Parliament stay as it is, it will suffice to disband the army. If these redcoats were but out of the way, the mob would soon deal with the Parliament. *Probatum est:*¹⁵ Nothing is more easy than to keep malignant members from the House. Remember Lord North not long ago;¹⁶ this was a taste, a specimen, of their activity. What then would they not do if they were masters of the field, if none were left to oppose them? Would not the avenues of both Houses be so well guarded, that none but patriots would dare to approach?

26. But (as often as you have heard the contrary affirmed) King George has too much understanding, to throw himself into the hands of those men who have given full proof that they bear him no great goodwill. Nor has he reason to believe that they are much more fond of his office than of his person. They are not vehemently fond of monarchy itself, whoever the Monarch be. Therefore neither their good nor ill words will induce him, in haste, to leap into the fire with his eyes open.

27. But can anything be done to open the eyes, to restore the senses, of an infatuated nation? Not unless the still renewed, still operating cause of that infatuation can be removed. But how is it possible to be removed, unless by restraining the licentiousness of the press? And is not this remedy worse than the disease? Let us weigh this matter a little. There was an ancient law in Scotland, which made leasing-making a capital crime. By leasing-making was meant, telling such willful lies as tended to breed dissension between the King and his subjects. What pity but there should be such a law enacted in the present session of Parliament! By our present laws, a man is punishable for publishing even truth to the detriment of his neighbor. This I would not wish. But should he not be punished, who publishes palpable lies? and such lies as manifestly tend to breed dissension between the King and his subjects? Such, with a thousand more, was that bare-faced lie of the King's bursting out into laughter before the city Magistrates! Now, does not the publisher of this lie deserve to lose his ears more than a common knight of the post? And if he is liable to no punishment for a crime of so mischievous a nature, what a grievous defect is in our law! And how loud does it call for a remedy!

28. To return to the point whence we set out. You see whence arose this outcry for liberty, and these dismal complaints that we are robbed of our liberty echoing through the land. It is plain to every unprejudiced man, they have not the least foundation. We enjoy at this day throughout these Kingdoms such liberty, civil and religious, as no other kingdom or commonwealth in Europe, or in the world, enjoys; and such as our ancestors never enjoyed from the Conquest to the Revolution. Let us be thankful for it to God and the King! Let us not, by our vile unthankfulness, yea, our denial that we enjoy it at all, provoke the King of

kings to take it away. By one stroke, by taking to himself that Prince whom we know not how to value, He might change the scene, and put an end to our civil as well as religious liberty. Then would be seen who were patriots and who were not; who were real lovers of liberty and their country. The God of love remove that day far from us! Deal not with us according to our deservings; but let us know, at least in this our day, the things which make for our peace!

February 24, 1772.

THOUGHTS

CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF POWER.

1. BY power, I here mean supreme power, the power over life and death, and consequently over our liberty and property, and all things of an inferior nature.
2. In many nations this power has in all ages been lodged in a single person. This has been the case in almost the whole eastern world, from the earliest antiquity; as in the celebrated empires of Assyria, of Babylon, of Media, Persia, and many others. And so it remains to this day, from Constantinople to the farthest India. The same form of government obtained very early in very many parts of Africa, and remains in most of them still, as well as in the empires of Morocco and Abyssinia. The first adventurers to America found absolute monarchy established there also; the whole power being lodged in the Emperor of Mexico, and the Incas of Peru. Nay, and many of the ancient nations of Europe were governed by single persons; as Spain, France, the Russias, and several other nations are at this day.
3. But in others, the power has been lodged in a few, chiefly the rich and noble. This kind of government, usually styled aristocracy, obtained in Greece and in Rome after many struggles with the people, during the later ages of the republic. And this is the government which at present subsists in various parts of Europe. In Venice indeed, as well as in Genoa, the supreme power is nominally lodged in one, namely, the Doge; but in fact, he is only a royal shade; it is really lodged in a few of the nobles.
4. Where the people have the supreme power, it is termed a democracy. This seems to have been the ancient form of government in several of the Grecian states. And so it was at Rome for some ages after the expulsion of the Kings. From the earliest authentic records, there is reason to believe it was for espousing the cause of the people, and defending their rights

against the illegal encroachments of the nobles, that Marcus Coriolanus was driven into banishment, and Manlius Capitolinus, as well as Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, murdered. Perhaps formerly the popular government subsisted in several states. But it is scarce now to be found, being everywhere swallowed up either in monarchy or aristocracy.

5. But the grand question is, not in whom this power is lodged, but from whom it is ultimately derived. What is the origin of power? What is its primary source? This has been long a subject of debate. And it has been debated with the utmost warmth, by a variety of disputants. But as earnest as they have been on each side of the question, they have seldom come to any good conclusion; but have left the point undecided still, to be a ball of contention to the next generation.

6. But is it impossible, in the nature of things, to throw any light on this obscure subject? Let us make the experiment; let us (without pretending to dictate, but desiring everyone to use his own judgment) try to find out some ground whereon to stand, and go as far as we can toward answering the question. And let not any man be angry on the account, suppose we should not exactly agree. Let everyone enjoy his own opinion, and give others the same liberty.

7. Now, I cannot but acknowledge, I believe an old book, commonly called the Bible, to be true. Therefore I believe, “there is no power but from God: The powers that be are ordained of God.” (Romans 13:1.) There is no subordinate power in any nation, but what is derived from the supreme power therein. So in England the King, in the United Provinces the States are the fountain of all power. And there is no supreme power, no power of the sword, of life and death, but what is derived from God, the Sovereign of all.

8. But have not the people, in every age and nation, the right of disposing of this power; of investing therewith whom they please, either one or more persons; and that, in what proportion they see good, and upon what conditions? Consequently, if those conditions are not observed, have they not a right to take away the power they gave? And does not this imply, that they are the judges whether those conditions are observed or not?

Otherwise, if the receivers were judges of their own cause, this right would fall into nothing.

9. To prove this, that the people in every country are the source of power, it is argued thus: "All men living upon earth are naturally equal; none is above another; and all are naturally free, masters of their own actions. It manifestly follows, no man can have any power over another, unless by his own consent. The power therefore which the governors in any nation enjoy, must be originally derived from the people, and presupposes an original compact between them and their first governors."

10. This seems to be the opinion which is now generally espoused by men of understanding and education; and that (if I do not mistake) not in England alone, but almost in every civilized nation. And it is usually espoused with the fullest and strongest persuasion, as a truth little less than self-evident, as what is clear beyond all possibility of doubt, what commands the assent of all reasonable men. Hence if any man affected to deny it, he would in most companies be rather hooted at than argued with; it being so absurd to oppose what is confirmed by the general suffrage of mankind.

11. But still (suppose it to need no proof) it; may need a little explaining; for everyone does not understand the term. Some will ask, "Who are the people?" Are they every man, woman, and child? Why not? Is it not allowed, is it not affirmed, is it not our fundamental principle, our incontestable, self-evident axiom, that "all persons living upon earth are naturally equal; that all human creatures are naturally free; masters of their own actions; that none can have any power over others, but by their own consent?" Why then should not every man, woman, and child, have a voice in placing their governors; in fixing the measure of power to be entrusted with them, and the conditions on which it is entrusted? And why should not everyone have a voice in displacing them too; seeing it is undeniable, they that gave the power have a right to take it away? Do not quibble or shuffle. Do not evade the question; but come close to the point. I ask, By what argument do you prove that women are not naturally as free as men? And, if they are, why have they not as good a right as we have to choose their own Governors? Who can have any power over free, rational

creatures, but by their own consent? And are they not free by nature, as well as we? Are they not rational creatures?

12. But suppose we exclude women from using their natural right, by might overcoming right, by main strength, (for it is sure that we are stronger than they; I mean that we have stronger limbs, if we have not stronger reason,) what pretense have we for excluding men like ourselves, yea, thousands and tens of thousands, barely because they have not lived one-and-twenty years? “Why, they have not wisdom or experience to judge concerning the qualifications necessary for Governors.” I answer,

- (1.) Who has? How many of the voters in Great Britain? one in twenty? one in an hundred? If you exclude all who have not this wisdom, you will leave few behind. But,
- (2.) Wisdom and experience are nothing to the purpose. You have put the matter upon another issue. Are they men? That is enough. Are there human creatures? Then they have a right to choose their own Governors; an indefeasible right; right inherent, inseparable from human nature. “But in England, at least, they are excluded by law.” But did they consent to the making of that law? If not, by your original supposition, it can have no power over them. I therefore utterly deny that we can, consistently with that supposition, debar either women or minors from choosing their own Governors.

13. But suppose we exclude these by main force, (which it is certain we are able to do, since though they have most votes they have least strength,) are all that remain, all men of full age, the people? Are all males, then, that have lived one-and-twenty years allowed to choose their own Governors? “Not at all; not in England, unless they are freeholders, unless they have forty shillings a year.” Worse and worse. After depriving half the human species of their natural right for want of a beard; after depriving myriads more for want of a stiff beard, for not having lived one-and-twenty years; you rob others (probably some hundred thousands) of their birthright for want of money! Yet not altogether on this account neither; if so, it might be more tolerable. But here is an Englishman who has money enough to buy the estates of fifty freeholders, and yet he must not be numbered among the people because he has not

two or three acres of land! How is this? By what right do you exclude a man from being one of the people because he has not forty shillings a year; yea, or not a groat? Is he not a man, whether he be rich or poor? Has he not a soul and a body? Has he not the nature of a man; consequently, all the rights of a man, all that flow from human nature; and, among the rest, that of not being controlled by any but by his own consent.

14. "But he is excluded by law." By what law? by a law of his own making? Did he consent to the making of it? Before this law was passed, was his consent either obtained or asked? If not, what is that law to him? No man, you aver, has any power over another but by his own consent. Of consequence, a law made without his consent is, with regard to him, null and void. You cannot say otherwise without destroying the supposition, that none can be governed but by his own consent.

15. See, now, to what your argument comes. You affirm, all power is derived from the people; and presently excluded one half of the people from having any part or lot in the matter. At another stroke, suppose England to contain eight millions of people, you exclude one or two millions more. At a third, suppose two millions left, you exclude three-fourths of these. And the poor pittance that remains, by I know not what figure of speech, you call the people of England!

16. Hitherto we have endeavored to view this point in the mere light of reason. And even by this means it manifestly appears that this supposition, which is so high in vogue, which is so generally received, nay, which has been palmed upon us with such confidence, as undeniable and self-evident, is not only false, not only contrary to reason, but contradictory to itself; the very men who are most positive that the people are the source of power, being brought into an inextricable difficulty, by that single question, "Who are the people?" reduced to a necessity of either giving up the point, or owning that by the people they mean scarce a tenth part of them.

17. But we need not rest the matter entirely on reasoning; let us appeal to matter of fact. And because we cannot have so clear and certain a prospect of what is at too great a distance, whether of time or place, let us only take

a view of what has been in our own country for six or seven hundred years. I ask, then, When and where did the people of England (even suppose by that word, *the people*, you mean only an hundred thousand of them) choose their own Governors? Did they choose, to go no farther, William the Conqueror? Did they choose King Stephen, or King John? As to those who regularly succeeded their fathers, it is plain the people are out of the question. Did they choose Henry the Fourth, Edward the Fourth, or Henry the Seventh? Who will be so hardy as to affirm it? Did the people of England, or but fifty thousand of them, choose Queen Mary, or Queen Elizabeth? To come nearer to our own times, did they choose King James the First? Perhaps you will say, "But if the people did not give King Charles the supreme power, at least they took it away from him. Surely, you will not deny this." Indeed I will; I deny it utterly. The people of England no more took away his power, than they cut off his head. "Yes, the Parliament did, and they are the people." No; the Parliament did not. The lower House, the House of Commons, is not the Parliament, any more than it is the nation. Neither were those who then sat the House of Commons; no; nor one quarter of them. But suppose they had been the whole House of Commons, yea, or the whole Parliament; by what rule of logic will you prove that seven or eight hundred persons are the people of England? "Why, they are the delegates of the people; they are chosen by them." No; not by one half, not by a quarter, not by a tenth part, of them. So that the people, in the only proper sense of the word, were innocent of the whole affair.

18. "But you will allow, the people gave the supreme power to King Charles the Second at the Restoration." I will allow no such thing; unless by *the people* you mean General Monk and fifteen thousand soldiers. "However, you will not deny that the people gave the power to King William at the Revolution." Nay, truly, I must deny this too. I cannot possibly allow it. Although I will not say that William the Third obtained the royal power as William the First did; although he did not claim it by right of conquest, which would have been an odious title; yet certain it is, that he did not receive it by any act or deed of the people. Their consent was neither obtained nor asked; they were never consulted in the matter. It was not therefore the people that gave him the power; no, nor even the Parliament. It was the Convention, and none else. "Who were the

Convention?" They were a few hundred Lords and gentlemen, who, observing the desperate state of public affairs, met together on that important occasion. So that still we have no single instance in above seven hundred years of the people of England's conveying the supreme power either to one or more persons.

19. Indeed I remember in all history, both ancient and modern, but one instance of supreme power conferred by the people; if we mean thereby, though not all the people, yet a great majority of them. This celebrated instance occurred at Naples, in the middle of the last century; where the people, properly speaking, that is, men, women, and children, claimed and exerted their natural right in favor of Thomas Aniello, (vulgarly called Masanello,) a young fisherman. But will anyone say, he was the only Governor for these thousand years, who has had a proper right to the supreme power? I believe not; nor, I apprehend, does anyone desire that the people should take the same steps in London.

20. So much both for reason and matter of fact. But one single consideration, if we dwell a little upon it, will bring the question to a short issue. It is allowed, no man can dispose of another's life but by his own consent. I add, No, nor with his consent; for no man has a right to dispose of his own life. The Creator of man has the sole right to take the life which he gave. Now, it is an indisputable truth, *Nihil dat quod non habet*, "none gives what he has not." It plainly follows, that no man can give to another a right which he never had himself; a right which only the Governor of the world has, even the wiser Heathens being judges; but which no man upon the face of the earth either has or can have. No man therefore can give the power of the sword, any such power as implies a right to take away life. Wherever it is, it must descend from God alone, the sole disposer of life and death.

21. The supposition, then, that the people are the origin of power, is every way indefensible. It is absolutely overturned by the very principle on which it is supposed to stand; namely, that a right of choosing his Governors belongs to every partaker of human nature. If this be so, then it belongs to every individual of the human species; consequently, not to freeholders alone, but to all men; not to men only, but to women also; nor

only to adult men and women, to those who have lived one-and-twenty years, but to those who have lived eighteen or twenty, as well as those who have lived threescore. But none did ever maintain this, nor probably ever will. Therefore this boasted principle falls to the ground, and the whole superstructure with it. So common sense brings us back to the grand truth, "There is no power but of God."

THOUGHTS

ON

THE PRESENT SCARCITY OF PROVISIONS.

MANY excellent things have been lately published concerning the present scarcity of provisions; and many causes have been assigned for it, by men of experience and reflection. But may it not be observed, there is something wanting still, in most of those publications? One writer assigns and insists on one cause, another on one or two more. But who assigns all the causes that manifestly concur to produce this melancholy effect? at the same time pointing out, how each particular cause affects the price of each particular sort of provision?

I would willingly offer to candid and benevolent men a few hints on this important subject; proposing a few questions, and subjoining to each what seems to be the plain and direct answer.

I.

1. I ask, First, Why are thousands of people starving, perishing for want, in every part of the nation? The fact I know; I have seen it with my eyes, in every corner of the land. I have known those who could only afford to eat a little coarse food once every other day. I have known one in London (and one that a few years before had all the conveniencies of life) picking up from a dunghill stinking sprats, and carrying them home for herself and her children. I have known another gathering the bones which the dogs had left in the streets, and making broth of them, to prolong a wretched life! I have heard a third artlessly declare, "Indeed I was very faint, and so weak I could hardly walk, until my dog, finding nothing at home, went out, and brought in a good sort of bone, which I took out of his mouth, and made a pure dinner!" Such is the case at this day of multitudes of people, in a land flowing, as it were, with milk and honey! abounding with all the necessaries, the conveniencies, the superfluities of life!

Now, why is this? Why have all these nothing to eat? Because they have nothing to do. The plain reason why they have no meat is, because they have no work.

2. But why have they no work? Why are so many thousand people, in London, in Bristol, in Norwich, in every county, from one end of England to the other, utterly destitute of employment?

Because the persons that used to employ them cannot afford to do it any longer. Many that employed fifty men, now scarce employ ten; those that employed twenty, now employ one, or none at all. They cannot, as they have no vent for their goods; food being so dear, that the generality of people are hardly able to buy anything else.

3. But why is food so dear? To come to particulars: Why does bread-corn bear so high a price? To set aside partial causes, (which indeed, all put together, are little more than the fly upon the chariot-wheel,) the grand cause is, because such immense quantities of corn are continually consumed by distilling. Indeed, an eminent distiller near London, hearing this, warmly replied, "Nay, my partner and I generally distill but a thousand quarters a week." Perhaps so. And suppose five-and-twenty distillers, in and near the town, consume each only the same quantity: Here are five-and-twenty thousand quarters a week, that is, above twelve hundred and fifty thousand a year, consumed in and about London! Add the distillers throughout England, and have we not reason to believe, that (not a thirtieth or a twentieth part only, but) little less than half the wheat produced in the kingdom is every year consumed, not by so harmless a way as throwing it into the sea, but by converting it into deadly poison; poison that naturally destroys not only the strength and life, but also the morals, of our countrymen?

It may be objected, "This cannot be. We know how much corn is distilled by the duty that is paid. And hereby it appears, that scarce three hundred thousand quarters a year are distilled throughout the kingdom." Do we know certainly, how much corn is distilled by the duty that is paid? Is it indisputable, that the full duty is paid for all the corn that is distilled? not

to insist upon the multitude of private stills, which pay no duty at all. I have myself heard the servant of an eminent distiller occasionally aver, that for every gallon he distilled which paid duty, he distilled six which paid none. Yea, I have heard distillers themselves affirm, “We must do this, or we cannot live.” It plainly follows, we cannot judge, from the duty that is paid, of the quantity of corn that is distilled.

“However, what is paid brings in a large revenue to the King.” Is this an equivalent for the lives of his subjects? Would His Majesty sell an hundred thousand of his subjects yearly to Algiers for four hundred thousand pounds? Surely no. Will he then sell them for that sum, to be butchered by their own countrymen? “But otherwise the swine for the Navy cannot be fed.” Not unless they are fed with human flesh! Not unless they are fatted with human blood! O, tell it not in Constantinople, that the English raise the royal revenue by selling the flesh and blood of their countrymen!

4. But why are oats so dear? Because there are four times as many horses kept (to speak within compass) for coaches and chaises in particular, as were a few years ago. Unless, therefore, four times the oats grew now that grew then, they cannot be at the same price. If only twice as much is produced, (which, perhaps, is near the truth,) the price will naturally be double to what it was.

And as the dearness of grain of one kind will always raise the price of another, so whatever causes the dearness of wheat and oats must raise the price of barley too. To account, therefore, for the dearness of this, we need only remember what has been observed above; although some particular causes may concur in producing the same effect.

5. Why are beef and mutton so dear? Because many considerable farmers, particularly in the northern counties, who used to breed large numbers of sheep, or horned cattle, and very frequently both, now breed none at all: They no longer trouble themselves with either sheep, or cows, or oxen; as they can turn their land to far better account by breeding horses alone. Such is the demand, not only for coach and chaise horses, which are

bought and destroyed in incredible numbers, but much more for bred horses, which are yearly exported by hundreds, yea, thousands, to France.

6. But why are pork, poultry, and eggs so dear? Because of the monopolizing of farms; perhaps as mischievous a monopoly as was ever introduced into these kingdoms. The land which was some years ago divided between ten or twenty little farmers, and enabled them comfortably to provide for their families, is now generally engrossed by one great farmer. One farms an estate of a thousand a year, which formerly maintained ten or twenty. Everyone of these little farmers kept a few swine, with some quantity of poultry; and, having little money, was glad to send his bacon, or pork, or fowls and eggs to market continually. Hence the markets were plentifully served; and plenty created cheapness. But at present, the great, the gentlemen-farmers are above attending to these little things. They breed no poultry or swine, unless for their own use; consequently they send none to market. Hence it is not strange if two or three of these, living near a market town, occasion such a scarcity of these things, by preventing the former supply, that the price of them is double or treble to what it was before. Hence, (to instance in a small article,) in the same town wherein, within my memory, eggs were sold six or eight a penny, they are now sold six or eight a groat.

Another cause (the most terrible one of all, and the most destructive both of personal and social happiness) why not only beef, mutton, and pork, but all kinds of victuals, are so dear, is luxury. What can stand against this? Will it not waste and destroy all that nature and art can produce? If a person of quality will boil down three dozen of neats' tongues, to make two or three quarts of soup, (and so proportionably in other things,) what wonder that provisions fail? Only look into the kitchens of the great, the nobility and gentry, almost without exception; (considering withal, that "the toe of the peasant treads upon the heel of the courtier;") and when you have observed the amazing waste which is made there, you will no longer wonder at the scarcity, and consequently dearness, of the things which they use so much art to destroy.

7. But why is land so dear? Because, on all these accounts, gentlemen cannot live as they have been accustomed to do without increasing their

income; which most of them cannot do, but by raising their rents. And then the farmer, paying an higher rent for the land, must have an higher price for the produce of it. This again tends to raise the price of land; and so the wheel runs round.

8. But why is it, that not only provisions and land, but well-nigh everything else, is so dear? Because of the enormous taxes, which are laid on almost everything that can be named. Not only abundant taxes are raised from earth, and fire, and water; but, in England, the ingenious Statesmen have found a way to lay a tax upon the very light! Yet one element remains: And surely some man of honor will find a way to tax this also. For how long shall the saucy air strike a gentleman on the face, nay, a Lord, without paying for it?

9. But why are the taxes so high? Because there of the national debt. They must be so while this continues. I have heard that the national expense, seventy years ago, was, in time of peace, three millions a year. And now the bare interest of the public debt amounts yearly to above four millions! to raise which, with the other stated expenses of government, those taxes are absolutely necessary.

To sum up the whole: Thousands of people throughout the land are perishing for want of food. This is owing to various causes; but above all, to distilling, taxes, and luxury.

Here is the evil, and the undeniable causes of it. But where is the remedy?

Perhaps it exceeds all the wisdom of man to tell: But it may not be amiss to offer a few hints on the subject.

II.

1. What remedy is there for this sore evil, — many thousand poor people are starving? Find them work, and you will find them meat. They will then earn and eat their own bread.

2. But how can the masters give them work without ruining themselves? Procure vent for what is wrought, and the masters will give them as much

work as they can do. And this would be done by sinking the price of provisions; for then people would have money to buy other things too.

3. But how can the price of wheat and barley be reduced? By prohibiting for ever, by making a full end of that bane of health, that destroyer of strength, of life, and of virtue, — distilling. Perhaps this alone might go a great way toward answering the whole design. It is not improbable, it would speedily sink the price of corn, at least one part in three. If anything more were required, might not all starch be made of rice, and the importation of this, as well as of corn, be encouraged?

4. How can the price of oats be reduced? By reducing the number of horses. And may not this be effectually done, (without affecting the ploughman, the waggoner, or any of those who keep horses for common work,

(1.) By laying a tax of ten pounds on every horse exported to France, for which (notwithstanding an artful paragraph in a late public paper) there is as great a demand as ever?

(2.) By laying an additional tax on gentlemen's carriages? Not so much on every wheel, (barefaced, shameless partiality!) but five pounds yearly upon every horse. And would not these two taxes alone supply near as much as is now paid for leave to poison His Majesty's liege subjects?

5. How can the price of beef and mutton be reduced? By increasing the breed of sheep and horned cattle. And this would soon be increased sevenfold, if the price of horses was reduced; which it surely would be, half in half, by the method above-mentioned.

6. How can the price of pork and poultry be reduced? Whether it ever will, is another question. But it can be done,

(1.) By letting no farms of above an hundred pounds a year;

(2.) By repressing luxury; whether by laws, by example, or by both. I had almost said, by the grace of God; but to mention this has been long out of fashion.

7. How may the price of land be reduced? By all the methods above-named, as each tends to lessen the expense of housekeeping: But especially the last; by restraining luxury, which is the grand and general source of want.

8. How may the taxes be reduced?

- (1.) By discharging half the national debt, and so saving, by this single means, above two millions a year.
- (2.) By abolishing all useless pensions, as fast as those who now enjoy them die: Especially those ridiculous ones given to some hundreds of idle men, as Governors of forts or castles; which forts have answered no end for above these hundred years, unless to shelter jackdaws and crows. Might not good part of a million more be saved in this very article?

But will this ever be done? I fear not: At least, we have no reason to hope for it shortly; for what good can we expect (suppose the Scriptures are true) for such a nation as this, where there is no fear of God, where there is such a deep, avowed, thorough contempt of all religion, as I never saw, never heard or read of, in any other nation, whether Christian, Mahometan, or Pagan? It seems as if God must shortly arise and maintain his own cause. But, if so, let us fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of men.

LEWISHAM,

January 20, 1773.

THOUGHTS UPON SLAVERY.

(PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1774.)

I.

1. **BY** slavery, I mean domestic slavery, or that of a servant to a master. A late ingenious writer well observes, “The variety of forms in which slavery appears, makes it almost impossible to convey a just notion of it, by way of definition. There are, however, certain properties which have accompanied slavery in most places, whereby it is easily distinguished from that mild, domestic service which obtains in our country.”¹⁷

2. Slavery imports an obligation of perpetual service, an obligation which only the consent of the master can dissolve. Neither in some countries can the master himself dissolve it, without the consent of Judges appointed by the law. It generally gives the master an arbitrary power of any correction, not affecting life or limb. Sometimes even these are exposed to his will, or protected only by a fine, or some slight punishment, too inconsiderable to restrain a master of an harsh temper. It creates an incapacity of acquiring anything, except for the master’s benefit. It allows the master to alienate the slave, in the same manner as his cows and horses. Lastly, it descends in its full extent from parent to child, even to the last generation.

3. The beginning of this may be dated from the remotest period of which we have an account in history. It commenced in the barbarous state of society, and in process of time spread into all nations. It prevailed particularly among the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, and the ancient Germans; and was transmitted by them to the various kingdoms and states which arose out of the Roman Empire. But after Christianity prevailed, it gradually fell into decline in almost all parts of Europe. This great change began in Spain, about the end of the eighth century; and was become general in most other kingdoms of Europe, before the middle of the fourteenth.

4. From this time slavery was nearly extinct till the commencement of the sixteenth century, when the discovery of America, and of the western and eastern coasts of Africa, gave occasion to the revival of it. It took its rise from the Portuguese, who, to supply the Spaniards with men to cultivate their new possessions in America, procured Negroes from Africa, whom they sold for slaves to the American Spaniards. This began in the year 1508, when they imported the first Negroes into Hispaniola. In 1540, Charles the Fifth, then King of Spain, determined to put an end to Negro slavery; giving positive orders that all the Negro slaves in the Spanish dominions should be set free. And this was accordingly done by Lagasca, whom he sent and empowered to free them all, on condition of continuing to labor for their masters. But soon after Lagasca returned to Spain, slavery returned and flourished as before. Afterwards, other nations, as they acquired possessions in America, followed the examples of the Spaniards; and slavery has taken deep root in most of our American colonies.

II.

Such is the nature of slavery; such the beginning of Negro slavery in America. But some may desire to know what kind of country it is from which the Negroes are brought; what sort of men, of what temper and behavior are they in their own country; and in what manner they are generally procured, carried to, and treated in, America.

1. And, First, what kind of country is that from whence they are brought? Is it so remarkably horrid, dreary, and barren, that it is a kindness to deliver them out of it? I believe many have apprehended so; but it is an entire mistake, if we may give credit to those who have lived many years therein, and could have no motive to misrepresent it.

2. That part of Africa whence the Negroes are brought, commonly known by the name of Guinea, extends along the coast, in the whole, between three and four thousand miles. From the river Senegal, seventeen degrees north of the line, to Cape Sierra-Leone, it contains seven hundred miles. Thence it runs eastward about fifteen hundred miles, including the Grain

Coast, the Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast, and the Slave Coast, with the large kingdom of Benin. From thence it runs southward, about twelve hundred miles, and contains the kingdoms of Congo and Angola.

3. Concerning the first, the Senegal coast, Monsieur Brue, who lived there sixteen years, after describing its fruitfulness near the sea, says, “The farther you go from the sea, the more fruitful and well-improved is the country, abounding in pulse, Indian corn, and various fruits. Here are vast meadows which feed large herds of great and small cattle; and the villages, which lie thick, show the country is well peopled.” And again: “I was surprised to see the land so well cultivated: Scarce a spot lay unimproved; the low lands, divided by small canals, were all sowed with rice; the higher grounds were planted with Indian corn, and peas of different sorts. Their beef is excellent; poultry plenty, and very cheap, as are all the necessaries of life.”

4. As to the Grain and Ivory Coast, we learn from eyewitnesses, that the soil is in general fertile, producing abundance of rice and roots. Indigo and cotton thrive without cultivation; fish is in great plenty; the flocks and herds are numerous, and the trees laden with fruit.

5. The Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all who have seen it agree, is exceeding fruitful and pleasant, producing vast quantities of rice and other grain, plenty of fruit and roots, palm wine and oil, and fish in great abundance, with much tame and wild cattle. The very same account is given us of the soil and produce of the kingdoms of Benin, Congo, and Angola. From all which it appears, that Guinea, in general, is far from an horrid, dreary, barren country, — is one of the most fruitful, as well as the most pleasant, countries in the known world. It is said indeed to be unhealthy; and so it is to strangers, but perfectly healthy to the native inhabitants.

6. Such is the country from which the Negroes are brought. We come next to inquire what sort of men they are, of what temper and behavior, not in our plantations, but in their native country. And here likewise the surest way is to take our account from eye and ear witnesses. Now, those who have lived in the Senegal country observe, it is inhabited by three nations, the Jalofs, Fulis, and Mandingos. The King of the Jalofs has under him

several Ministers, who assist in the exercise of justice. The Chief Justice goes in circuit through all his dominions, to hear complaints and determine controversies; and the Viceroy goes with him, to inspect the behavior of the Alkadi, or Governor, of each village. The Fulis are governed by their chief men, who rule with much moderation. Few of them will drink anything stronger than water, being strict Mahometans. The Government is easy, because the people are of a quiet and good disposition, and so well instructed in what is right, that a man who wrongs another is the abomination of all. They desire no more land than they use, which they cultivate with great care and industry: If any of them are known to be made slaves by the white men, they all join to redeem them. They not only support all that are old, or blind, or lame among themselves, but have frequently supplied the necessities of the Mandingos, when they were distressed by famine.

7. "The Mandingos," says Monsieur Brue, "are rigid Mahometans, drinking neither wine nor brandy. They are industrious and laborious, keeping their ground well cultivated, and breeding a good stock of cattle. Every town has a Governor, and he appoints the labor of the people. The men work the ground designed for corn; the women and girls, the rice ground. He afterwards divides the corn and rice among them; and decides all quarrels, if any arise. All the Mahometan Negroes constantly go to public prayers thrice a day; there being a Priest in every village, who regularly calls them together; and it is surprising to see the modesty, attention, and reverence which they observe during their worship. These three nations practice several trades; they have smiths, saddlers, potters, and weavers; and they are very ingenious at their several occupations. Their smiths not only make all the instruments of iron which they have occasion to use, but likewise work many things neatly in gold and silver. It is chiefly the women and children who weave fine cotton cloth, which they dye blue and black."

8. It was of these parts of Guinea that Monsieur Allanson, correspondent of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, from 1749 to 1753, gives the following account, both as to the country and people: — "Which way soever I turned my eyes, I beholden a perfect image of pure nature: An agreeable solitude, bounded on every side by a charming landscape; the

rural situation of cottages in the midst of trees; the ease and quietness of the Negroes, reclined under the shade of the spreading foliage, with the simplicity of their dress and manners: The whole revived in my mind the idea of our first parents, and I seemed to contemplate the world in its primitive state. They are, generally speaking, very good-natured, sociable, and obliging. I was not a little pleased with my very first reception; and it fully convinced me, that there ought to be a considerable abatement made in the accounts we have of the savage character of the Africans.” He adds: “It is amazing that an illiterate people should reason so pertinently concerning the heavenly bodies. There is no doubt, but that, with proper instruments, they would become excellent astronomers.”

9. The inhabitants of the Grain and Ivory Coast are represented by those that deal with them, as sensible, courteous, and the fairest traders on the coasts of Guinea. They rarely drink to excess; if any do, they are severely punished by the King’s order. They are seldom troubled with war: If a difference happen between two nations, they commonly end the dispute amicably.

The inhabitants of the Gold and Slave Coast likewise, when they are not artfully incensed against each other, live in great union and friendship, being generally well-tempered, civil, tractable, and ready to help any that need it. In particular, the natives of the kingdom of Whidah are civil, kind, and obliging to strangers; and they are the most gentleman-like of all the Negroes, abounding in good manners toward each other. The inferiors pay the utmost respect to their superiors; so wives to their husbands, children to their parents. And they are remarkably industrious; all are constantly employed, — the men in agriculture, the women in spinning and weaving cotton.

10. The Gold and Slave Coasts are divided into several districts, some governed by Kings, others by the principal men, who take care each of their own town or village, and prevent or appease tumults. They punish murder and adultery severely; very frequently with death. Theft and robbery are punished by a fine proportionable to the goods that were taken. All the natives of this coast, though Heathens, believe there is one God, the Author of them and all things. They appear likewise to have a

confused apprehension of a future state. And, accordingly, every town and village has a place of public worship. It is remarkable that they have no beggars among them; such is the care of the chief men, in every city and village, to provide some easy labor even for the old and weak. Some are employed in blowing the smiths' bellows; others in pressing palm oil; others in grinding of colors. If they are too weak even for this, they sell provisions in the market.

11. The natives of the kingdom of Benin are a reasonable and good-natured people. They are sincere and inoffensive, and do no injustice either to one another or to strangers. They are eminently civil and courteous: If you make them a present, they endeavor to repay it double; and if they are trusted till the ship returns the next year, they are sure honestly to pay the whole debt. Theft is punished among them, although not with the same severity as murder. If a man and woman of any quality are taken in adultery, they are certain to be put to death, and their bodies thrown on a dunghill, and left a prey to wild beasts. They are punctually just and honest in their dealings; and are also very charitable, the King and the great Lords taking care to employ all that are capable of any work. And those that are utterly helpless they keep for God's sake; so that here also are no beggars. The inhabitants of Congo and Angola are generally a quiet people. They discover a good understanding, and behave in a friendly manner to strangers, being of a mild temper and an affable carriage. Upon the whole, therefore, the Negroes who inhabit the coast of Africa, from the river Senegal to the southern bounds of Angola, are so far from being the stupid, senseless, brutish, lazy barbarians, the fierce, cruel, perfidious savages they have been described, that, on the contrary, they are represented, by them who have no motive to flatter them, as remarkably sensible, considering the few advantages they have for improving their understanding; as industrious to the highest degree, perhaps more so than any other natives of so warm a climate; as fair, just, and honest in all their dealings, unless where white men have taught them to be otherwise; and as far more mild, friendly, and kind to strangers, than any of our forefathers were. *Our forefathers!* Where shall we find at this day, among the fair-faced natives of Europe, a nation generally practicing the justice, mercy, and truth, which are found among these poor Africans? Suppose the preceding accounts are true, (which I see no reason or pretense to

doubt of,) and we may leave England and France, to seek genuine honesty in Benin, Congo, or Angola.

III.

We have now seen what kind of country it is from which the Negroes are brought; and what sort of men (even white men being the judges) they were in their own country. Inquire we, Thirdly, In what manner are they generally procured, carried to, and treated in, America.

1. First. In what manner are they procured? Part of them by fraud. Captains of ships, from time to time, have invited Negroes to come on board, and then carried them away. But far more have been procured by force. The Christians, landing upon their coasts, seized as many as they found, men, women, and children, and transported them to America. It was about 1551 that the English began trading to Guinea; at first, for gold and elephants' teeth; but soon after, for men. In 1556, Sir John Hawkins sailed with two ships to Cape Verd, where he sent eighty men on shore to catch Negroes. But the natives flying, they fell farther down, and there set the men on shore, "to burn their towns and take the inhabitants." But they met with such resistance, that they had seven men killed, and took but ten Negroes. So they went still farther down, till, having taken enough, they proceeded to the West Indies and sold them.

2. It was some time before the Europeans found a more compendious way of procuring African slaves, by prevailing upon them to make war upon each other, and to sell their prisoners. Till then they seldom had any wars; but were in general quiet and peaceable. But the white men first taught them drunkenness and avarice, and then hired them to sell one another. Nay, by this means, even their Kings are induced to sell their own subjects. So Mr. Moore, factor of the African Company in 1730, informs us: "When the King of Barsalli wants goods or brandy, he sends to the English Governor at James's Fort, who immediately sends a sloop. Against the time it arrives, he plunders some of his neighbors' towns, selling the people for the goods he wants. At other times he falls upon one of his own towns, and makes bold to sell his own subjects." So Monsieur Brue says, "I wrote to the King," (not the same,) "if he had a sufficient

number of slaves, I would treat with him. He seized three hundred of his own people, and sent word he was ready to deliver them for the goods." He adds: "Some of the natives are always ready" (when well paid) "to surprise and carry off their own countrymen. They come at night without noise, and if they find any lone cottage, surround it and carry off all the people." Barbot, another French factor, says, "Many of the slaves sold by the Negroes are prisoners of war, or taken in the incursions they make into their enemies' territories. Others are stolen. Abundance of little Blacks, of both sexes, are stolen away by their neighbors, when found abroad on the road, or in the woods, or else in the cornfields, at the time of year when their parents keep them there all day to scare away the devouring birds." That their own parents sell them is utterly false: Whites, not Blacks, are without natural affection!

3. To set the manner wherein Negroes are procured in a yet stronger light, it will suffice to give an extract of "Two Voyages to Guinea" on this account. The first is taken verbatim from the original manuscript of the Surgeon's Journal: —

"Sestro, Dec. 29, 1724. — No trade today, though many traders came on board. They informed us, that the people are gone to war within land, and will bring prisoners enough in two or three days; in hopes of which we stay.

"The 30th. — No trade yet; but our traders came on board today, and informed us the people had burnt four towns; so that tomorrow we expect slaves off.

"The 31st. — Fair weather; but no trading yet. We see each night towns burning. But we hear many of the Sestro men are killed by the inland Negroes; so that we fear this war will be unsuccessful.

"The 2nd of January. — Last night we saw a prodigious fire break out about eleven o'clock and this morning see the town of Sestro burned down to the ground." (It contained some hundred houses.) "So that we find their enemies are too hard for them at present, and consequently our trade

spoiled here. Therefore about seven o'clock we weighed anchor, to proceed lower down."

4. The second extract, taken from the Journal of a Surgeon, who went from New York on the same trade, is as follows: "The commander of the vessel sent to acquaint the King, that he wanted a cargo of slaves. The King promised to furnish him; and, in order to it, set out, designing to surprise some town, and make all the people prisoners. Sometime after, the King sent him word, he had not yet met with the desired success; having attempted to break up two towns, but having been twice repulsed; but that he still hoped to procure the number of slaves. In this design he persisted, till he met his enemies in the field. A battle was fought, which lasted three days. And the engagement was so bloody, that four thousand five hundred men were slain upon the spot." Such is the manner wherein the Negroes are procured! Thus the Christians preach the Gospel to the Heathens!

5. Thus they are procured. But in what numbers and in what manner are they carried to America? Mr. Anderson, in his History of Trade and Commerce, observes: "England supplies her American colonies with Negro slaves, amounting in number to about an hundred thousand every year;" that is, so many are taken on board our ships; but at least ten thousand of them die in the voyage; about a fourth part more die at the different islands, in what is called the seasoning. So that at an average, in the passage and seasoning together, thirty thousand die; that is, properly, are murdered. O Earth, O Sea, cover not thou their blood!

6. When they are brought down to the shore in order to be sold, our Surgeons thoroughly examine them, and that quite naked, women and men, without any distinction; those that are approved are set on one side. In the mean time, a burning iron, with the arms or name of the company, lies in the fire, with which they are marked on the breast. Before they are put into the ships, their masters strip them of all they have on their backs: So that they come on board stark naked, women as well as men. It is common for several hundred of them to be put on board one vessel, where they are stowed together it as little room as it is possible for them to be crowded. It is easy to suppose what a condition they must soon be in, between heat,

thirst, and stench of various kinds. So that it is no wonder, so many should die in the passage; but rather, that any survive it.

7. When the vessels arrive at their destined port, the Negroes are again exposed naked to the eyes of all that flock together, and the examination of their purchasers. Then they are separated to the plantations of their several masters, to see each other no more. Here you may see mothers haunting over their daughters, bedewing their naked breasts with tears, and daughters clinging to their parents, till the whipper soon obliges them to part. And what can be more wretched than the condition they then enter upon? Banished from their country, from their friends and relations for ever, from every comfort of life, they are reduced to a state scarce anyway preferable to that of beasts of burden. In general a few roots, not of the nicest kind, usually yams or potatoes, are their food; and two rags, that neither screen them from the heat of the day, nor the cold of the night, their covering. Their sleep is very short, their labor continual, and frequently above their strength; so that death sets many of them at liberty before they have lived out half their days. The time they work in the West Indies, is from day-break to noon, and from two o'clock till dark; during which time, they are attended by overseers, who, if they think them dilatory, or think anything not so well done as it should be, whip them most unmercifully, so that you may see their bodies long after wealed and scarred usually from the shoulders to the waist. And before they are suffered to go to their quarters, they have commonly something to do, as collecting herbage for the horses, or gathering fuel for the boilers; so that it is often past twelve before they can get home. Hence, if their food is not prepared, they are sometimes called to labor again, before they can satisfy their hunger. And no excuse will avail. If they are not in the field immediately, they must expect to feel the lash. Did the Creator intend that the noblest creatures in the visible world should live such a life as this?

Are these thy glorious work, Parent of Good?

8. As to the punishments inflicted on them, says Sir Hans Sloane, "they frequently geld them, or chop off half a foot: After they are whipped till they are raw all over, some put pepper and salt upon them; some drop melted wax upon their skin; others cut off their ears, and constrain them to

broil and eat them. For rebellion,” (that is, asserting their native liberty, which they have as much right to as to the air they breathe,) “they fasten them down to the ground with crooked sticks on every limb, and then applying fire, by degrees, to the feet and hands, they burn them gradually upward to the head.”

9. But will not the laws made in the plantations prevent or redress all cruelty and oppression? We will take but; a few of those laws for a specimen, and then let any man judge: —

In order to rivet the chain of slavery, the law of Virginia ordains: “That no slave shall be set free upon any pretense whatever, except for some meritorious services, to be adjudged and allowed by the Governor and Council; and that where any slave shall be set free by his owner, otherwise than is herein directed, the Churchwardens of the parish, wherein such Negro shall reside for the space of one month, are hereby authorized and required to take up and sell the said Negro by public outcry.”

10. Will not these lawgivers take effectual care to prevent cruelty and oppression?

The law of Jamaica ordains: “Every slave that shall run away, and continue absent from his master twelve months, shall be deemed rebellious.” And by another law, fifty pounds are allowed to those who kill or bring in alive a rebellious slave. So their law treats these poor men with as little ceremony and consideration, as if they were merely brute beasts! But the innocent blood which is shed in consequence of such a detestable law, must call for vengeance on the murderous abettors and actors of such deliberate wickedness.

11. But the law of Barbados exceeds even this: “If any Negro under punishment, by his master, or his order, for running away, or any other crime or misdemeanor, shall suffer in life or member, no person whatsoever shall be liable to any fine therefore. But if any man, of wantonness, or only of bloody-mindedness, or cruel intention, willfully kill a Negro of his own,” (now, observe the severe punishment!) “he shall

pay into the public treasury fifteen pounds sterling! and not be liable to any other punishment or forfeiture for the same!”

Nearly allied to this is that law of Virginia: “After proclamation is issued against slaves that run away, it is lawful for any person whatsoever to kill and destroy such slaves, by such ways and means as he shall think fit.”

We have seen already some of the ways and means which have been thought fit on such occasions; and many more might be mentioned. One gentleman, when I was abroad, thought fit to roast his slave alive! But if the most natural act of “running away” from intolerable tyranny, deserves such relentless severity, what punishment have these lawmakers to expect hereafter, on account of their own enormous offenses?

IV.

1. This is the plain, unaggravated matter of fact. Such is the manner wherein our African slaves are procured; such the manner wherein they are removed from their native land, and wherein they are treated in our plantations. I would now inquire, whether these things can be defended, on the principles of even heathen honesty; whether they can be reconciled (setting the Bible out of the question) with any degree of either justice or mercy.

2. The grand plea is, “They are authorized by law.” But can law, human law, change the nature of things? Can it turn darkness into light, or evil into good? By no means. Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong still. There must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy. So that I still ask, Who can reconcile this treatment of the Negroes, first and last, with either mercy or justice?

Where is the justice of inflicting the severest evils on those that have done us no wrong? of depriving those that never injured us in word or deed, of every comfort of life? of tearing them from their native country, and depriving them of liberty itself, to which an Angolan has the same natural right as an Englishman, and on which he sets as high a value? Yea, where is the justice of taking away the lives of innocent, inoffensive men; murdering

thousands of them in their own land, by the hands of their own countrymen; many thousands, year after year, on shipboard, and then casting them like dung into the sea; and tens of thousands in that cruel slavery to which they are so unjustly reduced?

3. But waving, for the present, all other considerations, I strike at the root of this complicated villany; I absolutely deny all slave-holding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice.

I cannot place this in a clearer light than that great ornament of his profession, Judge Blackstone, has already done. Part of his words are as follows: —

“The three origins of the right of slavery assigned by Justinian, are all built upon false foundations:

- (1.) Slavery is said to arise from captivity in war. The conqueror having a right to the life of his captives, if he spares that, has then a right to deal with them as he pleases. But this is untrue, if taken generally, — that, by the laws of nations, a man has a right to kill his enemy. He has only a right to kill him in particular cases, in cases of absolute necessity for self-defense. And it is plain, this absolute necessity did not subsist, since he did not kill him, but made him prisoner. War itself is justifiable only on principles of self-preservation: Therefore it gives us no right over prisoners, but to hinder their hurting us by confining them. Much less can it give a right to torture, or kill, or even to enslave an enemy when the war is over. Since therefore the right of making our prisoners slaves, depends on a supposed right of slaughter, that foundation failing, the consequence which is drawn from it must fail likewise.

“It is said, Secondly, slavery may begin by one man’s selling himself to another. And it is true, a man may sell himself to work for another; but he cannot sell himself to be a slave, as above-defined. Every sale implies an equivalent given to the seller, in lieu of what he transfers to the buyer. But what equivalent can be given for life or liberty? His property likewise, with the very price which he seems to receive, devolves *ipso facto* to his master, the instant he becomes his slave: In this case, therefore, the buyer

gives nothing, and the seller receives nothing. Of what validity then can a sale be, which destroys the very principle upon which all sales are founded?

“We are told, Thirdly, that men may be born slaves, by being the children of slaves. But this, being built upon the two former rights, must fall together with them. If neither captivity nor contract can, by the plain law of nature and reason, reduce the parent to a state of slavery, much less can they reduce the offspring.” It clearly follows, that all slavery is as irreconcilable to justice as to mercy.

4. That slave-holding is utterly inconsistent with mercy, is almost too plain to need a proof. Indeed, it is said, “that these Negroes being prisoners of war, our captains and factors buy them, merely to save them from being put to death. And is not this mercy?” I answer,

- (1.) Did Sir John Hawkins, and many others, seize upon men, women, and children, who were at peace in their own fields or houses, merely to save them from death?
- (2.) Was it to save them from death, that they knocked out the brains of those they could not bring away?
- (3.) Who occasioned and fomented those wars, wherein these poor creatures were taken prisoners? Who excited them by money, by drink, by every possible means, to fall upon one another? Was it not themselves? They know in their own conscience it was, if they have any conscience left. But,
- (4.) To bring the matter to a short issue, can they say before God, that they ever took a single voyage, or bought a single Negro, from this motive? They cannot; they well know, to get money, not to save lives, was the whole and sole spring of their motions.

5. But if this manner of procuring and treating Negroes is not consistent either with mercy or justice, yet there is a plea for it which every man of business will acknowledge to be quite sufficient. Fifty years ago, one meeting an eminent Statesman in the lobby of the House of Commons, said, “You have been long talking about justice and equity. Pray which is this bill; equity or justice?” He answered very short and plain, “D — n justice; it is necessity.” Here also the slaveholder fixes his foot; here he

rests the strength of his cause. "If it is not quite right, yet it must be so; there is an absolute necessity for it. It is necessary we should procure slaves; and when we have procured them, it is necessary to use them with severity, considering their stupidity, stubbornness, and wickedness."

I answer, You stumble at the threshold; I deny that villany is ever necessary. It is impossible that it should ever be necessary for any reasonable creature to violate all the laws of justice, mercy, and truth. No circumstances can make it necessary for a man to burst in sunder all the ties of humanity. It can never be necessary for a rational being to sink himself below a brute. A man can be under no necessity of degrading himself into a wolf. The absurdity of the supposition is so glaring, that one would wonder anyone can help seeing it.

6. This in general. But, to be more particular, I ask, First, What is necessary? and, Secondly, To what end? It may be answered, "The whole method now used by the original purchasers of Negroes is necessary to the furnishing our colonies yearly with a hundred thousand slaves." I grant this is necessary to that end. But how is that end necessary? How will you prove it necessary that one hundred, that one of those slaves should be procured? "Why, it is necessary to my gaining an hundred thousand pounds." Perhaps so: But how is this necessary? It is very possible you might be both a better and a happier man, if you had not a quarter of it. I deny that your gaining one thousand is necessary either to your present or eternal happiness. "But, however, you must allow, these slaves are necessary for the cultivation of our islands; inasmuch as white men are not able to labor in hot climates." I answer, First, it were better that all those islands should remain uncultivated for ever; yea, it were more desirable that they were altogether sunk in the depth of the sea, than that they should be cultivated at so high a price as the violation of justice, mercy, and truth. But, Secondly, the supposition on which you ground your argument is false. For white men, even Englishmen, are well able to labor in hot climates; provided they are temperate both in meat and drink, and that they inure themselves to it by degrees. I speak no more than I know by experience. It appears from the thermometer, that the summer heat in Georgia is frequently equal to that in Barbados, yea, to that under the line. And yet I and my family (eight in number) did employ all our spare time

there, in felling of trees and clearing of ground, as hard labor as any Negro need be employed in. The German family, likewise, forty in number, were employed in all manner of labor. And this was so far from impairing our health, that we all continued perfectly well, while the idle ones round about us were swept away as with a pestilence. It is not true, therefore, that white men are not able to labor, even in hot climates, full as well as black. But if they were not, it would be better that none should labor there, that the work should be left undone, than that myriads of innocent men should be murdered, and myriads more dragged into the basest slavery.

7. "But the furnishing us with slaves is necessary for the trade, and wealth, and glory of our nation." Here are several mistakes. For, First, wealth is not necessary to the glory of any nation; but wisdom, virtue, justice, mercy, generosity, public spirit, love of our country. These are necessary to the real glory of a nation; but abundance of wealth is not. Men of understanding allow that the glory of England was full as high in Queen Elizabeth's time as it is now; although our riches and trade were then as much smaller, as our virtue was greater. But, Secondly, it is not clear that we should have either less money or trade, (only less of that detestable trade of man-stealing,) if there was not a Negro in all our islands, or in all English America. It is demonstrable, white men, inured to it by degrees, can work as well as them; and they would do it, were Negroes out of the way, and proper encouragement given them. However, Thirdly, I come back to the same point: Better no trade, than trade procured by villany. It is far better to have no wealth, than to gain wealth at the expense of virtue. Better is honest poverty, than all the riches bought by the tears, and sweat, and blood, of our fellow-creatures.

8. "However this be, it is necessary, when we have slaves, to use them with severity." What, to whip them for every petty offense, till they are all in gore blood? to take that opportunity of rubbing pepper and salt into their raw flesh? to drop burning sealing-wax upon their skin? to castrate them? to cut off half their foot with an ax? to hang them on gibbets, that they may die by inches, with heat, and hunger, and thirst? to pin them down to the ground, and then burn them by degrees, from the feet to the

head? to roast them alive? When did a Turk or a Heathen find it necessary to use a fellow-creature thus?

I pray, to what end is this usage necessary? “Why, to prevent their running away; and to keep them constantly to their labor, that they may not idle away their time: So miserably stupid is this race of men, yea, so stubborn, and so wicked.” Allowing them to be as stupid as you say, to whom is that stupidity owing? Without question, it lies altogether at the door of their inhuman masters; who give them no means, no opportunity, of improving their understanding; and, indeed, leave them no motive, either from hope or fear, to attempt any such thing. They were no way remarkable for stupidity while they remained in their own country: The inhabitants of Africa, where they have equal motives and equal means of improvement, are not inferior to the inhabitants of Europe; to some of them they are greatly superior. Impartially survey, in their own country, the natives of Benin, and the natives of Lapland; compare (setting prejudice aside) the Samoyeds and the Angolans; and on which side does the advantage lie, in point of understanding? Certainly the African is in no respect inferior to the European. Their stupidity, therefore, in our plantations is not natural; otherwise than it is the natural effect of their condition. Consequently, it is not their fault, but yours: You must answer for it, before God and man.

9. “But their stupidity is not the only reason of our treating them with severity. For it is hard to say, which is the greatest, this, or their stubbornness and wickedness.” It may be so: But do not these, as well as the other, lie at your door? Are not stubbornness, cunning, pilfering, and diverse other vices, the natural, necessary fruits of slavery? Is not this an observation which has been made in every age and nation? And what means have you used to remove this stubbornness? Have you tried what mildness and gentleness would do? I knew one that did; that had prudence and patience to make the experiment; Mr. Hugh Bryan, who then lived on the borders of South Carolina. And what was the effect? Why, that all his Negroes (and he had no small number of them) loved and revered him as a father, and cheerfully obeyed him out of love. Yea, they were more afraid of a frown from him, than of many blows from an overseer. And what pains have you taken, what method have you used, to reclaim them

from their wickedness? Have you carefully taught them, that there is a God, a wise, powerful, merciful Being, the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth? that he has appointed a day wherein he will judge the world, will take an account of all our thoughts, words, and actions? that in that day he will reward every child of man according to his works? that then the righteous shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and the wicked shall be cast into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? If you have not done this, if you have taken no pains or thought about the matter, can you wonder at their wickedness? What wonder, if they should cut your throat? And if they did, whom could you thank for it but yourself? You first acted the villain in making them slaves, whether you stole them or bought them. You kept them stupid and wicked, by cutting them off from all opportunities of improving either in knowledge or virtue: And now you assign their want of wisdom and goodness as the reason for using them worse than brute beasts!

V.

1. It remains only to make a little application of the preceding observations. But to whom should that application be made? That may bear a question. Should we address ourselves to the public at large? What effect can this have? It may inflame the world against the guilty, but is not likely to remove that guilt. Should we appeal to the English nation in general? This also is striking wide; and is never likely to procure any redress for the sore evil we complain of. As little would it in all probability avail, to apply to the Parliament. So many things, which seem of greater importance, lie before them, that they are not likely to attend to this. I therefore add a few words to those who are more immediately concerned, whether captains, merchants, or planters.

2. And, First, to the captains employed in this trade. Most of you know the country of Guinea; several parts of it, at least, between the river Senegal and the kingdom of Angola. Perhaps, now, by your means part of it is become a dreary, uncultivated wilderness, the inhabitants being all murdered or carried away, so that there are none left to till the ground. But you well know how populous, how fruitful, how pleasant it was a few years ago. You know, the people were not stupid, not wanting in sense,

considering the few means of improvement they enjoyed. Neither did you find them savage, fierce, cruel, treacherous, or unkind to strangers. On the contrary, they were, in most parts, a sensible and ingenious people. They were kind and friendly, courteous and obliging, and remarkably fair and just in their dealings. Such are the men whom you hire their own countrymen to tear away from this lovely country; part by stealth, part by force, part made captives in those wars which you raise or foment on purpose. You have seen them torn away, — children from their parents, parents from their children; husbands from their wives, wives from their beloved husbands, brethren and sisters from each other. You have dragged them who had never done you any wrong, perhaps in chains, from their native shore. You have forced them into your ships like an herd of swine, — them who had souls immortal as your own; only some of them leaped into the sea, and resolutely stayed under water, till they could suffer no more from you. You have stowed them together as close as ever they could lie, without any regard either to decency or convenience. And when many of them had been poisoned by foul air, or had sunk under various hardships, you have seen their remains delivered to the deep, till the sea should give up his dead. You have carried the survivors into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life; such slavery as is not found among the Turks at Algiers, no, nor among the Heathens in America.

3. May I speak plainly to you? I must. Love constrains me; love to you, as well as to those you are concerned with.

Is there a God? You know there is. Is he a just God? Then there must be a state of retribution; a state wherein the just God will reward every man according to his works. Then what reward will he render to you? O think betimes! before you drop into eternity! Think now, “He shall have judgment without mercy that showed no mercy.”

Are you a man? Then you should have an human heart. But have you indeed? What is your heart made of? Is there no such principle as compassion there? Do you never feel another’s pain? Have you no sympathy, no sense of human woe, no pity for the miserable? When you saw the flowing eyes, the heaving breasts, or the bleeding sides and tortured limbs of your fellow-creatures, was you a stone, or a brute? Did

you look upon them with the eyes of a tiger? When you squeezed the agonizing creatures down in the ship, or when you threw their poor mangled remains into the sea, had you no relenting? Did not one tear drop from your eye, one sigh escape from your breast? Do you feel no relenting now? If you do not, you must go on, till the measure of your iniquities is full. Then will the great God deal with you as you have dealt with them, and require all their blood at your hands. And at “that day it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for you!” But if your heart does relent, though in a small degree, know it is a call from the God of love. And “today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.” Today resolve, God being your helper, to escape for your life. Reward not money! All that a man hath will he give for his life! Whatever you lose, lose not your soul: Nothing can countervail that loss. Immediately quit the horrid trade: At all events, be an honest man.

4. This equally concerns every merchant who is engaged in the slave-trade. It is you that induce the African villain to sell his countrymen; and in order thereto, to steal, rob, murder men, women, and children without number, by enabling the English villain to pay him for so doing, whom you overpay for his execrable labor. It is your money that is the spring of all, that empowers him to go on: So that whatever he or she African does in this matter is all your act and deed. And is your conscience quite reconciled to this? Does it never reproach you at all? Has gold entirely blinded your eyes, and stupefied your heart? Can you see, can you feel, no harm therein? Is it doing as you would be done to? Make the case your own. “Master;” said a slave at Liverpool to the merchant that owned him, “what, if some of my countrymen were to come here, and take away my mistress, and Master Tommy, and Master Billy, and carry them into our country, and make them slaves, how would you like it?” His answer was worthy of a man: “I will never buy a slave more while I live.” O let his resolution be yours! Have no more any part in this detestable business. Instantly leave it to those unfeeling wretches who

Laugh at human nature and compassion!

Be you a man, not a wolf, a devourer of the human species! Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy!

5. And this equally concerns every gentleman that has an estate in our American plantations; yea, all slave-holders, of whatever rank and degree; seeing men-buyers are exactly on a level with men-stealers. Indeed you say, "I pay honestly for my goods; and I am not concerned to know how they are come by." Nay, but you are; you are deeply concerned to know they are honestly come by. Otherwise you are a partaker with a thief, and are not a jot honestest than him. But you know they are not honestly come by; you know they are procured by means nothing near so innocent as picking of pockets, house-breaking, or robbery upon the highway. You know they are procured by a deliberate series of more complicated villany (of fraud, robbery, and murder) than was ever practiced either by Mahometans or Pagans; in particular, by murders, of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now, it is your money that pays the merchant, and through him the captain and the African butchers. You therefore are guilty, yea, principally guilty, of all these frauds, robberies, and murders. You are the spring that puts all the rest in motion; they would not stir a step without you; therefore, the blood of all these wretches who die before their time, whether in their country or elsewhere, lies upon your head. "The blood of thy brother" (for, whether thou wilt believe it or no, such he is in the sight of Him that made him) "crieth against thee from the earth," from the ship, and from the waters. O, whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it be too late: Instantly, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood-guiltiness! Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, thy lands, are at present stained with blood. Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt; spill no more the blood of the innocent! Do not hire another to shed blood; do not pay him for doing it! Whether you are a Christian or no, show yourself a man! Be not more savage than a lion or a bear!

6. Perhaps you will say, "I do not buy any Negroes; I only use those left me by my father." So far is well; but is it enough to satisfy your own conscience? Had your father, have you, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting Revelation aside. It cannot be, that either war, or contract, can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. Much less is it possible, that any child of man should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human

creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air; and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature.

If, therefore, you have any regard to justice, (to say nothing of mercy, nor the revealed law of God,) render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle toward all men; and see that you invariably do unto everyone as you would he should do unto you.

7. O thou God of love, thou who art loving to every man, and whose mercy is over all thy works; thou who art the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and who art rich in mercy unto all; thou who hast mingled of one blood all the nations upon earth; have compassion upon these outcasts of men, who are trodden down as dung upon the earth! Arise, and help these that have no helper, whose blood is spilt upon the ground like water! Are not these also the work of thine own hands, the purchase of thy Son's blood? Stir them up to cry unto thee in the land of their captivity; and let their complaint come up before thee; let it enter into thy ears! Make even those that lead them away captive to pity them, and turn their captivity as the rivers in the south. O burst thou all their chains in sunder; more especially the chains of their sins! Thou Savior of all, make them free, that they may be free indeed!

The servile progeny of Ham
 Seize as the purchase of thy blood!
 Let all the Heathens know thy name:
 From idols to the living God
 The dark Americans convert,
 And shine in every pagan heart!

A

CALM ADDRESS

TO

OUR AMERICAN COLONIES.

*Ne, pueri, ne tanta animis assuescite bella,
Neu patriae validas in viscera vertite vires*¹⁸ —VIRGIL.

(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1775.)

TO THE READER.

I WAS of a different judgment on this head, till I read a tract entitled, “Taxation no Tyranny.” But as soon as I received more light myself, I judged it my duty to impart it to others. I therefore extracted the chief arguments from that treatise, and added an application to those whom it most concerns. I was well aware of the treatment this would bring upon myself; but let it be, so I may in any degree serve my King and country.

A late tract, wrote in answer to this, is wrote in just such a spirit as I expected. It is strewed over with such flowers as these: “Contemptible sophistry! Fallacious to the last degree! Childish quirks! Pitiful sophisms!” with strong assertions, repeated over and over, and with florid quotations. But all the arguments which are produced therein, may be contained in a nutshell.

The writer¹⁹ asserts twenty times, “He that is taxd without his own consent, that is, without being represented, is a slave.” I answer, No; I have no representative in Parliament; but I am taxd; yet I am no slave. Yea, nine in ten throughout England have no representative, no vote; yet they

are no slaves; they enjoy both civil and religious liberty to the utmost extent.

He replies, "But they may have votes if they will; they may purchase freeholds." What! Can every man in England purchase a freehold? No, not one in an hundred. But, be that as it may, they have no vote now; yet they are no slaves, they are the freest men in the whole world.

"Who then is a slave?" Look into America, and you may easily see. See that Negro, fainting under the load, bleeding under the lash! He is a slave. And is there "no difference" between him and his master? Yes; the one is screaming, "Murder! Slavery!" the other silently bleeds and dies!

"But wherein then consists the difference between liberty and slavery?" Herein: You and I, and the English in general, go where we will, and enjoy the fruit of our labors: This is liberty. The Negro does not: This is slavery.

Is not then all this outcry about liberty and slavery mere rant, and playing upon words?

This is a specimen of this writer's arguments. Let us just touch upon his quotations: —

"All the inhabitants of England," says the fanciful Montesquieu, as one terms him, "have a right of voting at the election of a representative, except such as are so mean, as to be deemed to have no will of their own!" Nay, if all have a right to vote that have a will of their own, certainly this right belongs to every man, woman, and child in England.

One quotation more: "Judge Blackstone says, 'In a free state, every man who is supposed to be a free agent ought to be in some measure his own governor.' Therefore, one branch, at least, of the legislative power should reside in the whole body of the people." But who are the whole body of the people? According to him, every free agent. Then the argument proves too much. For are not women free agents? Yea, and poor as well as rich men. According to this argument, there is no free state under the sun.

The book which this writer says I so strongly recommend, I never yet saw with my eyes. And the words which he says I spoke, never came out of my lips. But I really believe, he was told so.

I now speak according to the light I have. But if anyone will give me more light, I will be thankful.

BRETHREN AND COUNTRYMEN,

1. THE grand question which is now debated, (and with warmth enough on both sides,) is this, Has the English Parliament a right to tax the American colonies?

In order to determine this, let us consider the nature of our colonies. An English colony is, a number of persons to whom the king grants a charter, permitting them to settle in some far country as a corporation, enjoying such powers as the charter grants, to be administered in such a manner as the charter prescribes. As a corporation they make laws for themselves; but as a corporation subsisting by a grant from higher authority, to the control of that authority they still continue subject.

Considering this, nothing can be more plain, than that the supreme power in England has a legal right of laying any tax upon them for any end beneficial to the whole empire.

2. But you object, "It is the privilege of a freeman and an Englishman to be taxed only by his own consent. And this consent is given for every man by his representatives in Parliament. But we have no representatives in Parliament. Therefore we ought not to be taxed thereby."

I answer, This argument proves too much. If the Parliament cannot tax you because you have no representation therein, for the same reason it can make no laws to bind you. If a freeman cannot be taxed without his own consent, neither can he be punished without it; for whatever holds with regard to taxation, holds with regard to all other laws. Therefore he who denies the English Parliament the power of taxation, denies it the right of making any laws at all. But this power over the colonies you have never

disputed; you have always admitted statutes for the punishment of offenses, and for the preventing or redressing of inconveniencies; and the reception of any law draws after it, by a chain which cannot be broken, the necessity of admitting taxation.

3. But I object to the very foundation of your plea: That “every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented:” As confidently as it has been asserted, it is absolutely false. In wide-extended dominions, a very small part of the people are concerned in making laws. This, as all public business, must be done by delegation; the delegates are chosen by a select number. And those that are not electors, who are far the greater part, stand by, idle and helpless spectators.

The case of electors is little better. When they are near equally divided, in the choice of their delegates to represent them in the Parliament or National Assembly, almost half of them must be governed, not only without, but even against, their own consent.

And how has any man consented to those laws which were made before he was born? Our consent to these, nay, and to the laws now made even in England, is purely passive. And in every place, as all men are born the subjects of some state or other, so they are born, passively, as it were, consenting to the laws of that state. Any other than this kind of consent, the condition of civil life does not allow.

4. But you say, you “are entitled to life, liberty, and property by nature; and that you have never ceded to any sovereign power the right to dispose of these without your consent.”

While you speak as the naked sons of nature, this is certainly true. But you presently declare, “Our ancestors, at the time they settled these colonies, were entitled to all the rights of natural-born subjects within the realm of England.” This likewise is true; but when this is granted, the boast of original rights is at an end. You are no longer in a state of nature, but sink down into colonists, governed by a charter. If your ancestors were subjects, they acknowledged a Sovereign; if they had a right to English privileges, they were accountable to English laws, and had ceded to the

King and Parliament the power of disposing, without their consent, of both their lives, liberties, and properties. And did the Parliament cede to them a dispensation from the obedience which they owe as natural subjects? or any degree of independence, not enjoyed by other Englishmen?

5. “They did not” indeed, as you observe, “by emigration forfeit any of those privileges; but they were, and their descendants now are, entitled to all such as their circumstances enable them to enjoy.”

That they who form a colony by a lawful charter, forfeit no privilege thereby, is certain. But what they do not forfeit by any judicial sentence, they may lose by natural effects. When a man voluntarily comes into America, he may lose what he had when in Europe. Perhaps he had a right to vote for a knight or burgess; by crossing the sea he did not forfeit this right. But it is plain, he has made the exercise of it no longer possible. He has reduced himself from a voter to one of the innumerable multitude that have no votes.

6. But you say, “As the colonies are not represented in the British Parliament, they are entitled to a free power of legislation. For they inherit all the right which their ancestors had of enjoying all the privileges of Englishmen.”

They do inherit all the privileges which their ancestors had; but they can inherit no more. Their ancestors left a country where the representatives of the people were elected by men particularly qualified, and where those who wanted that qualification were bound by the decisions of men whom they had not deputed. You are the descendants of men who either had no votes, or resigned them by emigration. You have therefore exactly what your ancestors left you; not a vote in making laws, nor in choosing legislators; but the happiness of being protected by laws, and the duty of obeying them.

What your ancestors did not bring with them, neither they nor their descendants have acquired. They have not, by abandoning their right in one legislature, acquired a right to constitute another; any more than the

multitudes in England who have no vote, have a right to erect a Parliament for themselves.

7. However, the “colonies have a right to all the privileges granted them by royal charters, or secured to them by provincial laws.”

The first clause is allowed: They have certainly a right to all the privileges granted them by royal charters; provided those privileges be consistent with the British Constitution. But as to the second there is a doubt: Provincial laws may grant privileges to individuals of the province; but surely no province can confer provincial privileges on itself! They have a right to all which the King has given them; but not to all which they have given themselves.

A corporation can no more assume to itself privileges which it had not before, than a man can, by his own act and deed, assume titles or dignities. The legislature of a colony may be compared to the vestry of a large parish, which may lay access on its inhabitants, but still regulated by the law, and which, whatever be its internal expenses, is still liable to taxes laid by superior authority.

8. But whereas I formerly allowed, “If there is, in the charter of any colony, a clause exempting them from taxes for ever, then they have a right to be so exempted;” I allowed too much. For to say, that the King can grant an exemption from the power of Parliament, is saying in other words, that one branch of the legislature can grant away the power of the others. This is so far from being true, that if there is, in the charter of any colony, a clause exempting them from taxes for ever, yet, unless it were confirmed by an act of the whole Legislature, that clause is void in itself. The King (to use the phrase of the law) was “deceived in his grant,” as having given that which he had no right to bestow.

Of all these charters, then, it may be said, either they do contain such a clause, or they do not. If they do not, the plea of charter-exemption drops. If they do, although the charter itself stands good, yet that clause of it is null and void, as being contrary to the principles of the British Constitution.

9. Give me leave to add a few words on this head: The following acts show clearly, that, from the Restoration, the colonies were considered as part of the realm of England, in point of taxation, as well as everything else: —

25th Charles II., chap. 7, expressly relates to the colonies, and lays several specific duties on commodities exported from the plantations.

9th Anne, chap. 10, orders a revenue to be raised in America from the post office.

9th Anne, chap. 27, lays a duty on several goods imported into America.

3rd George II., chap. 28, lays a duty on all rice exported from Carolina to the South of Cape Finisterre.

8th George II., chap. 19, extends the same to Georgia.

6th George II., chap. 13, lays several duties on rum, sugar, and molasses imported into North America.

10. All that impartially consider what has been observed, must readily allow that the English Parliament has an undoubted right to tax all the English colonies.

But whence then is all this hurry and tumult? Why is America all in an uproar? If you can yet give yourselves time to think, you will see the plain case is this: —

A few years ago, you were assaulted by enemies, whom you were not well able to resist. You represented this to your mother-country, and desired her assistance. You was largely assisted, and by that means wholly delivered from all your enemies.

After a time, your mother-country, desiring to be reimbursed for some part of the large expense she had been at, laid a small tax (which she had always a right to do) on one of her colonies.

But how is it possible, that the taking this reasonable and legal step should have set all America in a flame?

I will tell you my opinion freely; and perhaps you will not think it improbable. I speak the more freely, because I am unbiased; I have nothing to hope or fear from either side. I gain nothing either by the Government or by the Americans, and probably never shall. And I have no prejudice to any man in America: I love you as my brethren and countrymen.

11. My opinion is this: We have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy. Whether they hate His present Majesty on any other ground than because he is a King, I know not. But they cordially hate his office, and have for some years been undermining it with all diligence, in hopes of erecting their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon its ruins. I believe they have let very few into their design; (although many forward it, without knowing anything of the matter;) but they are steadily pursuing it, as by various other means, so in particular by inflammatory papers, which are industriously and continually dispersed throughout the town and country; by this method they have already wrought thousands of the people even to the pitch of madness. By the same, only varied according to your circumstances, they have likewise inflamed America. I make no doubt but these very men are the original cause of the present breach between England and her colonies. And they are still pouring oil into the flame, studiously incensing each against the other, and opposing, under a variety of pretenses, all measures of accommodation. So that, although the Americans in general love the English, and the English in general love the Americans, (all, I mean, that are not yet cheated and exasperated by these artful men,) yet the rupture is growing wider every day, and none can tell where it will end.

These good men hope it will end in the total defection of North America from England. If this were effected, they trust the English in general would be so irreconcilably disgusted, that they should be able, with or without foreign assistance, entirely to overturn the Government; especially while the main of both the English and Irish forces are at so convenient a distance.

12. But, my brethren, would this be any advantage to you? Can you hope for a more desirable form of government, either in England or America, than that which you now enjoy? After all the vehement cry for liberty, what more liberty can you have? What more religious liberty can you desire, than that which you enjoy already? May not every one among you worship God according to his own conscience? What civil liberty can you desire, which you are not already possessed of? Do not you sit, without restraint, “every man under his own vines?” Do you not, every one, high or low, enjoy the fruit of your labor? This is real, rational liberty, such as is enjoyed by Englishmen alone; and not by other people in the habitable world. Would the being independent of England make you more free? Far, very far from it. It would hardly be possible for you to steer clear, between anarchy and tyranny. But suppose, after numberless dangers and mischiefs, you should settle into one or more republics, would a republican government give you more liberty, either religious or civil? By no means. No governments under heaven are so despotic as the republican; no subjects are governed in so arbitrary a manner as those of a commonwealth. If anyone doubt of this, let him look at the subjects of Venice, of Genoa, or even of Holland. Should any man talk or write of the Dutch Government, as every cobbler does of the English, he would be laid in irons before he knew where he was. And then, woe be to him! Republics show not mercy.

13. “But if we submit to one tax, more will follow.” Perhaps so, and perhaps not. But if they did; if you were taxed (which is quite improbable) equal with Ireland or Scotland, still, were you to prevent this, by renouncing connection with England, the remedy would be worse than the disease. For O! what convulsions must poor America feel, before any other Government was settled? Innumerable mischiefs must ensue, before any general form could be established. And the grand mischief would ensue when it was established; when you had received a yoke which you could not shake off.

14. Brethren, open your eyes! Come to yourselves! Be no longer the dupes of designing men! I do not mean any of your countrymen in America; I doubt whether any of these are in the secret. The designing

men, the Ahithophels, are in England; those who have laid their scheme so deep, and covered it so well, that thousands, who are ripening it, suspect nothing at all of the matter. These well-meaning men, sincerely believing that they are serving their country, exclaim against grievances, which either never existed, or are aggravated above measure; and thereby inflame the people more and more, to the wish of those who are behind the scene. But be not you duped any longer; do not ruin yourselves for them that owe you no goodwill, that now employ you only for their own purposes, and in the end will give you no thanks. They love neither England nor America, but play one against the other, in subserviency to their grand design of overturning the English Government. Be warned in time; stand and consider, before it is too late; before you have entailed confusion and misery on your latest posterity. Have pity upon your mother-country! Have pity upon your own! Have pity upon yourselves, upon your children, and upon all that are near and dear to you! Let us not bite and devour one another, lest we be consumed one of another! O let us follow after peace! Let us put away our sins! the real ground of all our calamities; which never will or can be thoroughly removed, till we fear God and honor the King!

A SERMON preached by Dr. Smith, in Philadelphia, has been lately reprinted in England. It has been much admired, but proceeds all along upon wrong suppositions. These are confuted in the preceding tract; yet I would just touch upon them again.

Dr. Smith supposes,

1. They have a right of granting their own money; that is, of being exempt from taxation by the supreme power. If they “contend for” this, they contend for neither more nor less than independence. Why then do they talk of their “rightful Sovereign?” They acknowledge no Sovereign at all.

That they contend for “the cause of liberty,” is another mistaken supposition. What liberty do you want, either civil or religious? You had the very same liberty we have in England. I say you *had*; but you have

now thrown away the substance, and retain only the shadow. You have no liberty, civil or religious, now, but what the Congress pleases to allow.

But you justly suppose, “We are by a plain original contract entitled to a community of privileges, with our brethren that reside in England, in every civil and religious respect.” (Page 19.) Most true. And till you appointed your new sovereigns, you enjoyed all those privileges. Indeed you had no vote for members of Parliament; neither have I, because I have no freehold in England. Yet the being taxed by the Parliament is no infringement either of my civil or religious liberty. And why have you no representatives in Parliament? Did you ever desire them?

But you say again, “No power on earth has a right to grant our property without our consent.” (Page 22.)

Then you have no Sovereign; for every Sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his subjects; that is, “to grant their property, with or without their consent.” Our Sovereign²⁰ has a right to tax me, and all other Englishmen, whether we have votes for Parliament-men or no.

Vainly, therefore, do you complain of “unconstitutional exactions, violated rights, and mutilated charters.” (Page 24.) Nothing is exacted but according to the original constitution both of England and her colonies. Your rights are no more violated than mine, when we are both taxed by the supreme power; and your charters are no more mutilated by this, than is the charter of the city of London.

Vainly do you complain of being “made slaves.” Am I or two millions of Englishmen made slaves because we are taxed without our own consent?

You may still “rejoice in the common rights of freemen.” I rejoice in all the rights of my ancestors. And every right which I enjoy is common to Englishmen and Americans.

But shall we “surrender any part of the privileges which we enjoy by the express terms of our colonization;” that is, of our charter? By no means; and none requires it of you. None desires to withhold anything that is

granted by the express terms of your charters. But remember! one of your first charters, that of Massachusetts Bay, says, in express terms, you are exempt from paying taxes to the King for seven years; plainly implying, that after those seven years you are to pay them like other subjects. And remember your last charter, that of Pennsylvania, says, in express terms, you are liable to taxation; yea, it objects against being taxed by the King, unless in connection with the Lords and Commons.

But “a people will resume,” you say, “the power which they never surrendered, except” — No need of any exception. They never surrendered it at all; they could not surrender it; for they never had it. I pray, did the people, unless you mean the Norman army, give William the Conqueror his power? And to which of his successors did the people of England (six or seven millions) give the sovereign power? This is mere political cant; words without meaning. I know but one instance in all history wherein the people gave the sovereign power to anyone: That was to Massaniello of Naples. And I desire any man living to produce another instance in the history of all nations.

Ten times over, in different words, you “profess yourselves to be contending for liberty.” But it is a vain, empty profession; unless you mean by that threadbare word, a liberty from obeying your rightful Sovereign, and from keeping the fundamental laws of your country. And this undoubtedly it is, which the confederated colonies are now contending for.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON LIBERTY.

OCCASIONED BY A LATE TRACT.

(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1776.)

1. IT was with great expectation that I read Dr. Price's "Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America;" and I was not disappointed. As the author is a person of uncommon abilities, so he has exerted them to the uttermost in the tract before us, which is certainly a masterpiece of its kind. He has said all that can be said upon the subject, and has digested it in the most accurate manner; and candor requires us to believe that he has wrote with an upright intention, with a real design to subserve the interest of mankind in general, as well as the subjects of the British Empire. But as the Doctor is a friend to liberty, so he can "think and let think." He does not desire that we should implicitly submit to the judgment, either of him or any other fallible man; and will not therefore be displeased at a few further observations on the same subject. That subject is,

2. The liberty which is now claimed by the confederate colonies in America. In order to understand this much controverted question, I would set aside everything not essential to it. I do not therefore now inquire, whether this or that measure be consistent with good policy; or, whether it is likely to be attended with good or ill success: I only want to know, is their claim right or wrong? Is it just or unjust?

3. What is it they claim? You answer, "Liberty." Nay, is it not independency? You reply: "That is all one; they do claim it, and they have a right to it."

To independency? That is the very question. To liberty they have an undoubted right; and they enjoy that right. (I mean, they did, till the late

unhappy commotions.) They enjoyed their liberty in as full a manner as I do, or any reasonable man can desire.

“What kind of liberty do they enjoy?” Here you puzzle the cause, by talking of physical and moral liberty. What you speak of both is exactly true, and beautifully expressed: But both physical and moral liberty are beside the present question; and the introducing them can answer no other end than to bewilder and confuse the reader. Therefore, to beg the reader “to keep these in his view,” is only begging him to look off the point in hand. You desire him, in order to understand this, to attend to something else! “Nay, I beg him to look straight forward; to mind this one thing; to fix his eye on that liberty, and that only, which is concerned in the present question: And all the liberty to which this question relates, is either religious or civil liberty.”

4. “Religious liberty is, a liberty to choose our own religion; to worship God according to our own conscience. Every man living, as a man, has a right to this, as he is a rational creature. The Creator gave him this right when He endowed him with understanding; and every man must judge for himself, because every man must give an account of himself to God. Consequently, this is an unalienable right: it is inseparable from humanity; and God did never give authority to any man, or number of men, to deprive any child of man thereof, under any color or pretense whatever.”
21

Now, who can deny that the colonies enjoy this liberty to the fullness of their wishes?

5. Civil liberty is a liberty to dispose of our lives, persons, and fortunes, according to our own choice, and the laws of our country.

I add, *according to the laws of our country*: For, although, if we violate these, we are liable to fines, imprisonment, or death; yet if, in other cases, we enjoy our life, liberty, and goods, undisturbed, we are free, to all reasonable intents and purposes.

Now, all this liberty the confederate colonies did enjoy, till part of them enslaved the rest of their countrymen; and all the loyal colonies do enjoy it at the present hour. None takes away their lives, or freedom, or goods; they enjoy them all quiet and undisturbed.

“But the King and Parliament can take them all away.” But they do not; and, till it is done, they are freemen. The supreme power of my country can take away either my religious or civil liberty; but, till they do, I am free in both respects: I am free now, whatever I may be by and by. Will any man face me down, I have no money now, because it may be taken from me tomorrow?

6. But the truth is, what they claim is not liberty; it is independency. They claim to be independent of England; no longer to own the English supremacy.

A while ago, they vehemently denied this; for matters were not then ripe: And I was severely censured for supposing they intended any such thing. But now the mask is thrown off: They frankly avow it; and Englishmen applaud them for so doing!

Nay, you will prove, that not only the colonies, but all mankind, have a right to it; yea, that independency is of the very essence of liberty; and that all who are not independent are slaves.

Nay, if all who are not independent are slaves, then there is no free nation in Europe; then all in every nation are slaves, except the supreme powers. All in France, for instance, except the King; all in Holland, except the Senate; yea, and these too; King and Senate both are slaves, if (as you say) they are dependent upon the people. So, if the people depend on their governors, and their governors on them, they are all slaves together.

Mere play with words. This is not what all the world means by liberty and slavery; therefore, to say, “If the Parliament taxes you without your consent, you are a slave,” is mere quibbling. Whoever talks thus, should say honestly, “Reader, I give you warning, I affix a new sense, not the common one, to these words, liberty and slavery.” Take the words in this

sense, and you may prove there are slaves enough in England, as well as America; but if we take them in the old, common sense, both the Americans and we are free men.

7. But you say, “The Parliament has already deprived them of one great branch of liberty, by enacting, that, in the cases there specified, they shall be tried in England.”

I answer, How grievously did they abuse that liberty before it was taken away! Let any fair man consider the case: How often have we heard of their quiet and peaceable submission to pay the duties by law established! And what a merit has been made of this by all their advocates! But it was a merit that never belonged to them; for the duties were not paid. All this time they did not, in fact, pay one-half, no, not a quarter, of those duties. They continually defrauded the King of the far greater part of them, without shame or fear. Indeed, what should they fear? They did not deign to do it privately, like their fellows in England; no, they acted openly in the face of the sun. Shiploads of tea, for instance, were brought into Boston harbor, and landed at noonday, without paying any duty at all. Who should hinder it? If a custom-house officer hindered, was it not at the peril of his life? And if, at any time, a seizure was made, and the cause came to be tried by a Boston jury, what would follow? It was no more than, “Ask your fellow, whether you are a thief.”

8. Permit me to mention one eminent instance: The famous Mr. John Hancock, some time since, brought into Boston a shipload of smuggled tea, at noonday. Just then came in the ships from London, laden with the same commodity, which, by the removal of the former tax, they were now enabled to sell cheaper than him. What could he now do *pro patria*? as Mr. Evans says; in plain English, not to lose by his cargo? All Europe knows what was done: “Some persons in disguise,” Dr. Price tells us, “buried the English tea in the sea.” It was not so commonly known who employed them, or paid them for their labor: To be sure, good Mr. Hancock knew no more of it than the child unborn!

9. Now, I desire to know of any reasonable man, what could the English Government do? No officer could seize the smuggled goods; or, if he did,

no jury would condemn the smuggler. There was therefore no possibility that the King should have his right, without taking some such step as was taken. There was not any alternative, but either to give up the customs altogether, (as the evil was increasing more and more,) or to try the offenders here; so that still they had as much liberty as their notorious offenses allowed.

With what justice, then, can this be urged as a violation of their liberty! “O!” cries the man in yon stone doublet, “Bondage! slavery! Help, Englishmen! I am deprived of my liberty!” Certainly you are; but first you deprived the man of his purse.

“What! Do you compare Mr. H. to a felon?” I do, in this respect: I compare every smuggler to a felon; a private smuggler to a sneaking felon, a pickpocket; a noonday smuggler, to a bold felon, a robber on the highway. And if a person of this undeniable character is made President of a Congress, I leave every man of sense to determine what is to be expected from them.

10. To return: As the colonies are free, with regard to their persons, so they are with regard to their goods. It is no objection that they pay out of them a tax, to which they did not previously consent. I am free; I use my money as I please, although I pay taxes out of it, which were fixed by law before I was born, and, consequently, without my consent; and indeed those taxes are so moderate, that neither they nor I have reason to complain.

“But if the Parliament tax you moderately now, it is possible they may, hereafter, tax you immoderately.” It is possible, but not probable; they never have done it yet: When they do, then complain.

We are not talking of what may be, but what is; and it cannot be denied, they are free (which is the present question) in all the three particulars which Judge Blackstone includes in civil liberty.

11. But liberty will not content either them or you. You now openly plead for independency, and aver that the colonies ought to be independent on England, to assert their own supremacy,

(1.) Because they are half as many as the English.

(2.) Because in a century they will be twice as many.

The argument runs thus: If the Americans are half as many as the English, then they have a right to be independent. But they are half as many; therefore, they have a right to be independent.

I deny the consequence in the first proposition: Number does not prove a right to independency. I deny the second proposition too: They are not half as many; even though you swell the number of the Americans as much as you diminish the number of the English.

I have been surprised lately, to observe many taking so much pains to extenuate the numbers of the inhabitants of England. For what end is this done? Is it to make us more respectable to our neighbors? or merely to weaken the hands of the King and ministry? I say the King and the ministry; for I lay no stress on their pompous professions of love and loyalty to the King: Just such professions did their predecessors make to King Charles, till they brought him to the block.

12. “But are they not half as many? Do not the confederated provinces contain three millions of souls?” I believe not. I believe they contain about two millions. But, allowing they did, I make no doubt but the English (beside three millions of Scots and Irish) are ten millions at this day.

“How can that be, when there are only six hundred thousand in London?” Believe it who can, I cannot believe there are so few as fifteen hundred thousand in London and its environs, allowing only two miles every way from the walls of the city.

“But we know there were no more than six hundred thousand, when the computation was made in the late reign; allowing that there were, at an average, five in each house.” They who make this allowance, probably fix their computation at their own fireside. They do not walk through every

part of the town, up to the garrets, and down to the cellars. I do; and by what I have seen with my own eyes, frequently fifteen, eighteen, or twenty in one house, I cannot believe there are fewer, at an average, than ten under one roof; and the same I believe of Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, and most other trading towns. Besides, how many thousand houses have been added to London within these thirty or forty years?

13. "But the people of England are continually decreasing." So it has been confidently affirmed; but it is a total mistake. I know the contrary, having an opportunity of seeing ten times more of England, every year, than most men in the nation. All our manufacturing towns, as Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, increase daily. So do very many villages all over the kingdom, even in the mountains of Derbyshire. And, in the meantime, exceeding few, either towns or villages, decrease.

And it is no wonder the people should increase, considering the amazing increase of trade which has been lately, not in London only, but much more in Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, and indeed all parts of the kingdom, which I have had the opportunity of observing. There was a considerable decay of trade before; but the tide is turned, and it now pours in abundantly. So greatly were our American friends mistaken, who hoped, by shutting up their ports, to ruin most of the manufacturers in England, and so starve us into compliance with their demands.

"However, in a century, the Americans will be twice as many as the English." That admits of a doubt; but when they are, then let them avail themselves of it.

14. "Nay, not only the Americans, but all men, have a right to be self-governed and independent." You mean, they had a right thereto, before any civil societies were formed. But when was that time, when no civil societies were formed? I doubt hardly since the flood; and, wherever such societies exist, no man is independent. Whoever is born in any civilized county is, so long as he continues therein, whether he chooses it or no, subject to the laws and to the supreme governors of that country. Whoever is born in England, France, or Holland, is subject to their

respective Governors; and “must needs be subject to the power, as to the ordinance of God, not only for wrath, but for conscience’ sake.” He has no right at all to be independent, or governed only by himself; but is in duty bound to be governed by the powers that be, according to the laws of the country. And he that is thus governed, not by himself but the laws, is, in the general sense of mankind, a free man; not that there ever existed any original compact between them and those Governors. But the want of this does not make him a slave, nor is any impeachment to his liberty; and yet this free man is, by virtue of those laws, liable to be deprived, in some cases of his goods; in others, of his personal freedom, or even of his life. And all this time he enjoys such a measure of liberty, as the condition of civilized nations allows; but no independency: That chimera is not found; no, not in the wilds of Africa or America.

Although, therefore, these subtle metaphysical pleas for universal independence appear beautiful in speculation, yet it never was, neither can be, reduced to practice. It is in vain to attempt it:

*Sensus moresque repugnant,
Atque ipsa utilitas, justi prope mater et aequi.* ²²

15. Let us, however, give a fair hearing to these pleas, as they are urged by this masterly writer; and it may be worthwhile to trace the matter to the foundation, surveying it part by part: —

“Any will, distinct from that of the majority of a community, which claims a power of making laws for it, produces servitude. This lays the line between liberty and slavery.” (Page 5.)

I must beg leave to stop you on the threshold. All this I totally deny; and require solid, rational proof of these assertions; for they are by no means self-evident.

“From what has been said, it is obvious, that all civil government, as far as it is free, is the creature of the people. It originates with them; it is conducted by their direction. In every free state, every man is his own legislator; all taxes are free gifts; all laws are established by common

consult. If laws are not made by common consent, a Government by them is slavery.” (Page 7.)

Here is a group of strong assertions. But how are they supported? “O! they are inferred from what has been said.” But what has been said, has as yet nothing to support it. If, then, these assertions stand at all, they stand by themselves. Let us try if they can. “All civil government, as far as it is free, is a creature of the people.” It is, if we allow your definition of freedom; that is, if we allow you to beg the question.

16. But before we can move a step further; I must beg you to define another of your terms. This is the more necessary, as it occurs again and again; and indeed the whole question turns upon it. What do you mean by *the people*? “All the members of a state?” So you express it, page 8. “All the individuals that compose it?” So you speak in the next page. Will you rather say with Judge Blackstone, “Every free agent?” or with Montesquieu, “Everyone that has a will of his own?” Fix upon which of these definitions you please, and then we may proceed.

If my argument has an odd appearance, yet let none think I am in jest. I am in great earnest. So I have need to be; for I am pleading the cause of my King and country; yea, of every country under heaven, where there is any regular Government. I am pleading against those principles that naturally tend to anarchy and confusion; that directly tend to unhinge all government, and overturn it from the foundation. But they are principles which are incumbered with such difficulties as the wisest man living cannot remove.

17. This premised, I ask, Who are the people that have a right to make and unmake their Governors? Are they “all the members of a state?” So you affirmed but now. Are they “all the individuals that compose it?” So you said quickly after. Will you rather say, “The people are every free agent?” or, “Everyone that has a will of his own?” Take which you will of these four definitions, and it necessarily includes all men, women, and children. Now, stand to your word. Have all men, women, and children, in a state, a right to make and unmake their Governors? They are all free agents, except infants; and even these have a will of their own. They all are “members of

the state;" they are, all and everyone, "the individuals that compose it." And had ever the people, as above defined by yourself, a right to make and unmake their Governors!

18. Setting Mr. Evans's witticisms aside, I seriously desire him, or Doctor Price, or any zealous assertor of the king-making right of our sovereign lords the people, to point out a single instance of their exerting this right in any age or nation. I except only the case of Thomas Aniello, (vulgarly called Massanello,) in the last century. Do not tell me, "There are many;" but point them out. I aver, I know of none. And I believe it will puzzle anyone living to name a second instance, either in ancient or modern history.

19. And by what right, (setting the Scriptures aside, on which you do not choose to rest the point,) by what right do you exclude women, any more than men, from choosing their own Governors? Are they not free agents, as well as men? I ask a serious question, and demand a serious answer. Have they not "a will of their own?" Are they not "members of the state?" Are they not part of "the individuals that compose it?" With what consistency, then, can any who assert the people, in the above sense, to be the origin of power, deny them the right of choosing their Governors, and "giving their suffrages by their representatives?"

"But do you desire or advise that they should do this?" Nay, I am out of the question. I do not ascribe these rights to the people; therefore, the difficulty affects not me; but, do you get over it how you can, without giving up your principle.

20. I ask a second question: By what right do you exclude men who have not lived one-and-twenty years from that "unalienable privilege of human nature," choosing their own Governors? Is not a man a free agent, though he has lived only twenty years, and ten or eleven months? Can you deny, that men from eighteen to twenty-one are "members of the state?" Can anyone doubt, whether they are a part of "the individuals that compose it?" Why then are not these permitted to "choose their Governors, and to give their suffrages by their representatives?" Let any who say these rights are inseparable from the people, get over this difficulty, if they can; not by

breaking an insipid jest on the occasion, but by giving a plain, sober, rational answer.

If it be said, “O, women and striplings have not wisdom enough to choose their own Governors;” I answer, Whether they have or no, both the one and the other have all the rights which are “inseparable from human nature.” Either, therefore, this right is not inseparable from human nature, or both women and striplings are partakers of it.

21. I ask a third question: By what authority do you exclude a vast majority of adults from choosing their own Governors, and giving their votes by their representatives, merely because they have not such an income; because they have not forty shillings a year? What, if they have not? Have they not the rights which, you say, belong to man as man? And are they not included in the people? Have they not a will of their own? Are they not free agents? Who then can, with either justice or equity, debar them from the exercise of their natural rights?

“O, but the laws of the land debar them from it.” Did they make those laws themselves? Did they consent to them, either in person or by their representatives, before they were enacted? “No; they were enacted by their forefathers long before they were born.” Then, what are they to them? You have assured us, that if men may give away their own liberty, they cannot give away the liberty of others, of their children or descendants. Nay, you have told us, that no man has a right to give away his own liberty; that it is unalienable from the nature of every child of man. Never, therefore, patronize those iniquitous laws. No; if you are a lover of liberty, an enemy to slavery and oppression, exhort them to shake off this servile yoke.

22. To set this whole matter in another light, I beg leave to repeat the sum of a small tract lately published.²³ Have not the people, in every age and nation, the right to dispose of the supreme power; of investing therewith whom they please, and upon what conditions they see good? Consequently, if those conditions are not observed, they have a right to take it away. To prove this, it is argued, “All men living are naturally equal; none is above another; and all are naturally free masters of their own

actions; therefore, no man can have any power over another, but by his own consent; therefore, the power which any Governors enjoy, must be originally derived from the people, and presupposes an original compact between them and their first Governors.”

23. But, who are the people? Are they every man, woman, and child? Why not? Is it not one fundamental principle, that “all persons living are naturally equal; that all human creatures are naturally free; masters of their own actions; that none can have any power over them, but by their own consent?” Why, then, should not every man, woman, and child, have a voice in placing their Governors, in fixing the measure of their power, and the conditions on which it is entrusted? And why should not everyone have a voice in displacing them too? Surely they that gave the power have a right to take it away. By what argument do you prove, that women are not naturally as free as men? And if they are, why have they not as good a right to choose their Governors? Who can have any power over free, rational creatures, but by their own consent? And are they not free by nature as well as we? Are they not rational creatures?

24. But suppose we exclude women from using their natural right, by might overcoming right, what pretense have we for excluding men like ourselves, barely because they have not lived one-and-twenty years? “Why, they have not wisdom or experience to judge of the qualifications necessary for Governors.” I answer,

- (1.) Who has? how many of the voters in Great Britain? one in twenty? one in an hundred? If you exclude all who have not this wisdom, you will leave few behind. But,
- (2.) Wisdom and experience are nothing to the purpose. You have put the matter upon another issue. Are they men? That is enough. Are they human creatures? Then they have a right to choose their own Governors; an indefeasible right; a right inherent, inseparable from human nature. “But in England they are excluded by law.” Did they consent to the making of that law? If not, by your original supposition, it can have no power over them. I therefore utterly deny that we can, consistently with that supposition, exclude either women or minors from choosing their own Governors.

25. But, suppose we exclude these by main force; are all that remain, all men of full age, the people? Are all males, then, that have lived one-and-twenty years, allowed to choose their own Governors? Not in England, unless they are freeholders, and have forty shillings a year. Worse and worse! After depriving half the human species of their natural right for want of a beard; after having deprived myriads more for want of a stiff beard, for not having lived one-and-twenty years; you rob others, many hundred thousands, of their birthright for want of money! Yet not altogether on this account neither; if so, it might be more tolerable. But here is an Englishman who has money enough to buy the estates of fifty freeholders, and yet he must not be numbered among the people, because he has not two or three acres of land! How is this? By what right do you exclude a man from being one of the people, because he has not forty shillings a year; yea, or not a groat? Is he not a man, whether he be rich or poor? Has he not a soul and a body? Has he not the nature of a man; consequently, all the rights of a man, all that flow from human nature; and, among the rest, that of not being controlled by any but by his own consent?

“But he that has not a freehold is excluded by law.” By a law of his own making? Did he consent to the making of it? If he did not, what is that law to him? No man, you aver, has any power over another, but by his own consent: Of consequence, a law made without his consent is, with regard to him, null and void. You cannot say otherwise, without destroying the supposition, that “none can be governed but by his own consent.”

26. See now to what your argument comes. You affirm, all power is derived from the people; and presently exclude one-half of the people from having any part or lot in the matter. At another stroke, suppose England to contain eight millions of people, you exclude one or two millions more. At a third, suppose two millions left, you exclude three-fourths of these; and the poor pittance that remains, by I know not what figure of speech, you call the people of England!

27. Hitherto we have endeavored to view this point in the mere light of reason; and, even by this, it appears, that this supposition, which has been

palmed upon us as undeniable, is not only false, not only contrary to reason, but contradictory to itself; the very men who are most positive that the people are the source of power, being brought into an inexplicable difficulty, by that single question, "Who are the people?" reduced to a necessity of either giving up the point, or owning that by *the people*, they mean scarce a tenth part of them.

28. But we need not rest the matter entirely on reasoning. Let us appeal to matter of fact; and, because we cannot have so clear a prospect of what is at a distance, let us only take a view of what has been in our own country. I ask, then, When did the people of England (suppose you mean by that word only half a million of them) choose their own Governors? Did they choose (to go no further) William the Conqueror? Did they choose King Stephen or King John? As to those who regularly succeeded their fathers, the people are out of the question. Did they choose Henry the Fourth, Edward the Fourth, or Henry the Seventh? Who will be so hardy as to affirm it? Did the people of England, or but fifty thousand of them, choose Queen Mary, or Queen Elizabeth, or King James the First? Perhaps you will say, "If the people did not give King Charles the supreme power at least they took it away." No; the people of England no more took away his power, than they cut off his head. "Yes; the Parliament did, and they are the people." No; the Parliament did not: The House of Commons is not the Parliament, any more than it is the nation. Neither were those who then sat the House of Commons; no, nor one quarter of them. But, suppose they had been the whole House of Commons, yea, or the whole Parliament, by what rule of logic will you prove that seven or eight hundred persons are the people of England? "Why, they are the delegates of the people; they are chosen by them." No, not by one-half, not by a quarter, not by a tenth part of them: So that the people, in the only proper sense of the word, were innocent of the whole affair.

29. "But you will allow, the people gave the supreme power to King Charles the Second at the Restoration." I will allow no such thing, unless, by the people, you mean General Monk and ten thousand soldiers. "However, you will not deny that the people gave the power to King William at the Revolution." I will; the Convention were not the people, neither elected by them: So that still we have not a single instance, in

above seven hundred years, of the people of England's conveying the supreme power either to one or more persons.

30. So much both for reason and matter of fact. But one single consideration will bring the question to a short issue. It is allowed, no man can dispose of another's life, but by his own consent: I add, No, nor with his consent; for no man has a right to dispose of his own life: The Creator of man has the sole right to take the life which he gave. Now, it is an indisputable truth, *Nihil dat quod non habet*, — “None gives what he has not.” It follows, that no man can give to another a right which he never had himself; a right which only the Governor of the world has, even the wiser Heathens being judges; but which no man upon the face of the earth either has or can have. No man, therefore, can give the power of the sword, any such power as gives a right to take away life: Wherever it is, it must descend from God alone, the sole disposer of life and death.

31. The supposition, then, that the people are the origin of power, or that “all government is the creature of the people,” though Mr. Locke himself should attempt to defend it, is utterly indefensible. It is absolutely overturned by the very principle on which it is supposed to stand, namely, that “a right of choosing his Governors belongs to every partaker of human nature.” If this be so, then it belongs to every individual of the human species; consequently, not to freeholders alone, but to all men; not to men only, but to women also; not only to adult men and women, to those who have lived one-and-twenty years, but to those that have lived eighteen or twenty, as well as those who have lived threescore. But none did ever maintain this, nor probably ever will; therefore, this boasted principle falls to the ground, and the whole superstructure with it. So common sense brings us back to the grand truth, “There is no power but of God.”

32. I may now venture to “pronounce, that the principles on which you have argued, are incompatible with practice,” even the universal practice of mankind, as well as with sound reason; and it is no wonder “that they are not approved by our Governors,” considering their natural tendency, which is, to unhinge all Government, and to plunge every nation into total anarchy.

This, in truth, is the tendency of the whole book; a few passages of which I shall now recite, begging leave to make a few remarks upon them. But I must ask the reader's pardon, if I frequently say the same thing more than once; for, otherwise, I could not follow the author.

33. "All the members of a state" (which necessarily include all the men, women, and children) "may entrust the powers of legislation with any number of delegates, subject to such restrictions as they think necessary." (Page 8.) This is "incompatible with practice." It never was done from the beginning of the world; it never can; it is flatly impossible in the nature of the thing. "And thus, all the individuals that compose a great state partake of the powers of legislation and government." *All the individuals!* Mere Quixotism! Where does that state exist? Not under the canopy of heaven. "In this case, a state is still free," (but this case has no being,) "if the representatives are chosen by the unbiased voices of the majority." Hold! this is quite another case; you now shuffle in a new term: The *majority* we were not talking of, but *all the members* of a state. The majority are not *all the individuals* that compose it; and pray, how came the minority to be deprived of those rights, which you say are "unalienable from human nature?" — "But we disguise slavery, keeping up the form of liberty, when the reality is lost." It is not lost; I now enjoy all the real liberty I can desire, civil as well as religious. The liberty you talk of was never found; it never existed yet. But what does all this lead to, but to stir up all the inhabitants of Great Britain against the Government?

34. To inflame them still more, you go on: "Liberty is more or less complete, according as the people have more or less share in the Government." This is altogether contrary to matter of fact: The greater share the people have in the Government, the less liberty, either civil or religious, does the nation in general enjoy. Accordingly, there is most liberty of all, civil and religious, under a limited monarchy; there is usually less under an aristocracy, and least of all under a democracy. What sentences then are these: "To be guided by one's own will, is freedom; to be guided by the will of another, is slavery?" (Page 11.) This is the very quintessence of republicanism; but it is a little too bare-faced; for, if this is true, how free are all the devils in hell, seeing they are all guided by their

own will! And what slaves are all the angels in heaven, since they are all guided by the will of another! See another stroke: “The people have power to model Government as they please.” (Page 12.) What an admirable lesson, to confirm the people in their loyalty to the Government! Yet again: “Government is a trust, and all its powers a delegation.” (Page 15.) It is a trust, but not from the people: “There is no power but of God.” It is a delegation, namely, from God; for “rulers are God’s ministers,” or delegates.

35. How irreconcilable with this are your principles! Concerning our Governors in England, you teach, “A Parliament forfeits its authority by accepting bribes.” If it does, I doubt all the Parliaments in this century, having accepted them more or less, have thereby forfeited their authority, and, consequently, were no Parliaments at all: It follows, that the Acts which they enacted were no laws; and what a floodgate would this open! You teach further: “If Parliaments contradict their trust,” (of which the people are to judge,) “they dissolve themselves.” And certainly, a Parliament dissolved is no Parliament at all. And seeing “a state that submits to such a breach is enslaved,” what should the people do? Knock them on the head, to be sure. And who can doubt, but they have an unalienable power so to do, seeing “Government was instituted for the people’s sake, and theirs is the only real omnipotence.” (Page 16.)

36. And, lest your meaning should not yet be plain enough, you conclude this article thus: “These reflections should be constantly present to every mind in this country. There is nothing that requires to be more watched than power; there is nothing that ought to be opposed with a more determined resolution than its encroachments. The people of this kingdom were once warmed with such sentiments as these.” Exactly such, in the glorious days of Watt the Tyler, and of Oliver Cromwell. “Often have they fought and bled in the cause of liberty; but that time seems to be going.” Glory be to God, it is not going, but gone. O may it never return! “The fair inheritance of liberty, left us by our ancestors, we are not unwilling to resign.” We are totally unwilling to resign either our civil or religious liberty; and both of these we enjoy in a far greater measure than ever our ancestors did. Nay, they did not enjoy either one or the other, from the time of William the Conqueror till the Revolution. “Should any

events arise,” (and you give very broad intimations that they have arisen already,) “which should render the same supposition necessary that took place in the time of King Charles the First,” — the same opposition which made the land a field of blood, set every man’s sword against his brother, overturned the whole constitution, and cut off, first, the flower of the nation, and then the King himself, — “I am afraid all that is valuable to us would be lost: The terror of the standing army would deaden all zeal,” for these noble exploits, “and produce a general servitude.” (Page 18.)

37. What a natural tendency has all this, to instill into the good people of England the most determined rancor and bitterness against their Governors, against the King and Parliament! And what a natural tendency has all that follows to instill the same both into the English and the Americans! On these passages also, I shall beg leave to subjoin a few short observations: —

“A country that is subject to the legislature of another country, in which it has no voice, and over which it has no control, is in slavery.” This is palpably false. Take one instance out of many: Pennsylvania was subject (till now) to the legislature of England, in which it had no voice, and over which it had no control; yet it never was in slavery; it never wanted either civil or religious liberty; nay, perhaps it was more free in both respects than any other country in the universe. “In a country thus subjugated to another,” (a very improper, as well as invidious word,) “there is little or nothing to check rapacity.” If you mean the rapacity of the English Government, the insinuation is cruelly false; it never existed; no such rapacity was ever exercised. “And the most flagrant injustice and cruelty may be practiced without remorse or pity.” (Page 20.) This is purely calculated to inflame; for no such injustice or cruelty was ever practiced, nor was ever likely to be, either in this or any other province of America. That which follows is a curious sentiment indeed; I know not that ever I met with it before: “The government of one country over another” (suppose of England over North America, or over the West Indian islands) “cannot be supported but by a military force. This is a state of oppression no country could submit to, an hour, without an armed force to compel them.” (Page 23.) Was ever anything more palpably false! The English Government, both in the islands and North America, is the government of

one country over another; but it has needed no armed force to support it for above these hundred years: And this Government which you would persuade them is oppressive, all the colonies did not only submit to, but rejoice in, without any armed force to compel them. They knew, and felt, they were not oppressed; but enjoyed all the liberty, civil and religious, which they could desire.

38. We come now to more matter entirely new: “No country can lawfully surrender their liberty, by giving up the power of legislating for themselves, to any extraneous jurisdiction; such a cession, being inconsistent with the unalienable rights of human nature, would either not bind at all, or bind only the individuals that made it.” (Page 25.) This is a home thrust. If this be so, all the English claim either to Ireland, Scotland, or America, falls at once. But can we admit this without any proof? Ought assertions to pass for arguments? If they will, here are more of the same kind: “No one generation can give up this for another.” That is, the English settlers in America could not “give up their power of legislating for themselves.” True, they could not give up what they never had. But they never had, either before or after they left England, any such power of making laws for themselves as exempted them from the King and Parliament; they never pretended to any such power till now; they never advanced any such claim; nay, when this was laid to their charge, they vehemently denied it, as an absolute slander. But you go further still: “When this power” (of independency) “is lost, the people have always a right to resume it.” Comfortable doctrine indeed! perfectly well-calculated for the support of civil government!

39. To the same good end, you observe: “Without an equal representation of all that are governed, government becomes complete tyranny.” (Page 27.) Now, you had told us before, “There is not such an equal representation in England:” It follows, “The English Government is complete tyranny!” We have, however, the comfort to know that it never was any better since the Parliament subsisted. For who can say that there ever was an equal representation since the conquest? We know further, that we have only neighbor’s fare; for we cannot find there is any nation in Europe, no, nor in the habitable world, where the Government is not as complete tyranny as our own; we find none wherein there is “an equal

representation of all that are governed.” But will any man affirm, in cool blood, that the English Government is “complete tyranny?” We have certainly enjoyed more complete liberty since the Revolution, than England ever enjoyed before; and the English Government, unequal as the representation is, has been admired by all impartial foreigners.

40. “But the sword is now to determine our rights: Detested be the measures which have brought us to this.” (Page 33.) I once thought those measures had been originally concerted in our own kingdom; but I am now persuaded they were not. I allow that the Americans were strongly exhorted by letters from England, “never to yield or lay down their arms till they had their own terms, which the Government would be constrained to give them in a short time:” But those measures were concerted long before this; long before either the Tea Act or the Stamp Act existed; only they were not digested into form, — that was reserved for the good Congress. Forty years ago, when my brother was in Boston, it was the general language there, “We must shake off the yoke; we never shall be a free people till we shake off the English yoke.” These, you see, were even then for “trying the question,” just as you are now; “not by charters,” but by what you call, “the general principles of liberty.” And the late Acts of Parliament were not the cause of what they have since done, but barely the occasion they laid hold on.

41. But “a late Act declares that this kingdom has power to make statutes to bind the colonies in all cases whatever! Dreadful power indeed! I defy anyone to express slavery in stronger terms.” (Page 34.) *In all cases whatever!* What is there peculiar in this? Certainly, in all cases, or in none. And has not every supreme Governor this power? This the English Parliament always had, and always exercised, from the first settlement of the American colonies. But it was not explicitly declared, because it was never controverted. The dreadfulness of it was never thought of for above an hundred years; nor is it easy to discern where that dreadfulness lies. Wherein does it consist? The Parliament has power to make statutes, which bind Englishmen likewise, in all cases whatever. And what then? Why, you say, “I defy anyone to express slavery in stronger terms.” I think I can “express slavery in stronger terms.” Let the world judge between us. Slavery is a state wherein neither a man’s goods, nor liberty,

nor life, are at his own disposal. Such is the state of a thousand, of ten thousand, Negroes in the American colonies. And are their masters in the same state with them? in just the same slavery with the Negroes? Have they no more disposal of their own goods, or liberty, or lives? Does anyone beat or imprison them at pleasure; or take away their wives, or children, or lives; or sell them like cows or horses? This is slavery; and will you face us down that the Americans are in such slavery as this? You answer, Yes, with regard to their goods; for the English Parliament “leaves them nothing that they can call their own.” (Page 35.) Amazing! Have they not houses, and lands, and money, and goods of every kind, which they call their own? And did they not enjoy, a few years since, complete liberty, both civil and religious, instead of being bound to hard labor, smarting under the lash, groaning in a dungeon, perhaps murdered, or stabbed, or roasted alive, at their masters’ pleasure?

42. But, “did not their charters promise them all the enjoyment of all the rights of Englishmen?” (Page 40.) They did; and they have accordingly enjoyed all the rights of Englishmen from the beginning. “And allow them to tax themselves?” Never so as to exempt them from being taxed by Parliament. It is evident from the Acts of Parliament now in being, that this was never granted, and never claimed till now: On the contrary, the English Government has ever claimed the right of taxing them, even in virtue of those very charters. But you ask, “Can there be an Englishman who would not sooner lose his heart’s blood, than yield to such claims?” (Page 47.) A decent question for a subject of England to ask! Just of a piece with your assertions, that “our constitution is almost lost;” that the claims of the Crown have “stabbed our liberty;” and that “a free Government loses its nature, the moment it becomes liable to be commanded by any superior power.” (Page 49.) *From the moment it becomes liable!* This is not the case with the colonies; they do not become liable to be commanded by the King and Parliament; they always were so, from their first institution.

43. “The fundamental principle of our Government is, the right of the people to grant their own money.” No; if you understand the word people, according to your own definition, for all the individuals that compose the state, this is not the fundamental principle of our

Government, nor any principle of it at all. It is not the principle even of the Government of Holland, nor of any Government in Europe. "It was an attempt to encroach upon this right in a trifling instance, that produced the civil war in the reign of King Charles the First." O no! it was the actual encroaching, not on this right only, but on the religious as well as civil rights of the subject; and that, not in one trifling instance only, but in a thousand instances of the highest importance. "Therefore, this is a war undertaken, not only against our own constitution, but on purpose to destroy other similar constitutions in America, and to substitute in their room a military force." (Page 50.) Is it possible that a man of sense should believe this? Did the King and Parliament undertake this war, on purpose to overturn a castle in the air, to destroy a constitution that never existed? Or is this said purely *ad movendam invidiam*, "to inflame the minds of the people?" I would rather impute it to the power of prejudice; as also the following wonderful sentence: "How horrid, to Sheathe our swords in the bowels of our brethren, for no other end than to make them acknowledge our supremacy!" Yes, for this end, — to make them lay down their arms, which they have taken up against their lawful Sovereign; to make them restore what they have illegally and violently taken from their fellow-subjects; to make them repair the cruel wrongs they have done them, as far as the nature of the thing will admit, and to make them allow to all that civil and religious liberty whereof they have at present deprived them. These are the ends for which our Government has very unwillingly undertaken this war, after having tried all the methods they could devise to secure them without violence.

44. Having considered the justice, you come now to consider the policy, of this war. "In the last reigns, the colonies, foregoing every advantage which they might derive from trading with foreign nations, consented to send only to us, whatever it was for our interest to receive from them; and to receive only from us, whatever it was for our interest to send them." (Page 67.) They *consented to do this!* No! they only pretended to do it; it was a mere copy of their countenance. They never did, in fact, abstain from trading with other nations, Holland and France in particular. They never did, at least for forty years past, conform to the Act of Navigation. They did not send only to us what we wanted, or receive only from us what they wanted. What I did they not "allow us to regulate their trade in any

manner which we thought best?" (Page 68.) No such thing. They only allowed us to make laws to regulate their trade. But they observed them as they thought best; sometimes a little, sometimes not at all. "They fought our battles with us." Certainly we fought theirs: And we have sad reason to remember it; for had Canada remained in the hands of the French, they would have been quiet subjects still.

45. "But what calamities must follow" from this impolitic war! I see "the empire dismembered." (Page 73.) If it be, that is not the consequence of the war, but rather the cause of it. "The blood of thousands shed" (it is not yet; perhaps it never may) "in an unrighteous quarrel." Doubtless unrighteous on their part, who revolt from their lawful Sovereign; and therefore whatever blood is shed will lie at their door. "Our strength exhausted." No, not yet; as they that try may find to their cost. "Our merchants breaking." But far more before the war than since. "Our manufacturers starving." I pray, where? I cannot find them: Not in London, in Bristol, in Birmingham, in Manchester, in Liverpool, Leeds, or Sheffield; nor anywhere else, that I know; and I am well acquainted with most of the manufacturing towns in England. "The funds tottering." Then the stocks must sink very low: But that is not the case. "And the miseries of a public bankruptcy impending." Just as they have done these hundred years. Fifty years ago I used to be much alarmed at things of this kind. When I heard a doleful prophecy of him impending on the nation, I really imagined something would follow. Nay, nothing in the world: These predictions are mere *brutum fulmen*; thunder without lightning.

46. Now for a little more of this fine painting! But, remember! it is not drawn from the life. "A nation once the protector of liberty in distant countries, endeavoring to reduce its own brethren to servitude." Say, to lay down the arms which they have taken up against their King and country. "Insisting upon such a supremacy over them as would leave them nothing they could call their own." (Page 89.) Yes; the supremacy insisted on would leave them all the liberty, civil and religious, which they have had from their first settlement. You next compare them to the brave Corsicans, taking arms against the Genoese. But the Corsicans were not colonies from Genoa: Therefore, there is nothing similar in the case. Neither in that you next quote, the case of Holland. You say, Yes: "The United Provinces of

Holland were once subject to the Spaniards; But, being provoked by the violation of their charters, they were driven to that resistance which we and all the world have ever since admired.” (Page 90.) *Provoked by the violation of their charters!* yea, by the total subversion both of their religious and civil liberties; the taking away their goods, imprisoning their persons, and shedding their blood like water, without the least color of right, yea, without the very form of law; insomuch that the Spanish Governor, the Duke of Alva, made his open boast, that “in five years he had caused upwards of eighteen thousand persons to fall by the hands of the common hangman.” I pray, what has this to do with America? Add to this that the Hollanders were not colonies from Spain, but an independent people, who had the same right to govern Spain, as the Spaniards to govern Holland.

47. As another parallel case, you bring the war of the Romans with the allied states of Italy. But neither is this case parallel at all; for those states were not colonies of Rome, (although some colonies were scattered up and down among them,) but original, independent states, before Rome itself had a being. Were it then true that “every Briton must approve the conduct of those allies,” (page 91,) it would not follow, that they must approve the conduct of the Americans; or that “we ought to declare our applause, and say, We admire your spirit; it is the spirit that has more than once saved us.” We cannot applaud the spirit of those who usurp an illegal authority over their countrymen; who rob them of their substance, who outrage their persons, who leave them neither civil nor religious liberty; and who, to crown all, take up arms against their King and mother-country, and prohibit all intercourse with them.

48. See an argument of a different kind: “The laws and religion of France were established in Canada, on purpose to bring up thence an army of French Papists.” (Page 94.) What proof have you, what tittle or shadow of proof, for this strange assertion, that the laws and religion which they had before in Canada were established on purpose to bring an army thence? It is manifest to every impartial man, that this was done for a nobler purpose. Every nation, you allow, has a natural liberty to enjoy their own laws, and their own religions: So have the French in Canada; and we have no right to deprive them of this liberty. Our Parliament never desired,

never intended, to deprive them of this; (so far were they from any intention of depriving their own countrymen of it!) and on purpose to deliver them from any apprehension of so grievous an evil, they generously and nobly gave them a legal security, that it should not be taken from them. And is this (one of the best things our Parliament ever did) improved into an accusation against them? “But our laws and religion are better than theirs.” Unquestionably they are; but this gives us no right to impose the one or the other, even on a conquered nation. What if we had conquered France, ought we not still to have allowed them their own laws and religion? Yea, if the Russians had conquered Constantinople, or the whole Ottoman empire, ought they not to have allowed to all they conquered, both their own religion and their own laws; nay, and to have given them, not a precarious toleration, but a legal security for both?

49. “But the wild Indians, and their own slaves, have been instigated to attack them.” I doubt the fact. What proof is there of this, either with regard to the Indians or the Negroes? “And attempts have been made to gain the assistance of a large body of Russians.” Another hearty assertion, which many will swallow, without ever asking for proof: In truth, had any such attempts been made, they would not have proved ineffectual. Very small pay will induce a body of Russians to go wherever they hope for good plunder. It might just as well have been said, “Attempts were made to procure a large body of Tartars.”

50. Now for a little more encouragement to your good friends and allies in America: “The utmost force we can employ does not exceed thirty thousand men to conquer half a million of determined men, fighting for that sacred blessing of liberty, without which man is a beast, and government a curse.” (Page 95.) I am not sure that our utmost force is either thirty, or forty, or fifty, thousand men. But are you sure, that “half a million, at least, are determined to fight” against them? Yes: For “a quarter of the inhabitants of every country are fighting men; and the colonies consist of two millions.” Here are several points which are not quite clear. I doubt,

- (1.) Whether those colonies contain two millions. I doubt,
- (2.) Whether a quarter of the inhabitants of any country are fighting men: We usually reckon a sixth part. I doubt,

- (3.) Whether a quarter of the American fighting men, are determined to fight in so bad a cause; to fight, not for liberty, which they have long enjoyed, but for independency. Will you affirm, that “without this, man is a beast, and government a curse?” Then, show me where man is not a beast, and where government is not a curse.

51. But you give them more encouragement still: “In the Netherlands, a few states thus circumstanced withstood the whole force of the Spanish monarchy; and, at last, emancipated themselves from its tyranny.” (*Ibid.*) *Thus circumstanced!* No; they were in wholly different circumstances; they were cruelly and wantonly oppressed; they were robbed both of civil and religious liberty; they were slaughtered all the day long; and, during the contest, which was really for liberty, they were assisted by the German Princes, by England, and by France itself. But “what can thirty thousand men do, when they are to be fed from hence?” (Page 96.) Do you think they will stand with their finger in their eye? If they cannot find food at land, (which would be strange,) the seas and rivers are open. “Their maritime towns they are resolved to burn themselves.” They will think twice, before they execute that resolution. “As to their trade, the loss of it will do them unspeakable good.” Will it indeed? Then let them acknowledge their benefactors. “They rejoice particularly in the last restraining Act: This will furnish them with a reason for confiscating the estates of all the friends of our Government among them.” (Page 97.) *A reason!* All the friends of our Government are infinitely obliged to you for suggesting this to them, who are full ready to improve any hint of the kind; and it will be no wonder if they soon use these enemies of their country as the Irish did the Protestants in 1641.

52. “One consideration more. From one end of America to the other, they are fasting and praying: But what are we doing? Ridiculing them as fanatics, and scoffing at religion.” This certainly is the case with many; but God forbid it should be the case with all! There are thousands in England (I believe full as many, if not many more than in America) who are daily wrestling with God in prayer for a blessing upon their King and country; and many join fasting therewith; which, if it were publicly enjoined, would be no scandal to our nation. Are they “animated by piety?” So are we;

although “not unto us be the praise.” “But can we declare, in the face of the sun, that we are not aggressors in this war?” We can. “And that we mean not, by it, to acquire dominion or empire, or to gratify resentment?” (Page 99:) I humbly believe, both the King and his Ministers can declare this before God: “But solely to gain reparation for injury,” from men who have already plundered very many of His Majesty’s loyal subjects, and killed no small number of them.

53. You now proceed to answer objections; and mention, as the First, “Are they not our subjects?” You answer: “They are not your subjects; they are your fellow-subjects.” Are they indeed? Do you affirm this? Then you give up the whole question; then their independence, which you have so vehemently maintained, falls to the ground at once.

A Second objection, you say, is this: “But we are taxd; why should not they?” You answer: “You are taxd by yourselves; they insist on the same privilege.” I reply, They are now taxd by themselves, in the very same sense that nine-tenths of us are. We have not only no vote in the Parliament, but none in electing the members: Yet Mr. Evans says, “We are virtually represented:” And if we are, so are the Americans. You add: “They help you to pay your taxes, by giving you a monopoly of their trade.” They consented, as you observed before, to do this; but they have not done it for many years: They have, in fact, traded to Holland, to France, to Spain, and everywhere they could. And how have they helped us, by purchasing our manufactures? Take one instance out of a thousand: They have taken large quantities of our earthenware, for which they regularly required three years’ credit. These they sold to the Spaniards, at a very advanced price, and for ready money only. And did they not hereby help themselves, at least, as much as they helped us? And what have we lost by losing their custom? We have gained forty, fifty, or sixty percent. The Spaniards now come directly to Bristol; and pay down ready money, pieces of eight, for all the earthenware that can possibly be procured.

54. A Third objection, you say, is this: “They will not obey the Parliament and the laws.” You answer: “Say, They will not obey your Parliament and your laws; because they have no voice in your Parliament,

no share in making your laws.” (Page 100.) So, now the mask quite falls off again. A page or two ago, you said, “They are your fellow-subjects.” Now, you frankly declare, they owe no subjection to our Government, and attempt to prove it! To that proof I reply: Millions in England have no more voice in the Parliament than they; yet that does not exempt them from subjection to the Government and the laws. But “they may have a voice in it if they will.” No; they cannot, any more than the Americans. “Then they so far want liberty.” I answer,

- (1.) Whether they do or no, they must needs be subject; and that not only for wrath, for fear of punishment, but for conscience’ sake.
- (2.) They do not want liberty; they have all the liberty they can desire, civil as well as religious. “Nay, I have no other notion of slavery, but being bound by a law to which I do not consent.” If you have not, look at that man chained to the oar: He is a slave; he cannot at all dispose of his own person. Look at that Negro sweating beneath his load: He is a slave; he has neither goods nor liberty left. Look at that wretch in the Inquisition: Then you will have a far other notion of slavery.

55. You next advance a wonderful argument to convince us that all the Americans are slaves: “All your freehold land is represented; but not a foot of theirs; ‘nay,’ says an eminent man, ‘there is not a blade of grass in England but is represented.’” This much-admired and frequently-quoted assertion is altogether new! I really thought, not the grass, or corn, or trees, but the men of England, were represented in Parliament. I cannot comprehend, that Parliament-men represent the grass, any more than the stones or clay of the kingdom. *No blade of grass but is represented!* Pretty words! But what do they mean? Here is Mr. Burke; pray, what does he represent? “Why, the city of Bristol.” What, the buildings so called; or the ground whereon they stand? Nay, the inhabitants of it: The ground, the houses, the stones, the grass, are not represented. Who till now ever entertained so wild a thought? But let them stand together, the independency of our colonies, and the representation of every blade of grass!

56. You conclude: "Peace may be obtained upon the easy, the constitutional, and therefore the indispensable, terms of an exemption from parliamentary taxation, and an admission of the sacredness of their charters." (Page 107.)

Are not you betraying your cause? You have been all along pleading, in the most explicit manner, for their exemption, not only from parliamentary taxation, but legislation also. And, if your arguments prove anything, they certainly prove this, that the colonies have an unalienable right, not only to tax, but to make laws for themselves; so that the allowing them the former is nothing, unless we allow the latter also; that is, in plain terms, unless we allow them to be independent on the English Government.

As to your other term of peace, there is unquestionably such a thing as the forfeiting of a character: Whether the colonies have forfeited theirs or not, I leave others to determine. Whether they have or have not, there can be no reason for making the least doubt but, upon their laying down their arms, the Government will still permit them to enjoy both their civil and religious liberty in as ample a manner as ever their ancestors did, and as the English do at this day.

57. I add a few words more: Two or three years ago, by means of incendiary papers, spread throughout the nation, the minds of the people were inflamed to an amazing degree; but the greater part of the flame is now gone out. The natural tendency, or rather the avowed design, of this pamphlet, is, to kindle it again; if it be possible, to blow up into a flame the sparks that yet remain; to make the minds of His Majesty's subjects, both at home and abroad, evil affected toward his Government; discontented in the midst of plenty, out of humor with God and man; to persuade them, in spite of all sense and reason, that they are absolute slaves, while they are actually possessed of the greatest civil and religious liberty that the condition of human life allows.

Let all who are real lovers of their country use every lawful means to put out, or, at least, prevent the increase of, that flame which, otherwise, may consume our people and nation. Let us earnestly exhort all our countrymen to improve the innumerable blessings they enjoy; in

particular, that invaluable blessing of liberty, civil as well as religious, which we now enjoy in a far more ample measure than any of our forefathers did. Let us labor to improve our religious liberty, by practicing pure religion and undefiled; by worshipping God in spirit and in truth; and taking his “word for a lantern to our feet, and a light in all our paths.” Let us improve our civil liberty, the full freedom we enjoy, both as to our lives, goods, and persons, by devoting all we have, and all we are, to his honorable service. Then may we hope that he will continue to us all these blessings, with the crown of all, a thankful heart. Then shall we say, it all the changing scenes of life, —

“Father, how wide thy glories shine,
Lord of the universe and mine!
Thy goodness watches o’er the whole,
As all the world were but one soul;
Yet counts my every sacred hair,
As I remain’d thy single care!”

A

SEASONABLE ADDRESS

TO THE MORE SERIOUS PART OF THE
INHABITANTS OF GREAT BRITAIN,

RESPECTING

THE UNHAPPY CONTEST BETWEEN US AND OUR AMERICAN
BRETHREN:WITH AN OCCASIONAL WORD INTERSPERSED TO THOSE OF A
DIFFERENT COMPLEXION.

BY A LOVER OF PEACE.

(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1776.)

He beholden the city, and wept over it. — Luke 19:41.*Let your moderation be known unto all men.* — Philippians 4:5.

MEN AND BRETHREN,

UNHAPPY, very unhappy for us, we are a kingdom divided against itself; and, without a miracle, fall we must! What a fall will there then be, when such “distress is upon the land, and wrath upon the people!” And is this a little thing, brethren? Is it what any of us either desire or promote God forbid! A kingdom divided against itself is an evil, of all others, the most dreadful; inasmuch as an innumerable train of evils necessarily follow; no inconsiderable part of which are the sword, fire, plunder, and famine. This our forefathers unhappily felt, and to our inexpressible sorrow we may feel.

And is this an unlikely thing? Is it altogether improbable? Surely no! But that small cloud which arose some few years since, has, to discerning minds, been gathering blackness, and spreading itself well-nigh over the whole land. And is it any marvel if, by and by, it should burst upon us, as it has done upon America? Let him that has wisdom understand this.

Then who that has any understanding, any bowels of mercy and compassion, would not do the utmost, that either human or divine prudence can suggest, to prevent it? For who knows, when the sword is once drawn, where it may stop? Who can command it to be put up into its scabbard, and it will obey him? Such power is not in man; it is only in Him

Who rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas.

Again: If the sword should be drawn, upon whom may it light? This we know not. But supposing it should be on yourself, or a beloved wife, an aged parent, a tender child, A dear relative, what recompence can be found for such a loss? What, O! what would the whole world then be, if it might be gained? Alas! what a poor trifle! But, suppose you escape with your life, and the lives of those that are near and dear to you, there is yet another dreadful evil to fear, and which has been the case; plunder, lawless plunder, may deprive you of your little all. Now, who can insure another? Who can exempt himself in the time of general distress, from such an evil? Alas! brethren, “we must let this alone for ever. We are of yesterday, and know nothing” of tomorrow.

What then must we do to save (not to destroy) our kingdom, and to save (not to destroy) our American brethren? *Do*, my brethren! Why, what would we do, if either our own or our neighbor’s house were on fire? We should bring, if in our senses, no combustible matter to increase the flame, but water and a helping hand to extinguish it. This we should certainly do, and our labor would not be in vain. Now, apply this to America and Great Britain. The former is like an house on fire; the devouring flames of an unnatural civil war are already kindled, and some hundreds of lives have

fallen a prey to its insatiable violence. And how long before this may be our case here, God only knows!

Stop here then, my brethren, and survey the desolation. Behold the weeping and disconsolate widow refusing to be comforted! Her beloved husband is fallen! is fallen! and is no more! See the affectionate parent hanging down his head like the bulrush! Hear the broken language of his heart! "My son! my son! would God I had died in thy place! O my son! my son!" This is far from the flight of imagination, or the coloring of fancy. It is the real and actual condition of many amongst that unhappy people, and a part only of their manifold distress. In a word, they and we appear to be a people infatuated like the Jews of old, and ripening for destruction; and no marvel if, while we are biting and devouring one another, some stronger beasts of prey step in and divide the spoil! Here stop then, and drop a tear for the slain of our people, through the fire of contention that is kindled amongst them! And if on your recovery from the horrors of so terrible a conflagration, you should begin to inquire into its cause, a spectator begs leave to inform you, that it was occasioned through the unhappy contention of brethren, (which, as Solomon observes, "only cometh of pride,") and begs your kind assistance to extinguish the flames, lest they and their whole substance should be consumed together! The great danger of which, as well as the cause of this unparalleled and fatal strife, I would beg leave to present to your view in a piece of fine painting, done by an abler master: "See! Here are some thousands of our brave countrymen gathered together on this plain; they are followed by the most tender and feeling emotions of wives, children, and an innumerable multitude of their thoughtful, humane, and sympathizing countrymen. Then turn your eyes and behold a superior number at a little distance, of their brethren, 'flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone,' who only a few years since emigrated to the dreary wilds of America. These also are followed with the most tender feelings of wives, children, and countrymen. See, they advance towards each other, well prepared with every instrument of death! But what are they going to do? To shoot each other through the head or heart; to stab and butcher each other, and hasten (it is to be feared) one another into the everlasting burning. Why so? What harm have they done to one another? Why, none at all. Most of them are entire strangers to each other. But a matter is in

dispute relative to the mode of taxation. So these countrymen, children of the same parents, are to murder each other with all possible haste, to prove who is in the right. Now, what an argument is this! What a method of proof! What an amazing way of deciding controversies! But so it is; and O what horrors attend on it! At what a price is the decision made! By the blood and wounds of thousands; the burning cities, ravaging and laying waste the country." Now, who that seriously considers this awful contest, can help lamenting the astonishing want of wisdom in our brethren to decide the matter without bloodshed? What, are there no wise men amongst us? none that are able to judge between brethren? But brother goeth to war against brother; and that in the very sight of the Heathen. Surely this is a sore evil amongst us. O how are the mighty fallen! How is wisdom perished from the wise! What a flood of folly and madness has broke in upon us!

But do you farther ask me, Who was first in the transgression? Who began the dreadful strife? I must beg your pardon for not touching this subject now. Excuse my saying anything of the second cause, as I mean only to inquire into the first. I fear doing harm, and this is far from my design. Another great reason for my avoiding any reflections of this sort, on this delicate subject, is, that it has been already done by some of the most able hands, and to very little purpose. Argument seems lost in clamor, in confusion of passion and party rage; and the satanic dust of prejudice seems to have put out the eyes of our understanding. But thus much I might venture to say, — the case is rendered very complicated, and must in general remain unintelligible, unless to those who thoroughly understand the constitution of each party, and then have wisdom enough to weigh it in an unprejudiced balance.

To be plain, the present melancholy dispute either is, or is not, founded in a constitutional right on the one part, and a constitutional opposition on the other. So far is certain. Therefore, till the entire nature of both constitutions is well and fully understood, it is utterly impossible to decide thereon. I speak as to the matter of the dispute only; the manner of it is another point. Now, how many understand, or ever properly consider, either the one or the other? I fear but few. Holy deplorable then is it, that; almost everyone is sufficient for it, and accordingly passes

sentence. An outcry is raised. The Americans should or should not be taxed; and many have drawn their swords, and are well-nigh ready to cut their antagonists' throats! But this is not our wisdom; it is far from it. It is indeed fighting uncertainly, and scattering firebrands, arrows, and death. But go no farther. Stop here, and calmly reflect on the above argument. Settle it in your heart, that unless you properly understand the merits of the cause, you talk at random; you argue uncertainly, and worse than to no purpose.

But if any man has this wisdom, and this well-poised balance, let him stand forth in defense of his country, and be assured his labor will not be in vain.

Here we must lament, that, instead of its being a matter of great and general concern, it is more a party affair; and to our shame may it be said, that such a spirit has so unhappily influenced almost all sorts of people that some are breathing out slaughter against one party, and some against another. Now, while this is the case, is it any marvel that we should perish together? While we are contending who set the building on fire, and looking with rage and vengeance on the suspected party, instead of bringing the assuaging water of heartfelt grief and pious concern, with the helping hand of wisdom, moderation, and love, it is more than certain the flames will spread and endanger the whole building.

If these things, therefore, are so, let us cease contending with each other. Let us avoid unkind and bitter reflection on one another; seeing it can do no real service to the cause we would defend, but, in all probability, much harm. Let us bring no combustible matter of this sort to increase the fire. But as the flames are actually spreading, and may soon reach from them to us, let us do our utmost to extinguish them. Ye salt of the earth, exert the seasoning, preserving quality which you are favored with. Bring your contentious brethren in your loving arms of faith and prayer, and lay them at your Father's feet, praying him "to forgive them, as they know not what they do." Look upwards for help, to Him "who doeth whatsoever pleases him in the armies of heaven, and amongst the sons of men;" knowing it is He alone that "can quench the violence of fire, still the raging of the sea, and the madness of the people." Much, brethren, depends on

you, though “the world account your life madness, and your end to be without honor;” for you are the true “salt of the earth;” you alone preserve it from general putrefaction; and you, under God, are the great means of saving a divided kingdom, “a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers;” and had not the Lord “left you as a small remnant,” we should long since “have been as Sodom and Gomorrah!”

But do not you, for your Master’s sake, lose your favor in that unhallowed fire of contention, which the people who know not God are now burning in. The old serpent may herein deceive us, as he has too often done already. As an angel of light he is most likely to succeed, and, under the specious show of doing our country service, betray us, in treating our opponents, into a spirit and temper not from above. And how many may unhappily be influenced and led away with our error, God only knows! But this seems to be the design of the adversary of God and man; and if he can set the Christian world together by the ears, he has gained his point. But again, brethren, we may be deceived respecting the cause itself. Our veneration and respect for the cause we would espouse may betray us into a maze of error, imprudence, false zeal, and bitterness of temper; which must prove highly injurious to the public good. What has been, you know, may he again. And as the great Governor of the world has often permitted, particularly upon his own people, a judicial blindness, hardness of heart, and an amazing infatuation, which terminated in their ruin; so it is not improbable but the great and spreading defection and intemperate zeal on the one hand, and the determined purpose of maintaining the authority and dignity of government by fire and sword on the other, is more judicial than we are aware of. And that this is the case, I fear, is more than probable. It has been so in this kingdom, as well as the kingdom of Israel, in the matter of David and his son Absalom; and it will be so while iniquity beareth rule. If this be so, take heed what you do. Do nothing hastily or rashly. But, rather, before you touch this awfully delicate subject, and enter the lists, examine and weigh well the thoughts of your heart, and the springs of motion. And with David pray, “Search me, O God, and prove the ground of my heart,” etc. Beg to be directed. If you cannot act from a full persuasion that this is required at your hands, and if you cannot see the divine cloud go before you, desist in time. “Let the dead bury their dead;” but let not those who were designed to save the earth destroy it. Let not

Christians engage in the controversy in the spirit and temper of the world, and bite and devour one another, lest they should be consumed with the world. But rather let them wish, with an eminent Prophet, (an admirable way of showing our love to our country, and doing it the most effectual service!) “O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” and with Christ himself, the Inspirer of the Prophets, “when he beholden the” rebellious “city, weep over it!”

But, it may be, you are of a different complexion. You “fear not the Lord, neither regard the operation of his hands.” Your case, I fear, is too similar to his, who of old said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?” But He is, though you know him not, the God of your life, your health, your strength, and all your mercies. It is “through him you live, move, and have your being; “and is therefore altogether worthy of all you have and all you are.” “Acquaint yourself with him, and be at peace; and thereby good shall come unto thee.” Till this is the case, it is morally impossible that you should be a true patriot, a real lover of your country. You may indeed assume the sounding title; but it is an empty name. You may in word mightily contend for your country’s good; but, while you are a slave to sin, you are an enemy to God, and your country too. But let the time past suffice. Be henceforth, not only in word, but in deed and in truth, a patriot. Put away the accursed thing, the evil that is found in you; so shall you love your country as your own soul, and prevent the fearful end of both.

That we may do this, and that it may please infinite Wisdom to succeed our attempts, I would beg leave to pass from the Second to the First cause. Here I would fix my foot, as on a sure and solid foundation that will stand for ever. The holy Scriptures give us ample accounts of the fall and rise of the greatest monarchies. It is simply this: They rose by virtue; but they fell by vice. “Righteousness” alone “exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.” And this ever will be the case, till the end of all things. So much in general is certain; but wherein we have well-nigh filled up “the measure of our iniquity,” and may therefore expect their fate, is another point. But it is certain that iniquity of every kind, and amongst all ranks and orders of men, has and does abound; and as we are punished with the

sword, it is not improbable but one principal sin of our nation is, the blood that we have shed in Asia, Africa, and America. Here I would beg your serious attention, while I observe, that however extensively pursued, and of long continuance, the African trade may be, it is nevertheless iniquitous from first to last. It is the price of blood! It is a trade of blood, and has stained our land with blood! And is the East India trader a jot better? I fear not. They seem very nearly allied. For though here is no leading into captivity, as in the former; yet the refined iniquity practiced there, of fomenting war amongst the natives, and seizing the chief of the plunder, has been as conspicuous to the serious and attentive. What millions have fallen by these means, as well as by artificial famine! O earth, cover not thou their blood! It will speak to heaven and to the inhabitants of the earth to the latest posterity. O ye Governors of this great nation, would to God that ye had seen this, and timely done your utmost to separate those tares from the wheat of fair and honest trade! What peace therefore can we expect, while these evils continue? “There can be no peace, saith the Lord.” While “the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground,” “what hast thou to do with peace?” “Shall I not visit for these things? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” Yes, my brethren, we have much reason to fear and tremble, as upon the brink of fate.

But there is (if aught can be worse) a sorer evil, namely, an astonishing contempt and neglect of truly sacred things; especially the solemn worship of Almighty God: And herein our Nobility and Gentry almost universally distinguish themselves. This is indeed a sore evil; one of the grossest affronts that can be offered to the great Governor of the world. And I am bold to say, that as he hath spoken to this nation as he hath not to any other nation upon earth of late years, and that in an uncommon way and manner, but as in general we have stopped our ears, and utterly despised His call; the day will come when the candlestick will be removed, and the kingdom of God given to another people that will attend the call, and bring forth fruit. And when the divine glory, in this respect, begins to depart, the natural glory will soon follow. Probably that day is not far off, unless we repent.

We seem indeed to have been at our meridian height of power, greatness, etc.; (not of holiness unto the Lord;) and it is to be feared that the glory has begun to depart, which, like the sun when he begins to decline, will continue its declension, finally disappear, and leave us in total darkness, unless a divine interposition prevent. For we seem judicially given up to pursue those measures that will effectually accomplish it. Now, as what God hath joined together (especially such powerful people as we and the Americans now are) for the mutual support, comfort, and defense of each other, should not be put asunder by any means whatsoever, as it would undoubtedly frustrate His gracious design in this well-compacted body; so, if one powerful member should rise up against the whole body, or the whole body against one such member, and disunite from it; this schism must, in the nature of things, occasion such a weakness and deformity in the whole body, as is only to be known by an unhappy experience. The disunion of the ten tribes is a melancholy proof of it. And as Judah vexed Ephraim, and Ephraim Judah, so will it be with us. The counsel therefore to separate cannot be from God. It has no foundation in the nature and fitness of things beneficial, either to them or us, and must in the end prove like the counsel of Ahithophel.

Ye friends of America, turn your eyes therefore, for a moment, from those you suspect to be the only authors of the present evil, and think seriously of a more secret but certain cause, namely, the universality and enormity of every species of wickedness that is found in our land; and then marvel not that the great Governor of the world hath withholden that restraint which he is ever wont to hold amongst the Governors of a wise and good people. For we may be assured of this, that, were those in authority under the temptation of despotism and oppression, (and would to God, it never was the case!) if we as a people, by our transgressions, had not to a great and certain degree provoked the eyes of his glory, "I," saith the Lord, "would put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips."

Ye friends of Government also, draw near, and turn your eyes from those you suspect to be the only authors of the present evil; look in this glass, and see the ugly monster; universal sin, that subtle, unsuspected serpent that has inflamed our blood, and brought on the malignant fever of contention on our body. Here gaze, till its loathsome and hideous

deformity makes you loathe her. Then you will not marvel, that when the divine restraint is withholden, we are capable of anything, even that which is the most likely to end in our present and eternal ruin! And should not ye, O! ye Americans, ye unhappy sufferers by this dreadful fire, look into the same glass, and not marvel at a divine permission of your afflictions; but in a becoming spirit and disposition ask, “Wherefore dost thou contend with me? Why hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee?” Surely then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people!

But is our universal impiety the first and principal cause of our misery and wretchedness in general, and of the present distress in particular? Then let no individual attempt to clear himself from the dreadful charge of being accessory to it. Let no one presume to look on himself as unconcerned and innocent. Let no one “wipe his mouth and say, What harm have I done?” but rather let him know that his sin in particular has added to the general account, and not a little contributed to the fierceness of the divine contention. I say “divine contention;” and such doubtless it is, though in general we conceive it merely human. But the latter is the effect only of the former, and should never be forgotten. It demands our first and most serious attention, being the first and principal means of restoring the wished for peace, and greatly desired reconciliation. For this is no other than to make God himself our friend; and, “if He be for us, who can be against us?” Let us do this therefore without delay. Let every one remember his own sin, and not his neighbor’s.

Let us follow the example of the Ninevites. Let us “break off our sins by repentance.” Let us “observe such a fast as God hath chosen.” (And, O, what need of a national fast at this juncture!) “Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; and let them say, Spare” (not destroy) “thy people, O Lord;” and “give not thine heritage to reproach, that the Heathen should rule over them, and say, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.” But should this spirit of universal humiliation fail, and consequently the divine favor upon our land, let not the seed of Abraham faint, neither let them be dismayed. Their humiliation and intercession shall be remembered. It cannot be forgotten; and, if Sodom is not spared

for their sake, they themselves shall nevertheless be spared, “as a man spareth his own son that serveth him: God will make a difference between him that serveth him, and him that serveth him not.”

Strong is his arm, and shall fulfill
His great decree and sov'reign will.

“Fear not,” therefore, ye “little flock,” if the overflowing scourge should come. But “enter ye into the rock, and hide ye for a little moment in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain!”

A

CALM ADDRESS

TO

THE INHABITANTS OF ENGLAND.

(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1777.)

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

1. ABOUT a year and a half ago, being exceedingly pained at what I saw or heard continually, I wrote a little tract entitled, “A Calm Address to our American Colonies;” but the ports being just then shut up by the Americans, I could not send it abroad, as I designed. However, it was not lost; within a few months, fifty, or perhaps an hundred thousand copies, in newspapers and otherwise, were dispersed throughout Great Britain and Ireland. The effect exceeded my most sanguine hopes. The eyes of many people were opened; they saw things in a quite different light. They perceived, and that with the utmost clearness, how they had been hoodwinked before. They found, they had been led unawares into all the wilds of political enthusiasm, as far distant from truth and common sense, as from the real love of their country.

2. I am encouraged hereby to address myself once more, not indeed to my countrymen afar off, but to you who remain in your native land, who are inhabitants of old England. I have no private views in doing this. I attend no great man’s table. I have nothing to ask, either of the King, or any of his Ministers. You may easily believe this; for if I had sought wealth or preferment half a century ago, I should hardly think it worth while to seek it now, when I have one foot in the grave. But I have a view to contribute all that in me lies to the public welfare and tranquillity. A flame was studiously kindled some time since, which threatened to involve the whole

nation. By the blessing of God, it is greatly checked; it does not spread, or blaze as formerly. But it is not quite put out. I wish to quench the remains of that evil fire.

3. My view is, as far as is possible, to lessen, if not remove, the misunderstandings under which many honest, well-meaning men are laboring to this day; misunderstandings which have caused much animosity, nay, much bitterness and rancor in their minds against those who equally “strive to have a conscience void of offense towards God and towards man.” I would fain have all these duly sensible of the blessings which they enjoy; that they may be thankful to the Giver of every blessing, and may love one another as He has loved us.

4. Surely every man of candor and humanity must wish well to such an attempt; in the prosecution of which I will first endeavor to set down, in as plain and artless a manner as I can, according to the best light I have, the real state of those affairs which have occasioned these misunderstandings; and then add two or three short reflections, which I conceive naturally deducible therefrom.

5. And, First, I will set down, in as plain and artless a manner as I can, according to the best light I have, the real state of those affairs which have occasioned these misunderstandings. I have perhaps had some means of information which many others have not had. Over and above those accounts which have been published, I have had abundance of letters from persons in America, on whose judgment, veracity, and impartiality I could safely depend; especially from the provinces of New York, Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. I have likewise had the opportunity of conversing freely and largely with many that came from those provinces, and of comparing together the accounts of those who were attached to one or the other party. And I shall endeavor to deliver the plain facts, without speculations concerning them.

6. In the year 1737, my brother took ship, in order to return from Georgia to England. But a violent storm drove him up to New England; and he was for some time detained at Boston. Even then he was surprised to hear the most serious people, and men of consequence, almost continually crying

out, "We must be independent; we shall never be well, till we shake off the English yoke." This sounded exceeding strange to him; as he could not form any imagination, that they could be happier under any government, than the mild one which they then enjoyed.

A gentleman who spent some time at Boston in the year 1739, informed me that he had frequently heard the very same conversation there; although at that time the people only spake what they had long and eagerly desired; but, it seems, without any formed design, or having concerted any measures upon the head.

7. Almost from their settlement in the country, but more especially from this time, the people of this as well as the other provinces, multiplied exceedingly. This was the natural effect of the unparalleled lenity of the Government they were under, and the perfect liberty they enjoyed, civil as well as religious. Through the same causes, from the smallness of their taxes, and the large bounties continually received from their mother country, (which also protected them from all their enemies,) their wealth increased as fast as their numbers. And, together with their number and their wealth, the spirit of independency increased also. At the same time, it could not be but their shipping would increase in the same proportion with their trade, which was now extended not only through America, and not only through Great Britain and Ireland, but also (not withstanding the Act of Navigation) through almost every part of Europe.

8. Much more wealth was accumulated in the numerous seaport towns, by defrauding His Majesty of his customs. This was continually done, not only by stealth, but frequently with an high hand. Whole shiploads of unaccustomed goods were imported, particularly at Boston, and that at noonday. And it is notorious, that one of the greatest dealers in this kind was the celebrated Mr. Hancock. It is true, this now and then met with some check from His Majesty's officers; but it was so little, it scarce deserves the naming. However, little as it was, they bore it not without huge indignation, and strong marks of resentment. And whenever a matter of this kind came before an American jury, (which could not but frequently be the case) it was easy to foresee the event. The officer was sure to have his labor for his pains; for they were too good patriots to

condemn their countrymen! By this means the customs of North America, which ought to have brought in so considerable a sum as would have gone far toward defraying the expense of the government, were reduced to a very small pittance.

9. In consideration of this, the English Government a few years ago thought it equitable to lay a small duty upon the stamps in America, in order, if not to bear themselves harmless, yet to lessen their burden. Immediately a cry arose, as if all America was just going to be swallowed up. It was echoed across the Atlantic Ocean, from America to England. The patriots (so they styled themselves) in England eagerly joined the cry, and spared no labor and no expense to propagate it throughout the nation. Do you suppose they did this out of stark love and kindness to the poor, ruined Americans? No such matter. They understood the case too well; they knew they cried before they were hurt. But they laid hold on this as a fair occasion to throw an aspersion on those that were in power, being very willing, and supposing themselves very worthy, to supply their place. However, the Ministry finding the clamor increasing, and the storm spreading on both sides the ocean, were persuaded to give way to the torrent. They did so; and the Stamp Act was repealed.

10. The American leaders now apprehending that they had a sufficient number of fast friends in England, began to entertain higher designs; the New England men in particular. They had no longer anything to fear from Canada, which the English had conquered for them. And they had nothing to fear from England, when they judged their allies were growing stronger and stronger. They therefore paved the way for the execution of their favorite scheme; first, by diligently cultivating the republican notions which they had received from their forefathers; and then by speaking and writing in the most contemptuous and reproachful manner of the English Government.

11. Soon after, it being thought reasonable, that every part of the British empire should furnish its share of the general expense, the English Parliament laid a small duty on the tea imported into America. Again a violent outcry arose, and was studiously propagated through all the provinces. It was no less diligently spread throughout England. And as

they judged the time was now come to advance a little further, the leading men, both at home and abroad, began more and more confidently to assert, “that the English had no right to tax the American colonies.” The assertors of this new position in England strongly exhorted those in America to withstand what they were pleased to call this “illegal, unconstitutional oppression.” Thus encouraged, the Bostonians, under the auspices of Mr. Hancock, (whose interest was particularly at stake,) scorning to do anything secretly, paraded the town at noonday with colors flying, and bravely threw the English tea into the sea. This was the first plain overt act of rebellion, not of a few, but of the town of Boston. Reparation of the wrong was demanded; but it was not obtained. Till it should be obtained, the Parliament ordered Boston harbor to be shut up.

12. But things were not yet ripe for an open rupture: Therefore the Americans still gave the Government good words. They professed their loyalty, their great regard for the King, and their desire of obeying all his legal commands. But all this time they were using all possible art and diligence to blacken, first the Ministry, after a time the Parliament too, and then the King himself. Of this I had a clear and particular account from a friend in Pennsylvania, who then observed a storm rising in the north, and moving on toward the southern colonies. And it moved on apace. A new supreme power, called a Congress, appeared. It openly assumed the reins of government, exercised all the rights of sovereignty, burst all the bands, and totally disclaimed the authority both of King and Parliament.

13. But still the Americans talked of allegiance, and said they desired nothing but the liberty of Englishmen. Many in England cordially believed them; I myself for one. And many more (though they saw deeper; perhaps were in the secret) affected to believe them, defended them with all their might, and pleaded their cause, in public and private, as honest, upright men, who only withstood oppression, and desired nothing but what was their legal right.

14. While we were warmly debating these things in England, the Americans, believing matters were now in a proper forwardness, wholly threw off the mask, openly took up arms, seized upon His Majesty’s stores and ships, and avowed themselves to be sovereign states,

independent on Britain or any other. And herein they were still vehemently encouraged by their numerous friends in England. Some of these (and they were persons of no mean account) wrote them letters, (which were carefully sent by the Congress through all the provinces,) nearly in these words: "Make no concessions; give up nothing. Stand your ground. Be resolute, and, you may depend upon it, in less than a year and an half, there will be such commotions in England, that the Government will be glad to be reconciled to you upon your own terms."

15. One might have imagined, for some time, that this was a true prophecy. Many warm men at home labored to embarrass the Government in all its measures. They spoke all manner of evil of the Ministry. They made the keenest reflections on the Parliament; and, when they had whetted themselves and one another, they spared not the King himself. Meanwhile, they were so wonderfully tender of the Americans, that they would not in anywise term them rebels, though they were in open arms against their lawful Sovereign. And all this time, whatsoever was undertaken against them went on heavily. The King's troops were either detained in the harbors, or stopped in their passage by contrary winds. Some of the transports, and abundance of other ships, fell into the hands of the Americans. Their privateers swarmed on every side, both in the American and European seas. They were plentifully furnished with provision from the resources they had within themselves, and with all sorts of arms and ammunition, by our good allies, the Dutch and French. In the meanwhile, the few English troops that were in America were closely shut up in Boston, by a numerous army holding them in on every side, and gaping to swallow them up. And these within the town were in want of all things, while those without abounded with all things. This they gloried in, as a manifest proof that God was on their side. As they now were confident of success, the talk of liberty was over: Independency was the word; this was avowed without any disguise or reserve. And, indeed, liberty was come to an end; it had no longer any being in the confederate colonies. If any one dared to speak a little in favor of the King, or in disfavor of the Congress, he was soon taught to know his lords and masters, whose little finger was heavier than the loins of Kings.

16. At length the King published a Proclamation for a General Fast in England, that we might “humble ourselves before God, and implore his blessing and assistance.” Some of the patrons of independency mocked at this, and endeavored to turn it into ridicule. A company of them met at an inn in Bristol on the fast-day, and had a plentiful entertainment. Others stormed and raved at this hypocrisy, as they were pleased to term it. However, there is all reason to believe that God was well pleased with it. We now openly acknowledged him, and he openly acknowledged us. From this very time, the tide turned. The King’s forces (which many said was impossible) made good their landing at the place proposed, and that without any loss at all. They took possession of Long Island, and with next to no opposition. They took the island and city of New York, with all its boasted fortifications. They drove the rebels out of their almost inaccessible posts, though defended by strong entrenchment’s. They took Fort Washington and Fort Lee, which an handful of men might have defended against a numerous army. At all these places they took warlike stores in abundance, beside some thousands of prisoners. They took possession of Rhode Island, and everywhere drove the rebels before them like a flock of sheep.

17. Where are now the two or three hundred thousand men, that we were told would pour down upon us? But what, if they did? What would a million do, if they ran away as soon as the English appeared? Whatever they do, they will not fight. I believe they cannot; for the hand of God is upon them. But they can rob, and plunder, and destroy, and turn a well-peopled and fruitful land into a wilderness. They can burn houses, and drive men, women, and children into the wild woods, in the depth of winter. Yea, they can burn whole towns, without any regard for the sick or aged, that necessarily perished in the flame. But did not God regard them? Did not their dying cries enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath?

18. Such is the present state of affairs in America. Let us now take a view of the whole: Twelve provinces, upon various pretenses, (all which have been confuted over and over,) have declared themselves independent states, openly renounced their allegiance to their lawful Sovereign, taken up arms against him, and prosecuted the war in an unheard-of manner. At first prosperity seemed to attend them in all their undertakings. But since

we sought help from God, there has been a manifest blast upon them. Their armies are scattered; their forts and strongholds lost; their provinces taken one after another. Meantime, are they humbled? No; they roar like a wild bull in a net. They tear up the ground with fierceness and rage; repentance is hid from their eyes. They revenge themselves — upon women and children; they burn — all behind them! O American virtue! Are these the men who are proposed as a pattern to all Europe?

19. Brethren! Countrymen! What are the reflections that now naturally arise in your breasts? Do you not immediately observe, that after this huge outcry for liberty, which has echoed through America, there is not the very shadow of liberty left in the confederate provinces? There is no liberty of the press. A man may more safely print against the Church in Italy or Spain, than publish a tittle against the Congress in New England or Pennsylvania. There is no religious liberty. What Minister is permitted to follow his own conscience in the execution of his office? to put man in mind to be “subject to principalities and powers?” to “fear God and honor the King?” Who is suffered (whatever his conscience may dictate) to “pray for the King, and all that are in authority?” There is no civil liberty. No man hath any security, either for his goods, or for his person; but is daily liable to have his goods spoiled or taken away, without either law or form of law, and to suffer the most cruel outrage as to his person, such as many would account worse than death. And there is no legal method wherein he can obtain redress for whatever loss or outrage he has sustained.

20. Do not you observe, wherever these bawlers for liberty govern, there is the vilest slavery? No man there can say that his goods are his own. They are absolutely at the disposal of the mob, or the Congress. No man can say that his tongue is his own. If he say a word for the King, what will follow? No man can say that his body is his own. He may be imprisoned whenever our lords the Congress please. They are as absolute as the Emperor of Morocco: Their will is the sole law. No man can say his life is his own. Those who have the disposal of his substance, who have the disposal of his liberty, have the disposal of his life also. And of this they have given recent proofs. It is true, they do not themselves cut throats; they do not soil their own fingers; but their friends the mob are always

ready. Thus is real liberty, in all its branches, given up for that poor shadow, independency! a phantom which does not, in fact, exist in any civilized nation under heaven! It never did, and never will, being wholly inconsistent with the very idea of government. And to what a condition are these poor colonies brought, by quitting the substance for the shadow! “Do you ask,” says a gentleman who writes from Philadelphia, “what is the present state of these provinces? You may see it upon Ezekiel’s roll; such is the condition of this country: ‘It is written within and without, lamentation, and mourning, and woe.’”

21. And do not you observe, on the other hand, the perfect liberty which we enjoy? Not, indeed, derived from our forefathers, as some writers idly talk. No; our forefathers never enjoyed it, either before or after William the Conqueror, and least of all in the time of the long Parliament, or under Oliver Cromwell. They had then little more liberty, civil or religious, than is now enjoyed in the confederate provinces. Never talk of the liberty of our forefathers: English liberty commenced at the Revolution. And how entire is it at this day! Every man says what he will, writes what he will, prints what he will. Every man worships God, if he worships him at all, as he is persuaded in his own mind. Every man enjoys his own property; nor can the King himself take a shilling of it, but according to law. Every man enjoys the freedom of his person, unless the law of the land authorize his confinement. Above all, every man’s life is secured, as well from the King, as from his fellow-subjects. So that it is impossible to conceive a fuller liberty than we enjoy, both as to religion, life, body, and goods.

22. Do not you see then the abundant cause we have to be thankful to God, who having “made the whole nation of men, determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation,” in that he hath cast our lot in a fair ground, under the mildest government upon earth? Are not we of all men without sense, if, instead of thankfulness, we give way to murmuring and discontent, and finding fault with we know not what? In all reason, we should be perpetually praising God for this as well as for a thousand other benefits, and endeavoring to make him a suitable return, by devoting our lives to his service.

23. And as long as we fear God, shall we not “honor the King?” looking upon him with a love mixed with reverence? Should we not remember him before God in prayer, that his throne may be established in righteousness? that he, and all which are in authority under him, may duly administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and the maintenance of true religion and virtue? And is it not our part carefully to abstain from speaking evil of the ruler of our people; and to study to “lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty?”

Hitherto I have addressed myself to my countrymen in general. But I would add a word to you in particular, who bear a religious character; whether you are members of the established Church, or Dissenters of any denomination.

One might reasonably expect, that all of you would be cheerfully “subject to the higher powers;” seeing you are agreed “there is no power,” whether supreme or subordinate, “but of God.” Nay, one would expect that you would be continually reminding all you had any intercourse with, that they “must needs be subject, not” only “for wrath, but” also “for conscience’ sake.” How is it, then, that any of you espouse the cause of those that are in open rebellion against their lawful Sovereign? that, if you do not plead expressly for them, you at least extenuate their crime; perhaps even scruple to call them rebels, and speak of them with tenderness, rather than resentment? How is it that any of you who fear God “are not afraid to speak evil of dignities?” to “speak evil of the ruler of your people,” as well as of those that are put in authority under him? Do you believe that “Michael the archangel durst not bring a railing accusation against Satan?” And dare you bring or retail an hundred railing accusations against your lawful Governors? Now, at least, humble yourselves before God, and act more suitably to your character. Wherever you are, far from countenancing, repress the base clamors of the vulgar; remembering those awful words: “If any man among you seemeth to be religious,” (rather, be ever so religious,) “and bridleth not his tongue, that man’s religion is vain.”

Are not you who dissent from the established Church, in whatever kind or degree, particularly concerned to observe this “for wrath” as well as “for conscience’ sake?” Do you imagine, there are no High Churchmen left? Did

they all die with Dr. Sacheverel? Alas, how little do you know of mankind! Were the present restraint taken off, you would see them swarming on every side, and gnashing upon you with their teeth. There would hardly need a nod from that sacred person whom you revile, or at least lightly esteem. Were he to stand neuter, in what a condition would you be within one twelve months? If other Bonners and Gardiners did not arise, other Lands and Sholdenons would, who would either rule over you with a rod of iron, or drive you out of the land. Know the blessings you enjoy. Let common sense restrain you, if neither religion nor gratitude can. “Beware of the wrath of a patient man.” Dare not again to open your lips against your Sovereign: — Lest he fall upon you? No; but lest he cease to defend you. Then farewell to the liberty you now enjoy.

Permit me to add a few more words to you, a small part of whom dissent from, but the far greater part remain in, the Church; you who are vulgarly called Methodists. Do any of you blaspheme God or the King? None of you, I trust, who are in connection with me. I would no more continue in fellowship with those who continued in such a practice, than with whoremongers, or sabbath-breakers, or thieves, or drunkards, or common swearers. But there are not a few who go under that name, though they have no connection with us; yea, though they cordially hate us as dreadful heretics, for believing that “God willeth all men to be saved;” who hate the King and all his Ministers only less than they do an Arminian; and who speak all manner of evil of them in private, if not in public too.²⁴ But suffer me to ask, Is this well done? Is it gratitude? Is it prudence? In the name of wonder, what could His Majesty have done for you which he has not done? What would you have? Can you tell? What can you desire more than you have already? Have you not full liberty of conscience in every respect, without any shadow of restraint? In what other nation under the sun is such religious liberty to be found? Have you not full liberty, with regard to your life, to your person, and to your goods? In what other country upon earth is such civil liberty to be found? If you are not thankful to God and the King for these blessings, you are utterly unworthy of them. Is it prudence to speak in so bitter and contemptuous a manner of such Governors as God has given you? What, if by the bitterness of your spirit, the acrimony of your language, and the inflammatory libels which you spread abroad, you could carry your point,

unhinge the present Government, and set up another in its stead! what would you gain thereby? Would another Government allow you more liberty than you now enjoy? Could they give you a more unbounded liberty of conscience? It is impossible! Would they give you a larger measure of civil liberty? They could not if they would. And certainly they would not give you the liberty of railing at your Governors, and stirring up your fellow-subjects against them. If you did this, you would not only lose your goods, but probably your life also. On the other hand, what if the present Government should continue in spite of all your disloyal practices! have you any assurance, have you any reason to believe, that our Governors will always be so patient? Nay, undoubtedly, when things of greater moment are settled, they will find a time for you. Your present behavior will then be remembered; perhaps not altogether to your advantage. It is not the ignorance but the wisdom of your Governors which occasions their present silence. And if you go on thus, be assured, sooner or later, you will meet with your reward. There is no need that the King should do anything: He needs only not to restrain; that is enough: There are those on every side who are now ready to swallow you up. You will then wish you had been wise in time, when your wisdom comes too late; when the King of kings “laughs at your calamity, and mocks while your fear cometh.”

A

SERIOUS ADDRESS

TO

**THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND, WITH REGARD TO
THE STATE OF THE NATION.****(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1778.)**

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

I WOULD fain lay a few plain considerations before you, before all men of candor and common sense, who are not so totally swallowed up of prejudice as to be incapable of hearing reason. I beg you to weigh the matter calmly; not to be overborn by noisy or wordy men, but to use your own senses, your own eyes and ears, and your own understanding. Do not run away (as many do) with part of a story; but hear the whole, and then judge. Have patience to lay all circumstances together, and then you may form a just judgment.

A solemn inquiry was lately made concerning the state of the nation. If such an inquiry were properly made, so that the real state of the nation might be clearly and distinctly shown, it might be attended with excellent consequences. It might enable the legislative power to redress or prevent numerous evils. And it might lead those who conduct public affairs to take the most effectual measures for promoting the solid and lasting welfare of all their fellow-subjects.

On the other hand, if such an inquiry were improperly made, and consequently the state of the nation misrepresented, — if it were represented as far worse than it really is, — exceeding bad consequences might follow. It would naturally tend to disturb, to frighten, to discourage

the people. It would tend to depress and sour their spirits, to embitter them against others, and to make them disaffected to His Majesty, and all that act under him. It would make them utterly unthankful to God, for all the blessings that surround them; the ready way to weaken our hands and strengthen the hands of our common enemies.

Should not then an inquiry of so important a nature be made with the greatest accuracy? And in order to this, should not the question be stated with all possible exactness? But in a late inquiry, I cannot find that the question was stated at all. The inquirers jumped into the middle of it at once, in defiance of all logic and common sense. "The state of the nation" is a very vague and indeterminate expression; so indeterminate, that, if the meaning of the phrase be not fixed before the inquiry concerning it is begun, men of eloquence may make vehement speeches, of two or three hours long, while neither the speakers nor the hearers know what they are talking about. And speeches of this kind tend to inflame, not to inform, our honest countrymen. They are calculated, not to bring light, but fire; to raise the nation into a flame.

But to come to the point: You are desirous to inquire concerning the state of the nation. But what is it you would know concerning it? "Certainly, whether it be prosperous or not?" In what respects? It may be prosperous in one respect, and not so in another. Tell us coolly and distinctly, what is the question? And what is it you would prove?

It is this: "Is not the nation ruined?" *Ruined!* What can you mean? The great men of another nation asked the King, "Knowest thou not that Egypt is destroyed?" How was it destroyed? Why, all the cattle of Egypt were killed by the murrain. And not only all the flax and corn, all the wheat and barley were consumed, but the locusts had devoured every herb and leaf, and left no green thing in the land.

Countrymen, judge! Is England thus destroyed? Are all our cattle killed? Have you no oxen, or cows, or sheep, or swine? — no horses, mules, asses left? Whatever be the case elsewhere, are not a few of them left alive in London? Is all your corn destroyed? Look round upon the fields; is there no green thing left? See with your own eyes. You do see, that there is as

fair a prospect, as has been for many years. I can testify, that for more than half a century, there has not been greater plenty, either of cattle or vegetables of every kind, than there is at this day. England therefore is not destroyed. “But is it not in the high road to destruction? What is its present state? good or bad? increasing or decreasing?”

Increasing or decreasing, in what respects? I beg leave to offer you, on this head, some of the most sensible remarks I have seen on the subject, with some little variations and additions: —

“The state of the nation has respect to nine capital articles; population, agriculture, manufactures; the land and fresh-water carriage of goods, salt-water carriage of goods; the state of our fisheries at home and abroad, the tendency of our taxes, the clear amount of the revenue, and the national debt. All of these, taken together, form that complex idea which we call ‘the state of the nation.’

“In order therefore to know the state of the nation, we should compare each of these articles, as they subsist at present, with the like articles as they subsisted in some former period, in order to see whether our national affairs have gone backward or forward since that time. And what time more proper than the year 1759? — that period of glory and of conquest, when everything was supposed to go right as we are told that everything now goes wrong.”

1. “In regard to population, it is to be feared that our numbers have decreased since the year 1759.” This has been boldly affirmed, and that over and over; yet I cannot allow it by any means; and I have such opportunities of being informed as few persons in England have; as I see almost all the large towns in the kingdom, once in two years at least, and can therefore make these inquiries on the spot, as minutely as I please.

We may allow, that within this time, twenty or thirty thousand English soldiers have been sent abroad. Allow, likewise, seventy or eighty thousand emigrants, from England and Scotland only. Hereby there is a decrease of an hundred thousand, within less than twenty years. I read likewise, in a very beautiful Poem, of a “Deserted” — what? province?

county? metropolis? No — “Village,” somewhere on the Wiltshire Downs! Yet not quite deserted; for a gentleman who lives there informs me, he cannot learn it has had more inhabitants within these hundred years than it has at this day. I allow too, that some of the villages near the Land’s End are less populous than formerly; but what is all this loss, taken together, in comparison of the increase? I cannot but think there has been, within twenty years, an increase of more than an hundred thousand, in six cities and towns only; I mean, in London, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, and Liverpool. Do not you see with your eyes in all these places, not only houses, but whole streets added continually? And can any one persuade you, in the mean time, that there is no increase of inhabitants? And yet some have wonder fully affirmed that there is a decrease of inhabitants even in London! Why do they not affirm, there is a decrease of houses too? When I see one, I will believe the other.

And it is not only in cities and large towns, as some have intimated, but even on commons, heaths, and mountains, yea, all over the Peak of Derbyshire, that you may see little houses (and many not very little) shooting up on every side. And does not this denote an increase of people? Or are they inhabited only by rats and mice? Considering these things which I have seen with my own eyes, I cannot doubt one moment but England has a million more inhabitants than it had twenty years ago.

2. “As to agriculture, what was the state of it last year, compared with the state of it in 1759? Has it advanced or declined since that time? You may judge by considering a very few particulars. Are your old farmhouses, barns, outhouses, tumbling down? And are no new ones erected? Are your old enclosures, fences, drains, running to decay, and no new ones making? Is there less land tilled and improved now, than there was in 1759? Nay more, as is notoriously known, by many hundred thousand acres. Are our farmers in general grown poorer than heretofore? Are their stocks of hay and corn, of sheep, horses, and cattle diminished? Are they not exceedingly increased? I will add no more. Let those who affirm we are on the brink of ruin show how greatly our agriculture is decreased since the happy days of 1759!”

3. Again: Inquire, my friends, “In what respects and in what degree have any of our manufactures declined of late? Perhaps there is some decrease in a few branches, of weaving in particular. And this must be in the nature of things, while fashions are continually changing; so that a large demand for this or that commodity cannot be expected to continue long. But is not this decrease in some branches amply compensated by the increase in others? Let it be more particularly inquired, Are the capital places less employed in manufactures, than they were in 1759? Are there fewer buildings now in use for the carrying on of great and extensive works? Are there fewer warehouses and magazines, and fewer machines and engines of every kind? How easily may you be convinced, that, in every one of these articles, far from a decrease, there is a very considerable increase, since the year 1759!

4. “As to land and fresh-water carriage of goods, let any of you inquire, Are there fewer public wagons on the roads than there were formerly? And are there fewer roads fit for wagons to travel on? If so, our trade decreases. Are there fewer trows or barges employed on rivers and canals than there were heretofore? If there are, we allow the decrease of these is a sure sign of the decrease of trade. And, on the contrary, the vast increase of these proves a proportionable increase of it. ‘Are the rivers and canals fewer in these degenerate times than in the year 1759?’” See, my friends, by this plain, demonstrative proof, how sadly our trade is decreased!

And I cannot but observe, that arguments of this general kind are abundantly more conclusive than any which are or can be drawn from the case of particular persons. We always find a considerable number of these, both in London and elsewhere, who loudly complain of the decay of trade, and the hardness of the times. What does this mean? That “they themselves want business.” Perhaps they want industry too. But these particular cases are of no weight, opposed to those general considerations.

5. You may inquire next, with regard to “salt-water carriage of goods. Is the quantity of British shipping decreased since the year 1759? Are there fewer ships now employed in the coasting trade? fewer in the Irish trade? or fewer for distant voyages? Nay, have we fewer ship carpenters, or fewer sailmakers at work? And do we build fewer or smaller ships for

merchants' service than formerly?" The more particularly you inquire, the more clearly you will see how immensely the nation has improved in this article.

But it is objected, "We have lost eight hundred of our ships since the beginning of the war." Perhaps so; although you have no proof of this; for Lloyd's Catalogue is no sufficient evidence. But how many have we taken? This it is absolutely needful you should know, or you cannot know whether we have lost or gained upon the whole. We have taken above nine hundred. And the evidence of our gain is at least as good as that of our loss.

"Nay, but we have also lost our Negro trade." I would to God it may never be found more! that we may never more steal and sell our brethren like beasts; never murder them by thousands and tens of thousands! O may this worse than Mahometan, worse than Pagan, abomination, be removed from us for ever! Never was anything such a reproach to England since it was a nation, as the having any hand in this execrable traffic.

6. "The state of our fisheries at home and abroad forms another important article of comparison. For as our ships of war are our bulwarks, and our sailors are the proper guards for defending such works, so it is of the utmost importance to have always ready, for manning our fleets, a number of able seamen. Now, these are most readily supplied by our fisheries. And when were these in their most flourishing state? in 1759, or 1777? Were more British ships employed in the fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, or in the gulf of St. Lawrence, or on the coasts of Labrador, then, than there are now? Were there half as many? Again: Were there more employed in the fisheries for whales, and fish to make oil? Were there even half as many? As to the fisheries on our own coasts, and on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, can any man deny that they have hugely increased during these eighteen years? Indeed all our fisheries are now in a more flourishing condition than ever they were before." Allowing then, that we have sustained some loss in Newfoundland, what is this to the total gain? On this account, therefore, we have no reason to talk of the "ruinous state of the nation."

7. “As to the tendency of our taxes, having previously observed, that the hands of the diligent and frugal are the only hands which make a nation rich; I have then to ask, Do our taxes in general, especially those which took place the last year, tend to make the people diligent and frugal, or idle and extravagant? Do they tend to promote industry, or obstruct it? to turn bees into drones, or drones into bees? Of late years we have made several excellent alterations in our taxes: We have repealed that very injudicious tax which in a manner prohibited the importing of butter, tallow, lard, and other articles from Ireland. Hence the mutual intercourse between the two kingdoms has prodigiously increased. Our shipping and navigation likewise have increased in the same proportion. And so has the quantity of English goods and manufactures exported thither. Does this show a decay of trade; or give a just ground for our daily complaints and lamentations?”

8. “The clear amount of the annual revenue is a matter of fact, and capable of ocular demonstration. Now, let an appeal be made to the proper accounts, which state the amount of all the taxes of the year 1759; let these accounts be compared with those of the year 1777, and you cannot but see with your own eyes where the advantage lies; yea, notwithstanding the loss of our tobacco trade from Maryland and Virginia, and notwithstanding the great failure of the crops of sugar, as well as of cider and perry.

9. “The last article is the national debt. And great it undoubtedly is. Yet, comparatively speaking, it is not so great now, as it was in 1759. For if the nation is now (as has been clearly shown) very considerably richer, then it is better able to bear an equal or a greater load of national debt, than it was at that juncture.

“To illustrate this by a familiar instance: A private trader, who has but an hundred pounds in the world, is greatly in debt if he owes but twenty pounds; and is in danger of stopping payment for want of cash, or of being crushed by some wealthy rival. But if he has a thousand pounds in stock, and owes two hundred, he is in far less danger. And if he has ten thousand pounds stock, and owes two thousand, he is in no danger; nay, he is a rich man.

“Not that I would encourage the running any farther in debt. I only intend to show that our distresses, which raise such tragical exclamations, are more imaginary than real.”

Thus far the Dean of Gloucester. And what can be more fair and candid than these reasonings? What can be more satisfactory to you who are of no party, but an honest inquirer after truth? Perhaps you lately heard a strange, broken, maimed account all on one side of the question, of debts without any credits to balance! And what could you learn from this? Now you hear both sides, and thence may easily see what is the real state of the nation. And how much better is it, in all the preceding respects, than it was eighteen years ago! What becomes then of all those passionate outcries concerning the “dreadful condition we are in,” when it undeniably appears, to every candid inquirer, that we have not been in so good a condition these fifty years! On how totally insufficient grounds is the contrary supposition built! “We have lost — near as many ships as we have taken! We have been disturbed on the banks of Newfoundland; and we can no longer sell our brethren like sheep, and pour out their blood like water; therefore the nation is in a desperate state; therefore we are on the brink of ruin!” And are these the best arguments that can be found to support the lamentable conclusion!

Now, my friends, give me leave to sum up briefly what has been offered on the other side. And, I pray, observe the difference; mark the firm and solid foundation whereon the conclusion is built. The prosperous or adverse state of the nation is to be judged of from the state of its population, its agriculture, its manufactures, its land and fresh-water carriage of goods, its salt-water carriage of goods, its fisheries, the tendency of its taxes, its annual revenue, and the national debt. But you have seen, that, in each of these particulars, considered one by one, England is not in a worse but in a far better state than it was eighteen years ago; so far from being on the brink of ruin, that it is in a state of eminent prosperity.

Let none then deceive you with vain words! Let none by subtle reasonings, or by artful, elaborate harangues, persuade you out of your senses. Let no sweet-tongued orator, by his smooth periods, steal away

your understanding; no thundering talker fill you with vain fears of evils that have no being. Be aware of all who (perhaps sincerely) strive to terrify you with creatures of their own imagination. You are encompassed with liberty, peace, and plenty. You see them on the right hand and on the left. Let no man then cast a mist before your eyes, and face you down that they are poverty and slavery. Know the public as well as private blessings which you enjoy, and be thankful to God and man.

There is only one reason why we should fear: There is a God that judgeth the earth. And as none can harm us if we have Him for our friend, so none can help us if we have Him for our enemy. Is it not wise then seriously to consider this, Is God our friend or our enemy? But who thinks or cares about it? Too many of us do not: God is not in all our thoughts. I am afraid ignorance, yea, contempt, of God, is the present characteristic of the English nation. A late writer supposes it to be sloth and luxury; but I cannot think so; because neither of these is peculiar to us; our neighbors vie with us in both; many of them are full as slothful as us, and many of them are as luxurious. But none can vie with us in this; There is no nation upon earth that is equally profane. Is there any people under heaven that pays no more regard than we do to the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth? What nation (I do not say in the Christian, but in the Mahometan or pagan, world) uses his great and venerable name with so little ceremony? In what country is there to be heard in so great abundance

The horrid oath, the direful curse,
(That latest weapon of the wretch's war!)
And blasphemy, sad comrade of despair?

Comrade of despair! So it uses to be in other countries; but in ours it is the comrade of mirth and jollity! We daily curse and swear, and blaspheme the Most High, merely by way of diversion, almost from the highest to the lowest. Nobility, gentry, tradesmen, peasants, blaspheme the worthy name whereby we are called, without provocation, without remorse! Sloth and luxury we allow are general among us; but profaneness is well-nigh universal. Whoever spends but a few days in any of our large towns, will find abundant proof, that senseless, shameless, stupid profaneness is the true characteristic of the English nation.

Meantime we say, (in effect, if not in terms,) “Is there knowledge in the Most High? Tush, thou God carest not for it.”

But are we sure of this? I doubt, he does: I doubt, if this is still added to all the other instances of impiety, he will soon say, “Shall I not visit for these things? Shall I not be avenged on such a nation as this?” Let us be wise in time! Let us be as wise, at least, as the inhabitants of Nineveh; let us make our peace with God, and then we may defy all the men upon earth!

A nation God delights to bless,
 Can all our raging foes distress,
 Or hurt whom they surround?
 Hid from the general scourge we are,
 Nor see the bloody waste of war,
 Nor hear the trumpet’s sound.
 O might we, Lord, the grace improve,
 By laboring for the rest of love,
 The soul-composing power!
 Bless us with that internal peace,
 And all the fruits of righteousness,
 Till time shall be no more!

LONDON,

Feb. 20, 1778.

A

COMPASSIONATE ADDRESS

TO

THE INHABITANTS OF IRELAND.

LIMERICK, *May* 10, 1778.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

1. **B**EFORE I left London (two or three months ago) a general panic prevailed there. Some vehemently affirmed and others potently believed, that the nation was in a most desperate state; that it was upon the very brink of ruin, past all hopes of recovery. Soon after, I found that the same panic had spread throughout the city of Bristol. I traced it likewise wherever I went, in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire. When I crossed the Channel, I was surprised to find it had got before me to Ireland; and that it was not only spread through Dublin first, and thence to every part of Leinster, but had found its way into Munster too, into Cork, Bandon, and Limerick: In all which places people were terrifying themselves and their neighbors, just as they did in London.

2. “How is it possible,” say they, “that we should contend with so many enemies together? If General Washington has (as Mr. Franklin of Limerick computes) sixty-five thousand men; if the powerful fleet and numerous armies of France are added to these; if Spain, in consequence of the family compact, declares war at the same time; and if Portugal join in confederacy with them, what will become of us? Add to these the enemies of our own household, ready to start up on every side; and when France invades us from without, and these from within, what can follow but ruin and destruction?”

3. I would fain speak a word of comfort to my poor neighbors, that they may not be frightened to death. Perhaps, my friends, things are not in altogether so desperate a situation as you imagine. When I was at Cork last week, I conversed largely with some persons who were just landed from Philadelphia. I could thoroughly depend upon the account they gave, as they had had full means of information, and had no possible interest to serve by misrepresenting anything. The substance of their account was this: "In December, General Washington had seventeen or eighteen thousand men in his army. From that time thirty, forty, sometimes fifty of them died in a day by a pestilential fever; and in two months' time, upwards of fifteen hundred deserted to General Howe. So that many were inclined to believe he had not when we came away much more than five thousand effective men left." Never fright yourselves, therefore, about General Washington's huge army, that melted away like snow in harvest. The English forces meantime are in perfect health, (about sixteen thousand,) and have plenty of all things.

4. "But there are twenty or thirty thousand recruits to join him in a month or two; and what will General Howe do then?" Just as he does now; he will regard any number of them as much as he would so many sparrows. For what could fifty thousand raw men do, that had never seen the face of an enemy? especially when, by the tenure of their service, they were only to stay in the army nine months? (The circumstance concerning which General Washington so earnestly expostulated with the Congress.) Will these dead-doing men, do you think, be in haste to cut off all the old, weather-beaten Englishmen! Otherwise they will not have made an end of them, before the time comes for their returning home!

5. "But I do not believe the American army is in this condition." If you do not, I cannot help it. And you have no more right to be angry at me for believing it, than I at you for not believing it. Let each of us then, without resentment or bitterness, permit the other to think for himself.

6. "O, but the French will swallow us up." They will as soon swallow up the sea. Pray, which way is it they are to come at us, unless they can fly through the air? It is certain our fleet, notwithstanding the shameless lies

told to the contrary, is now every way in a better condition than it ever was since England was a nation. And while we are indisputably masters at sea, what can the French do but gnash their teeth at us? “Nay, but Spain will join them.” That is by no means clear. They have not forgot the Havannah yet. But, if they do, we are well able to deal with them both; full as able as we were the last war.

7. “Yea, but Portugal too will declare against us.” I do not believe one word of it. The Portuguese (to say nothing about their gratitude) are not such arrant fools; they understand their own interest better; they need no one to inform them, that if the English were only to stand center, the Spaniards would eat them up at a mouthful. They well know the present war will not last always; and, in the end, either England will prevail, or not. If it does not, if Spain prevail over England, England cannot defend Portugal. If England prevail over Spain, she will not. She will doubtless leave His Most Faithful Majesty to receive the reward he has so justly deserved from the fleet and army of his neighbor.

8. “But do not you know the French squadron is sailed to assist them, with four thousand soldiers on board?” I really do not, nor you neither; nor any man in Ireland. That they are sailed, I know; but not whether to Africa, or Asia, or America. But have they four thousand soldiers on board? And is that all? I heard they were twelve thousand. But in how many transports did they embark? We could not hear of one. Where then were the soldiers to be put? in the hold of the men-of-war, or on the shrouds? This story is not well devised; it manifestly confutes itself. But suppose twelve thousand are sailed, are they sure to land? Do they command the winds and seas? And, if they do, are they sure the English fleet will not speak with them by the way? If they escape these, are they sure of landing without opposition? Is it certain that all our soldiers will stand meantime with their fingers in their mouth? How great then is the odds against the French ever joining the American army! Although, if they did, there is no doubt but General Howe would give a good account of them all.

9. “Why, to say the truth, we are not so much afraid of Portugal or Spain, yea, or of France itself, as we are of those intestine vipers, who are always

ready to tear out; their mother's bowels. And how should we defend ourselves against these, if they made a general insurrection?" This is worth considering. It is certain, it is undoubtedly plain, it is beyond all contradiction, if they gave a large dose of laudanum to all His Majesty's liege subjects; if every man, woman, and child in the four provinces fell fast asleep all at once; if they all continued to sleep till the insurgents had brought their matters to bear in every city and town in the kingdom; if then the conspirators came all in the same hour, and cut off their heads at a stroke; the nation certainly, without all doubt, would be in a very fearful condition! But till this is the case, you need no more be afraid of ten thousand White Boys, than of ten thousand crows.

10. There is no need at present that an handful of men should oppose themselves to a multitude. Blessed be God, there are still within the kingdom some thousands of regular troops, of horse as well as foot, who are ready to march wherever they shall be wanted; over and above the independent companies at Birr, at Mountmellick, at Bandon, and at Cork; at which city alone no less than six of these companies are formed already; which it is supposed, when they shall be completed, will contain at least two thousand men. And as they exercise themselves every day, they are already expert in the whole military exercise. So that were any so mad as to attempt making an insurrection, it would be crushed in its very infancy.

11. "But is there not another ground of fear? Is there not 'a God that judgeth the earth?' And have not England and Ireland (to speak in the language of Scripture) 'filled up the measure of their iniquity?'" I answer,

(1.) I allow that wickedness of various kinds has over spread the land like a flood. It would be easy to enlarge upon this melancholy truth; it cannot be denied that,

The rich, the poor, the high, the low,
 Have wander'd from his mild command:
 The floods of wickedness o'erflow,
 And deluge all the guilty land:
 People and Priest lie drown'd in sin,
 And Tophet yawns to take them in.

But yet,

(2.) I totally deny that either England or Ireland have yet “filled up the measure of their iniquities.” “Why, what have they not done? What abomination can be named or conceived which they have not committed?” I will tell you: They have not done what was done of old, before God delivered up the Jews to destruction. They have not “shed the blood of the just in the midst of Jerusalem.” Neither in London, Dublin, nor any other of our cities, has there been any instance of the kind. To which of our Governors in either England or Ireland can those words of our Lord be applied? “Behold, I send unto you Prophets; and some of them ye will kill; and some of them ye will scourge, and persecute from city to city. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee!” (Matthew 23:34, etc.) Now, neither England nor Ireland has done this, at least during the present century. Therefore, it cannot be affirmed that they have “filled up the measure of their iniquities.” Consequently we have no reason to believe that our Lord will yet say, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!”

12. I have another reason to believe that God will yet have compassion upon a sinful land: What was it which he said of old time to Abraham interceding for guilty Sodom? “I will not destroy the city, if there be fifty, twenty, yea, ten righteous men found in it.” And are there not ten, twenty, fifty righteous men to be found in our Sodom? Dare you affirm, or have you reason to believe, that there are only twenty hundred? And will God “destroy the righteous with the wicked! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Besides, will not all these righteous men wrestle with God for their people and nation? And does he not hear the prayer?

Let Moses in the spirit groan,
And God cries out, Let me alone!

Let me alone, that all my wrath
May rise the wicked to consume:
While Justice hears thy praying faith
It cannot seal the sinner’s doom.

My Son is in my servant’s prayer,
And Jesus forces me to spare.

13. I add but one reason more, why we may rationally hope that these kingdoms, sinful as they are, will not yet be given up to destruction. Religion, true, scriptural religious, the love of God and our neighbor, inviting men to avoid evil and to do good, to practice justice, mercy, and truth, is not decreasing therein; no, it is continually increasing in every part of the kingdom; as an impartial inquirer cannot but observe, whether he turn east, west, north, or south. Now, I know no instance in all history, from the earliest ages to this day, of the Governor of the world delivering up a kingdom to destruction, while religion was increasing in it. I believe no such instance can be found. And indeed it seems to be totally inconsistent with his wisdom and goodness, and with the rules whereby He hath governed all nations from the beginning of the world. Fear him therefore with a filial fear; and you need fear nothing but him. In this sense also, one thing is needful, — the making God your friend. And when we have “a conscience void of offense towards God and towards man,” we may say with boldness, “The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge: Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the depth of the sea. The flood thereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.”

HOW FAR IS IT THE DUTY OF A CHRISTIAN MINISTER TO PREACH POLITICS?

1. It is impossible to answer this question before it is understood. We must, First, therefore endeavor to understand it; and then it will be easy to answer.

2. There is a plain command in the Bible, “Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.” But notwithstanding this, many that are called religious people speak evil of him continually. And they speak many things that are palpably false; particularly when they affirm him to be a weak man; whereas a Nobleman, who is not at all prejudiced in his favor, when he was pressed to speak, made this honest declaration: “Sir, I know him well; and I judge the King to be one of the most sensible men in Europe. His Ministers are no fools; but His Majesty is able to wind them all round his finger.”

3. Now, when a Clergyman comes into a place where this and many more stories, equally false, have been diligently propagated against the King, and are generally believed, if he guards the people against this evil-speaking, by refuting those slanders, many cry out, “O, he is preaching politics!”

4. If you mean this by the term, it is the bounden duty of every Christian Minister to preach politics. It is our bounden duty to refute these vile aspersions, in public as well as in private. But this can be done only now and then, when it comes naturally in our way. For it is our main and constant business to “preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

5. Again: Many who do not so freely censure the King, speak all manner of evil of his Ministers. If any misfortune befalls us at home or abroad, by sea or land, it is “all their fault.” If one commander in America is surprised with all his forces when he is dead drunk, “Lord North deserves to be

hanged.” If General Burgoyne or Lord Cornwallis is betrayed into their enemy’s hand, all the blame is laid on our Ministers at home. But still the King is wounded through their sides; the blame glances from them to him. Yet if we say a word in defense of them, (which is in effect defending him,) this also is preaching politics.

6. It is always difficult and frequently impossible for private men to judge of the measures taken by men in public offices. We do not see many of the grounds which determine them to act in this or the contrary manner. Generally, therefore, it behooves us to be silent, as we may suppose they know their own business best; but when they are censured without any color of reason, and when an odium is cast on the King by that means, we ought to preach politics in this sense also; we ought publicly to confute those unjust censures: Only remembering still, that this is rarely to be done, and only when fit occasion offers; it being our main business to preach “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

JOHN WESLEY.

LEWISHAM, *January* 9, 1782.

AN ESTIMATE

OF

THE MANNERS OF THE PRESENT TIMES.

(PRINTED THE YEAR 1785.)

1. SOME years ago an ingenious man published a treatise with this title. According to him, the characteristics of the English at present are sloth and luxury. And thus much we may allow, that neither the one nor the other ever abounded in England as they do at this day. With regard to sloth, it was the constant custom of our ancestors to rise at four in the morning. This was the stated hour, summer and winter, for all that were in health. The two Houses of Parliament met “at five;” *hord quintd antemeridiana*, says their Journal. But how is it with people of fashion now? They can hardly huddle on their clothes before eight or nine o’clock in the morning; perhaps some of them not before twelve. And when they are risen, what do they do?

They waste away
In gentle inactivity the day.

How many are so far from working with their hands that they can scarce set a foot to the ground! How many, even young, healthy men, are too lazy either to walk or ride! They must loll in their carriages day by day; and these can scarce be made easy enough! And must not the minor Gentry have their coaches too? Yea, if they only ride on the outside. See here the grand cause (together with intemperance) of our innumerable nervous complaints! For how imperfectly do either medicines or the cold bath supply the place of exercise! without which the human body can no more continue in health than without sleep or food.

2. We allow likewise the abundant increase of luxury, both in meat, drink, dress, and furniture. What an amazing profusion of food do we see, not only at a Nobleman's table, but at an ordinary city entertainment; suppose of the Shoemakers' or Tailors' Company! What variety of wines, instead of the good, home-brewed ale, used by our forefathers! What luxury of apparel, changing like the moon, in the city and country, as well as at Court! What superfluity of expensive furniture glitters in all our great men's houses! And luxury naturally increases sloth, unfitting us for exercise either of body or mind. Sloth, on the other hand, by destroying the appetite, leads to still farther luxury. And how many does a regular kind of luxury betray at last into gluttony and drunkenness; yea, and lewdness too of every kind; which indeed is hardly separable from them!

3. But allowing all these things, still this is not a true estimate of the present manners of the English nation. For whatever is the characteristic of a nation, is, First, universal, found in all the individuals of it, or at least in so very great a majority, that the exceptions are not worth regarding. It is, Secondly, constant, found not only now and then, but continually, without intermission; and, Thirdly, peculiar to that nation, in contradistinction to all others. But neither luxury nor sloth is either universal or constant in England, much less peculiar to it.

4. Whatever may be the case of many of the Nobility and Gentry, (the whole body of whom are not a twentieth part of the nation,) it is by no means true, that the English in general, much less universally, are a slothful people. There are not only some Gentlemen, yea, and Noblemen, who are of the ancient stamp, who are patterns of industry in their calling to all that are round about them, but it is undeniable that a vast majority of the middle and lower ranks of people are diligently employed from morning to night, and from the beginning to the end of the year. And indeed those who are best acquainted with other nations, will not scruple to testify, that the bulk of the English are at this day as diligent as any people in the universe.

5. Neither is sloth the constant, any more than the universal, character of the English nation. Upon many occasions even those that are most infected with it arise and shake themselves from the dust. Witness the behavior of those of the highest rank, when they were engaged in war. Did

anyone charge sloth on the late Duke of Marlborough, or the Marquis of Granby? Witness the behavior of many eminent men in the militia, setting an example to all their troops! Yea, some of them were neither afraid nor ashamed to march on foot at the head of their men!

6. Least of all is sloth peculiar to the English nation. Is there no such thing even in Holland? Is there none in Germany? Certainly there is enough of it, and to spare, in every part of France; and yet there is a more abundant harvest of it both in Italy, Spain, and Portugal: So utterly void of truth is that assertion, that sloth is the present characteristic of the English nation!

7. Neither is luxury. For it is not universal, no, nor general. The food which is used by nine-tenths of our nation is (as it ever was) plain and simple. A vast majority of the nation, if we take in all the living souls, are not only strangers to gluttony and drunkenness, but to delicacy either of meat or drink. Neither do they err in quantity any more than in quality, but take what nature requires, and no more.

8. And as luxury in food is not universal in England, so neither is luxury in apparel. Thousands in every part of the kingdom are utterly guiltless of it. Whether by choice or necessity, their dress is as plain as their food; and so is their furniture. We may farther affirm, that even lewdness is not yet universal in England; although we are making swift advances toward it, by playhouses, masquerades, and pantheons.

9. And even where luxury in food and dress is most prevalent, yet it is not constant. Both the one and the other are laid aside, at particular seasons, even by Gentlemen and Noblemen. How many of these are, in time of war, regardless both of food and apparel! Yea, what a contempt of both did they show even during the shadow of war, while they lay encamped in various parts of the kingdom!

10. Neither is luxury peculiar to the English nation. What is our luxury in dress to that of the French? And luxury in food is carried to as great a height even in Germany; and to a much greater in France. The French scorn to stand on a level herein with the dull Germans. In the northern kingdoms, too, there are as many gluttons as in ours, and at least as many drunkards.

And as to the basest branch of luxury, if we may give credit to eyewitnesses, (I cite Dr. Johnson in particular, and Lady Mary Wortley Montague,) what is all the lewdness of London, to that of Vienna, Paris, Rome, and all the large cities of Italy? English ladies are not attended by their cicerones yet; nor would any English husband suffer it. So that, bad as we were, we are sober and temperate, yea, and modest, in comparison of our neighbors.

11. But if sloth and luxury are not, what is the present characteristic of the English nation?

It is ungodliness. This is at present the characteristic of the English nation. Ungodliness is our universal, our constant, our peculiar character.

I do not mean Deism; the not assenting to revealed religion. No; a Deist is a respectable character, compared to an ungodly man. But by ungodliness I mean, first, a total ignorance of God; Secondly, a total contempt of him.

12. And, First, a total ignorance of God is almost universal among us. The exceptions are exceeding few, whether among the learned or unlearned. High and low, cobblers, tinkers, hackney-coachmen men and maid servants, soldiers, sailors, tradesmen of all ranks, Lawyers, Physicians, Gentlemen, Lords, are as ignorant of the Creator of the world as Mahometans or Pagans. They look up to that "brave o'er-hanged firmament, fretted with golden fires;" they see the moon walking in brightness, the sun on his meridian throne; they look round on the various furniture of the earth, herbs, flowers, trees, in all their beauty; and coolly ascribe all to nature, without having any idea affixed to the word. Should you seriously ask them, What is nature? they know not how to answer. Perhaps they will say, "Why, it is the course of things, that always was and always will be." *Always was!* Then you assert that the present course of things was from eternity. If so, the world is eternal; either then there are two eternals, or there is no God!

13. So much the good people of England in general know of God their Creator! And high and low, from the meanest peasant to the gayest butterfly at court, know just as much of God their Governor. They know

not, they do not in the least suspect, that he governs the world he has made; that he is the supreme and absolute Disposer of all things both in heaven and earth. A poor Heathen (though a Consul, a Prime Minister) knew *Deorum providentia cuncta geri*; that “the providence of God directs all things.” *Providence!* What is that? Do you know anything about it? “Yes, I do; I never denied a general Providence.” *A general Providence!* What do you mean? What is a general that includes no particulars? What is a whole that does not contain any parts? It is a self-contradiction, it is arrant nonsense. Either, therefore, allow a particular providence, or do not pretend to believe any providence at all. If you do not believe that the Governor of the world governs all things in it, small and great; that fire and hail, snow and vapor, wind and storm, fulfill his word; that he rules kingdoms and cities, fleets and armies, and all the individuals whereof they are composed; (and yet without forcing the wills of men, or necessitating any of their actions;) do not affect to believe that he governs anything, or has anything to do in the world. No; be consistent with yourself: Say that, as nature produced, so chance governs, all things. At least, if you must, for decency’s sake, acknowledge a kind of God, maintain that,

Since he gave things their beginning,
And set this whirligig a-spinning,

he left it, and everything therein, to spin on in its own way.

14. Whether this is right or no, it is almost the universal sentiment of the English nation. And if high and low are so totally ignorant of God their Governor, are they likely to know any more of God their Redeemer, or of God their Judge, who will shortly reward every man according to his works? In very deed, God is not in all their thoughts; they do not think of him from morning to night. Whether they are forming particular or national schemes, God has no place therein. They do not take God into their account; they can do their whole business without him; without considering whether there be any God in the world; or whether he has any share in the management of it.

15. And whatever be the event of their undertakings, whether they have good or ill success, they do not suppose God to have any part either in the

one or the other. They take it for granted, that the race is to the swift, and the battle to the strong. Therefore, if things succeed well, they give no praise to God, but to the conduct of their General and the courage of their men. And if they succeed ill, they do not see the hand of God, but impute all to natural causes.

16. The English in general, high and low, rich and poor, do not speak of God. They do not say anything about Him, from day to day, from week to week, from year to year. They talk of anything beside; they are not so squeamish as the old poet, who would not spend his breath in talking

*De villis domibusve alienis;
Nec male necne Lepos saltet.*²⁵

We talk indifferently on everything that comes in the way; on everything — but God. If any one were to name him in good company, with any degree of seriousness, suppose at a Gentleman or Nobleman's table, would not they all stand aghast? Would not a profound silence ensue, till some one started a more agreeable subject?

17. Again: A vast majority of the English live in the constant neglect of the worship of God. To form a judgment of this, you may take a specimen in the good city of London. How few of the inhabitants worship God in public, even one day in a week! Do not yet fewer of them make a conscience of worshipping God in their families? And perhaps they are a still smaller number that daily worship God in their closets. Such, if we acknowledge the truth, is the general, constant ungodliness of the English nation!

18. But negative ungodliness (so to speak) is the least exceptionable part of our character. Proceed we then to the positive ungodliness, which overflows every part of our land.

The first branch of this positive ungodliness, and such as shows an utter contempt of God, is perjury. And to this the common people are strongly tempted in our public Courts of Justice, by the shocking manner wherein oaths are usually administered there, contrary to all sense and decency.

Forty years ago, (and perhaps it may be so still,) when an oath was administered in the Court of Savannah in Georgia, the Judge with all on the bench rose up, and stood uncovered while it was administering; and none moved his foot, or uttered a word, till they sat down again. Has not every English Judge power to introduce the same solemnity into every court where he presides? Certainly he has. And if he does not exert that power, he is inexcusable before God and man.

19. Till this is done, our shameless manner of administering oaths will increase the constant perjuries in our nation. They are farther increased by our multiplying oaths to such an amazing degree; and that on the slightest occasions. Hence perjury infects the whole nation. It is constant, from month to month, from year to year. And it is a glory which no nation divides with us; it is peculiar to ourselves. There is nothing like it to be found in any other (Christian or Heathen) nation under heaven.

20. To descend to particulars would be tedious: Suffice it to observe in general, there are exceeding few Justices of the Peace, Mayors of Corporations, Sheriffs, Constables, or Churchwardens; exceeding few Officers of the Customs, the Excise, or any public office whatever, who are not constantly perjured, taking oaths which they never intend to keep. Add to these, thousands, yea, myriads of the voters at elections, particularly for members of Parliament: Add thousands of the students in each University, who swear to a book of statutes, which they never read, which most of them never design to read, and much less to observe: Then judge, whether there be any nation on the face of the earth, which can vie with the English in perjury!

21. There is one other species of ungodliness, which is, if possible, still more general among us; which is also constant, being to be heard in every street every day in the year; and which is quite peculiar to our nation, to England, and its dependencies; namely, the stupid, senseless, shameless ungodliness of taking the name of God in vain. Where in the habitable world do the people so continually pray the great God to “damn their souls?” Where else do they so blaspheme the Majesty of Heaven? so idly swear by the name of God? Some wretched gentlemen (so called) set the example, which the small vulgar readily follow. And these curses and oaths

they pour out wantonly, without any provocation; and desperately, without any remorse. Let those who are acquainted with ancient and modern history say, whether there is or ever was any heathen nation, wherein such a total contempt of God, such horrid ungodliness, so generally and constantly prevailed!

22. See then, Englishmen, what is the undoubted characteristic of our nation; it is ungodliness. True, it was not always so: For many ages we had as much of the fear of God as our neighbors. But in the last age, many who were absolute strangers to this, made so large a profession of it, that the nation in general was surfeited, and, at the Restoration, ran headlong from one extreme to the other. It was then ungodliness broke in upon us as a flood; and when shall its dire waves be stayed?

23. Countrymen, is ungodliness any honor to our nation? Let men of reason judge. Is this outraging the Greatest and Best of beings, a thing honorable in itself? Surely you cannot think so. Does it gain us any honor in the eyes of other nations? Nay, just the contrary. Some of them abhor the very name of Englishmen, others despise us, on this very account. They look upon us as monsters, hardly worthy to be ranked among human creatures.

24. Ye men of candor, say, does this ungodliness bring any real advantage to our nation? Innumerable advantages we enjoy; but might we not have them without discarding the fear of God? Might we not prosper as well, both by sea and land, if we did not set God at open defiance? if we did not so continually affront him to his face, and dare him to do his worst? If He has not left chance to govern the world, and if he is really stronger than men, will not our affairs go on better if God is our friend, than if he is our enemy? Is God an enemy to be despised? Rather, is there not reason in those words of the old warrior: —

Non me tua fervida terrent
*Dicta, ferox; Dii me terrent et Jupiter hostis!*²⁶

We have had excellent, well-appointed fleets; we have had numerous veteran armies. And what have they done? Have we not more and more reason to make that melancholy exclamation,

*Heu, nihil invitis fas quenquam fidere. Divis!*²⁷

25. Can you believe, that our total ignorance of God, and our general contempt of Him, who, whether men will acknowledge it or no, has still all power in heaven and in earth, can be well pleasing to him? We need not care for all the *fervida dicta*, all the rodomontades, of France and Spain. But if the Lord of the universe is against us, ought we not to care? unless we are very sure that our fleets and armies can prevail against Him! Otherwise, would it be any disgrace to humble ourselves, not to man, but to God? to use every means to secure Him for our friend, now all our other friends have failed us? Then, admitting “there is no other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God,” yet shall none be able to hurt us, but peace and every other blessing shall return both to us and to our colonies.

A WORD TO A SABBATH-BREAKER.

“Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.”

HAVE you forgotten who spoke these words? Or do you set Him at defiance? Do you bid Him do his worst? Have a care. You are not stronger than He. “Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth; but woe unto the man that contendeth with his Maker. He sitteth on the circle of the heavens; and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him!”

“Six days shalt thou do all manner of work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” It is not thine, but God’s day. He claims it for his own. He always did claim it for his own, even from the beginning of the world. “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it.” He *hallowed* it; that is, he made it holy; He reserved it for his own service. He appointed, that as long as the sun or the moon, the heavens and the earth, should endure, the children of men should spend this day in the worship of Him who “gave them life and breath and all things.”

Shall a man then rob God? And art thou the man? Consider, think what thou art doing! Is it not God who giveth thee all thou hast? Every day thou livest, is it not his gift? And wilt thou give him none? Nay, wilt thou deny him what is his own already? He will not, he cannot, quit his claim. This day is God’s. It was so from the beginning. It will be so to the end of the world. This he cannot give to another. O “render unto God the things that are God’s,” now; “today, while it is called today!”

For whose sake does God lay claim to this day? for his sake, or for thine? Doubtless, not for his own. He needeth not thee, nor any child of man. “Look unto the heavens and see, and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what doest thou against Him? If thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto Him? If thou art

righteous, what givest thou Him? Or what receiveth He of thine hand?" For thy own sake, therefore, God thy Maker doeth this. For thy own sake he calleth thee to serve him. For thy own sake He demands a part of thy time to be restored to Him that gave thee all. Acknowledge his love. Learn, while thou art on earth, to praise the King of Heaven. Spend this day as thou hopest to spend that day which never shall have an end.

The Lord not only hallowed the Sabbath-day, but he hath also blessed it. So that you are an enemy to yourself You throw away your own blessing, if you neglect to "keep this day holy." It is a day of special grace. The King of heaven now sits upon his mercy-seat, in a more gracious manner than on other days, to bestow blessings on those who observe it. If you love your own soul, can you then forbear laying hold on so happy an opportunity? Awake, arise, let God give thee his blessing! Receive a token of his love! Cry to him that thou mayest find the riches of his grace and mercy in Christ Jesus! You do not know how few more of these days of salvation you may have. And how dreadful would it be, to be called hence in the abuse of his proffered mercy!

O what mercy hath God prepared for you, if you do not trample it under foot I "What mercy hath He prepared for them that fear Him, even before the sons of men!" A peace which the world cannot give, joy, that no man taketh from you; rest from doubt and fear and sorrow of heart; and love, the beginning of heaven. And are not these for you? Are they not all purchased for you by Him who loved you, and gave himself for you? for you, a sinner? you, a rebel against God? you, who have so long crucified him afresh? Now "look unto Him whom you have pierced!" Now say, Lord, it is enough. I have fought against thee long enough. I yield, I yield. "Jesus, Master, have mercy upon me!"

On this day above all, cry aloud, and spare not, to the "God who heareth prayer." This is the day he hath set apart for the good of your soul, both in this world and that which is to come. Never more disappoint the design of his love, either by worldly business or idle diversions. Let not a little thing keep you from the house of God, either in the forenoon or afternoon. And spend as much as you can of the rest of the day, either in repeating what you have heard, or in reading the Scripture, or in private prayer, or

talking of the things of God. Let his love be ever before your eyes. Let his praise be ever in your mouth. You have lived many years in folly and sin; now, live one day unto the Lord.

Do not ask anymore, “Where is the harm, if, after Church, I spend the remainder of the day in the fields, or in a public-house, or in taking a little diversion?” You know where is the harm. Your own heart tells you so plain, that you cannot but hear. It is a base misspending of your talent, and a barefaced contempt of God and his authority. You have heard of God’s judgments, even upon earth, against the profaners of this day. And yet these are but as drops of that storm of “fiery indignation, which will” at last “consume his adversaries.”

Glory be to God who hath now given you a sense of this. You now know, this was always designed for a day of blessing. May you never again, by your idleness or profaneness, turn that blessing into a curse! What folly, what madness would that be! And in what sorrow and anguish would it end! For yet a little while, and death will close up the day of grace and mercy. And those who despise them now, will have no more Sabbaths, or sacraments, or prayers for ever. Then how will they wish to recover that which they now so idly cast away! But all in vain. For they will then “find no place for repentance, though they should seek it carefully with tears.”

O my friend, know the privilege you enjoy. Now, “remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.” Your day of life and of grace is far spent. The night of death is at hand. Make haste to use the time you have; improve the last hours of your day. Now provide “the things which make for your peace,” that you may stand before the face of God for ever.

A WORD TO A SWEARER.

“*Swear not at all,*”

SAITH the Lord God of heaven and earth. Art thou without God in the world? Hast thou no knowledge of God, no concern about him? Is not God in all thy thoughts?

Dost thou believe there is a God? Where? in heaven only? Nay, he filleth all in all! Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?

Whither wilt thou go then from his Spirit? Or whither wilt thou flee from his presence? If thou go up into heaven, God is there: If thou go down into hell, he is there also. If thou take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there his hand shall touch thee, and his right hand shall hold thee.

God seeth thee now; his eyes are upon thee; he observes all thy thoughts; he compasseth thy path; he counteth all thy steps; he is acquainted with all thy ways; by him thy actions are weighed; nor is there a word in thy tongue but he knoweth it altogether.

And does not power belong unto God; yea, all power in heaven and in earth? Is he not able, even while thou readest or hearest these words, to crush thee into nothing? Can he not just now crumble thee into dust; or bid the earth open and swallow thee up? O do not set him at nought! do not provoke him thus! do not fly in his face! Can he not, in a moment, cast forth his lightnings and tear thee; shoot out his arrows and consume thee? What hinders him from cutting thee off this instant; sending thee now, now, quick into hell?

Would God do thee any wrong therein? What I in giving thee the request of thy own lips? What words were those thou spakest but now? Did not

God hear? Why, thou didst pray to God to send thee to hell! Thou didst ask him to damn thy soul! How, art thou in love with damnation? Art thou in haste to dwell with everlasting burnings; to be day and night tormented in that flame, without a drop of water to cool thy tongue?

Dost thou pray for this? pray God it may never be either my lot or thine. Alas, my brother? What, if God take thee at thy word! What, if he say, Be it unto thee even as thou wilt! What, if he give thee thy wish, and let thee drop into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!

I had rather thou shouldst go to the paradise of God. Hadst not thou? Is not heaven better than hell? Art thou not convinced of this in thy own conscience? Why, then, amend thy prayer. Cry to God: "Save my soul, for I have sinned against thee! Save me from all my sins. Save me from all my evil words, and evil works; from my evil tempers, and evil desires! Make me holy as thou art holy! Let me know thee, and love thee, and serve thee, now and for ever!"

And is not God willing to do this? Surely he is; for God loveth thee. He gave his only Son, that thou mightest not perish, but have everlasting life. Christ died for thee; and he that believeth on him hath everlasting life. Mark that word, — he hath it. He hath it now. He hath the beginning of heaven even upon earth; for his soul is filled with the love of God; and the love of God is heaven. He that truly believes on Jesus Christ hath a peace which earth cannot give; his mind is always calm; he hath learned in every state therewith to be content; he is always easy, quiet, well-pleased; always happy, in life and in death; for a believer is not afraid to die; he desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ; he desires to quit this house of clay, and to be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; to hear the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and to see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven; to stand at his right hand, and hear that word, (which I earnestly beg of God you and I may hear,) "Come, ye blessed, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world!"

A WORD TO A DRUNKARD.

1. **ARE** you a man God made you a man; but you make yourself a beast. Wherein does a man differ from a beast? Is it not chiefly in reason and understanding? But you throw away what reason you have. You strip yourself of your understanding. You do all you can to make yourself a mere beast; not a fool, not a madman only, but a swine, a poor filthy swine. Go and wallow with them in the mire! Go, drink on, till thy nakedness be uncovered, and shameful spewing be on thy glory!

2. O how honorable is a beast of God's making, compared to one who makes himself a beast! But that is not all. You make yourself a devil. You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you, and gain others, which perhaps were not in you; at least you heighten and increase them. You cause the fire of anger, or malice, or lust, to burn seven times hotter than before. At the same time you grieve the Spirit of God, till you drive him quite away from you; and whatever spark of good remained in your soul you drown and quench at once.

3. So you are now just fit for every work of the devil, having cast off all that is good or virtuous, and filled your heart with everything that is bad, that is earthly, sensual, devilish. You have forced the Spirit of God to depart from you; for you would take none of his reproof; and you have given yourself up into the hands of the devil, to be led blindfold by him at his will.

4. Now, what should hinder the same thing from befalling you, which befell him who was asked, which was the greatest sin, adultery, drunkenness, or murder; and which of the three he had rather commit. He said drunkenness was the least. Soon after, he got drunk; he then met with another man's wife, and ravished her. The husband coming to help her, he murdered him. So drunkenness, adultery, and murder went together.

5. I have heard a story of a poor wild Indian, far wiser than either him or you. The English gave him a cask of strong liquor. The next morning he called his friends together, and, setting it in the midst of them, said, "These white men have given us poison. This man" (calling him by his name) "was a wise man, and would hurt none but his enemies; but as soon as he had drunk of this, he was mad, and would have killed his own brother. We will not be poisoned." He then broke the cask, and poured the liquor upon the sand.

6. On what motive do you thus poison yourself? only for the pleasure of doing it? What! will you make yourself a beast, or rather a devil? Will you run the hazard of committing all manner of villanies; and this only for the poor pleasure of a few moments, while the poison is running down your throat? O never call yourself a Christian! Never call yourself a man! You are sunk beneath the greater part of the beasts that perish.

7. Do you not rather drink for the sake of company? Do you not do it to oblige your friends? "For company," do you say? How is this? Will you take a dose of ratsbane for company? If twenty men were to do so before you, would not you desire to be excused? How much more may you desire to be excused from going to hell for company? But, "to oblige your friends:" What manner of friends are they who would be obliged by your destroying yourself? who would suffer, nay, entice you so to do? They are villains. They are your worst enemies. They are just such friends, as a man that would smile in your face, and stab you to the heart.

8. O do not aim at any excuse! Say not, as many do, "I am no one's enemy but my own." If it were so, what a poor saying is this, "I give none but my own soul to the devil." Alas! is not that too much? Why shouldst thou give him thy own soul? Do it not. Rather give it to God.

But it is not so. You are an enemy to your King, whom you rob hereby of an useful subject. You are an enemy to your country, which you defraud of the service you might do, either as a man or as a Christian. You are an enemy to every man that sees you in your sin; for your example may move him to do the same. A drunkard is a public enemy. I should not

wonder at all, if you was (like Cain of old) afraid that “every man who meeteth you should slay you.”

9. Above all, you are an enemy to God, the great God of heaven and earth; to him who surrounds you on every side, and can just now send you quick into hell. Him you are continually affronting to his face. You are setting him at open defiance. O do not provoke him thus any more! Fear the great God!

10. You are an enemy to Christ, to the Lord that bought you. You fly in the face of his authority. You set at nought both his sovereign power and tender love. You crucify him afresh; and when you call him your Savior, what is it less than to “betray him with a kiss?”

11. O repent! See and feel what a wretch you are. Pray to God, to convince you in your inmost soul. How often have you crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame! Pray that you may know yourself, inwardly and outwardly, all sin, all guilt, all helplessness. Then cry out, “Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me!” Thou Lamb of God, take away my sins! Grant me thy peace. Justify the ungodly. O bring me to the blood of sprinkling, that I may go and sin no more, that I may love much, having had so much forgiven!

A WORD TO AN UNHAPPY WOMAN.

1. **W**HITHER are you going? to heaven or hell? Do you not know? Do you never think about it? Why do you not? Are you never to die? Nay, it is appointed for all men to die. And what comes after? Only heaven or hell. Will the not thinking of death, put it farther off? No; not a day; not one hour. Or will your not thinking of hell, save you from it? O no; you know better. And you know that every moment you are nearer hell, whether you are thinking of it or no; that is, if you are not nearer heaven. You must be nearer one or the other.

2. I entreat you, think a little on that plain question, Are you going toward heaven or hell? To which of the two does this way lead? Is it possible you should be ignorant? Did you never hear, that neither adulterers nor fornicators shall inherit the kingdom? that fornicators and adulterers God will judge? And how dreadful will be their sentence, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels!”

3. Surely you do not mock at the word of God! You are not yet sunk so low as this. Consider then that awful word, “Know ye not, that ye are the temples of God?” Was not you designed for the Spirit of God to dwell in? Was not you devoted to God in baptism? But “if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.” O do not provoke him to it any longer! Tremble before the great, the holy God!

4. Know you not, that your body is, or ought to be, the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? Know you not, that “you are not your own? for you are bought with a price.” And, O how great a price! “You are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” O when will you glorify God, with your body and your spirit, which are God’s!

5. Ah, poor wretch! How far are you from this? How low are you fallen! You yourself are ashamed of what you do. Are you not? Conscience,

speak in the sight of God! Does not your own heart condemn you at this very hour? Do not you shudder at the condition you are in? Dare, for once, to lay your hand upon your breast, and ask, "What am I doing? And what must the end of these things be?" Destruction both of body and soul.

6. *Destruction of body as well all of soul!* Can it be otherwise? Are you not plunging into misery in this world, as well as in the world to come? What have you brought upon yourself already? what infamy? what contempt? How could you now appear among those relations and friends that were once so loved, and so loving to you? What pangs have you given them? How do some of them still weep for you in secret places? And will you not weep for yourself, when you see nothing before you but want, pain, diseases, death? O spare yourself! Have pity upon your body, if not your soul! Stop! before you rot above ground and perish!

7. Do you ask, What shall I do? First, sin no more. First of all, secure this point. Now, this instant, now, escape for your life; stay not; look not behind you. Whatever you do, sin no more; starve, die, rather than sin. Be more careful for your soul than your body. Take care of that too; but of your poor soul first.

8. "But you have no friend; none at least that is able to help you." Indeed you have: One that is a present help in time of trouble. You have a friend that has all power in heaven and earth, even Jesus Christ the righteous. He loved sinners of old; and he does so still. He then suffered the publicans and harlots to come unto him. And one of them washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. I would to God you were in her place! Say, Amen! Lift up your heart, and it shall be done. How soon will he say, "Woman, be of good cheer; thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee. Go in peace. Sin no more. Love much; for thou hast much forgiven."

9. Do you still ask, But what shall I do for bread; for food to eat, and raiment to put on? I answer, in the name of the Lord God, (and, mark well! His promise shall not fail,) "Seek thou first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto thee."

Settle it first in your heart, Whatever I have or have not, I will not have everlasting burnings. I will not sell my soul and body for bread; better even starve on earth than burn in hell. Then ask help of God. He is not slow to hear. He hath never failed them that seek him. He who feeds the young ravens that call upon him, will not let you perish for lack of sustenance. He will provide, in a way you thought not of, if you seek him with your whole heart. O let your heart be toward him; seek him from the heart! Fear sin, more than want, more than death. And cry mightily to Him who bore your sins, till you have bread to eat that the world knoweth not of; till you have angels' food, even the love of God shed abroad in your heart; till you can say, "Now I know that my Redeemer liveth, that he hath loved me, and given himself for me; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God!"

A WORD TO A SMUGGLER.

I.

“WHAT is smuggling?” It is the importing, selling, or buying of run goods; that is, those which have not paid the duty appointed by law to be paid to the King.

1. Importing run goods. All smuggling vessels do this with an high hand. It is the chief, if not the whole, business of these to bring goods which have not paid duty.

2. Next to these are all sea Captains, Officers, sailors, or passengers, who import anything without paying the duty which the law requires.

3. A third sort of smugglers are all those who sell anything which has not paid the duty.

4. A fourth sort, those who buy tea, liquors, linen, handkerchiefs, or anything else which has not paid duty.

II.

“But why should they not? What harm is there in it?”

1. I answer, open smuggling (such as was common a few years ago, on the southern coasts especially) is robbing on the highway; and as much harm as there is in this, just so much there is in smuggling. A smuggler of this kind is no honester than an highwayman. They may shake hands together.

2. Private smuggling is just the same with picking of pockets. There is full as much harm in this as in that. A smuggler of this kind is no honester than a pickpocket. These may shake hands together.

3. But open smugglers are worse than common highwaymen, and private smugglers are worse than common pickpockets. For it is undoubtedly

worse to rob our father than one we have no obligation to. And it is worse still, far worse, to rob a good father, one who sincerely loves us, and is at that very time doing all he can to provide for us and to make us happy. Now, this is exactly the present case. King George is the father of all his subjects; and not only so, but he is a good father. He shows his love to them on all occasions; and is continually doing all that is in his power to make his subjects happy.

4. An honest man therefore would be ashamed to ask, Where is the harm in robbing such a father? His own reason, if he had any at all, would give him a speedy answer. But you are a Christian, — are you not? You say you believe the Bible. Then I say to you, in the name of God and in the name of Christ, “Thou shalt not steal.” Thou shalt not take what is not thine own, what is the right of another man. But the duties appointed by law are the King’s right, as much as your coat is your right. He has as good a right to them as you have to this: These are his property as much as this is yours. Therefore you are as much a thief if you take his duties, as a man is that takes your coat.

5. If you believe the Bible, I say to you, as our Savior said to them of old time, “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.” If then you mind our Savior’s words, be as careful to honor the King as to fear God. Be as exact in giving the King what is due to the King, as in giving God what is due to God. Upon no account whatever rob or defraud him of the least thing which is his lawful property.

6. If you believe the Bible, I say to you, as St. Paul said to the ancient Christians, “Render unto all their dues;” in particular, “custom to whom custom is due, tribute to whom tribute.” Now, custom is by the laws of England due to the King; therefore every one in England is bound to pay it him. So that robbing the King herein is abundantly worse than common stealing, or common robbing on the highway.

7. And so it is on another account also; for it is a general robbery: It is, in effect, not only robbing the King, but robbing every honest man in the nation. For the more the King’s duties are diminished, the more the taxes

must be increased. And these lie upon us all; they are the burden, not of some, but of all the people of England. Therefore every smuggler is a thief-general, who picks the pockets both of the King and all his fellow-subjects. He wrongs them all; and, above all, the honest traders; many of whom he deprives of their maintenance; constraining them either not to sell their goods at all, or to sell them to no profit. Some of them are tempted hereby, finding they cannot get bread for their families, to turn thieves too. And then you are accountable for their sin as well as your own; you bring their blood upon your own head. Calmly consider this, and you will never more ask what harm there is in smuggling.

III.

1. But for all this, cannot men find excuses for it! Yes, abundance; such as they are. "I would not do this," says one, "I would not sell unaccustomed goods, but I am under a necessity: I cannot live without it." I answer, May not the man who stops you on the highway say the very same? "I would not take your purse; but I am under a necessity: I cannot live without it." Suppose the case to be your own; and will you accept of this excuse? Would not you tell him, "Let the worst come to the worst, you had better be honest, though you should starve." But that need not be, neither. Others who had no more than you to begin with, yet find a way to live honestly; and certainly so may you: However, settle it in your heart, "Live or die, I will be an honest man."

2. "Nay," says another, "we do not wrong the King; for he loses nothing by us. Yea, on the contrary, the King is rather a gainer; namely, by the seizures that are made."

So you plunder the King, out of stark love and kindness! You rob him to make him rich! It is true, you take away his purse; but you put an heavier in its place! Are you serious? Do you mean what you say? Look me in the face, and tell me so. You cannot. You know in your own conscience that what comes to the King out of all seizures made the year round, does not amount to the tenth, no, not to the hundredth, part of what he is defrauded of.

But if he really gained more than he lost, that would not excuse you. You are not to commit robbery, though the person robbed were afterwards to gain by it. You are not to “do evil, that good may come.” If you do, your “damnation is just.”

“But certainly,” say some, “the King is a gainer by it, or he might easily suppress it.” Will you tell him which way? by Custom-House Officers? But many of them have no desire to suppress it. They find their account in its continuance; they come in for a share of the plunder. But what, if they had a desire to suppress it? They have not the power. Some of them have lately made the experiment; and what was the consequence? Why, they lost a great part of their bread, and were in danger of losing their lives.

Can the King suppress smuggling by parties of soldiers? That he cannot do. For all the soldiers he has are not enough to watch every port and every creek in Great Britain. Besides, the soldiers that are employed will do little more than the Custom-House Officers. For there are ways and means to take off their edge too, and make them as quiet as lambs.

“But many courtiers and great men, who know the King’s mind, not only connive at smuggling, but practice it.” And what can we infer from this? Only that those great men are great villains. They are great highwaymen and pickpockets; and their greatness does not excuse, but makes their crime tenfold more inexcusable.

But besides: Suppose the King were willing to be cheated, how would this excuse your cheating his subjects? all your fellow-subjects, every honest man, and, in particular, every honest trader? How would it excuse your making it impossible for him to live, unless he will turn knave as well as yourself?

3. “Well, but I am not convinced it is a sin: My conscience does not condemn me for it.” No! Are you not convinced that robbery is a sin? Then I am sorry for you. And does not your conscience condemn you for stealing? Then your conscience is asleep. I pray God to smite you to the heart, and awaken it this day!

4. "Nay, but my soul is quite happy in the love of God; therefore I cannot think it is wrong." I answer, Wrong it must be, if the Bible is right.

Therefore either that love is a mere delusion, a fire of your own kindling, or God may have hitherto winked at the times of ignorance. But now you have the means of knowing better; now light is offered to you; and if you shut your eyes against the light, the love of God cannot possibly continue.

5. "But I only buy a little brandy or tea now and then, just for my own use." That is, I only steal a little. God says, "Steal not at all."

6. "Nay, I do not buy any at all myself; I only send my child or servant for it." You receive it of them; do you not? And the receiver is as bad as the thief.

7. "Why, I would not meddle with it, but I am forced by my parent, husband, or master." If you are forced by your father or mother to rob, you will be hanged never the less. This may lessen, but does not take away, the fault; for you ought to suffer rather than sin.

8. "But I do not know that it was run." No! Did not he that sold it tell you it was? If he sold it under the common price, he did. The naming the price was telling you, "This is run."

9. "But I do not know where to get tea which is not run." I will tell you where to get it; you may have it from those whose tea is duly entered, and who make a conscience of it. But were it otherwise, if I could get no wine but what I knew to be stolen, I would drink water; yea, though not only my health but my life depended upon it; for it is better to die than to live by thieving.

10. "But, if I could get what has paid duty, I am not able to pay the price of it; and I cannot live without it." I answer,

- (1.) You can live without it, as well as your grandmother did. But,
- (2.) If you could not live without it, you ought to die rather than steal; for death is a less evil than sin.

11. "But my husband will buy it, whether I do or no; and I must use what he provides, or have none." Undoubtedly, to have none is a less evil than to be partaker with a thief.

IV.

Upon the whole, then, I exhort all of you that fear God, and desire to save your souls, without regarding what others do, resolve at all hazards to keep yourselves pure. Let your eye be fixed on the word of God, not the examples of men. Our Lord says to every one of you, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me!" Let no convenience, no gain, no pleasure, no friend, draw you from following him. In spite of all the persuasions, all the reasonings, of men, keep to the word of God. If all on the right hand and the left will be knaves, be you an honest man. Probably God will repay you, (he certainly will, if this be best for you,) even with temporal blessings; there have not been wanting remarkable instances of this. But, if not, he will repay you with what is far better, — with "the testimony of a good conscience towards God;" with "joy in the Holy Ghost;" with an "hope full of immortality;" with "the love of God shed abroad in your hearts:" And "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!"

LONDON,

January 30, 1767.

A WORD TO A CONDEMNED MALEFACTOR.

WHAT a condition are you in! The sentence is passed; you are condemned to die; and this sentence is to be executed shortly! You have no way to escape; these fetters, these walls, these gates and bars, these keepers, cut off all hope: Therefore, die you must. But must you die like a beast, without thinking what it is to die? You need not; you will not; you will think a little first; you will consider, "What is death?" It is leaving this world, these houses, lands, and all things under the sun; leaving all these things, never to return; your place will know you no more. It is leaving these pleasures; for there is no eating, drinking, gaming, no merriment in the grave. It is leaving your acquaintance, companions, friends; your father, mother, wife, children. You cannot stay with them, nor can they go with you; you must part; perhaps for ever. It is leaving a part of yourself; leaving this body which has accompanied you so long. Your soul must now drop its old companion, to rot and molder into dust. It must enter upon a new, strange, un bodied state. It must stand naked before God!

2. But, O, how will you stand before God; the great, the holy, the just, the terrible God? Is it not his own word, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord?" No man shall see him with joy; rather, he will call for the mountains to fall upon him, and the rocks to cover him. And what do you think holiness is? It is purity both of heart and life. It is the mind that was in Christ, enabling us to walk as he also walked. It is the loving God with all our heart; the loving our neighbor, every man, as ourselves; and the doing to all men, in every point, as we would they should do unto us. The least part of holiness is to do good to all men, and to do no evil either in word or work. This is only the outside of it. But this is more than you have. You are far from it; far as darkness from light. You have not the mind that was in Christ: There was no pride, no malice in him; no hatred, no revenge, no furious anger, no foolish or worldly desire. You have not walked as Christ walked; no, rather as the devil would have walked, had he been in a body; the works of the devil you have done, not the works of

God. You have not loved God with all your heart. You have not loved him at all. You have not thought about him. You hardly knew or cared whether there was any God in the world. You have not done to others as you would they should do to you; far, very far from it. Have you done all the good you could to all men? If so, you had never come to this place. You have done evil exceedingly; your sins against God and man are more than the hairs of your head. Insomuch that even the world cannot bear you; the world itself spews you out. Even the men that know not God declare you are not fit to live upon the earth.

3. O repent, repent! Know yourself; see and feel what a sinner you are. Think of the innumerable sins you have committed, even from your youth up. How many wicked words have you spoken? How many wicked actions have you done? Think of your inward sins; your pride, malice, hatred, anger, revenge, lust! Think of your sinful nature, totally alienated from the life of God. How is your whole soul prone to evil, void of good, corrupt, full of all abominations! Feel that your carnal mind is enmity against God. Well may the wrath of God abide upon you. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: He hath said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It shall die eternally, shall be "punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

4. How then can you escape the damnation of hell, — the lake of fire burning with brimstone; "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?" You can never redeem your own soul. You cannot atone for the sins that are past. If you could leave off sin now, and live unblamable for the time to come, that would be no atonement for what is past. Nay, if you could live like an angel for a thousand years, that would not atone for one sin. But neither can you do this; you cannot leave off sin; it has the dominion over you. If all your past sins were now to be forgiven, you would immediately sin again; that is, unless your heart were cleansed; unless it were created anew. And who can do this? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Surely none but God. So you are utterly sinful, guilty, helpless! What can you do to be saved?

5. One thing is needful: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!" Believe (not as the devils only, but) with that faith which is the

gift of God, which is wrought in a poor, guilty, helpless sinner by the power of the Holy Ghost. See all thy sins on Jesus laid. God laid on him the iniquities of us all. He suffered once the just for the unjust. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. He was wounded for thy sins; he was bruised for thy iniquities. "Behold the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world!" taking away thy sins, even thine, and reconciling thee unto God the Father! "Look unto him and be thou saved!" If thou look unto Him by faith, if thou cleave to Him with thy whole heart, if thou receive Him both to atone, to teach, and to govern thee in all things, thou shalt be saved, thou art saved, both from the guilt, the punishment, and all the power of sin. Thou shalt have peace with God, and a peace in thy own soul, that passeth all understanding. Thy soul shall magnify the Lord, and thy spirit rejoice in God thy Savior. The love of God shall be shed abroad in thy heart, enabling thee to trample sin under thy feet. And thou wilt then have an hope full of immortality. Thou wilt no longer be afraid to die, but rather long for the hour, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.

6. This is the faith that worketh by love, the way that leadeth to the kingdom. Do you earnestly desire to walk therein? Then put away all hindrances. Beware of company: At the peril of your soul, keep from those who neither know nor seek God. Your old acquaintance are no acquaintance for you, unless they too acquaint themselves with God. Let them laugh at you, or say you are running mad. It is enough, if you have praise of God. Beware of strong drink. Touch it not, lest you should not know when to stop. You have no need of this to cheer your spirits; but of the peace and the love of God; beware of men that pretend to show you the way to heaven, and know it not themselves. There is no other name whereby you can be saved, but the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And there is no other way whereby you can find the virtue of his name but by faith. Beware of Satan transformed into an angel of light, and telling you it is presumption to believe in Christ, as your Lord and your God, your wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Believe in him with your whole heart. Cast your whole soul upon his love. Trust Him alone; love Him alone; fear Him alone; and cleave to Him alone; till He shall say to you, (as to the dying malefactor of old,) "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

A WORD IN SEASON:

OR,

ADVICE TO AN ENGLISHMAN. ²⁸

1. Do you ever think? Do you ever consider? If not, it is high time you should. Think a little, before it is too late. Consider what a state you are in; and not you alone, but our whole nation. We would have war; and we have it. And what is the fruit? Our armies broken in pieces; and thousands of our men either killed on the spot, or made prisoners in one day. Nor is this all. We have now war at our own doors; our own countrymen turning their swords against their brethren. And have any hitherto been able to stand before them? Have they not already seized upon one whole kingdom? Friend, either think now, or sleep on and take your rest, till you drop into the pit where you will sleep no more!

2. Think what is likely to follow, if an army of French also should blow the trumpet in our land! What desolation may we not then expect? what a widespread field of blood? And what can the end of these things be? If they prevail, what but Popery and slavery? Do you know what the spirit of Popery is? Did you never hear of that in Queen Mary's reign; and of the holy men who were then burned alive by the Papists, because they did not dare to do as they did; to worship angels and saints, to pray to the Virgin Mary, to bow down to images, and the like? If we had a King of this spirit, whose life would be safe? at least, what honest man's? A knave indeed might turn with the times. But what a dreadful thing would this be to a man of conscience: "Either turn or burn: Either go into that fire, or into 'the fire that never shall be quenched?'"

3. And can you dream that your property would be any safer than your conscience? Nay, how should that be? Nothing is plainer than that the Pretender cannot be King of England, unless it be by conquest. But every conqueror may do what he will; the laws of the land are no laws to him.

And who can doubt but one who should conquer England by the assistance of France, would copy after the French rules of government?

4. How dreadful then is the condition wherein we stand? on the very brink of utter destruction! But why are we thus? I am afraid the answer is too plain to every considerate man: Because of our sins; because we have well-nigh “filled up the measure of our iniquities.” For, what wickedness is there under heaven which is not found among us at this day? Not to insist on the Sabbath-breaking in every corner of our land; the thefts, cheating, fraud, extortion; the ill justice, violence, oppression; the lying and dissimulating; the robberies, sodomies, and murders; which, with a thousand unnamed villanies, are common to us and our neighbor Christians of Holland, France, and Germany; consider, over and above, what a plentiful harvest we have of wickedness almost peculiar to ourselves. For who can vie with us in the direction of Courts of Justice; in the management of public charities; or in the accomplished, barefaced wickedness which so abounds in our prisons, and fleets, and armies? Who in Europe can compare with the sloth, laziness, luxury, and effeminacy of the English Gentry; or with the drunkenness, and stupid, senseless cursing and swearing which are daily seen and heard in our streets? One great inlet, no doubt, to that flood of perjury, which so increases among us day by day; the like whereunto is not to be found in any other part of the habitable earth.

5. Add to all these, (what is indeed the source as well as completion of all,) that open and professed Deism and rejection of the Gospel, that public, avowed apostasy from the Christian faith, which reigns among the rich and great, and hath spread from them to all ranks and orders of men, the vulgar themselves not excepted, and made us a people fitted for the “destroyer of the Gentiles.”

6. Because of these sins is this evil come upon us. For, whether you are aware of it or no, there is a God; a God who, though he sits upon the circle of the heavens, sees and knows all that is done upon earth. And this God is holy; he does not love sin; he is just, rendering to all their due; and he is strong, there is none able to withstand him; he hath all power in heaven and in earth. He is patient indeed, and suffers long; but he will at last

repay the wicked to his face. He often does so in this world; especially when a whole nation is openly and insolently wicked. Then doth God “arise and maintain his own cause;” then doth he terribly show both his justice and power; that if these will not repent, yet others may fear, and flee from the wrath to come.

7. There hath been, among them that feared God, a general expectation, for many years, that the time was coming when God would thus arise to be avenged on this sinful nation. At length the time is come. The patience of God, long provoked, gives place to justice. The windows of heaven begin to be opened, to rain down judgments on the earth. And yet, with what tenderness does he proceed! in the midst of wrath remembering mercy. By how slow degrees does his vengeance move! Nor does his whole displeasure yet arise.

8. Brethren, countrymen, Englishmen, what shall we do; today, while it is called today, before the season of mercy is quite expired, and our “destruction cometh as a whirlwind?” Which way can we remove the evils we feel? which way prevent those we fear? Is there any better way than the making God our friend? the securing his help against our enemies? Other helps are little worth. We see armies may be destroyed, or even flee away from old men and children. Fleets may be dashed to pieces in an hour, and sunk in the depth of the sea. Allies may be treacherous, or slow, or foolish, or weak, or cowardly; but God is a friend who cannot betray, and whom none can either bribe or terrify. And who is wise, or swift, or strong like him? Therefore, whatever we do, let us make God our friend; let us with all speed remove the cause of his anger; let us cast away our sins. Then shall his love have free course, and he will send us help, sufficient help, against all our enemies.

9. Come; will you begin? Will you, by the grace of God, amend one, and that without delay? First, then, own those sins which have long cried for vengeance in the ears of God. Confess, that we, and all, and you in particular, deserve for our inward and outward abominations, not only to be swept from the face of the earth, but to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Never aim at excusing either yourself or others; let your mouth be stopped. Plead guilty before God. Above all, own that impudence of

wickedness, that utter carelessness, that pert stupidity, which is hardly to be found in any part of the earth, (at least, not in such a degree,) except in England. Do you not know what I mean? You was not long since praying to God for damnation upon your soul. One who has heard you said, "Is that right? Does not God hear? What, if he takes you at your word?" You replied, with equal impudence and ignorance, "What, are you a Methodist?" What, if he is a Turk? Must thou therefore be a Heathen? God humble thy brutish, devilish spirit!

10. Lay thee in the dust, for this and for all thy sins. Let thy laughter be turned into heaviness; thy joy into mourning; thy senseless jollity and mirth into sorrow and brokenness of heart. This is no time to eat, and drink, and rise up to play, but to afflict thy soul before the Lord. Desire of God a deep, piercing sense of the enormous sins of the nation, and of thy own. Remember that great example; how when the King of Nineveh was warned of the near approaching vengeance of God, he "caused it to be proclaimed, Let none taste anything; let them not feed nor drink water: But let them be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" (Jonah 3.)

11. Let them turn every one from his evil way. Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. And see that this reformation be universal; for there is no serving God by halves. Avoid all evil, and do all good unto all men; else you only deceive your own soul. See also that it be from the heart; Lay the ax to the root of the tree. Cut up, by the grace of God, evil desire, pride, anger, unbelief. Let this be your continual prayer to God, the prayer of your heart as well as lips: "Lord, I would believe; help thou mine unbelief; give me the faith that worketh by love. 'The life which I now live,' let me 'live by faith in the Son of God.' Let me so believe, that I may 'love thee with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength;' and that I may love every child of man, even 'as thou hast loved us!' Let me daily 'add to my faith courage, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, charity; that so an entrance may be ministered to me abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.'"

A HYMN.

REGARD, thou righteous God, and true,
 Regard thy weeping people's prayer,
 Before the sword our land go through,
 Before thy latest plague we bear,
 Let all to thee, their Smiter, turn,
 Let all beneath thine anger mourn.

The sword, which first bereaved abroad,
 We now within our borders see;
 We see, but slight, thy nearer rod:
 So oft, so kindly, warn'd by thee,
 We still thy warning love despise,
 And dare thine utmost wrath to rise.

Yet, for the faithful remnant's sake,
 Thine utmost wrath awhile defer,
 If, haply, we at last may wake,
 And, trembling at destruction near,
 The cause of all our evils own,
 And leave the sins for which we groan.

Or, if the wicked will not mourn,
 And 'scape the long-suspended blow,
 Yet shall it to thy glory turn,
 Yet shall they all thy patience know,
 Thy slighted love and mercy clear,
 And vindicate thy justice here.

FOR HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE.

IMMORTAL King of kings,
Whose favor or whose frown
Monarchs and states to honor brings,
Or turns them upside down!

To thee, in danger's hour,
We for our Sov'reign cry:
Protect him by thy gracious power,
And set him up on high.

Not by a mighty host
Can he deliver'd be;
Let others in their numbers trust,
We look, O Lord, to thee.

Help to thy servant send,
And strengthen from above;
And still thy minister defend
By thine almighty love.

The Spirit of thy grace
Thy heavenly unction, shed,
And hosts of guardian angels place
Around his sacred head.

Confound whoe'er oppose,
Or force them to retire;
Be thou a tower against his foes,
Be thou a wall of fire.

O bring him out of all
His sanctified distress,
And by his name thy servant call,
And fill him with thy peace.

Show him, almighty Lord,
That thou his Savior art;
And speak the soul-converting word,
"My son, give me thy heart!"

A WORD TO A PROTESTANT.

1. Do not you call yourself a Protestant? Why so? Do you know what the word means? What is a Protestant? I suppose you mean one that is not a Papist. But what is a Papist? If you do not know, say so; acknowledge you cannot tell. Is not this the case? You call yourself a Protestant; but you do not know what a Protestant is. You talk against Papists; and yet neither do you know what a Papist is. Why do you pretend, then, to the knowledge which you have not? Why do you use words which you do not understand?

2. Are you desirous to know what these words, *Papist* and *Protestant*, mean? A Papist is one who holds the Pope or Bishop of Rome (the name *papa*, that is, *father*, was formerly given to all Bishops) to be head of the whole Christian Church; and the Church of Rome, or that which owns the Pope as their head, to be the only Christian Church.

3. In a course of years, many errors crept into this Church, of which good men complained from time to time. At last, about two hundred years ago, the Pope appointed many Bishops and others to meet at a town in Germany, called Trent. But these, instead of amending those errors, established them all by a law, and so delivered them down to all succeeding generations.

4. Among these errors may be numbered, their doctrine of seven sacraments; of transubstantiation; of communion in one kind only; of purgatory, and praying for the dead therein; of veneration of relics; and of indulgences, or pardons granted by the Pope, and to be bought for money.

It is thought by some, that these errors, great as they are, do only defile the purity of Christianity; but it is sure, the following strike at its very root, and tend to banish true religion out of the world: —

5. First. The doctrine of merit. The very foundation of Christianity is, that a man can merit nothing of God; that we are “justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;” not for any of our works or of our deservings, but by faith in the blood of the covenant.

But the Papists hold, that a man may by his works merit or deserve eternal life; and that we are justified, not by faith in Christ alone, but by faith and works together.

This doctrine strikes at the root of Christian faith, the only foundation of true religion.

6. Secondly. The doctrine of praying to saints, and worshipping of images. To the Virgin Mary they pray in these words: “O Mother of God, O Queen of heaven, command thy Son to have mercy upon us!” And, “The right use of images,” says the Council of Trent, “is to honor them, by bowing down before them.” (Sess. 25, pars 2.)

This doctrine strikes at the root of that great commandment, (which the Papists call part of the first,) “Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them,” that is, not any image whatsoever. It is gross, open, palpable idolatry, such as can neither be denied nor excused; and tends directly to destroy the love of God, which is indeed the first and great commandment.

7. Thirdly. The doctrine of persecution. This has been for many ages a favorite doctrine of the Church of Rome. And the Papists in general still maintain, that all heretics (that is, all who differ from them) ought to be compelled to receive what they call the true faith; to be forced into the Church, or out of the world.

Now, this strikes at the root of, and utterly tears up, the second great commandment. It directly tends to bring in blind, bitter zeal; anger, hatred, malice, variance; every temper, word, and work that is just contrary to the loving our neighbor as ourselves.

So plain it is, that these grand Popish doctrines of merit, idolatry, and persecution, by destroying both faith, and the love of God and of our neighbor, tend to banish true Christianity out of the world.

8. Well might our forefathers protest against these: And hence it was that they were called Protestants; even because they publicly protested, as against all the errors of the Papists, so against these three in particular: The making void Christian faith, by holding that man may merit heaven by his own works; the overthrowing the love of God by idolatry, and the love of our neighbor by persecution.

Are you then a Protestant, truly so called? Do you protest, as against all the rest, so in particular against these three grand fundamental errors of Popery? Do you publicly protest against all merit in man? all salvation by your own works? against all idolatry of every sort? and against every kind and degree of persecution?

I question not but you do. You publicly protest against all these horrible errors of Popery. But does your heart agree with your lips? Do you not inwardly cherish what you outwardly renounce? It is well if you who cry out so much against Papists are not one yourself. It is well if you are not yourself (as little as you may think of it) a rank Papist in your heart.

9. For, first, how do you hope to be saved? by doing thus and thus? by doing no harm, and paying every man his own, and saying your prayers, and going to church and sacrament? Alas! alas! Now you have thrown off the mask: This is Popery barefaced. You may just as well speak plain, and say, "I trust to be saved by the merit of my own works." But where is Christ all this time? Why, he is not to come in till you get to the end of your prayer; and then you will say, "for Jesus Christ's sake," — because so it stands in your book. O my friend, your very foundation is Popish. You seek salvation by your own works. You trample upon the "blood of the covenant." And what can a poor Papist do more?

10. But let us go on: Are you clear of idolatry any more than the Papists are? It may be, indeed, yours is in a different way. But how little does that signify! They set up their idols in their churches; you set up yours in your

heart. Their idols are only covered with gold or silver; but yours is solid gold. They worship the picture of the Queen of Heaven; you, the picture of the Queen or King of England. In another way, they idolize a dead man or woman; whereas your idol is yet alive. O how little is the difference before God! How small pre-eminence has the money worshipper at London, over the image-worshipper at Rome; or the idolizer of a living sinner, over him that prays to a dead saint!

11. Take one step farther: Does the Papist abroad persecute? Does he force another man's conscience? So does the Papist at home, as far as he can, for all he calls himself a Protestant. Will the man in Italy tolerate no opinion but his own? No more, if he could help it, would the man in England. Would you? Do not you think the Government much overseen, in bearing with any but those of the Church? Do not you wish they would put down such and such people? You know what you would do if you was in their place. And by the very same spirit you would continue the Inquisition at Rome, and rekindle the fires in Smithfield.

12. It is because our nation is overrun with such Protestants, who are full of their own good-deservings, as well as of abominable idolatry, and of blind, fiery zeal, of the whole spirit of persecution, that the sword of God, the great, the just, the jealous God, is even now drawn in our land; that the armies of the aliens are hovering over it, as a vulture over his prey; and that the open Papists are on the very point of swallowing up the pretended Protestants. ²⁹

13. Do you desire to escape the scourge of God? Then I entreat you, First, be a real Protestant. By the Spirit of God assisting you, (for without him you know you can do nothing,) cast away all that trust in your own righteousness, all hope of being saved by your own works. Own, your merit is everlasting damnation; that you deserve the damnation of hell. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Lie in the dust. Let your mouth be stopped; and let all your confidence be in the "blood of sprinkling;" all your hope in Jesus Christ "the righteous;" all your faith in "Him that justifieth the ungodly, through the redemption that is in Jesus."

O put away your idols out of your heart. "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." "Having food to eat and raiment to put on, be content;" desire nothing more but God. Today, hear his voice, who continually cries, "My son, give me thy heart." Give yourself to Him who gave himself for you. May you love God, as he has loved us! Let him be your desire, your delight, your joy, your portion, in time and in eternity.

And if you love God, you will love your brother also; you will be ready to lay down your life for his sake; so far from any desire to take away his life, or hurt a hair of his head. You will then leave his conscience uncontrolled; you will no more think of forcing him into your own opinions, as neither can he force you to judge by his conscience. But each shall "give an account of himself to God."

14. It is true, if his conscience be misinformed, you should endeavor to inform him better. But whatever you do, let it be done in charity, in love and meekness of wisdom. Be zealous for God; but remember, that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" that angry zeal, though opposing sin, is the servant of sin; that true zeal is only the flame of love. Let this be your truly Protestant zeal: While you abhor every kind and degree of persecution, let your heart burn with love to all mankind, to friends and enemies, neighbors and strangers; to Christians, Heathens, Jews, Turks, Papists, heretics; to every soul which God hath made. "Let" this "your light shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

HYMN I.

1 **W**HERE have I been so long,
Fast bound in sin and night,
Mix'd with the blind self-righteous throng
Who hate the sons of light?

2 O how shall I presume,
Jesus, to call on thee,
Sunk in the lowest dregs of Rome,
The worst idolatry!

3 A stranger to thy grace,
Long have I labor'd, Lord,
To 'stablish my own righteousness,
And been what I abhorr'd.

4 Foe to the Popish boast,
No merit was in me!
Yet in my works I put my trust,
And not alone in thee.

5 For works that I had wrought
I look'd to be forgiven,
And by my virtuous tempers thought
At last to purchase heaven.

6 Or if I needed still
The help of grace divine,
Thy merits should come in to fill
The small defects of mine.

7 Alas! I knew not then,
Thou only didst atone
For all the sinful sons of men,
And purge our guilt alone;

8 Didst shed thy blood to pay
The all-sufficient price,
And take the world's offense away
By thy great sacrifice.

9 But O, my dying God,
By thee convinced at last,
My soul on that atoning blood,
On that alone, I cast!

10 I dare no longer trust
 On aught I do, or feel,
But own, while humbled in the dust,
 My whole desert is hell.

My works of righteousness,
 I cast them all away:
Me, Lord, thou frankly must release,
 For I have nought to pay.

12 Not one good word or thought
 I to thy merits join;
But gladly take the gift, unbought,
 Of righteousness divine.

13 My faith is all in thee,
 My only hope thou art;
The pardon thou hast bought for me,
 Engrave it on my heart.

14 The blood by faith applied,
 O let it now take place;
And speak me freely justified,
 And fully saved by grace.

HYMN II.

1 FORGIVE me, O thou jealous God,
A wretch who on thy laws have trod,
 And robb'd thee of thy right;
A sinner to myself unknown,
'Gainst thee I have transgress'd, and done
 This evil in thy sight.

2 My body I disdain'd to' incline,
Or worship at an idol's shrine,
 With gross idolatry;
But O! my soul hath baser proved,
Honor'd, and fear'd, and served and loved
 The creature more than thee.

3 Let the blind sons of Rome bow down
To images of wood and stone;
 But I, with subtler art,
Safe from the letter of thy word,
My idols secretly adored,
 Set up within my heart.

4 But O! suffice the season past;
My idols now away I cast,
 Pleasure, and wealth, and fame;
The world, and all its goods, I leave,
To thee alone resolved to give
 Whate'er I have or am,

5 Lo! in a thankful, loving heart,
I render thee whate'er thou art,
 I give myself to thee;
And thee my whole delight I own,
My joy, my glory, and my crown,
 To all eternity.

HYMN III.

- 1 O THOU who seest what is in man,
And show'st myself to me,
Sinner a sinner to complain,
And groan his griefs to thee.
- 2 A sinner, that has cloak'd his shame
With self-deceiving art;
Thy worshipper reform'd in name,
But unrenew'd in heart.
- 3 The servants most unlike their Lord,
How oft did I condemn!
The persecuting Church abhorr'd,
Nor saw myself in them!
- 4 The spirit of my foes I caught,
The angry, bitter zeal;
And fierce for my own party fought,
And breathed the fire of hell.
- 5 Threat'ning I did and slaughter breathe,
(The flail of heresy,)
And doom the sects to bonds, or death,
That did not think with me.
- 6 To propagate the truth, I fought
With fury and despite;
And, in my zeal for Israel, sought
To slay the Gibeonite.
- 7 "The temple of the Lord are we!"
And all who dared deny,
I would not have their conscience free,
But force them to comply.
- 8 With wholesome discipline severe
To conquer them I strove,
And drive into the pale through fear,
Who would not come through love.

- 9 How vainly then the zealots blind
 Of Rome did I disclaim!
 Still to the church of Satan join'd,
 And differing but in name.
- 10 How could I, Lord, myself deceive,
 While unreform'd within?
 Protest against their creed, and cleave
 The closer to their sin?
- 11 Their foulest sin my own I made,
 (And humbly now confess,)
 While by my anger I essay'd
 To work thy righteousness.
- 12 A murderer convict, I come
 My vileness to bewail;
 By nature born a son of Rome,
 A child of wrath and hell.
- 13 Lord, I at last recant, reject,
 Through thy great strength alone,
 The madness of the Romish sect,
 The madness of my own.
- 14 Lord, I abhor, renounce, abjure,
 The fiery spirit unclean,
 The persecuting zeal impure,
 The sin-opposing sin.
- 15 Let others draw, with fierce despite,
 The' eradicating sword,
 And with the devil's weapons fight,
 The battles of the Lord.
- 16 But O! my gracious God, to me
 A better spirit impart;
 The gentle mind that was in thee,
 The meekly loving heart.
- 17 The heart whose charity o'erflows
 To all, far off, and near;
 True charity to friends and foes,
 Impartially sincere.
- 18 Heathens, and Jews, and Turks, may I,
 And heretics embrace;
 Nor e'en to Rome the love deny
 I owe to all the race.

A WORD TO A FREEHOLDER.

WHAT are you going to do? to vote for a Parliament man? I hope then you have taken no money. For doubt. Less you know the strictness of the oath, — that you have received no “gift or reward, directly or indirectly, nor any promise of any, on account of your vote” in the ensuing election. Surely you start at perjury! at calm, forethought, deliberate, willful perjury! If you are guilty already, stop; go no further. It is at the peril of your soul. Will you sell your country? Will you sell your own soul? Will you sell your God, your Savior? Nay, God forbid! Rather cast down just now the thirty pieces of silver or gold, and say, “Sir, I will not sell heaven. Neither you nor all the world is able to pay the purchase.”

I hope you have received nothing else, neither will receive; no entertainment, no meat or drink. If this is given you on account of your vote, you are perjured still. How can you make oath, you have received no gift? This was a gift, if you did not buy it. What I will you sell your soul to the devil for a draught of drink, or for a morsel of bread? O consider what you do! Act as if the whole election depended on your single vote, and as if the whole Parliament depended (and therein the whole nation) on that single person whom you now choose to be a member of it.

But if you take nothing of any, for whom shall you vote? For the man that loves God. He must love his country, and that from a steady, invariable principle. And by his fruits you shall know him. He is careful to abstain from all appearance of evil. He is zealous of good works, as he has opportunity, doing good to all men. He uses all the ordinances of God, and that both constantly and carefully. And he does this, not barely as something he must do, or what he would willingly be excused from; no, he rejoices in this his reasonable service, as a blessed privilege of the children of God.

But what, if none of the candidates have these fruits? Then vote for him that loves the King, King George, whom the wise providence of God has

appointed to reign over us. He ought to be highly esteemed in love, even for his office' sake. A King is a lovely, sacred name. He is a Minister of God unto thee for good. How much more such a King, as has been, in many respects, a blessing to his subjects! You may easily know those who love him not; for they generally glory in their shame. They "are not afraid to speak evil of dignities;" no, not even of the "ruler of their people."

Perhaps you will say, "But I love my country; therefore I am for the country interest." I fear you know not what you say. Are you against your King because you love your country? Who taught you to separate your King from your country? to set one against the other? Be assured, none that loves either. True lovers of their country do not talk in this senseless manner.

Is not the interest of the King of England, and of the country of England, one and the same? If the King is destroyed, doth it profit the country? if the country, does it profit the King? Their interest cannot be divided. The welfare of one is the welfare of both.

Have you an objection of a different kind? Do you say, "I am for the Church? The Church of England for ever! Therefore I vote for —; he is a true Churchman, a lover of the Church." Are you sure of that? Friend, think a little. What kind of a Churchman is he? a whoring Churchman, a gaming Churchman, a drunken Churchman, a lying Churchman, a cursing and swearing Churchman? or a red-hot persecuting Churchman, that would send all Dissenters to the devil at a clap? For shame! for shame! Do you call a man a Churchman, who knows no more of God than a Turk? call a man a Churchman, that does not even pretend to so much religion as would serve an honest Heathen? He is a lover of the Church who is a lover of God, and consequently of all mankind. Whoever else talks of loving the Church, is a cheat. Set a mark upon that man.

Above all, mark that man who talks of loving the Church, and does not love the King. If he does not love the King, he cannot love God. And if he does not love God, he cannot love the Church. He loves the Church and the King just alike. For indeed he loves neither one nor the other.

O beware, you who truly love the Church, and therefore cannot but love the King; beware of dividing the King and the Church, any more than the King and country. Let others do as they will, what is that to you? Act you as an honest man, a loyal subject, a true Englishman, a lover of the country, a lover of the Church; in one word, a Christian! one that fears nothing but sin, that seeks nothing but heaven, and that desires nothing but God; nothing but glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men!

ADVICE TO A SOLDIER.

1. **ARE** you to die? Must you leave this world, and carry nothing of it away with you? Naked as you came out of your mother's womb, naked shall you return. And are you never to come back into this world? Have you no more place under the sun? When you leave these houses and fields, this flesh and blood, do you part with them for ever? Are you sure of this? Must all men die? Can none at all escape death? Do rich men likewise die, and leave their riches for others? Do princes also fall and die like one of their people? Can you then escape it? You do not think so. You know death is as sure as if you felt it already; as if you was now gasping for life, sweating and trembling in those last pangs, till the soul started off from the quivering lips into the boundless ocean of eternity.

2. And are you to be judged? How is this to be? Why, the Son of God shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him; "and then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Behold, he cometh with clouds! And every eye shall see Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty! And I saw" (wilt thou also say) "a great white throne, and Him that sat thereon, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and they were judged, every man according to his works." And shalt thou also be judged according to thy works? all thy works, whether they be good or evil? Yea, and for every idle word which thou shalt speak, thou shalt give an account in the day of judgment. But this is not all: The Lord, the Judge, searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins. He understands all thy thoughts; and for all these likewise he shall bring thee into judgment. Supposest thou it is enough to be outwardly good? What! though thy inward parts are very wickedness? And are they not? Is not thy soul fallen short of the glory (the glorious image) of God? Look into thy breast. Art thou not a fallen spirit? Dost thou not know and feel how very far thou art gone from original righteousness? Desperately full

thou art of all evil, and naked of all good? Is there not in thee an earthly, sensual, devilish mind? a mind that is enmity against God? It is plain there is. For thou dost not love God. Thou dost not delight in him. He is not the desire of thy eyes, or the joy of thy heart. Thou lovest the creature more than the Creator. Thou art a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. O how wilt thou stand in the judgment?

3. Are you then to go to heaven or hell? It must be either to one or the other. I pray God you may not go to hell! For who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Who can bear the fierceness of that flame, without even a drop of water to cool his tongue? yea, and that without end; for as the worm dieth not, so the fire is not quenched. No; whoever is once cast into that lake of fire, shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. O eternity! eternity! Who can tell the length of eternity? I warn thee now, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, that thou come not into that place of torment!

4. But, alas! Is not hell now begun in thy soul? Does thy conscience never awake? Hast thou no remorse at any time? no sense of guilt? no dread of the wrath of God? Why, these (if thou art not saved from them in this life) are the worm that never dieth. And what else is thy carnal mind? thy enmity against God? thy foolish and hurtful lusts, thy inordinate affections? What are pride, envy, malice, revenge? Are they not vipers gnawing thy heart? May they not well be called, the dogs of hell? Canst thou be out of hell, while these are in thy soul? while they are tearing it in pieces, and there is none to help thee? Indeed they are not fully let loose upon thee: And while thou seest the light of the sun, the things of the world that surround thee, or the pleasures of sense, divert thy thoughts from them. But when thou canst eat and drink no more, when the earth, with the works thereof, is burned up, when the sun is fallen from heaven, and thou art shut up in utter darkness, what a state wilt thou be in then! Mayest thou never try! Seek thou a better habitation, a house of God, eternal in the heavens.

5. There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest. For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, but

everlasting joy upon their heads. But this joy our ears have not yet heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Yet a little of it the children of God can conceive, from what they already enjoy. For the kingdom of heaven is within them. God has given them eternal life; the life which is hid with Christ in God. They have heaven upon earth; “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Their souls are renewed in the image of God. They love God. They are happy in him; and they love their neighbor (that is, every man) as themselves, as their own souls. Being justified by faith, they have peace with God, yea, a peace which passeth all understanding. And they rejoice in him, knowing their sins are blotted out; that they are accepted in the Beloved; and that they are going to “an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.”

6. Will you reply to all this: “But I am a soldier, and have therefore nothing to do with these things?” Hold! Have soldiers nothing to do with death? How so? Do soldiers never die? Can you fright death away? No, my friend; he will not regard all your big words and looks, nor all the weapons of your warfare. You can neither conquer nor escape him. Your profession may excuse you from many other things; but there is no excusing yourself from death. Are you less sure of this than other men are? No; there is one lot for all. Are you farther from it than they? Nay, rather nearer; you live in the very jaws of death. Why, then, a soldier (if there be any difference) has more to do with death than other men. It is not far from every one of us; but to him it is just at the door.

7. Or, do you fancy a soldier has nothing to do with judgment? Will you say, then, (as poor Captain Uratz did, when he was asked, a few minutes before his death, if he had made his peace with God,) “I hope God will deal with me like a gentleman?” But God said unto him, “Thou fool! I will deal with thee as with all mankind. There is no respect of persons with me. I reward every man according to his works.” Thou also shalt receive of the righteous Judge according to the things which thou hast done in the body. Death levels all; it mingles in one dust the gentleman, soldier, clown, and beggar; it makes all these distinctions void. When life ends, so do they. Holy or unholy, is the one question then. Lo! the books are opened, that

all the dead may be judged according to the things that are written therein. O may thy name be found written in the book of life!

8. For, have soldiers nothing to do with hell? Why, then, is it so often in thy mouth? Dost thou think God does not hear the prayer? And how often hast thou prayed him to damn thy soul? Is his ear waxd heavy, that it cannot hear? I fear thou wilt find it otherwise. Was not he a soldier, too, (and a terrible one,) to whom God said of old, “Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming?” And what marvel? For sin is the high road to hell. And have soldiers nothing to do with sin? Alas! how many of you wallow therein, yea, and glory in your shame! How do you labor to work out your own damnation! O, poor work, for poor wages! The wages of sin is death; the wages of cursing, of swearing, of taking the name of God in vain, of Sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, revenge, of fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness. Now, art thou clear of these? Does not thy own heart smite thee? Art thou not condemned already? What voice is that which sounds in thine ears? Is it not the voice of God? “Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; Shall not my soul be avenged on such a sinner as this?” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! Be very sure that thou art stronger than he, before thou fliest in his face! Do not defy God, unless thou canst overcome him. But canst thou indeed? O no; do not try. Do not dare him to do his worst. Why should he destroy both thy body and soul in hell? Why shouldest thou be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power?

9. But if there were no other hell, thou hast hell enough within thee. An awakened conscience is hell. Pride, envy, wrath, hatred, malice, revenge; what are these but hell upon earth? And how often art thou tormented in these flames! — flames of lust, envy, or proud wrath! Are not these to thy soul, when blown up to the height, as it were a lake of fire, burning with brimstone? Flee away, before the great gulf is fixed; escape, escape for thy life! If thou hast not strength, cry to God, and thou shalt receive power from on high; and He whose name is rightly called Jesus shall save thee from thy sins.

10. And why should he not? Has a soldier nothing to do with heaven? God forbid that you should think so! Heaven was designed for you also. God so loved your soul, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that you, believing in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. Receive, then, the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world! This, this is the time to make it sure; this short, uncertain day of life. Have you then an hour to spare? No; not a moment. Arise, and call upon thy God. Call upon the Lamb, who taketh away the sins of the world, to take away thy sins. Surely he hath born thy griefs, and carried thy sorrows! He was wounded for thy transgressions, and bruised for thy iniquities. He hath paid the ransom for thy soul. Believe in him, and thou shalt be saved. Art thou a sinner? He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. Art thou a lost, undone sinner? He came to seek and to save that which was lost. May He that gave himself for thee, give thee ears to hear, and a heart to understand, his love! So shalt thou also say, "The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God." So shall the love of God be shed abroad in thy heart, and thou shalt rejoice with joy unspeakable. Thou shalt have the mind that was in Christ, and shalt so walk as he also walked; till, having fought the good fight, and finished thy course, thou receive the crown that fadeth not away!

A COLLECTION OF FORMS OF PRAYER, FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK.

(FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1733.)

SUNDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, I, thy unworthy servant, desire to present myself, with all humility, before thee, to offer my morning sacrifice of love and thanksgiving. Glory be to thee, O most adorable Father, who, after thou hadst finished the work of creation, enteredst into thy eternal rest. Glory be to thee, O holy Jesus, who having through the eternal Spirit, offered thyself a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, didst rise again the third day from the dead, and hadst all power given thee both in heaven and on earth. Glory be to thee, O blessed Spirit, who, proceeding from the Father and the Son, didst come down in fiery tongues on the Apostles on the first day of the week, and didst enable them to preach the glad tidings of salvation to a sinful world, and hast ever since been moving on the faces of men's souls, as thou didst once on the face of the great deep, bringing them out of that dark chaos in which they were involved. Glory be to thee, O holy, undivided Trinity, for jointly concurring in the great work of our redemption, and restoring us again to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Glory be to thee, who, in compassion to human weakness, hast appointed a solemn day for the remembrance of thy inestimable benefits. O let me ever esteem it my privilege and happiness to have a day set apart for the concerns of my soul, a day free from distractions, disengaged from the world, wherein I have nothing to do but to praise and love thee. O let it ever be to me a day sacred to divine love, a day of heavenly rest and refreshment.

Let thy Holy Spirit, who, on the first day of the week, descended in miraculous gifts on thy Apostles, descend on me thy unworthy servant, that I may be always "in the spirit on the Lord's day." Let his blessed inspiration prevent and assist me in all the duties of this thy sacred day,

that my wandering thoughts may all be fixed on thee, my tumultuous affections composed, and my flat and cold desires quickened into fervent longings and thirstings after thee. O let me join in the prayers and praises of thy Church with ardent and heavenly affection, hear thy word with earnest attention and a fixed resolution to obey it. And when I approach thy altar, pour into my heart humility, faith, hope, love, and all those holy dispositions which become the solemn remembrance of a crucified Savior. Let me employ this whole day to the ends for which it was ordained, in works of necessity and mercy, in prayer, praise, and meditation; and “let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in thy sight.”

I know, O Lord, that thou hast commanded me, and therefore it is my duty, to love thee with all my heart, and with all my strength. I know thou art infinitely holy and overflowing in all perfection; and therefore it is my duty so to love thee.

I know thou hast created me, and that I have neither being nor blessing but what is the effect of thy power and goodness.

I know thou art the end for which I was created, and that I can expect no happiness but in thee.

I know that in love to me, being lost in sin thou didst send thy only Son, and that he, being the Lord of glory, did humble himself to the death upon the cross, that I might be raised to glory.

I know thou hast provided me with all necessary helps for carrying me through this life to that eternal glory, and this out of the excess of thy pure mercy to me, unworthy of all mercies.

I know thou hast promised to be thyself my “exceeding great reward;” though it is thou alone who thyself “workest in me both to will and to do of thy good pleasure.”

Upon these, and many other titles, I confess it is my duty to love thee, my God, with all my heart. Give thy strength unto thy servant, that thy

love may fill my heart, and be the motive of all the use I make of my understanding, my affections, my senses, my health, my time, and whatever other talents I have received from thee. Let this, O God, rule my heart without a rival; let it dispose all my thoughts, words, and works; and thus only can I fulfill my duty and thy command, of loving thee “with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.”

O thou infinite Goodness, confirm thy past mercies to me, by enabling me, for what remains of my life, to be more faithful than I have hitherto been to this thy great command. For the time I have yet to sojourn upon earth, O let me fulfill this great duty. Permit me not to be in any delusion here; let me not trust in words, or sighs, or tears, but love thee even as thou hast commanded. Let me feel, and then I shall know, what it is to love thee with all my heart.

O merciful God, whatsoever thou deniest me, deny me not this love. Save me from the idolatry of “loving the world, or any of the things of the world.” Let me never love any creature, but for thy sake, and in subordination to thy love. Take thou the full possession of my heart; raise there thy throne, and command there as thou dost in heaven. Being created by thee, let me live to thee; being created for thee, let me ever act for thy glory; being redeemed by thee, let me render unto thee what is thine, and let my spirit ever cleave to thee alone.

Let the prayers and sacrifices of thy holy Church, offered unto thee this day, be graciously accepted. “Clothe thy Priests with righteousness, and pardon all thy people who are not prepared according to the preparation of the sanctuary.” Prosper all those who are sincerely engaged in propagating or promoting thy faith and love (——) ³⁰: “Give thy Son the Heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession;” that from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, thy name may be great among the Gentiles. Enable us of this nation, and especially those whom thou hast set over us in Church and State, in our several stations, to serve thee in all holiness, and to “know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.” Continue to us the means of grace, and grant we may never provoke thee, by our non-improvement, to deprive us of them. Pour down thy blessing upon our Universities, that they may

ever promote true religion and sound learning. Show mercy, O Lord, to my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, to all my friends, (——) ³¹ relations, and enemies, and to all that are in affliction. Let thy fatherly hand be over them, and thy Holy Spirit ever with them; that, submitting themselves entirely to thy will, and directing all their thoughts, words, and works to thy glory, they, and those that are already dead in the Lord, may at length enjoy thee, in the glories of thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for ever.

SUNDAY EVENING.

*General Questions which a serious Christian may propose to himself
before he begins his Evening Devotions.*

1. WITH what degree of attention and fervor did I use my morning prayers, public or private?
2. Have I done anything without a present, or at least a previous, perception of its direct or remote tendency to the glory of God?
3. Did I in the morning consider what particular virtue I was to exercise, and what business I had to do, in the day?
4. Have I been zealous to undertake, and active in doing, what good I could?
5. Have I interested myself any farther in the affairs of others than charity required?
6. Have I, before I visited or was visited, considered how I might thereby give or receive improvement?
7. Have I mentioned any failing or fault of any man, when it was not necessary for the good of another?
8. Have I unnecessarily grieved any one by word or deed?
9. Have I before or in every action considered how it might be a means of improving in the virtue of the day?

Particular Questions relative to the Love of God.

1. **H**AVE I set apart some of this day to think upon his perfections and mercies?

2. Have I labored to make this day a day of heavenly rest, sacred to divine love?

3. Have I employed those parts of it in works of necessity and mercy, which were not employed in prayer, reading, and meditation?

O MY Father, my God, I am in thy hand; and may I rejoice above all things in being so. Do with me what seemeth good in thy sight; only let me love thee with all my mind, son, and strength.

I magnify thee for granting me to be born in thy Church, and of religious parents; for washing me in thy baptism, and instructing me in thy doctrine of truth and holiness; for sustaining me by thy gracious providence, and guiding me by thy blessed Spirit; for admitting me, with the rest of my Christian brethren, to wait on thee at thy public worship; and for so often feeding my soul with thy most precious body and blood, those pledges of love, and sure conveyances of strength and comfort. O be gracious unto all of us, whom thou hast this day (or at any time) admitted to thy holy table. Strengthen our hearts in thy ways against all our temptations, and make us “more than conquerors” in thy love.

O my Father, my God, deliver me, I beseech thee, from all violent passions: I know how greatly obstructive these are both of the knowledge and love of thee. O let none of them find a way into my heart, but let me ever possess my soul in meekness. O my God, I desire to fear them more than death; let me not serve these cruel tyrants, but do thou reign in my breast; let me be ever thy servant, and love thee with all my heart.

Deliver me, O God, from too intense an application to even necessary business. I know how this dissipates my thoughts from the one end of all my business, and impairs that lively perception I would ever retain of thee standing at my right hand. I know the narrowness of my heart, and that an eager attention to earthly things leaves it no room for the things of heaven.

O teach me to go through all my employments with so truly disengaged a heart, that I may still see thee in all things, and see thee therein as continually looking upon me, and searching my reins; and that I may never impair that liberty of spirit which is necessary for the love of thee.

Deliver me, O God, from a slothful mind, from all luke-warmness, and all dejection of spirit. I know these cannot but deaden my love to thee; mercifully free my heart from them, and give me a lively, zealous, active, and cheerful spirit; that I may vigorously perform whatever thou commandest, thankfully suffer whatever thou choosest for me, and be ever ardent to obey in all things thy holy love.

Deliver me, O God, from all idolatrous love of any creature. I know infinite numbers have been lost to thee, by loving those creatures for their own sake, which thou permittest, nay, even commandest, to love subordinately to thee. Preserve me, I beseech thee, from all such blind affection; be thou a guard to all my desires, that they fix on no creature any farther than the love of it tends to build me up in the love of thee. Thou requirest me to love thee with all my heart: Undertake for me, I beseech thee, and be thou my security, that I may never open my heart to anything, but out of love to thee.

Above all, deliver me, O my God, from all idolatrous self-love. I know, O God, (blessed be thy infinite mercy for giving me this knowledge,) that this is the root of all evil. I know thou madest me, not to do my own will, but thine. I know, the very corruption of the devil is, the having a will contrary to thine. O be thou my helper against this most dangerous of all idols, that I may both discern all its subtleties, and withstand all its force. O thou who hast commanded me to renounce myself, give me strength, and I will obey thy command. My choice and desire is, to love myself, as all other creatures, in and for thee. O let thy almighty arm so stablish, strengthen, and settle me, that thou mayest ever be the ground and pillar of all my love.

By this love of thee, my God, may my soul be fixed against its natural inconstancy; by this may it be reduced to an entire indifference as to all things else, and simply desire what is pleasing in thy sight. May this holy

flame ever warm my breast, that I may serve thee with all my might; and let it consume in my heart all selfish desires, that I may in all things regard, not myself, but thee.

O my God, let thy glorious name be duly honored and loved by all the creatures which thou hast made. Let thy infinite goodness and greatness be ever adored by all angels and men. May thy Church, the Catholic seminary of divine love, be protected from all the powers of darkness. O vouchsafe to all who call themselves by thy name one short glimpse of thy goodness. May they once taste and see how gracious thou art, that all things else may be tasteless to them; that their desires may be always flying up towards thee, that they may render thee love, and praise, and obedience, pure and cheerful, constant and zealous, universal and uniform, like that the holy angels render thee in heaven.

Send forth thy blessed Spirit into the midst of these sinful nations, and make us a holy people: Stir up the heart of our Sovereign, of the Royal Family, of the Clergy, the Nobility, and of all whom thou hast set over us, that they may be happy instruments in thy hand of promoting this good work. Be gracious to the Universities, to the Gentry and Commons of this land: And comfort all that are in affliction; let the trial of their faith work patience in them, and perfect them in hope and love (—).

Bless my father, etc., my friends and relations, and all that belong to this family; all that have been instrumental to my good, by their assistance, advice, example, or writing; and all that do not pray for themselves.

Change the hearts of mine enemies, and give me grace to forgive them, even as thou for Christ's sake forgivest us.

O thou Shepherd of Israel, vouchsafe to receive me this night and ever into thy protection; accept my poor services, and pardon the sinfulness of these and all my holy duties. O let it be thy good pleasure shortly to put a period to sin and misery, to infirmity and death, to complete the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom; that we, and all that wait for thy salvation, may eternally love and praise thee, O God the Father, God the

Son, and God the Holy Ghost, throughout all ages, world without end.
“Our Father,” etc.

MONDAY MORNING.

General Questions, which may be used every Morning.

DID I think of God first and last?

Have I examined myself how I behaved since last night's retirement?

Am I resolved to do all the good I can this day, and to be diligent in the business of my calling?

O GOD, who art the giver of all good gifts, I thy unworthy servant entirely desire to praise thy name for all the expressions of thy bounty towards me. Blessed be thy love for giving thy Son to die for our sins, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Blessed be thy love for all the temporal benefits which thou hast with a liberal hand poured out upon me; for my health and strength, food and raiment, and all other necessities with which thou hast provided thy sinful servant. I also bless thee that, after all my refusals of thy grace, thou still hast patience with me, hast preserved me this night, (——) ³² and given me yet another day to renew and perfect my repentance. Pardon, good Lord, all my former sins, and make me every day more zealous and diligent to improve every opportunity of building up my soul in thy faith, and love, and obedience. Make thyself always present to my mind, and let thy love fill and rule my soul, in all those places, and companies, and employments to which thou callest me this day. In all my passage through this world, suffer not my heart to be set upon it; but always fix my single eye and my undivided affections on “the prize of my high calling.” This one thing let me do; let me so press toward this, as to make all things else minister unto it; and be careful so to use them, as thereby to fit my soul for that pure bliss which thou hast prepared for those that love thee.

O thou, who art good and doest good, who extendest thy loving kindness to all mankind, the work of thine hands, thine image, capable of knowing

and loving thee eternally: Suffer me to exclude none, O Lord, from my chariot; who are the objects of thy mercy; but let me treat all my neighbors with that tender love which is due to thy servants and to thy children. Thou hast required this mark of my love to thee: O let no temptation expose me to ingratitude, or make me forfeit thy loving kindness, which is better than life itself. But grant that I may assist all my brethren with my prayers, where I cannot reach them with actual services. Make me zealous to embrace all occasions that may administer to their happiness, by assisting the needy, protecting the oppressed, instructing the ignorant, confirming the wavering, exhorting the good, and reproving the wicked. Let me look upon the failings of my neighbor as if they were my own; that I may be grieved for them, that I may never reveal them but when charity requires, and then with tenderness and compassion. Let thy love to me, O blessed Savior, be the pattern of my love to him. Thou thoughtest nothing too dear to part with, to rescue me from eternal misery: O let me think nothing too dear to part with to set forward the everlasting good of my fellow-Christians. They are members of thy body; therefore I will cherish them. Thou hast redeemed them with an inestimable price; assisted by thy Holy Spirit, therefore, I will endeavor to recover them from a state of destruction; that thus adorning thy holy gospel, by doing good according to my power, I may at last be received into the endearments of thy eternal love, and sing everlasting praise unto the Lamb that was slain and sitteth on the throne for ever.

Extend, I humbly beseech thee, thy mercy to all men, and let them become thy faithful servants. Let all Christians live up to the holy religion they profess; especially these sinful nations. Be entreated for us, good Lord; be glorified by our reformation, and not by our destruction. "Turn thou us, and so shall we be turned:" O be favorable to thy people; give us grace to put a period to our provocations, and do thou put a period to our punishment. Defend our Church from schism, heresy, and sacrilege, and the King from all treasons and conspiracies. Bless all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with apostolical graces, exemplary lives, and sound doctrine. Grant to the Council wisdom from above, to all Magistrates integrity and zeal, to the Universities quietness and industry, and to the Gentry and Commons pious and peaceable and loyal hearts.

Preserve my parents, my brothers and sisters, my friends and relations, and all mankind, in their souls and bodies (——). Forgive mine enemies, and in thy due time make them kindly affected towards me. Have mercy on all who are “afflicted in mind, body, or estate; give them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions.” O grant that we, with those who are already dead in thy faith and fear, may together partake of a joyful resurrection, through Him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

MONDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to the Love of our Neighbor.

1. **H**AVE I thought anything but my conscience too dear to part with, to please or serve my neighbor?
2. Have I rejoiced or grieved with him?
3. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not with anger?
4. Have I contradicted anyone, either where I had no good end in view, or where there was no probability of convincing?
5. Have I let him I thought in the wrong (in a trifle) have the last word?

MOST great and glorious Lord God, I desire to prostrate myself before thy divine Majesty, under a deep sense of my unworthiness; and with sorrow, and shame, and confusion of face, to confess I have, by my manifold transgressions deserved thy severest visitations. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and am no more worthy to be called thy son:" O let thy paternal bowels yearn upon me, and for Jesus Christ's sake graciously receive me. Accept my imperfect repentance, and send thy Spirit of adoption into my heart, that I may again be owned by thee, call thee Father, and share in the blessings of thy children.

Adored be thy goodness for all the benefits thou hast already from time to time bestowed on me; for the good things of this life, and the hope of eternal happiness. Particularly, I offer to thee my humblest thanks for thy preservation of me this day (——). If I have escaped any sin, it is the effect of thy restraining grace; if I have avoided any danger, it was thy hand directed me. To thy holy name be ascribed the honor and glory. O let the sense of all thy blessings have this effect upon me, — to make me daily more diligent in devoting myself, all I am, and all I have, to thy glory.

O my God, fill my soul with so entire a love of thee, that I may love nothing but for thy sake, and in subordination to thy love. Give me grace to study thy knowledge daily, that the more I know thee, the more I may love thee. Create in me a zealous obedience to all thy commands, a cheerful patience under all thy chastisements, and a thankful resignation to all thy disposals. May I ever have awful thoughts of thee; never mention thy venerable names unless on just, solemn, and devout occasions; nor even then without acts of adoration. O let it be the one business of my life to glorify thee, by every thought of my heart, by every word of my tongue, by every work of my hand; by professing thy truth, even to the death, if it should please thee to call me to it; and by engaging all men, as far as in me lies, to glorify and love thee.

Let thy unwearied and tender love to me, make my love unwearied and tender to my neighbor, zealous to pray for, and to procure and promote, his health and safety, ease and happiness; and active to comfort, succor, and relieve all whom thy love and their own necessities recommend to my charity. Make me peaceful and reconcilable; easy to forgive, and glad to return good for evil. Make me like thyself, all kindness and benignity, all goodness and gentleness, all meekness and long-suffering. And, O thou Lover of souls, raise in me a compassionate zeal to save the life, the eternal life, of souls; and by affectionate and seasonable advice, exhortations, and reproof, to reclaim the wicked, and win them to thy love.

Be pleased, O Lord, to take me, with my father and mother, brethren and sisters, my friends and relations, and my enemies, into thy almighty protection this night. Refresh me with such comfortable rest that I may rise more fit for thy service. Let me lie down with holy thoughts of thee, and when I awake let me be still present with thee.

Show mercy to the whole world, O Father of all; let the gospel of thy Son run and be glorified throughout all the earth. Let it be made known to all infidels, and obeyed by all Christians. Be merciful to this Church and nation; give unto thy Bishops a discerning spirit, that they may make choice of fit persons to serve in thy sacred ministry; and enable all who are ordained to any holy function, diligently to feed the flocks committed to their charge, instructing them in saving knowledge, guiding them by their

examples, praying for and blessing them, exercising spiritual discipline in thy Church, and duly administering thy holy sacraments. Multiply thy blessings on our Sovereign, on the Royal Family, and on the Nobles, magistrates, Gentry, and Commons of this land; that they may all, according to the several talents they have received, be faithful instruments of thy glory. Give to our Schools and Universities, zeal, prudence, and holiness. Visit in mercy all the children of affliction, (——) relieve their necessities, lighten their burdens; give them a cheerful submission to thy gracious will, and at length bring them and us, with those that already rest from their labors, into the joy of our Lord; to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all praise, now and for ever.

TUESDAY MORNING.

O ETERNAL and merciful Father, I give thee humble thanks (increase my thankfulness, I beseech thee) for all the blessings, spiritual and temporal, which, in the riches of thy mercy, thou hast poured down upon me. Lord, let me not live but to love thee, and to glorify thy name. Particularly I give thee most unfeigned thanks for preserving me from my birth to this moment, and for bringing me safe to the beginning of this day, (——) in which, and in all the days of my life, I beseech thee that all my thoughts, words, and works may tend to thy glory. Heal, O Father of mercies, all my infirmities, (——) strengthen me against all my follies; forgive me all my sins, (——) and let them not cry louder in thine ears for vengeance, than my prayers for mercy and forgiveness.

O blessed Lord, enable me to fulfill thy commands, and command what thou wilt. O thou Savior of all that trust in thee, do with me what seemeth best in thine own eyes; only give me the mind which was in thee; let me learn of thee to be meek and lowly. Pour into me the whole Spirit of humility; fill, I beseech thee, every part of my soul with it, and make it the constant, ruling habit of my mind, that all my other tempers may arise from it; that I may have no thoughts, no desires, no designs, but such as are the true fruit of a lowly spirit. Grant that I may think of myself as I ought to think, that I may “know myself, even as I am known.” Herein may I exercise myself continually, when I lie down and when I rise up, that I may always appear poor, and little, and mean, and base, and vile in mine own eyes. O convince me that “I have neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.” Give me a lively sense that I am nothing, that I have nothing, and that I can do nothing. Enable me to feel that I am all ignorance and error, weakness and uncleanness, sin and misery; that I am not worthy of the air I breathe, the earth I tread upon, or the sun that shines upon me. And let me be fully content when all other men think of me as I do of myself. O save me from either desiring or seeking the honor that cometh of men. Convince me that the words of praise, “when smoother than oil,” then especially “are very swords.” Give me to dread

them more than the “poison of asps,” or “the pestilence that walketh in darkness.” And when these cords of pride, these snares of death, do overtake me, suffer me not to take any pleasure in them, but enable me instantly to flee unto thee, O Lord, and to complain unto my God. Let all my bones cry out, “Thou art worthy to be praised; so shall I be safe from mine enemies.”

Bless, O gracious Father, all the nations, whom thou hast placed upon the earth, with the knowledge of thee, the only true God: But especially bless thy holy Catholic Church, and fill it with truth and grace; where it is corrupt, purge it; where it is in error, rectify it; where it is right, confirm it; where it is divided and rent asunder, heal the breaches thereof, O thou Holy One of Israel. Replenish all whom thou hast called to any office therein with truth of doctrine and innocence of life. Let their prayers be as precious incense in thy sight, that their cries and tears for the city of their God may not be in vain.

O Lord, hear the King in the day of his trouble; let thy name, O God, defend him. Grant him his heart’s desire, and fulfill all his mind. Set his heart firm upon thee, and upon other things only as they are in and for thee. O defend him and his royal relations from thy holy Heaven, even with the saving strength of thy right hand.

Have mercy upon this kingdom, and forgive the sins of this people; turn thee unto us, bless us, and cause thy face to shine on our desolations. Inspire the Nobles and Magistrates with prudent zeal, the Gentry and Commons with humble loyalty. Pour down thy blessings on all seminaries of true religion and learning, that they may remember and answer the end of their institution. Comfort all the sons and daughters of affliction, especially those who suffer for righteousness’ sake. Bless my father and mother, my brethren and sisters, my friends and relations, and all that belong to this family. Forgive all who are mine enemies, and so reconcile them to me and thyself, that we all, together with those that now sleep in thee, may awake to life everlasting, through thy merits and intercession, O blessed Jesus; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, by all creatures, “all honor, and might, and wisdom, and glory, and blessing.”

TUESDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Humility.

1. **H**AVE I labored to conform all my thoughts, words, and actions to these fundamental maxims: “I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing?”
2. Have I set apart some time this day to think upon my infirmities, follies, and sins?
3. Have I ascribed to myself any part of any good which God did by my hand?
4. Have I said or done anything with a view to the praise of men?
5. Have I desired the praise of men?
6. Have I taken pleasure in it?
7. Have I commended myself, or others, to their faces, unless for God’s sake, and then with fear and trembling?
8. Have I despised anyone’s advice?
9. Have I, when I thought so, said, “I am in the wrong?”
10. Have I received contempt for things indifferent, with meekness? for doing my duty, with joy?
11. Have I omitted justifying myself where the glory of God was not concerned? Have I submitted to be thought in the wrong?
12. Have I, when contemned, First, prayed God it might not discourage or puff me up; Secondly, that it might not be imputed to the condemner; Thirdly, that it might heal my pride?

13. Have I, without some particular good in view, mentioned the contempt I had met with?

I DESIRE to offer unto thee, O Lord, my evening sacrifice, — the sacrifice of a contrite spirit. “Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness, and after the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offenses.” Let thy unspeakable mercy free me from the sins I have committed, and deliver me from the punishment I have deserved (——). O save me from every work of darkness, and cleanse me “from all filthiness of flesh and spirit,” that, for the time to come, I may, with a pure heart and mind, follow thee, the only true God.

O Lamb of God, who, both by thy example and precept, didst instruct us to be meek and humble, give me grace throughout my whole life, in every thought, and word, and work, to imitate thy meekness and humility. O mortify in me the whole body of pride; grant me to feel that I am nothing and have nothing, and that I deserve nothing but shame and contempt, but misery and punishment. Grant, O Lord, that I may look for nothing, claim nothing; and that I may go through all the scenes of life, not seeking my own glory, but looking wholly unto thee, and acting wholly for thee. Let me never speak any word that may tend to my own praise, unless the good of my neighbor require it; and even then let me beware, lest, to heal another, I wound my own soul. Let my ears and my heart be ever shut to the praise that cometh of men, and let me “refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so sweetly.” Give me a dread of applause, in whatsoever form, and from whatsoever tongue, it cometh. I know that “many stronger men have been slain by it,” and that it “leadeth to the chambers of death.” O deliver my soul from this snare of hell; neither let me spread it for the feet of others. Whosoever perish thereby, be their blood upon their own head, and let not my hand be upon them.

O thou Giver of every good and perfect gift, if at any time thou pleasest to work by my hand, teach me to discern what is my own from what is another’s, and to render unto thee the things that are thine. As all the good that is done on earth thou doest it thyself, let me ever return to thee all the

glory. Let me, as a pure crystal, transmit all the light thou pourest upon me; but never claim as my own what is thy sole property.

O thou who wert despised and rejected of men, when I am slighted by my friends, disdained by my superiors, overborn or ridiculed by my equals, or contemptuously treated by my inferiors, let me cry out with thy holy martyr, ³³ “It is now that I begin to be a disciple of Christ.” Then let me thankfully accept, and faithfully use, the happy occasion of improving in thy meek and lowly spirit. If for thy sake “men cast out my name as evil,” let me “rejoice and be exceeding glad.” If for my own infirmities, yet let me acknowledge thy goodness, in giving me this medicine to heal my pride and vanity, and beg thy mercy for those physicians of my soul by whose hands it is administered to me.

“Make me to remember thee on my bed, and think upon thee when I am waking.” Thou hast preserved me from all the dangers of the day past; thou hast been my support from my youth up until now; “under the shadow of thy wings” let me pass this night in comfort and peace.

O thou Creator and Preserver of all mankind, have mercy upon all conditions of men; purge thy holy catholic Church from all heresy, schism, and superstition. Bless our Sovereign in his person, in his actions, in his relations, and in his people. May it please thee “to endue his Council, and all the Nobility, with grace, wisdom, and understanding;” the Magistrates, with equity, courage, and prudence; the Gentry, with industry and temperance; and all the Commons of this land, with increase of grace, and a holy, humble, thankful spirit.

O pour upon our whole Church, and especially upon the Clergy thereof, the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant to our Universities peace and piety; and to all that labor under affliction, constant patience and timely deliverance. Bless all my kindred, especially my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all my friends and benefactors (——). Turn the hearts of my enemies; (——) forgive them and me all our sins, and grant that we, and all the members of thy holy Church, may find mercy in the dreadful day of judgment, through the mediation and satisfaction of thy blessed Son Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost the

Comforter, be all honor, praise, and thanksgiving, in all the Churches of the saints for ever.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O THOU who dwellest in the light which no man can approach, in whose presence there is no night, in the light of whose countenance there is perpetual day; I, thy sinful servant, whom thou hast preserved this night, who live by thy power this day, bless and glorify thee for the defense of thy almighty providence, (——) and humbly pray thee, that this, and all my days, may be wholly devoted to thy service. Send thy Holy Spirit to be the guide of all my ways, and the sanctifier of my soul and body. Save, defend, and build me up in thy fear and love; give unto me the light of thy countenance, peace from heaven, and the salvation of my soul in the day of the Lord Jesus.

O thou who art “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” thou hast said no man can follow thee, unless he renounce himself I know, O Savior, that thou hast laid nothing upon us but what the design of thy love made necessary for us. Thou sawest our disease, our idolatrous self-love, whereby we fell away from God, to be as gods ourselves, to please ourselves, and to do our own will. Lo, I come! May I ever renounce my own, and do thy blessed will in all things!

I know, O God, thou didst empty thyself of thy eternal glory, and tookest upon thee “the form of a servant.” Thou who madest all men to serve and please thee, didst not please thyself, but wast the servant of all. Thou, O Lord of the hosts of heaven and earth, didst yield thy cheeks to be smitten, thy back to be scourged, and thy hands and feet to be nailed to an accursed tree. Thus didst thou, our great Master, renounce thyself; and can we think much of renouncing our vile selves? My Lord and my God, let me not presume to be above my Master! Let it be the one desire of my heart, to be as my Master; to do, not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.

O thou whose whole life did cry aloud, “Father, not mine, but thy will be done,” give me grace to walk after thy pattern, to tread in thy steps. Give me grace to “take up my cross daily,” to inure myself to bear hardship.

Let me exercise myself unto godliness betimes, before the rains descend and the floods beat upon me. Let me now practice what is not pleasing to flesh and blood, what is not agreeable to my senses, appetites, and passions, that I may not hereafter renounce thee, for fear of suffering for thee, but may stand firm in the “day of my visitation.”

O thou who didst not please thyself, although for thy “pleasure all things are and were created,” let some portion of thy Spirit descend on me, that I may “deny myself and follow thee.” Strengthen my soul, that I may be temperate in all things; that I may never use any of thy creatures but in order to some end thou commandest me to pursue, and in that measure and manner which most conduces to it. Let me never gratify any desire which has not thee for its ultimate object. Let me ever abstain from all pleasures which do not prepare me for taking pleasure in thee; as knowing that all such war against the soul, and tend to alienate it from thee. O save me from ever indulging either “the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life.” Set a watch, O Lord, over my senses and appetites, my passions and understanding, that I may resolutely deny them every gratification which has no tendency to thy glory. O train me up in this good way, “that when I am old I may not depart from it;” that I may be at length of a truly mortified heart, “crucified unto the world, and the world crucified unto me.”

Hear also my prayers for all mankind, and guide their feet into the way of peace; for thy holy Catholic Church, — let her live by thy Spirit, and reign in thy glory. Remember that branch of it which thou hast planted in these kingdoms; especially the stewards of thy holy mysteries; give them such zeal, and diligence, and wisdom, that they may save both themselves and those that hear them.

Preserve, O great King of heaven and earth, all Christian Princes, especially our Sovereign and his family. Grant that his Council, and all that are in authority under him, may truly and indifferently administer justice. And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, that they may faithfully serve thee all the days of their life. Bless the Universities with prudence, unity, and holiness. However the way of truth be evil spoken of; may they walk in it even to the end. Whoever forget or blaspheme their high

calling, may they ever remember that they are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;” and, accordingly, “show forth the praise of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

With a propitious eye, O gracious Lord, behold all my enemies, and all that are in affliction; give them patience under their sufferings, and grant that they, and all the members of thy Church, may find rest, “where the wicked cease from troubling,” and mercy in the great day of trial. In particular I commend to thy mercy, my father and mother, my brethren and sisters, my friends and relations (——). Lord, thou best knowest all their wants; O suit thy blessings to their several necessities.

Let these my prayers, O Lord, find access to the throne of grace, through the Son of thy love, Jesus Christ the righteous; to whom, with thee, O Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be all love and obedience now and for ever!

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Mortification.

1. **H**AVE I done anything merely because it was pleasing?
2. Have I not only not done what passion solicited me to, but done just the contrary?
3. Have I received the inconveniences I could not avoid as means of mortification chosen for me by God?
4. Have I contrived pretenses to avoid self-denial? In particular,
5. Have I thought any occasion of denying myself too small to be embraced?
6. Have I submitted my will to the will of every one that opposed it, except where the glory of God was concerned?
7. Have I set apart some time for endeavoring after a lively sense of the sufferings of Christ and my own sins? for deprecating God's judgment, and thinking how to amend?

O ALMIGHTY Lord of heaven and earth, I desire with fear and shame to cast myself down before thee, humbly confessing my manifold sins and unsufferable wickedness. I confess, O great God, that I have sinned grievously against thee by thought, word, and deed, particularly this day. Thy words and thy laws, O God, are holy, and thy judgments are terrible! But I have broken all thy righteous laws, and incurred thy severest judgments; and where shall I appear when thou art angry?

But, O Lord my Judge, thou art also my Redeemer! I have sinned, but thou, O blessed Jesus, art my Advocate! "Enter not into judgment with me," lest I die; but spare me, gracious Lord, "spare thy servant, whom

thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood.” O reserve not evil in store for me against the day of vengeance, but let thy mercy be magnified upon me. Deliver me from the power of sin, and preserve me from the punishment of it.

Thou whose mercy is without measure, whose goodness is unspeakable, despise not thy returning servant, who earnestly begs for pardon and reconciliation. Grant me the forgiveness of what is past, and a perfect repentance of all my sins; that for the time to come I may with a pure spirit do thy will, O God, walking humbly with thee, conversing charitably with men, possessing my soul in resignation and holiness, and my body in sanctification and honor.

“My Lord and my God,” I know that unless I am planted together with thee in the likeness of thy death, I cannot in the likeness of thy resurrection. O strengthen me, that by “denying myself and taking up my cross daily,” I may crucify the old man, and utterly destroy the whole body of sin. Give me grace to “mortify all my members which are upon earth,” all my works and affections which are according to corrupt nature. Let me be dead unto sin, unto every transgression of thy law, which is holy, merciful, and perfect. Let me be dead unto the world, and all that is in the world, “the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life.” Let me be dead unto pleasure, so far as it tendeth not to thee and to those pleasures which are at thy right hand for evermore. Let me be dead unto my own will, and alive only unto thine. I am not my own; thou hast “bought me with a price,” with the price of thine own blood. And thou didst therefore die for all, “that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him that died for us.” Arm thou me with this mind; circumsise my heart, and make me a new creature. Let me no longer live to the desires of men, but to the will of God. Let thy Holy Spirit enable me to say with thy blessed Apostle, “I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

O thou Great Shepherd of souls, bring home unto thy fold all that are gone astray. Preserve thy Church from all heresy and schism, from all that persecute or oppose the truth; and give unto thy Ministers wisdom and holiness, and the powerful aid of thy blessed Spirit. Advance the just

interests, and preserve the persons, of all Christian Princes, especially our Sovereign: Give to him and his Royal Family, and to all his subjects, in their several stations, particularly those that are in authority among them, grace to do thy will in this world, and eternal glory in the world to come.

Bless, O Lord, all our nurseries of piety and schools of learning, that they may devote all their studies to thy glory. Have mercy on all that are in affliction; remember the poor and needy, the widow and fatherless, the friendless and oppressed; heal the sick and languishing, give them a sanctified use of thy rod, and when thou seest it expedient for them, receive them into the number of thy departed saints, and with them into thine everlasting kingdom.

O my God, I praise thee for thy continual preservation of me, for thy fatherly protection over me this day; (——) for all the comforts with which thou surroundest me, spiritual and temporal; particularly for leave now to pray unto thee. O accept the poor services, pardon the sinfulness of this and all my holy duties, and bless me, my friends and relations, my benefactors and mine enemies, (this night and ever,) with the blessings of thy children.

These my prayers, O most merciful Father, vouchsafe to hear, through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who with thee and the Holy Ghost is worshipped and glorified, in all Churches of the saints, one God blessed for ever!

THURSDAY MORNING.

O ETERNAL God, my Sovereign Lord, I acknowledge all I am, all I have, is thine. O give me such a sense of thy infinite goodness, that I may return to thee all possible love and obedience.

I humbly and heartily thank thee for all the favors thou hast bestowed upon me; for creating me after thine own image, for thy daily preserving me by thy good providence, for redeeming me by the death of thy blessed Son, and for the assistance of thy Holy Spirit; for causing me to be born a Christian country, for blessing me with plentiful means of salvation, with religious parents and friends, and frequent returns of thy ever blessed sacrament. I also thank thee for all thy temporal blessings; for the preservation of me this night; (——) for my health, strength, food, raiment, and all the comforts and necessaries of life. O may I always delight to “praise thy holy name,” and, above all thy benefits, love thee my great Benefactor.

And, O Father of mercies, shut not up thy bowels of compassion towards me, a vile and miserable sinner; despise not the work of thine own hands, the purchase of thy Son’s blood. For his sake I most humbly implore forgiveness of all my sins. “Lo, I come now, to do thy will alone;” and am resolved, by thy assistance, to have no longer any choice of my own, but with singleness of heart to obey thy good pleasure: “Father, not my will, but thine be done,” in all my thoughts, words, and actions.

O thou all-sufficient God of angels and men, who art above all, and through all, and in all; from whom, by whom, and in whom are all things; “in whom we live, move, and have our being;” may my will be as entirely and continually derived from thine, as my being and happiness are!

I believe, O sovereign Goodness, O mighty Wisdom, that thou dost sweetly order and govern all things, even the most minute, even the most noxious, to thy glory, and the good of those that love thee. I believe, O Father of the families of heaven and earth, that thou so disposest all

events, as may best magnify thy goodness to all thy children, especially those whose eyes wait upon thee. I most humbly beseech thee, teach me to adore all thy ways, though I cannot comprehend them; teach me to be glad that thou art King, and to give thee thanks for all things that befall me; seeing thou hast chosen that for me, and hast thereby “set to thy seal that they are good.” And for that which is to come, give me thy grace to do in all things what pleaseth thee; and then, with an absolute submission to thy wisdom, to leave the issues of them in thy hand.

O Lord Jesus, I give thee my body, my soul, my substance, my fame, my friends, my liberty, my life: Dispose of me, and all that is mine, as it seemeth best unto thee. I am not mine, but thine; Claim me as thy right, keep me as thy charge, love me as thy child! Fight for me when I am assaulted, heal me when I am wounded, and revive me when I am destroyed.

O help me with thy grace, that whatsoever I shall do or suffer this day may tend to thy glory. Keep me in love to thee, and to all men. Do thou direct my paths, and teach me to set thee always before me. Let not the things of this life, or my manifold concerns therein, alienate any part of my affections from thee; nor let me ever pursue or regard them, but for thee, and in obedience to thy will.

Extend, O Lord, thy pity to the whole race of mankind; enlighten the Gentiles with thy truth, and bring into thy flock thy ancient people the Jews. Be gracious to the holy catholic Church; and grant she may always preserve that doctrine and discipline which thou hast delivered to her. Grant that all of this nation, especially our Governors and the Clergy, may, “whatsoever they do, do all to thy glory.” Bless all nurseries of true religion and useful learning, and let them not neglect the end of their institution. Be merciful to all that are in distress, (——) that struggle with pain, poverty, or reproach; be thou a guide to them that travel by land or by water; give a strong, and quiet spirit to those who are condemned to death, liberty to prisoners and captives, and ease and cheerfulness to every sad heart. O give spiritual strength and comfort to scrupulous consciences, and to them that are afflicted by evil spirits. Pity idiots and lunatics, and give life and salvation to all to whom thou hast given no understanding.

Give to all that are in error the light of thy truth; bring all Sinners to repentance, (——) and give to all heretics humility and grace to make amends to thy Church, by the public acknowledgment of an holy faith. Bless all my friends and relations, acquaintance and enemies; (——) unite us all to one another by mutual love, and to thyself by constant holiness; that we, together with all those who are gone before us in thy faith and fear, may find a merciful acceptance in the last day, through the merits of thy blessed Son; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all glory, world without end!

THURSDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Resignation and Meekness.

1. **H**AVE I endeavored to will what God wills, and that only?
2. Have I received everything that has befallen me without my choice, as the choice of infinite wisdom and goodness for me, with thanks?
3. Have I (after doing what he requires of me to do concerning them) left all future things absolutely to God's disposal; that is, have I labored to be wholly indifferent to which soever way he shall ordain for me?
4. Have I resumed my claim to my body, soul, friends, fame, or fortune, which I have made over to God; or repented of my gift, when God accepted any of them at my hands?
5. Have I endeavored to be cheerful, mild, and courteous in whatever I said or did?
6. Have I said anything with a stern look, accent, or gesture? particularly with regard to religion?

MY Lord and my God, thou seest my heart, and my desires are not hid from thee. I am encouraged by my happy experience of thy goodness, (particularly this day past,) to present myself before thee, notwithstanding I know myself unworthy of the least favor from thee. I am ashamed when I think how long I have lived a stranger, yea, an enemy to thee, taking upon me to dispose of myself, and to please myself in the main course of my life. But I now unfeignedly desire to return unto thee, and, renouncing all interest and propriety in myself, to give myself up entirely to thee; I would be thine, and only thine for ever. But I know I am nothing, and can do nothing of myself; and if ever I am thine, I must be wholly indebted to thee for it. O my God, my Savior, my Sanctifier, turn not away thy face from a poor soul that seeks thee; but as thou hast

kindled in me these desires, so confirm, increase, and satisfy them. Reject not that poor gift which I would make of myself into thee, but teach me so to make it, that it may be acceptable in thy sight. Lord, hear me, help me, and show mercy unto me, for Jesus Christ's sake.

To thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, I give up myself entirely: May I no longer serve myself, but thee, all the days of my life.

I give thee my understanding: May it be my only care to know thee, thy perfections, thy works, and thy will. Let all things else be as dung and dross unto me, for the excellency of this knowledge. And let me silence all reasonings against whatsoever thou teachest me, who canst neither deceive, nor be deceived.

I give thee my will: May I have no will of my own; whatsoever thou willest may I will, and that only. May I will thy glory in all things, as thou dost, and make that my end in everything; may I ever say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." May I delight; to do thy will, O God, and rejoice to suffer it. Whatever threatens me, let me say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;" and whatever befalls me, let me give thanks, since it is thy will concerning me.

I give thee my affections: Do thou dispose of them all; be thou my love, my fear, my joy; and may nothing have any share in them, but with respect to thee and for thy sake. What thou lovest, may I love; what thou hatest, may I hate; and that in such measures as thou art pleased to prescribe me.

I give thee my body: May I glorify thee with it, and preserve it holy, fit for thee, O God, to dwell in. May I neither indulge it, nor have too much rigor towards it; but keep it, as far as in me lies, healthy, vigorous, and active, and it to do thee all manner of service which thou shalt call for.

I give thee all my worldly goods: May I prize them and use them only for thee: May I faithfully restore to thee, in the poor, all thou hast entrusted

me with, above the necessaries of life; and be content to part with them too, whenever thou, my Lord, shalt require them at my hands.

I give thee my credit and reputation: May I never value it, but only in respect of thee; nor endeavor to maintain it, but as it may do thee service and advance thy honor in the world.

I give thee myself and my all: Let me look upon myself to be nothing, and to have nothing, out of thee. Be thou the sole disposer and governor of myself and all; be thou my portion and my all.

O my God and my all, when hereafter I shall be tempted to break this solemn engagement, when I shall be pressed to conform to the world, and to the company and customs that surround me; may my answer be, "I am not my own; I am not for myself, nor for the world, but for my God. I will give unto God the things which are God's. God be merciful to me a sinner."

Have mercy, O Father of the spirits of all flesh, on all mankind. Convert all Jews, Turks, and Heathens, to thy truth. Bless the catholic Church; heal its breaches, and establish it in truth and peace. Preserve and defend all Christian Princes, especially our Sovereign and his family. Be merciful to this nation; bless the Clergy with soundness of doctrine and purity of life, the Council with wisdom, the Magistrates with integrity and zeal, and the people with loyalty. Bless the Universities with learning and holiness, that they may afford a constant supply of men fit and able to do thee service.

Shower down thy graces on all my relations, on all my friends, and all that belong to this family. Comfort and relieve those that labor under any affliction of body or mind, especially those who suffer for the testimony of a good conscience. Visit them, O gracious Lord, in all their distresses. Thou knowest, thou seest, them under all. O stay their souls upon thee; give them to rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for thy name's sake, and constantly to look unto the author and finisher of their faith. Supply abundantly to all their souls who are in prison, the want of thy holy ordinances, and in thy good time, deliver them, and be merciful unto

them, as thou usest to be unto them that love thy name. Those that love or do good to me, reward sevenfold into their bosom; (——) those that hate me (——) convert and forgive; and grant us all, together with thy whole Church, an entrance into thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ; to whom with thee and the blessed Spirit, three Persons and one God, be ascribed all majesty, dominion, and power, now and for evermore. Amen.

FRIDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, I bless thee from my heart, that of thy infinite goodness thou hast preserved me this night past, and hast, with the impregnable defense of thy providence, protected me from the power and malice of the devil. Withdraw not, I humbly entreat thee, thy protection from me, but mercifully this day watch over me with the eyes of thy mercy. Direct my soul and body according to the rule of thy will, and fill my heart with thy Holy Spirit, that I may pass this day, and all the rest of my days, to thy glory.

O Savior of the world, God of Gods, light of light, thou that art the brightness of thy Father's glory, the express image of his person; thou that hast destroyed the power of the devil, that hast overcome death, "that sittest at the right hand of the Father;" thou wilt speedily come down in thy Father's glory to judge all men according to their works: Be thou my light and my peace; destroy the power of the devil in me, and make me a new creature. O thou who didst cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene, cast out of my heart all corrupt affections. O thou who didst raise Lazarus from the dead, raise me from the death of sin. Thou who didst cleanse the lepers, heal the sick, and give sight to the blind, heal the diseases of my soul; open my eyes, and fix them singly on the prize of my high calling, and cleanse my heart from every desire but that of advancing thy glory.

O Jesus, poor and abject, unknown and despised, have mercy upon me, and let me not be ashamed to follow thee. O Jesus, hated, calumniated, and persecuted, have mercy upon me, and let me not be ashamed to come after thee. O Jesus, betrayed and sold at a vile price, have mercy upon me, and make me content to be as my Master. O Jesus, blasphemed, accused and wrongfully condemned, have mercy upon me, and teach me to endure the contradiction of sinners. O Jesus, clothed with a habit of reproach and shame, have mercy upon me, and let me not seek my own glory. O Jesus, insulted, mocked, and spit upon, have mercy upon me, and let me run with patience the race set before me. O Jesus, dragged to the pillar, scourged, and bathed in blood, have mercy upon me, and let me not faint in the fiery

trial. O Jesus, crowned with thorns, and hailed in derision; O Jesus, burdened with our sins, and the curses of the people; O Jesus, affronted, outraged, buffeted, overwhelmed with injuries, griefs, and humiliations; O Jesus, hanging on the accursed tree, bowing the head, giving up the ghost, have mercy upon me, and confirm my whole soul to thy holy, humble, suffering Spirit. O thou who for the love of me hast undergone such an infinity of sufferings and humiliations, let me be wholly “emptied of myself,” that I may rejoice to take up my cross daily and follow thee. Enable me, too, to endure the pain and despise the shame; and, if it be thy will, to resist even unto blood!

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, I, miserable sinner, humbly acknowledge that I am altogether unworthy to pray for myself. But since thou hast commanded me to make prayers and intercessions for all men, in obedience to thy command, and confidence of thy unlimited goodness, I commend to thy mercy the wants and necessities of all mankind. Lord, let it be thy good pleasure to restore to thy Church catholic, primitive peace and purity; to show mercy to these sinful nations, and give us grace at length to break off our sins by repentance; defend our Church from all the assaults of schism, heresy, and sacrilege; and bless all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons with apostolical graces. O let it be thy good pleasure to defend the King from all his enemies, spiritual and temporal; to bless all his royal relations; to grant to the Council wisdom, to the Magistrates zeal and prudence, to the Gentry and Commons piety and loyalty!

Lord, let it be thy good pleasure to give thy grace to the Universities; to bless those whom I have wronged, (——) and to forgive those who have wronged me; (——) to comfort the disconsolate, to give health and patience to all that are sick and afflicted. (——)

Vouchsafe to bless my father and mother with the fear of thy name, that they may be holy in all manner of conversation. Let them remember how short their time is, and be careful to improve every moment of it. O thou who hast kept them from their youth up until now, forsake them not how they are gray headed, but perfect them in every good word and work, and be thou their guide unto death. Bless my brethren and sisters, whom thou hast graciously taught the gospel of thy Christ; give them further degrees

of illumination, that they may serve thee with a perfect heart and willing mind. Bless my friends and benefactors, and all who have commended themselves to my prayers (——). Lord, thou best knowest all our conditions, all our desires, all our wants. O do thou suit thy grace and blessings to our several necessities.

Hear, O merciful Father, my supplications, for the sake of thy Son Jesus; and bring us, with all those who have pleased thee from the beginning of the world, into the glories of thy Son's kingdom: To whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all praise for ever and ever!

“Our Father;” etc.

FRIDAY EVENING.

*Questions relating to Mortification: — See before the Prayers for
Wednesday Evening.*

O GOD the Father, who canst not be thought to have made me only to destroy me, have mercy upon me.

O God the Son, who, knowing thy Father's will, didst come into the world to save me, have mercy upon me.

O God the Holy Ghost, who to the same end hast so often since breathed holy thoughts into me, have mercy upon me.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, whom in three Persons I adore as one God, have mercy upon me.

Lord, carest thou not that I perish? thou that wouldest have all men to be saved? thou that wouldest have none to perish? And wilt thou now show thine anger against a worm, a leaf? against a vapor that vanisheth before thee? O remember how short my time is, and deliver not my soul into the power of hell. For, alas, what profit is there in my blood? Or, who shall give thee thanks in that pit? No; let me live in thy sight: Let me live, O my God, and my soul shall praise thee. Forget me as I have been disobedient, provoking thee to anger; and regard me as I am distressed, crying out to thee for help. Look not upon me as I am a sinner; but consider me as I am thy creature. A sinner I am, I confess, a sinner of no ordinary stain: But let not this hinder thee, O my God; for upon such sinners thou gettest the greatest glory.

O remember for whose sake it was that thou camest from the bosom of thy Father, and wast content to be born of thine own handmaid. Remember for whom it was that thy tender body was torn and scourged and crucified. Was it not for the sins of the whole world? And shall I be so injurious to thy glory, as to think thou hast excepted me? Or can I think

thou diedst only for sinners of a lower kind, and leftest such as me without remedy? What had become then of him who filled Jerusalem with blood? what of her, who lived in a trade of sin? Nay, what had become of thine own disciple, who with oaths and curses thrice denied thee?

O, how easy is it for thee to forgive! for it is thy nature. How proper is it for thee to save! for it is thy name. How suitable is it to thy coming into the world! for it is thy business. And when I consider that I am the chief of sinners, may I not urge thee farther, and say, Shall the chief of thy business be left undone? Far be that from thee! Have mercy upon me!

I ask not of thee the things of this world, give them to whom thou pleasest, so thou givest me mercy. O say unto my soul, "Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee." O that I might never sin against thee more! And whereinsoever my conscience accuses me most, be thou most merciful unto me.

Save me, O God, as a brand snatched out of the fire.

Receive me, O my Savior, as a sheep that is gone astray, but would now return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of my soul.

Father, accept my imperfect repentance, compassionate my infirmities, forgive my wickedness, purify my uncleanness, strengthen my weakness, fix my unstableness, and let thy good Spirit watch over me for ever, and thy love ever rule in my heart, through the merits and sufferings and love of thy Son, in whom thou art always well pleased.

Give thy grace, O holy Jesus, to all the world; and let all who are redeemed by thy blood, acknowledge thee to be the Lord. Let all Christians, especially those of this nation, keep themselves unspotted from the world. Let all Governors, and especially our Sovereign, rule with wisdom and justice; and let the Clergy be exemplary in their lives, and discreet and diligent in their labors. Let our Universities enjoy freedom from violence and faction, and excel in true religion and sound learning. Be a help at hand to all that are afflicted, and assist them to trust in thee. Raise up friends for the widow and fatherless, the friendless and oppressed. Give patience

to all that are sick, comfort to all troubled consciences, strength to all that are tempted. Be gracious to my relations, (——) to all that are endeared to me by their kindnesses or acquaintance, to all who remember me in their prayers, or desire to be remembered in mine (——). Sanctify, O merciful Lord, the friendship which thou hast granted me with these thy servants (——). O let our prayers be heard for each other, while our hearts are united in thy fear and love, and graciously unite them therein more and more. Strengthen the hearts of us thy servants against all our corruptions and temptations; enable us to consecrate ourselves faithfully and entirely to thy service. Grant that we may “provoke each other to love” and serve thee, and grow up together before thee in thy fear and love, to thy heavenly kingdom. And by thy infinite mercies, vouchsafe to bring us, with those that are dead in thee, to rejoice together before thee, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, be honor and power everlasting.

SATURDAY MORNING.

O GOD, thou great Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, thou Father of angels and men, thou Giver of life and Protector of all thy creatures, mercifully accept this my morning sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which I desire to offer, with all humility, to thy divine Majesty. "Thou art praised, O Lord by all thy works," and magnified by everything which thou hast created. The sun rejoiceth to run his course, that he may set forth thy praise who madest him. Nor do the moon and stars refrain to manifest thy glory, even amidst the silent night. The earth breathes forth each day perfumes, as incense to thee, her sacred King, who hast crowned her with herbs and trees, and beautified her with hills and dales. The deep uttereth his voice, and lifteth up his hands on high to thee, the great Creator, the universal King, the everlasting God. The floods clap their hands, and the hills are joyful together before thee; the fruitful vales rejoice and sing thy praise. Thou feedest the innumerable multitude of animals which thou hast created: "These all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season." Thou madest light for our comfort, and broughtest forth darkness out of thy treasures to overshadow the earth, that the living creatures of it might take their rest. "The fire and hail, snow and vapor, wind and storm, fulfill thy word," and manifest thy glory. Inanimate things declare thee, O Lord of life; and irrational animals demonstrate their wise Creator. Amidst this universal jubilee of nature, suffer not, I beseech thee, the sons of men to be silent; but let the noblest work of thy creation pay thee the noblest sacrifice of praise. O pour thy grace into my heart, that I may worthily magnify thy great and glorious name. Thou hast made me and sent me into the world to do thy work. O assist me to fulfill the end of my creation, and to show forth thy praise with all diligence, by giving myself up to thy service. "Prosper the work of my hands upon me," O Lord; O prosper thou whatever I shall undertake this day, that it may tend to thy glory, the good of my neighbor, and the salvation of my own soul.

Preserve me from all those snares and temptations which continually solicit me to offend thee. Guide me by thy Holy Spirit in all those places

whither thy providence shall lead me this day; and suffer not my communications with the world to dissipate my thoughts, to make me inadvertent to thy presence, or lukewarm in thy service; but let me always walk as in thy sight, and as one who knows this life to be the seed-time of an eternal harvest. Keep me, I beseech thee, undefiled, unblamable, and unreprouable unto the end; and grant that I may so diligently perform thy will, in that station wherein thou hast been pleased to place me, that I may make my calling and election sure, through Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Savior.

Hear also, O Lord, my prayers for the whole race of mankind, and guide their feet into the way of peace. Reform the corruptions of thy catholic Church, heal her divisions, and restore to her her ancient discipline; give to the Clergy thereof, whether they be Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, grace, as good shepherds, to feed the flocks committed to their charge. Bless King George and all the Royal Family, and all that are put in authority under him. Let them exceed others as much in goodness as greatness, and be signal instruments of thy glory. Grant that in the Universities, and in all other places set apart for thy service, whatsoever is praiseworthy may for ever flourish. Keep, O Lord, all the Nobility Gentry, and Commons of this land, in constant communion with thy holy catholic Church, in humble obedience to the King, and in Christian charity one towards another.

In a particular manner, I beseech thee to be gracious to my father and mother, my brethren and sisters, and all my friends and relations. Pardon all their sins, and heal all their infirmities. Give them that share of the blessings of this life, which thou knowest to be most expedient for them; and thy grace so to use them here, that they may enjoy thee eternally.

With a propitious eye, O gracious Comforter, behold all that are in affliction; let the sighings of the prisoners, the groans of the sick, the prayers of the oppressed, the desire of the poor and needy, come before thee. (——) Give unto my enemies (——) grace and pardon, charity to me and love to thee; remove the cloud from their eyes, the stony from their hearts, that they may know and feel what it is to love their neighbor as themselves. And may it please thee to enable me to love all mine enemies, to bless them that now curse me to do good to them that hate me, and to

pray for those who despitefully use me and persecute me. Be pleased, O Lord, of thy goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom; that we, with all the whole Church, may have our perfect consummation of bliss, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty now and for ever.

SATURDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Thankfulness.

1. **H**AVE I allotted some time for thanking God for the blessings of the past week?
2. Have I, in order to be the more sensible of them, seriously and deliberately considered the several circumstances that attended them?
3. Have I considered each of them as an obligation to greater love, and, consequently, to stricter holiness?

O MOST great and glorious God, who art mighty in thy power, and wonderful in thy doings towards the sons of men, accept, I beseech thee, my unfeigned thanks and praise for my creation, preservation, and all the other blessings which, in the riches of thy mercy, thou hast from time to time poured down upon me. “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hand.” Thou createdst the sun and moon, the day and night, and makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise thee. Thou “formedst man of the dust; of the ground, and breathedst into him the breath of life.” In thine own image madest thou him, capable of knowing and loving thee eternally. His nature was perfect, thy will was his law, and thy blessed self his portion. Neither after he had left his first estate didst thou utterly withdraw thy mercy from him; but, in every succeeding generation, didst save, deliver, assist, and protect him. Thou hast instructed us by thy laws, and enlightened us by thy statutes; thou hast redeemed us by the blood of thy Son, and sanctifiest us by the grace of thy Holy Spirit. For these and all thy other mercies, how can I ever sufficiently love thee, or worthily magnify thy great and glorious name? All the powers of my soul are too few to conceive the thanks that are due to thee, even for vouchsafing me the honor of now appearing before thee and conversing with thee. But thou hast declared thou wilt accept the sacrifice of thanksgiving in return for all thy goodness. For ever therefore will I bless thee, will I adore thy

power, and magnify thy goodness: “My tongue shall sing of thy righteousness, and be telling of thy salvation from day to day.” I will give thanks unto thee for ever and ever; I will praise my God while I have my being. O that I had the heart of the seraphim, that I might burn with love like theirs. But though I am upon earth, yet will I praise, as I can, the King of heaven; though I am a feeble, mortal creature, yet will I join my song with those that excel in strength, with the immortal host of angels, and archangels, thrones, dominions, and powers, while they land and magnify thy glorious name, and sing with incessant shouts of praise, —

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts! Heaven and earth are full of his glory! Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen. Hallelujah.”

Accept, O merciful Father, my most humble thanks for thy preservation of me this day (——). O continue thy loving kindness towards me, and take me into thy protection this night. Let thy holy angels watch over me to defend me from the attempts of evil men and evil spirits. Let me rest in peace, and not sleep in sin; and grant that I may rise more fit for thy service.

O thou whose kingdom ruleth over all, rule in the hearts of all the men whom thou hast made; reform the corruptions, and heal the breaches, of thy holy Church, and establish her in truth and peace. Be gracious unto all Priests and Deacons, and give them rightly to divide the word of truth. Forgive the sins of this nation, and turn our hearts, that iniquity may not be our ruin. Bless King George, and all the Royal Family, with all those blessings which thou seest to be most expedient for them; and give to his Council, and to the Nobility and Magistracy, grace truly to serve thee in their several stations. Bless our Universities, that they may be the great bulwarks of thy faith and love, against all the assaults of vice and infidelity. May the Gentry and Commons of this realm live in constant communion with thy Church, in obedience to the King, and in love one towards another.

Be gracious to all who are near and dear to me. Thou knowest their names, and art acquainted with their wants. Of thy goodness be pleased to proportion thy blessings to their necessities. Pardon my enemies, and give

them repentance and charity, and me grace to overcome evil with good. Have compassion on all who are distressed in mind, body, or estate, and give them steady patience, and timely deliverance.

Now, to God the Father, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved; to God the Son, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to God the Holy Ghost, who sheddeth the love of God abroad in our hearts, be all love and all glory in time and to all eternity. Amen.

A COLLECTION OF PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES.

SUNDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, we desire to praise thy holy name for so graciously raising us up, in soundness of body and mind, to see the light of this day.

We bless thee in behalf of all thy creatures; for “the eyes of all look unto thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season.” But above all we acknowledge thy inestimable benefits bestowed upon mankind in Christ Jesus. We thank thee for his miraculous birth, for his most holy life, his bitter agony and bloody death, for his glorious resurrection on this day, his ascension into heaven, his triumph over all the powers of darkness, and his sitting at thy right hand for evermore.

O God, how great was thy love to the sinful sons of men, to give “thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life!” How great was that love which hath committed our souls to One so “mighty to save;” which hath chosen us to be thy sons and heirs, together with Christ Jesus, and set such an High Priest over thy house and family, to make intercession for us, to pour thy blessings upon us, and to send forth his angels to “minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation!” O the riches of thy grace, in sending the Holy Ghost to make us “abound in hope” that we shall one day rise from the dead, and, after our short labors here, rest with thee in thy eternal glory.

O that we could begin this day in devout meditations, in joy unspeakable, and in blessing and praising thee, who hast given us such good hope and everlasting consolation. Lift up our minds above all these little things below, which are apt to distract our thoughts; and keep them above, till our hearts are fully bent to seek thee every day, in the way wherein Jesus

hath gone before us, though it should be with the loss of all we here possess.

We are ashamed, O Lord, to think that ever we have disobeyed thee, who hast redeemed us by the precious blood of thine own Son. O that we may agree with thy will in all things for the time to come; and that all the powers of our souls and bodies may be wholly dedicated to thy service. We desire unfeignedly that all the thoughts and designs of our minds, all the affections and tempers of our hearts, and all the actions of our life, may be pure, holy, and unreprouable in thy sight.

“Search us, O Lord, and prove us; try out our reins and our heart. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in us, and lead us in the way everlasting.” Let thy favor be better to us than life itself; that so in all things we may approve our hearts before thee, and feel the sense of thy acceptance of us, giving us a joy which the world cannot give.

Make it our delight to praise thee, to call to mind thy loving kindness, and to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Help us to “take heed to ourselves, lest at any time our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting or drunkenness, or the cares of this life;” to have our conversation without covetousness, and to be content with such things as we have; to possess our bodies in sanctification and honor; to love our neighbor as ourselves; and as we would that others should do to us, do even so to them; to live peaceably, as much as lieth in us, with all men; to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; and to take those who have spoken in the name of our Lord, for an example of suffering affection, and of patience; and when we suffer as Christians, not to be ashamed, but to glorify thee our God on this behalf.

And accept, good Lord, of all the praises of all thy people met together this day. O that “thy ways were known upon all the earth, thy saving health among all nations;” and that all Christian Kings, especially, may be filled with thy Holy Spirit, and be faithful subjects of the Lord Jesus, “the King of kings and Lord of lords.” O that thy “Priests may be clothed with righteousness, and thy saints rejoice and sing;” that all who are in distress may trust in thee, the “health of their countenance and their God.” O Lord,

hear us, and make thy face to shine upon thy servants, that we may “enter into thy gates with thanksgiving, and into thy courts with praise; that we may be thankful unto thee and bless thy name.” Amen, for Jesus Christ’s sake; in whose words we conclude our imperfect prayers, saying, “Our Father,” etc.

SUNDAY EVENING.

O THOU “high and holy One that inhabitest eternity,” thou art to be feared and loved by all thy servants. “All thy works praise thee, O God;” and we especially give thanks unto thee for thy marvellous love in Christ Jesus, by whom thou hast “reconciled the world to thyself.” Thou hast “given us exceeding great and precious promises.” Thou hast sealed them with his blood, thou hast confirmed them by his resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. We thank thee that thou hast given us so many happy opportunities of knowing the “truth as it is in Jesus,” even “the mystery which was hid from ages and generations” but is now revealed to them that believe.

Blessed be thy goodness for that great consolation, and for the assistance of thy Holy Spirit. Blessed be thy goodness, that we have felt it so often in our hearts, inspiring us with holy thoughts, filling us with love and joy, and comfortable expectations of “the glory that shall be revealed.” We thank thee, that thou hast suffered us this day to attend on thee in thy public service; and that we have begun, in any measure, to pursue after that eternal “rest which remaineth for the people of God.”

We offer up again our souls and bodies to thee to be governed, not by our will, but thine. O let it be ever the ease and joy of our hearts, to be under the conduct of thy unerring wisdom, to follow thy counsels, and to be ruled in all things by thy holy will. And let us never distrust thy abundant kindness and tender care over us; whatsoever it is thou wouldest have us to do or to suffer in this world.

O God, purify our hearts, that we may entirely love thee, and rejoice in being beloved of thee; that we may confide in thee, and absolutely resign ourselves to thee, and be filled with constant devotion toward thee. O that we may never sink into a base love of anything here below, nor be oppressed with the cares of this life; but assist us to “abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.” Let us “use this world as not abusing it.” Give us true humility of spirit, that we may “not think of

ourselves more highly than we ought to think." Keep us from being "wise in our own conceits." "Let our moderation be known to all men." Make us "kindly affectioned one to another;" to delight in doing good; to "show all meekness to all men;" to "render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor;" and to "owe no man anything, but to love one another." Make us so happy, that we may be able to "love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to them that hate us; to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Compose our spirits to a quiet and steady dependence on thy good Providence, that we may "take no thought for our life," nor "be careful for anything, but by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, still make known our requests to thee our God." And help us to "pray always and not faint; in every thing to give thanks, and offer up the sacrifice of praise continually; to rejoice in hope of thy glory;" to "possess our souls in patience;" and to "learn in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content." Make us "know both how to be abased, and how to abound; everywhere, and in all things," instruct us "both to abound and to suffer want," being enabled to "do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us."

O that the light of all Christians did so "shine before men," that others might "glorify thee, our Father which art in heaven!" "Send forth thy light and thy truth" into all the dark corners of the earth, that "all Kings may fall down before thee, and all nations do thee service!" Bless these kingdoms, and give us grace at length to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." O Lord, save the King, and "establish his throne in righteousness." Prosper the endeavors of all those who faithfully feed thy people, and increase the number of them. O that the seed which hath been sown this day, may take deep root in all our hearts; that being "not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, we may be blessed in our deeds." Help us, in all the week following to "set a watch before our mouth, and keep the door of our lips;" and "let not our heart incline to any evil thing," or "to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity." But "as we have received how we ought to walk and to please thee, so may we abound more and more."

Protect us, we beseech thee, and all our friends everywhere this night; and awaken in the morning those good thoughts in our hearts, that the words of our Savior may abide in us, and we in Him, who hath taught us when we pray to say, "Our Father," etc.

MONDAY MORNING.

WE humble ourselves, O Lord of heaven and earth, before thy glorious Majesty. We acknowledge thy eternal power, wisdom, goodness, and truth; and desire to render thee most unfeigned thanks, for all the benefits which thou pourest upon us; but above all, for thine inestimable love, in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We implore thy tender mercies in the forgiveness of all our sins, whereby we have offended either in thought, word, or deed. We desire to be truly sorry for all our misdoings, and utterly to renounce whatsoever is contrary to thy will. We desire to devote our whole man, body, soul, and spirit, to thee. And as thou dost inspire us with these desires, so accompany them always with thy grace, that we may every day, with our whole hearts, give ourselves up to thy service.

We desire to be so holy and undefiled as our blessed Master was. And we trust thou wilt fulfill all the gracious promises which he hath made to us. Let them be dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver; let them be the comfort and joy of our hearts. We ask nothing, but that it may be unto thy servants according to his word.

Thou hast mercifully kept us the last night; blessed be thy continued goodness. Receive us likewise into thy protection this day. Guide and assist us in all our thoughts, words, and actions. Make us willing to do and suffer what thou pleasest; waiting for the mercy of our Lord, Christ Jesus, unto eternal life.

Blessed be thy goodness, which hath not suffered us to wander without instruction after the foolish desires of our own hearts; but hath clearly shown us where our happiness lies. O may we receive, with all thankfulness, those holy words which teach us the blessedness of poverty of spirit, of mourning after thee, of meekness and gentleness, of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of mercifulness and purity of heart, of

doing good unto all, and patiently suffering for doing the will of our Lord Christ.

O may we always be in the number of those blessed souls. May we ever feel ourselves happy in having the kingdom of God within us, in the comforts of the Holy One, in being filled with all the fruits of righteousness, in being made the children of the Highest, and, above all, in seeing thee, our God. Let us abound in thy love more and more; and in continual prayers and praises to thee, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

And we desire, thou knowest, the good of all mankind, especially of all Christian people; that they may all walk worthy of the gospel, and live together in unity and Christian love. For which end, we pray that all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors, may be wise, pious, just and merciful, endeavoring that all their subjects may lead peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty; and more particularly, that our Sovereign, King George, may be blessed with a religious, quiet, long, and prosperous reign, and that all in authority under him may seek, in their several stations, to right the oppressed, to comfort the afflicted, to provide for the poor and needy, and to relieve all those that are in any misery. Bless all those that watch over our souls; succeed their labors, and give us grace to follow their godly admonitions, and to “esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.” The same blessings we crave for our friends, relations, and acquaintance, that we may all live in perfect love and peace together, and rejoice together at the great day of the Lord Jesus; in whose holy words we sum up all our wants: “Our Father,” etc.

MONDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, in whom we live, move, all have our being; to whose tender compassions we owe our safety the day past, together with all the comforts of this life, and the hopes of that which is to come; we praise thee, O Lord, we bow ourselves before thee, acknowledging we have nothing but what we receive from thee. “Unto thee do we give thanks,” O God, who daily pourest thy benefits upon us.

Blessed be thy goodness for our health, for our food and raiment, for our peace and safety, for the love of our friends, for all our blessings in this life, and our desire to attain that life which is immortal. Blessed be thy love, for that we feel in our hearts any motion toward thee. Behold, O Lord, we present ourselves before thee, to be inspired with such a vigorous sense of thy love, as may put us forward with a greater earnestness, zeal, and diligence in all our duty. Renew in us, we beseech a lively image of thee, in all righteousness, purity, mercy, faithfulness, and truth. O that Jesus, the hope of glory, may be formed in us, in all humility, meekness, patience, and an absolute surrender of our souls and bodies to thy holy will; that we may not live, but Christ may live in us; that every one of us may say, “The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Let the remembrance of his love, who made himself an offering for our sins, be ever dear and precious to us. Let it continually move us to offer up ourselves to thee, to do thy will, as our blessed Master died. May we place an entire confidence in thee, and still trust ourselves with thee, who hast not “spared thine own Son, but freely given him up for us all.” May we humbly accept of whatsoever thou sendest us, and “in everything give thanks.” Surely thou “wilt never leave us nor forsake us.” O guide us safe through all the changes of this life, in an unchangeable love to thee, and a lively sense of thy love to us, till we come to live with thee and enjoy thee for ever.

And now that we are going to lay ourselves down to sleep, take us into thy gracious protection, and settle our spirits in such quiet and delightful thoughts of the glory where our Lord Jesus lives, that we may desire to be dissolved and to go to him who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we might live together with him.

To thy blessing we recommend all mankind, high and low, rich and poor, that they may all faithfully serve thee, and contentedly enjoy whatsoever is needful for them. And especially we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness. We leave all we have with thee, especially our friends, and those who are dear unto us; desiring that when we are dead and gone, they may lift up their souls in this manner unto thee; and teach those that come after, to praise, love, and obey thee. And if we awake again in the morning may we praise thee again with joyful lips, and still offer ourselves a more acceptable sacrifice to thee, through Jesus Christ; in whose words we beseech thee to hear us, according to the full sense and meaning thereof: “Our Father,” etc.

TUESDAY MORNING.

O MOST great and mighty Lord, the possessor of heaven and earth, all the angels rejoice in blessing and praising thee, the Father of spirits; for “thou hast created all things, and in wisdom hast thou made them all,” and spread thy tender mercies over all thy works. We desire thankfully to acknowledge thy bounty to us, among the rest of thy creatures, and thy particular grace and favor to us in Jesus Christ, our merciful Redeemer. O give us a deep sense of that love which gave Him to die for us, that he might be “the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.”

And hast thou not said, that thou wilt “give thy Holy Spirit to them that ask it?” O Father of mercies, let it be unto us according to thy word. Cherish whatever thou hast already given us, which is acceptable in thy sight. And since at the best we are unprofitable servants, and can do no more than it is our duty to do, enable us to do everything which thou hast commanded us heartily, with goodwill, and true love to thy service.

O that we might ever approach thee with delight, and feel it the joy of our hearts to think of thee, to praise thee, to give thee thanks, and to offer ourselves with absolute resignation to thee. O that mercy may always please us, as it pleaseth thee; that we may be strictly just and righteous; may cheerfully pass by injuries, freely deny ourselves whatever is not for thy glory; willingly submit to thy fatherly corrections, and perform the duties of our several repetitions with singleness of heart. Render us so mindful of the great love of our Lord, that we may be zealously concerned for his glory, and use our utmost diligence to promote his religion in the world; delighting to commemorate his death and passion, making a joyful sacrifice of our souls and bodies to him, and earnestly desiring that his kingdom may come over all the earth.

Fulfill, most merciful Lord, all our petitions; and as thou hast graciously protected us this night, so accompany us all this day with thy blessing, that we may please thee in body and soul, and be safe under thy defense, who art ever nigh unto all those that call upon thee.

And O that all men may be awakened into a lively and thankful sense of all thy benefits. Stir up especially the minds of all Christian people to follow “the truth as it is in Jesus,” and exercise themselves “to have a conscience void of offense towards God and towards man.” Bless these kingdoms, and endue our Sovereign with such excellent wisdom and holy zeal, that we may see many good days under his government. O that true religion, justice, mercy, brotherly kindness, and all things else that are praiseworthy, may so flourish among us, that we may enjoy the blessings of peace and plenty, and there may be no complaining in our streets.

We recommend to thee all our friends and neighbors, all the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, desiring those mercies for them which we should ask for ourselves, were we in their condition. “O God, whose never failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, keep them and us, we beseech thee, from all hurtful things, and give us those things which are profitable for us, according to thine abundant mercy in our Lord Jesus;” in whose words we conclude our supplication unto thee, saying, “Our Father,” etc.

TUESDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, the sovereign Lord of all creatures in heaven and earth, we acknowledge that our beings, and all the comforts of them, depend on thee, the Fountain of all good. We have nothing but what is owing entirely to thy free and bounteous love, O most blessed Creator, and to the riches of thy grace, O most blessed Redeemer.

To thee, therefore, be given, by us and by all creatures whom thou hast made to know how great and good thou art, all honor and praise, all love and obedience, as long as we have any being. "It is but meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should, at all times and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord," and devoutly resign both soul and body to thee, to be absolutely governed and ruled according to thy holy will.

Further, we pray thee, increase every good desire which we feel already in our hearts; let us always live as becomes thy creatures, as becomes the disciples of Jesus Christ. Incline us to be more and more in love with thy laws, till they are written upon our hearts. Stir up our wills to "love them exceedingly," and to cleave unto them as our very life.

O that we might heartily surrender our wills to thine; that we may unchangeably cleave unto it, with the greatest and most entire assertion to all thy commands. O that there may abide for ever in us such a strong and powerful sense of thy mighty love towards us in Christ Jesus, as may constrain us freely and willingly to please thee, in the constant exercise of righteousness and mercy, temperance and charity, meekness and patience, truth and fidelity; together with such an humble, contented, and peaceable spirit, as may adorn the religion of our Lord and Master. Yea, let it ever be the joy of our hearts to be righteous, as thou art righteous; to be merciful, as thou, our heavenly Father, art merciful; to be "holy, as thou who hast called us art holy, in all manner of conversation;" to be endued with thy divine wisdom, and to resemble thee in faithfulness and truth. O that the example of our blessed Savior may be always dear unto us, that we may cheerfully follow him in every holy tempers and delight to do thy will, O

God. Let these desires, which thou hast given us, never die or languish in our hearts, but be kept always alive, always in their vigor and force, by the perpetual inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

Accept, likewise, of our thanks, for thy merciful preservation of us all this day. We are bold again to commit ourselves unto thee this night. Defend us from all the powers of darkness; and raise up our spirits, together with our bodies, in the morning, to such a vigorous sense of thy continued goodness, as may provoke us all the day long to an unwearied diligence in well-doing.

And the same mercies that we beg for ourselves, we desire for the rest of mankind; especially for those who are called by the name of Christ. O that every one of these may do his duty with all fidelity; that Kings may be tender-hearted, as the fathers of their countries; and all their subjects may be dutiful and obedient to them, as their children; that the Pastors of thy Church may feed their flocks with true wisdom and understanding, and the people all may submit unto them, and follow their godly counsels; that the rich and mighty may have compassion on the poor and miserable; and all such distressed people may bless the rich, and rejoice in the prosperity of those that are above them! Give to husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, the grace to behave themselves so in their several relations, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things, and may receive of him a crown of glory; in whose holy name and words we continue to beseech thy grace and mercy towards us and all thy people everywhere, saying, "Our Father," etc.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O GOD, blessed for ever, we thank and praise thee for all thy benefits, for the comforts of this life, and our hope of everlasting salvation in the life to come. We desire to have a lively sense of thy love always possessing our hearts, that may still constrain us to love thee, to obey thee, to trust in thee, to be content with the portion thy love allots unto us, and to rejoice even in the midst of all the troubles of this life.

Thou hast delivered thine own Son for us all. How shalt thou not with him also freely give us all things? We depend upon thee especially for the grace of thy Holy Spirit. O that we may feel it perpetually bearing us up, by the strength of our most holy faith, above all the temptations that may at any time assault us; that we may keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and may still cleave to thee in righteousness, in lowliness, purity of heart, yea, the whole mind that was in Christ.

Let thy mighty power enable us to do our duty towards thee, and towards all men, with care, and diligence, and zeal, and perseverance, unto the end. Help us to be meek and gentle in our conversation, prudent and discreet in ordering our affairs, observant of thy fatherly providence in everything that befalls us, thankful for thy benefits, patient under thy chastisements, and readily disposed for every good word and work. Preserve in us a constant remembrance of thy all seeing eye; of thy inestimable love in Jesus Christ, whereof thou hast given us so many pledges, and of the great account we must give to him at the day of his appearing; that so we may continue steadfast and unmovable, and be abundant in the world of the Lord, knowing that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Deliver us, we beseech thee, from worldly cares and foolish desires; from vain hopes and causeless fears; and so dispose our hearts, that death itself may not be dreadful to us, but we may welcome it with a cheerful countenance, when and howsoever it shall approach.

O that our hearts may be so firmly established in grace, that nothing may affright us, or shake our constancy, but we may rather choose to die than to dishonor Him who died for us! We resign ourselves to thy wisdom and goodness, who knowest what is best for us; believing thou “wilt never suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, and wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.”

We commend unto thee all mankind; especially thy Church, and more particularly these kingdoms, that we may all believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and be zealous of good works. Bless our Sovereign, his Counselors, his Ministers, and all employed in public business, whether spiritual or civil, that whatsoever they do may be for thy glory, and the public good. Be gracious to all that are near and dear to us, and keep us all in thy fear and love. Guide us, good Lord, and govern us by the same Spirit, that we may be so united to thee here, as not to be divided when thou art pleased to call us hence, but together enter into thy glory, to dwell with thee in love and joy that shall never die, through Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Savior; who hath taught us when we pray to say, “Our Father,” etc.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

“O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. The day is thine, the night also is thine, thou hast prepared the light and the sun.” We render thee thanks for all the benefits which thou hast bestowed on the whole world; especially on us, whom thou hast called to the knowledge of thy grace in Christ Jesus. It is a marvellous love wherewith thou hast loved us. Thou hast not dealt so with all people; and as for thy great and precious promises, they have not known them.

Accept, O merciful Father, the good resolutions which thou hast inspired us with by thy Spirit. Strengthen them, we beseech thee, with thy continued grace, that no sudden desires, vehement inclinations, ineffectual purposes, no, nor partial performances, may lead us into a false opinion of ourselves; but that we may bring forth actually, and with a constant spirit, all the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus.

Deny not, O Lord, the desires of those souls who would offer up themselves entirely to thy service. But preserve us always in seriousness of spirit. Let the sense of our weakness make us watchful and diligent, the sense of our former negligence excite us to be fervent in spirit, and the goodness of thy commands render us fruitful and abundant in the work of the Lord. O that all our pious affections may be turned into actions of piety and holiness; and may all our actions be spirited with zeal, and all our zeal regulated with prudence, and our prudence void of all guile, and joined with perfect integrity of heart; that, adorning our most holy faith here, by an upright, charitable, and discreet conversation, we may receive praise in the day of the Lord, and be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.

O lift up our affections to things above, that we may have perfect contentment in well-doing and patient suffering, and the good hope we have of being eternally beloved of thee may make us rejoice evermore. Free us from the cares of the world, from all distrust of thy good providence, from repining at anything that befalls us, and enable us in everything to

give thanks, believing that all things are ordered wisely, and shall work together for good.

Into thy hands we commend both our souls and bodies, which thou hast mercifully preserved this day. We trust in thy watchful providence, who “givest thy angels charge over us,” who “art about our beds, and about our paths, and spiest out all our” thoughts. O continue these holy thoughts and desires in us till we fall asleep, that we may receive the light of the morning, if thou prolongest our lives, with a new joy in thee, and thankful affection to thee.

We desire likewise, O God, the good of the whole world. Pity the follies of mankind; deliver them from their miseries, and forgive thou all their sins. Hear the groans of every part of the creation, that is yet “subject to bondage,” and bring them all “into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.” Hear the daily prayers of the catholic Church. Free her from all foul and dividing errors; let the truth as it is in Jesus prevail, and “peace be in all her borders.” O that all Christian Governors may “seek peace and ensue it.” Make thy Ministers the messengers of peace, and dispose all who are called Christians to keep “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Enlighten the minds of all Jews, Turks, and Infidels. Strengthen all thy faithful servants. Bring back them that wander out of the way; raise up those that are fallen; confirm those that stand, and grant them steadily to persevere in faith, love, and obedience. Relieve and comfort all that are in distress. Let the earth bring forth her fruit in due season; and let all honest and industrious people be blessed in their labors.

Remember all those who have done good unto us, and reward them sevenfold into their bosom. Grant forgiveness and charity to all our enemies; and continue goodwill among all our neighbors. Support the sick with faith and patience; assist those who are leaving this world. Receive the souls which thou hast redeemed with thy Son’s precious blood, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost: And give us all a glorious resurrection and eternal life. “Our Father,” etc.

THURSDAY MORNING.

O LORD, the God of our salvation, “thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth.” Upon thee the eyes of all do wait; for thou givest unto all life and breath and all things. Thou still watchest over us for good; thou daily renewest to us our lives and thy mercies; and thou hast given us the assurance of thy word, that if we commit our affairs to thee, if we acknowledge thee in all our ways, thou wilt direct our paths. We desire, O Lord, to be still under thy gracious conduct and fatherly protection. We beg the guidance and help of thy good Spirit, to choose our inheritance for us, and to dispose of us, and all that concerns us, to the glory of thy name.

O Lord, withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, nor the comforts of thy presence. Never punish our past sins, by giving us over to the power of our sins; but pardon all our sins, and save us from all our iniquities. And grant us, O good God, the continual sense of thy gracious acceptance of us, in the Son of thy love, that our souls may bless thee, and “all that is within us may praise thy holy name.”

And O that we may find the joy of the Lord to be our strength; to defend us from all our sins, and to make us more zealous of every good work; that herein we may “exercise ourselves, to have a conscience void of offense, both towards God and towards men.” O help us “to walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise,” carefully “redeeming the time,” improving all those seasons and means of grace which thou art pleased to put into our hands. Sanctify to us all our employments in the world; our crosses, also, and our comforts; all the estates we go through, and all the events that befall us; till, through the merits of thy Son, and the multitude of thy mercies, we are conducted safe to “be ever with the Lord.”

Thou “hast laid help for us upon One that is mighty;” that is “able to save unto the uttermost all those who come unto God through him.” Through him thou hast encouraged us to come boldly, that we “may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Help us, we beseech thee, to demean ourselves as becomes the children of God, the redeemed of the

Lord, the members of Christ. Put thy Spirit within us, causing us to walk in thy statutes, and to keep thy judgments, and do them. Yea, let it be our meat and drink to do thy will, and to run the way of thy commandments.

O gracious Father, keep us, we pray thee, this day in thy fear and favor, and teach us, in all our thoughts, words, and works, to live to thy glory. If thou guide us not, we go astray; if thou uphold us not, we fall. O let thy good providence be our defense, and thy good Spirit our guide, and counselor, and supporter in all our ways. And grant that we may do always what is acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose holy name and words we close these our imperfect prayers: "Our Father," etc.

Let thy grace, O Lord Jesus, thy love, O heavenly Father, and thy comfortable fellowship, O blessed Spirit, be with us, and with all that desire our prayers, this day and for evermore.

THURSDAY EVENING.

O LORD our God, thy glory is above all our thoughts, and thy mercy is over all thy works. We are still living monuments of thy mercy: For thou hast not cut us off in our sins, but still givest us a good hope and strong consolation through grace. Thou hast sent thy only Son into the world, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish” in his sins, “but have everlasting life.” O Lord, we believe; help our unbelief; and give us the true “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,” that we may be in the number of those who do indeed repent and “believe to the saving of the soul. Being justified by faith,” let us “have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;” let us “rejoice in him through whom we have now redemption in his blood;” and let “the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

And as we pray that thou wilt be to us a Father of mercies and a God of consolation, so that thou wilt make us “followers of God as dear children,” ever jealous over our hearts, and watchful over our ways; continually fearing to offend, and endeavoring to please thee. Thou knowest, O Lord, all our temptations, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. Thou knowest the devices of the enemy, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts. We pray thee, good Lord, that thou wilt arm us with the whole armor of God. Uphold us with thy free Spirit, and watch over us for good evermore.

Let our supplications also ascend before thee for the whole race of mankind. Send thy word unto all the ends of the earth, and let it be the savor of life unto all that hear it. Be gracious to this our native land. O do thou rule all our rulers, counsel all our counselors, teach all our Teachers, and order all the public affairs to thy glory. Turn from us the judgments which we feel or fear; continue thy blessings to our souls and bodies; and notwithstanding all our provocations, be thou still our God, and let us be thy people. Have compassion on all the children of affliction, and sanctify thy fatherly corrections to them. Be gracious to all our friends and neighbors. Reward our benefactors. Bless our relations with the best of thy blessings, with thy fear and love. Preserve us from our enemies, and

reconcile them both to us and to thyself. O that all the habitations of Christians may be houses of prayer! And be thou especially kind to the several families where thy blessed name is called upon. Let thy blessing rest upon us of this family. Bless all our present estates to us; and fit us all for whatsoever thou shalt be pleased to call us to. O teach us how “to want and how to abound.” In every condition secure our hearts to thyself; and make us ever to approve ourselves sincere and faithful in thy service.

And now, O Father of mercies, be pleased to accept our evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. O that thou wouldest imprint and preserve upon our hearts a lively sense of all thy kindness to us; that our souls may bless thee, and all that is within us may praise thy holy name. Yea, let us give thee thanks from the ground of the heart, and praise our God while we have our being: For all thy patience with us, thy care over us, and thy continual mercy to us, blessed be thy name, O Lord God, our heavenly Father; and unto thee, with the Son of thy love, and Spirit of grace, be all thanks and praise, now and for evermore.

FRIDAY MORNING.

“O LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth; thou keepest mercy for thousands; thou pardonest iniquity and transgression and sin. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” And therefore do we still look up to that bountiful hand, from whence we have received all our good things. O Lord our God, be favorable unto us, as thou usest to be unto those that love thy holy name! O look not upon the sin of our nature, nor the sins of our hearts and lives, which are more than we can remember, and greater than we can express. It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because thy compassions fail not. But thou lookest upon the face of thine Anointed, who was manifested to take away our sins; by whom it is that we have the access unto the Majesty on high.

O God, be merciful to us miserable sinners, for his sake whom “thou hast exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance” unto thy people, “and forgiveness of sins.” Be merciful, O God, be merciful unto our souls, which have greatly sinned against thee. O heal our backslidings; renew us to repentance; establish our hearts in thy fear and love; and establish our goings in thy way, that our footsteps slip not. Let us waver no more; let us never more be weary or faint in our minds; let us not revolt from thee, or turn to folly again, after thou hast spoken peace to our souls; but may we go on conquering and to conquer all the enemies of our souls, and all the hindrances of our salvation, till thou hast bruised Satan under our feet.

Seeing there is in Christ Jesus an infinite fullness of all that we can want or wish, O that we may all receive of his fullness, grace upon grace; grace to pardon our sins, and subdue our iniquities; to justify our persons and to sanctify our souls; and to complete that holy change, that renewal of our hearts, whereby we may be transformed into that blessed image wherein thou didst create us. O make us all meet to be partakers of the inheritance of thy saints in light.

And teach us, O God, to use this world without abusing it; and to receive the things needful for the body, without losing our part in thy love, which is better than life itself. Whatever we have of this world, O may we have the same with thy leave and love; sanctified to us by the word of God and by prayer; and by the right improvement thereof to thy glory. And whatever we want of worldly things, leave us not destitute of the “things that accompany salvation;” but adorn our souls with all such graces of thy Holy Spirit, that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

And now that thou hast renewed our lives and thy mercies to us this morning, help us to renew our desires and resolutions, and endeavors to live in obedience to thy holy will. O restrain us from the sins into which we are most prone to fall, and quicken us to the duties we are most averse to perform; and grant that we may think and speak, and will and do, the things becoming the children of our heavenly Father; and so find the strong consolation of thy gracious acceptance in Jesus Christ our Savior, who, when we pray, hath taught us to say, “Our Father,” etc.

FRIDAY EVENING.

O LORD, thou wast before all, thou art above all, and thy years shall not fail. Thou art the searcher of our hearts; thou knowest the dullness and hardness, the vanity and deceitfulness, of them: We were born sinners, and so have we lived. We have added sin to sin; we have abused thy great and manifold mercies, tempted thy patience, and despised thy goodness; and justly mightest thou have cast us into outer darkness, where is wailing and gnashing of teeth.

But of thy loving kindnesses there is no number. Thou still callest us to return to thee; and “whosoever cometh to thee, thou wilt in nowise cast out.” O meet us with thy heavenly grace, that we may be able to come to thee. Be thou graciously pleased to stretch forth thy hand, and loose the chains wherewith our souls are entangled. O free us from every weight of sin, from every yoke of bondage. O help us to feel, and bewail, and forsake all our sins; and let us never want the comfortable assurance of thy forgiveness of them, thy acceptance of us, and thy love to us, in the blessed Son of thy eternal love.

Thou art never weary, O Lord, of doing us good: Let us never be weary of doing thee service. But, as thou hast pleasure in the prosperity of thy servants, so let us take pleasure in the service of our Lord, and abound in thy work, and in thy love and praise evermore. O fill up all that is wanting, reform whatever is amiss, in us, and perfect the thing that concerneth us. Let the witness of thy pardoning love ever abide in all our hearts. O speak into every one of our souls the peace which passeth all understanding; and let us always look upon thee as our Father, reconciled to us in Jesus Christ.

In his great name we cry unto thee in the behalf of the whole race of mankind. O that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God. Continue thy mercies to this sinful land; teach us at length to know thy will concerning us; and O turn thou all our hearts unto thee, as the heart of one man. Bless the King; O Lord, prolong his days and prosper his

government; make him always a “terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well.” And grant unto all Magistrates and Ministers of thy word, a continual supply of all the needful gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. Be thou a Father to the fatherless, a Husband to the widow, a Refuge to the oppressed, a Physician to the sick, a Helper of the friendless, a God of consolation to the sorrowful and distressed. Bless to us whatsoever thou art pleased to allot us, and everything that befalls us. Make all work for our good, to build us up in thy grace, and to help us on to thy glory.

Continue thy fatherly care over us this night. O preserve and defend, and bless and keep us, that no evil may befall us, “nor any plague come nigh our dwelling.” Give us comfortable sleep to strengthen us for thy service; and whenever thou callest us to the sleep of death, let us cheerfully resign our spirits into thy hands, through the riches of thy grace, and the worthiness of thy Son, in whose merits and mediation alone we put our trust. And for all that he hath done and suffered for us, to thy name, O blessed God of our salvation, be the praise, and honor, and glory, given by us and all thy people, now and for evermore. “Our Father,” etc.

SATURDAY MORNING.

WE present ourselves before thee, O Lord our God, to pay our tribute of prayer and thanksgiving; desiring thee mercifully to accept us and our services at the hands of Jesus Christ. In his great name we come to beg thy pardon and peace, the increase of thy grace, and the tokens of thy love; for we are not worthy of the least of thy mercies: But worthy is the Lamb that was slain to take away the sin of the world; for whose sake thou wilt give us all things; for he hath fulfilled those holy laws which we had broken, and perfectly satisfied for our offenses; and in him thou art a God gracious and merciful to those who deserve nothing but punishment.

O merciful Father, regard not what we have done against thee; but what our blessed Savior hath done for us. Regard not what we have made ourselves, but what He is made unto us to thee our God. O that Christ may be to every one of our souls, “wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption;” that his precious blood may cleanse us from all our sins; and that thy Holy Spirit may renew and sanctify our souls. May He crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, and mortify all our members which are upon earth. O let not “sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof;” but, “being made free from sin, let us be the servants of righteousness.” Let us approve our hearts to thee, and let all our ways be pleasing in thy sight.

O teach us to know thee our God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; and enable us to do thy will on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us to fear thee and to love thee, to trust and delight in thee, and to cleave to thee with full purpose of heart, that no temptations may draw us or drive us from thee; but that all thy dispensations to us, and thy dealings with us, may be the messengers of thy love to our souls. Quicken us, O Lord, in our dullness, that we may not serve thee in a lifeless and listless manner; but may abound in thy work, and be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And make us faithful in all our intercourse with our neighbor, that we may be ready to do good and hear evil, that we may be just and kind, merciful and meek, peaceable and patient, sober and temperate, humble and

self-denying, inoffensive and useful in the world; that so glorifying thee here, we may be glorified with thee in thy heavenly kingdom.

Day by day we magnify thee, O Lord, who makest every day an addition to thy mercies. We bless thee for preserving us the night past, and for the rest thou gavest us therein. O cause us to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do we trust. Cause us to know the way wherein we shall go, for we lift up our souls unto thee. O take not thy Holy Spirit from us; but direct all our ways to please thee our God. Help us to see thy power, to own thy presence, to admire thy wisdom, and to love thy goodness in all thy creatures; and by all, draw our hearts still nearer to thee. Such thy mercy and grace we beg for ourselves, and all ours and thine everywhere in our great mediator's blessed words: —

“Our Father,” etc.

SATURDAY EVENING.

O LORD our God, thou art infinitely good, and thou hast showed us what is good. Thou sendest out thy light and thy truth, that they may guide us, and makest plain thy way before our face. Thou givest us many opportunities and advantages, to quicken and further us in thy service. We have “line upon line,” and “precept upon precept;” thy messengers early and late to open and apply thy word, to call and warn, to direct and exhort us, with all long-suffering. But how little have we improved all the precious talents which thou hast put into our hands! O Lord, thou mightiest justly take away the gospel of thy kingdom from us, and give it unto another people, who would bring forth the fruits thereof. Because thou hast called, and we refused; thou hast stretched forth thy hands, and we have not regarded; thou mightiest leave us to our own perverseness and impenitence, till our iniquities become our ruin.

But, O Lord God, enter not thus into judgment with thy servants. Pardon all our contempt of thy word, and our not profiting thereby. And help us for the time to come better to improve the blessed opportunities set before us. “As the rain descends from heaven and returns not thither, but waters the earth and maketh it fruitful; so let not thy word return unto thee void, but prosper in the work whereunto thou sendest it.” O make it effectual to build us all up, in the true fear and love of God, and in the right knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O gracious God, may thy Spirit cause thy word to work thoroughly and successfully in all our hearts. And as we daily receive how we ought to walk and to please thee our God; so help us to “walk worthy of the Lord unto all well pleasing;” increasing in the knowledge and love of thee, and abounding more and more in every good work which is pleasing in thy sight through Jesus Christ.

At his hands, O Lord our God, we beg thy gracious acceptance of our humble praise and thanksgiving for all thy blessings, spiritual and temporal, so freely conferred upon us. We praise thee for all the comforts

and conveniences of this life, and for all the means and hopes of a better; particularly for what we have, received this day; the food of our souls set before us, the word of salvation sounding in our ears, and the Spirit of God striving with our hearts. O withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, but still continue thy accustomed goodness, and increase thy grace and heavenly blessings upon us, and rejoice over us to do us good.

In mercy pass by all which thy most pure and holy eyes have seen amiss in us this day. Forgive the iniquities of our holy things; overlook all our sins and failings through our great Mediator and Redeemer, whoever lives at thy right hand to make intercession for us. And for Jesus Christ, and all which thou art pleased to give us together with him, “not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name” be the praise, and honor, and glory, humbly ascribed by us, and all thy Church, now and for evermore!

“Our Father,” etc.

PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN.

PREFACE.

MY DEAR CHILD,

A LOVER of your soul has here drawn up a few Prayers, in order to assist you in that great duty. Be sure that you do not omit, at least morning and evening, to present yourself upon your knees before God. You have mercies to pray for, and blessings to praise God for. But take care that you do not mock God, drawing near with your lips, while your heart is far from him. God sees you, and knows your thoughts; therefore, see that you not only speak with your lips, but pray with your heart. And that you may not ask in vain, see that you forsake sin, and make it your endeavor to do what God has shown you ought; because God says, "The prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord." Ask then of God for the blessings you want, in the name, and for the sake, of Jesus Christ; and God will hear and answer you, and do more for you than you can either ask or think.

JOHN WESLEY.

LORD'S DAY MORNING.

O ALMIGHTY God, Maker of all mankind, in whom we live and move, and have our being, who makest the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice, suffer me now to approach thy divine Majesty with all reverence and godly fear. I desire to adore thy sacred name, who hast in thy goodness brought me in safety to behold the beginning of a new day and another Sabbath. I bless thee, who hast in love to my soul, and for the glory of thy name, set apart this day for holy uses, to engage me in thy service, wherein consists my honor and happiness. This is thy day: O Lord, enable me to rejoice and be glad in it. May I ever remember to keep it holy, not doing my own works, nor finding my own pleasure, nor speaking my own words; but so delight in thee, that thou mayest give me my heart's desire. Bless to me thy word, O my heavenly Father, and all the means of grace, that I may not use them in vain or to my own hurt, but for the instructing my mind, reforming my life, and the saving my soul. Save me from all hardness of heart and contempt of thy word; increase my love to it, and enable me to hear it meekly, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth fruit unto good living. Open my understanding to receive thy truth in the love thereof. Set it so powerfully upon my heart, and root it so deep in my soul, that the fruits thereof may be seen in my life, to thy glory and praise. May I always so hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest thy word, that it may be a savor of life to my soul. O let me not offer vain oblations unto the Lord, drawing nigh with my lips, while my heart is far from thee. But do thou enable me to worship thee with holy worship, with joy and delight, with profit and pleasure. Fill me with a comfortable sense of thy presence, that I may serve thee with reverence and godly fear, to the comfort of my soul and the glory of thy name. O Lord God, do thou clothe thy Priests with righteousness, and let thy saints rejoice and sing. Break the bread of life to all our souls, that we may eat and live for ever. O Lord, hear my prayers, and let my cry come unto thee. Do more and better for me than I can either desire or deserve, for the sake of my blessed Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all praise and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.”

LORD'S DAY EVENING.

MERCIFUL God, permit me to pay thee, now, my evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, for all the blessings and favors to my body and soul, so freely bestowed, and so long continued unto me. Thou hast dealt graciously with me, O Lord God, and hast been exceedingly good and kind to me, beyond all that I had reason to expect, or am able to express. I bless thee, O Lord, for every help which I enjoy to the promoting my present and eternal good. I desire to ascribe all praise and glory to thee, to whom alone it is due. O Lord, I bless thee that thy house is open to me, the bread of life offered me, the word of salvation preached, and thy Spirit striving with me. O suffer me not to receive thy grace in vain, nor let thy word be lost upon me. Do thou apply it to my heart, and fix it in my memory, that it may prove a blessing to my soul. In mercy, O Lord, pass by all things which in thy pure and holy eyes have been amiss this day past; pardon my neglects, and the guilt of my misdoings. And as I have heard how to walk and to please thee, O my God, help me to walk more worthy of the Lord unto all well pleasing, that I may be built up in thy true fear and love, and in the right knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be thou pleased to second every word of instruction that I have received with the power of thy grace and Holy Spirit; and above all, O blessed God, do thou give me a heart filled with thy love, and lifted up in thy praise, and devoted to thy honor and glory all the days of my life. Take me, O Lord God, my Savior, into thy gracious care and protection. Preserve me from all dangers in the night season. Let me lay down and sleep in thy arms, and when the trumpet shall sound, and at last call me from the sleep of death, let me be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so for ever be with the Lord. All these mercies, O my God, I most humbly ask, for the alone sake of Jesus Christ, my Redeemer. Amen. "Our Father," etc.

MONDAY MORNING.

O LORD God Almighty, Father of angels and men, I praise and bless thy holy name for all thy goodness and loving kindness to me and all mankind. I bless thee for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thy great love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. I bless thee for preserving me in the night past, and bringing me safe to the beginning of a new day. Defend me in the same with thy mighty power, and grant that this day I fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but let all my doings be so ordered by thy governance, that I may do always that which is righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Grant me such grace, that I may be able to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with a pure heart and mind to follow the steps of my gracious Redeemer. Keep me, I beseech thee, O Lord, from all things hurtful to my soul or body, and grant me thy pardon and peace, that, being cleansed from all my sins, I may serve thee with a quiet mind, bring forth plenteously the fruit of good works, and continue in the same unto my life's end, through Jesus Christ, my Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

MONDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY God, who art the gracious Preserver of all mankind, I desire now to offer unto thee my praise and thanksgivings, for all the blessings thou hast this day bestowed upon me. I confess, O my God, that I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies; for I have gone astray like a lost sheep. I have followed too much the devices and desires of my own heart. I have offended against thy holy laws. I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and have done those things which I ought not to have done; and there is no health in me. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon me, a miserable offender. Spare me, O Lord, who now confess my faults unto thee. Enable me to bewail my manifold sins and offenses, which I have from time to time most grievously committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for my Savior Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past, and grant me thy grace, that I may ever hereafter serve and please thee, in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. Take me under thy gracious care and keeping this night; save and defend me from all dangers. Grant unto my body rest in my bed, and unto my soul rest in thyself; and be thou my God and my guide, my hope and my help, my joy and my comfort, now and for evermore, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

TUESDAY MORNING.

O THOU Father of all mercies, and God of all goodness, I praise and bless thy name for thy mercies and favors unto me in the night past, and for bringing me safe to behold the light of a new day. Send down thy heavenly grace into my soul, that I may be enabled to worship thee and serve thee as I ought to do. Enable me to believe in thee, to fear thee, and to love thee with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; that I may honor thy holy name and word, and serve thee truly, this, and all the days of my life. Give me thy grace, that I may love all mankind as myself, and do unto all, as I would they should do unto me. Enable me to love and honor my parents, obey my superiors, and submit to all my teachers. Suffer me not to hurt any body by word or deed. Make me just and honest in all my dealings. Let me not bear any malice or hatred in my heart. Keep my hands from picking and stealing, my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering; keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity; that I may not covet any person's goods, but learn and labor to get my own living, and to do my duty in the state of life wherein it shall please thee to place me. Direct me so to pass through things temporal, that I may not finally lose the things which are eternal, but at last be received into thy presence, where is fullness of joy, and be seated at thy right hand, where are pleasures for evermore, through Jesus Christ my Savior. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

TUESDAY EVENING.

O LORD God, the gracious Giver of all good things, I praise and adore thee for thy goodness, which has been so plentiful towards me an unworthy child of man. Thou hast in thy mercy, not only preserved me this day from all dangers, but bestowed upon me all things needful, for which I desire entirely to praise thy fatherly goodness, and with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, to laud and magnify thy holy name. Bless, then, the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name; for the Lord is gracious, and his mercy is everlasting towards them that fear him. And now, Lord, I most humbly implore thy fatherly goodness to forgive me whatever has this day, in my heart or life, offended the eyes of thy glory. O Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, receive my prayer. Prevent me, O Lord, in all my doings for the time to come, and further me with thy continual help, that, in all my thoughts, words, and works, I may continually glorify thy holy name. Grant me thy grace, that I may follow thy blessed saints in all righteousness and holy living, that I may at last come to be a partaker with them of glory everlasting. Do thou enable me, gracious Lord, to adorn thy gospel in all holy conversation, and to do whatever I do to the glory of thy name. Cleanse the thoughts of my heart, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that I may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name. Let thy fatherly hand be ever over me, and thy Holy Spirit be ever with me; and do thou so lead me in the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that, in the end, I may obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ my Lord. And now, O Lord, as the night is come upon me, and as I am ready to betake myself to rest, I desire to commit myself to thy protection, who neither slumberest nor sleepest, but hast still a watchful eye over me: O watch over me for good, that none of the evils I deserve may fall upon me. Preserve me from all terrors and dangers in the night. Remove my sin out of thy sight, and show me the light of thy countenance, and refresh me with the sense of thy favor, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O LORD God Almighty, Fountain of all goodness, and Father of all mercies, I desire again to bow my knee before thy holy Majesty, humbly beseeching thee to accept my praise and thanksgivings for thy mercies to me in the night season. I laid me down and slept, and rose up again in safety; for it was thou only, O Lord, that sustainedst me. And now, O my soul, return unto thy rest. Look upon me, O Lord, in thy rich mercy, and, for thy dear Son's sake, be gracious unto my soul. Lighten my darkness, I beseech thee, O Lord, and let the dayspring from on high visit me. Enable me to cast away all the works of darkness, and to put upon me the armor of light, that I may be able to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil; to keep thy holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of my life. Give me, O Lord, wisdom to know the things that belong to my peace, before I go hence, and am no more seen. Graft in my heart the love of thy name, increase in me true religion, and nourish me with all goodness. Give me the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful. Teach me to ask and seek only such things as shall please thee and profit my soul. Give me such a measure of thy grace, that I may run the way of thy commandments, obtain thy gracious promises, and be made a partaker of thy heavenly treasures. Pour down upon me the abundance of thy mercy. Give me more than I can either desire or deserve. O give me the increase of faith, hope, and love; and keep me ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead me to all things useful. Let thy grace always prevent and follow me, that I may be continually given to all good works, and may always glorify my Father which is in heaven. These, and every other blessing, for me, and for thy whole Church, I humbly beg in the name, and for the sake of the merits, of Jesus Christ my Redeemer; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost etc.

“Our Father,” etc.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, I most humbly beseech thee now to accept my sincere praise and thanksgiving for all the blessings and mercies that I have enjoyed this day. It is thou, O Lord, alone, who hast preserved me from dangers; and from thy gracious bounty have I received all things needful to promote my present and eternal happiness. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name, be the praise. O Lord, I am unworthy, through my manifold sins, to offer thee any sacrifice; yet, as thy property is to have mercy and to forgive, I beseech thee to accept this my bounden duty; not dealing with me according to my deserving, but after thy mercy, and the merits of thy dear Son Jesus Christ. I confess into thee, O my God, that I am tied and bound with the chain of my sins; yet, let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose me. I have no power of myself to help myself; O do thou keep me by thy grace, both inwardly in my body, and inwardly in my soul, that I may be enabled to present both body and soul, a holy and pleasing sacrifice unto thee, through my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Grant me, O my God, grace, that I may love what thou hast commanded, and earnestly desire what thou hast promised. Enable me, amidst the many changes of this world, to fix my heart constantly upon things above. May I, both in heart and mind, constantly thither ascend, whither my Savior, Jesus Christ, is gone before, to prepare a place for me. Bring me up, O Lord, in thy fear and love. Keep me under the protection of thy good providence. Hide me under the shadow of thy wings; keep me from the evils of this world, and land me safe at last on that blissful shore where all is quietness and assurance for ever.

Into thy hands, O my God, I this night commend my soul and body. Give thy angels charge over me, and grant me such rest and sleep as may fit me for the duties of the following day. And, O my God, do thou prepare me for my last sleep in death, my departure out of this mortal state; that, before I go hence, I may finish the work; thou hast given me to do, and at last finish my course with joy through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

“Our Father” etc.

THURSDAY MORNING.

O THOU eternal Fountain of all wisdom, whom I cannot see or know but by the means of thy own light, vouchsafe to manifest thyself to my soul, and teach me to know aright thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. O blessed Sun of Righteousness, arise upon me with healing in thy wings, to scatter all the clouds of folly and ignorance that over spread my soul. Open my eyes to see the wondrous things thy love has wrought. Suffer me not to remain in darkness concerning anything that is needful for me to know in order to my present peace and my eternal glory. O Lord, incline mine ears to wisdom, and my heart to understanding, that I may follow on to know the Lord and increase in the knowledge and love of God. Give me, O Lord, that highest learning, to know thee; and that best wisdom, to know myself. Command a blessing on my studies and endeavors; and bless me, and help me, Lord, in my learning all such things as shall stand me in stead, and do me good. Let my soul and body, and all their powers, be under thy conduct, and employed to thy glory. Show me thy ways, O Lord, and lead me into truth; and whatever I am ignorant of, unto me let it be given to know the mysteries of thy kingdom; and let me count all things but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep me this day from all sin. Bless my going on and coming in, now and for evermore. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

THURSDAY EVENING.

O MY heavenly Father, who tookest me out of my mother's womb, who wast my hope when I hanged yet upon my mother's breast, I have been preserved by thee ever since I was born; O go not from me in this my youth, but send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling place. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and enable me to walk in thy truth. O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy name; and give me understanding in the way of godliness. Lord, I am young, and cannot discern between good and evil: O let me not go out of the way of thy commandments. Learn me true understanding and knowledge. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee; for thou art my God. Let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into all the paths of righteousness. Let my study day and night be in thy word, that I may become wise unto salvation. Make thy word a light unto my feet, and a lamp to my path: Guide me here with thy counsel, and after that receive me into glory. Withdraw not thou thy mercy from me, O my God; but let thy loving kindness and thy truth always preserve me. Give thy blessing to me, and with thy favorable kindness defend me, as with a shield. Show me the path of life, and enable me to walk therein, till I come into thy presence, where is fullness of joy, and to thy right hand, where are pleasures for evermore. As thou hast been pleased to preserve me this day, and hast bestowed upon me all things needful, I desire to bless thy name for the same. Take care of me this night, O Lord, and visit me with thy mercies. Preserve me, O Lord, from everything hurtful, and let thy merciful arms for ever surround me, through Jesus Christ my Savior. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

FRIDAY MORNING.

O LORD my God, I am taught by thy word, that I am by nature born in sin and a child of wrath, and that except I am born again I cannot see the kingdom of God. O Lord, do thou teach me the meaning of the new birth, that I, a child of wrath, may become a child of grace. Lord, take away the veil from my heart, that I may know my sinful nature. Make the remembrance of my sins grievous unto me, and the burden of them intolerable. Lead me then to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, that I may there wash, and be cleansed. Suffer me not to rest till I find redemption in thy blood, even the forgiveness of all my sins. It has pleased thee, O Lord, to hide these things from the wise and prudent, and to reveal them unto babes. Reveal then, O Lord, thy love in my soul. Let me taste and see how good and gracious thou art. Suffer a child to come unto thee, and forbid me not. I am unworthy; but receive me as thou didst the little children of old into thy gracious arms, and adopt me thine for ever. Shed abroad in my heart thy love, and fill me with all peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let every thought, word, and deed, be henceforth to the glory of thy great name through Jesus Christ, and at last grant me an abundant entrance into thy everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. Amen.

Be thou with me, O Lord, this day, to bless and keep, guide and govern me, and let me be thine, and only thine, for ever. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

FRIDAY EVENING.

O THOU ever blessed God, the Author and Giver of life, I desire with all humility to draw near unto thy gracious majesty, to offer up unto thee my evening sacrifice of prayer and praise. Thou alone, O God, art worthy to be praised, and to be had in everlasting remembrance. Glory be to thee O most adorable Lord God. Glory be to thy name for all thy mercies and goodness bestowed on me thy most unworthy servant, in the day that is now past. Give me a due sense of all thy mercies, that my heart may be unfeignedly thankful, and grant me thy grace, that I may show forth thy praise not only with my lips but in my life. Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness. According to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offenses. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from all my sins. Turn thy face from my sins, and put out all my misdeeds. Create in me a clean heart, O my God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, neither withdraw thy loving kindness from me. "Spare me, O Lord, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with me for ever." For the glory of thy name, turn from me those evils that I have most righteously deserved, and enable me to walk before thee henceforth in holiness and righteousness to thy praise and glory. Let thy mercy and goodness follow me all the days of my life, and be thou my guide unto death, and my portion for ever. Give me thy grace, that I may duly consider my latter end and the fewness of my days, that I may seriously apply my heart unto wisdom, and work out my salvation with fear and trembling, before the night of death cometh upon me, wherein no man can work. Enable me so to live, that I may not only be looking but also longing for my Savior's appearing; that when he shall come, I may also appear with him in glory. And now, O Lord my God, I beseech thee, take me under thy protection this night, and preserve me from all evil. I will lay me down in peace and take my rest; for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety. In thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded. These and all other mercies I humbly beg in the name of my Mediator Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Our Father," etc.

SATURDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, I bless thee, that of thy infinite goodness thou hast preserved me this night past, and brought me in safety to this morning. Withdraw not, I humbly beseech thee, thy protection from me, but take me under the care of thy providence this day. Watch over me with the eyes of thy mercy, direct my soul and body according to the rule of thy will, that I may pass this and all my days to thy glory. O Lord, I am but a child, and know not how to go out or come in; and I am in the midst of a sinful world. Give therefore unto thy servant an understanding heart, that I may know and choose the good, and abhor and shun that which is evil. According to thy mercy, think upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness. Make me to remember thee in the days of my youth. O learn me true wisdom, and let the law of thy mouth be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver, and let my whole delight be therein. O let me be devoted to thee from my childhood. Keep out of my heart all love of the world, of riches, or any other created thing, and fill it with the love of God. Thou knowest how many and powerful are the enemies of my soul, that seek to destroy it the flesh and the devil. O Lord, help; O Lord, save; O Lord, deliver me from them. Give me grace to renounce them all, and to keep thy holy will; and commandments all the days of my life. Show me and make me what I must be before I can inherit thy kingdom. Teach me the truth as it is in Jesus. Save me from my own will, and let thine be done in me and by me. O make me thy child by adoption and grace. Renew me daily with thy Holy Spirit, and guide me in all my ways, till thou hast perfected me for thy heavenly kingdom. Make me dutiful to my parents, affectionate to my relations, obedient to my superiors, and loving towards all mankind. And grant that as I grow in stature, I may grow in wisdom and in thy favor, till thou shalt take me to thine everlasting kingdom, there to dwell with thee for ever and ever, through Jesus Christ my Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father,” etc.

SATURDAY EVENING.

I DESIRE to offer unto thee, O Lord, my evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for all thy mercies bestowed upon me. I bless thee for my creation, preservation, and, above all, for my redemption by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I bless thee for bringing me safely to the conclusion of this day, and humbly implore the pardon of all the sins I have been guilty of, whether in thought, word, or deed. Have mercy upon me, O God, and do thou free me from all the sins I have committed, and deliver me from the punishment I have deserved. O thou blessed Guide of my youth, give me thy grace to seek after thee in my early years, that thou mayest not be unmindful of me in the time of age. Keep me from the evil of the world, and carry me safe through it to thy kingdom. Take care of me, and provide for me, and dispose of me in the world, as shall be most for thy glory and my good. Leave me not to myself, in the hands of my own counsel, but let me be taught of God. Take thou, O Lord, the gracious charge, and guidance, and government of me, and fix in my heart thy fear and love, and direct all my ways to please not myself but thee. O redeem me from the power of my sins by thy grace, and from the punishment of them by thy blood, and by both bring me to thy glory. I desire, O my God, to give up myself wholly to thee. I would be thine, and only thine, for ever. O my God, my Savior, turn not away thy face from a poor child that seeks thee. Give me to know that I am nothing, and can do nothing, of myself; and that if ever I am thine, I must be wholly indebted to thee for it. Let me be entirely devoted unto thee, and do thou make me obedient and faithful unto the end. Make me to remember thee in my bed, and think upon thee when I am waking; thou hast preserved me from the dangers of the day past, thou hast been my support ever since I was born. Under the shadow of thy wings let me pass this night in comfort and peace. Keep me both in body and soul, and give me such rest as my body has need of. And grant, O Lord, that when I lay down my body in the grave, my soul may rise to life immortal, through the merits and intercession of thy dear Son, my Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. "Our Father," etc.

A Prayer for Relations, Friends, etc., to be used after Morning and Evening Prayer.

VOUCHSAFE, O Lord, to bless my father and mother, and all my relations, with the fear of thy name. Bless them in their souls and bodies; perfect them in every good word and work, and be thou their guide unto death. Bless my friends, forgive my enemies; and grant unto all mankind the knowledge and love of thee. Have mercy upon all who are afflicted in mind, body, or estate. Give them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions; and receive them and me at last into thy blessed kingdom, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Grace before Meat.

O LORD, I beseech thee, give thy blessing with what thy mercy has here provided me with, that whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I may do all to thy glory and praise, through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

After Meals.

O LORD my God, I bless thy holy name for this mercy, which I have now received from thy bounty and goodness. Feed now my soul with thy grace, that I may make it my meat and drink to do thy gracious will, through Jesus Christ my Savior. Amen.

A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

*Sequor, non passibus aequis!*³⁴

TO THE READER.

NO man in England has had so long an acquaintance with Mr. Fletcher as myself. Our acquaintance began almost as soon as his arrival in London, about the year 1752, before he entered into Holy Orders, or, I believe, had any such intention; and it continued uninterrupted between thirty and forty years, even till it pleased God to take him to himself. Nor was ours a slight or ordinary acquaintance; but we were of one heart and of one soul. We had no secrets between us for many years; we did not purposely hide anything from each other. From time to time he consulted me, and I him, on the most important occasions; and he constantly professed, not only much esteem, but, what I valued far more, much affection. He told me in one of his letters, — I doubt not from his heart,

Tecum vivere amem; tecum obeam lubens.

“With thee I gladly would both live and die.”

I therefore think myself obliged by the strongest ties to pay this small tribute to his memory. But you may easily observe, that, in doing this, I am little more than a compiler; for I owe a great, if not the greatest, part of the ensuing Tract to a few friends who have been at no small pains in furnishing me with materials; and, above all, to my dear friend, (such she has been almost from her childhood,) Mrs. Fletcher. I could easily have altered both hers and their language, while I retained their sentiments; but I was conscious I could not alter it for the better; and I would not alter for altering' sake; but judged it fairest to give you most of their accounts, very nearly in their own words.

AMSTERDAM,

September 12, 1786.

THE

LIFE AND DEATH OF MR. FLETCHER.

CHAPTER I.

OF HIS PARENTAGE AND YOUTH.

1. JOHN WILLIAM DE LA FLECHERE (this was properly his name) was born at Nyon, in Switzerland, a town about fifteen miles north of Geneva, on September the twelfth, in the year 1729. His father was an Officer in the French service, till he left the army in order to marry; but after a time he returned to the army, and was a Colonel in the Militia of his own country.

2. In his early childhood he had much of the fear of God, and great tenderness of conscience. One day, having offended his father, who threatened to correct him, he did not dare to come into his presence, but retired into the garden; and when he saw him coming toward him, he ran away with all speed. But he was presently struck with deep remorse, and said to himself, "What! do I run away from my father? Perhaps I shall live to have a son that will run away from me." And it was several years before the impression which he then received was worn off.

3. Another instance of his tenderness of conscience occurred when he was about seven years of age: He was one day reprov'd by the nursery-maid, saying, "You are a naughty boy. Do you not know, that the devil is to take away all naughty children?" He was no sooner in bed, than he began to reflect very deeply upon her words: He thought, "I am a naughty boy; and how do I know but God may let the devil take me away this night?" He then got up and wrestled with God in prayer for a considerable time; and he would not go to bed again till he believed God had forgiven him.

4. The following accounts Mr. Fletcher himself gave to Mr. Samuel Webb, of London, then residing at Madeley: —

“When I was a lad, I had a design to get some fruit out of my father’s garden: The door being locked, I could not get in, but by climbing over the wall. This was very high; but with some difficulty I got to the top of it. As I was walking upon it, my foot slipped, and I fell down to the bottom. But just where I fell a large quantity of fresh made mortar was laid. I fell exactly upon it. This broke my fall, or it might have cost me my life.”

5. “Once, as I was swimming by myself in a deep water, one end of a strong riband which bound my hair, getting loose I know not how, and twisting about my leg, tied me as it were neck and heels. I strove with all my strength to disengage myself; but it was to no purpose. No person being within call, I gave myself up for lost. But when I had given over struggling, the riband loosed of itself.”

6. “Another instance of the tender care which God had over me was as follows: — One evening I and four young gentlemen, in high spirits, made a solemn agreement with each other to swim the next day to a rocky island, five miles distant from the shore. But this foolish adventure was within a very little of costing us all our lives. I and another indeed did with great difficulty and hazard swim to the island; but when we came thither, the rock was so steep and smooth, that we could not possibly climb up. After swimming round several times, and making many ineffectual efforts, we thought we must perish there; but at length one of us found a place, where he made a shift to crawl up. He then helped his companion after him. The others swam about halfway. A boat then took them up, when they were just sinking. Another boat, which we had ordered to follow us, afterwards came and took us home.”

7. A still more remarkable deliverance it is of which he gave an account in the year 1760: “Some years since, I lived at a place very near the river Rhine. In that part, it is broader than the Thames at London Bridge, and extremely rapid. But, having been long practiced in swimming, I made no scruple of going into it at any time; only I was always careful to keep near the shore, that the stream might not carry me away. Once, however, being less careful than usual, I was unawares drawn into the mid-channel. The water there was extremely rough, and poured along like a galloping horse. I

endeavored to swim against it, but in vain, till I was hurried far from home. When I was almost spent, I rested upon my back, and then looked about for a landing place, finding I must either land or sink. With much difficulty I got near the shore; but the rocks were so ragged and sharp, that I saw, if I attempted to land there, I should be torn in pieces; so I was constrained to turn again to the mid stream. At last, despairing of life, I was cheered by the sight of a fine smooth creek, into which I was swiftly carried by a violent stream. A building stood directly across it, which I did not then know to be a powder-mill. The last thing I can remember was, the striking of my breast against one of the piles whereon it stood. I then lost my senses, and knew nothing more, till I rose on the other side of the mill. When I came to myself, I was in a calm, safe place, perfectly well, without any soreness or weariness at all. Nothing was amiss but the distance of my clothes, the stream having driven me five miles from the place where I left them. Many personel gladly welcomed me on shore; one gentleman in particular, who said, ‘I looked when you went under the mill, and again when you rose on the other side; and the time of your being immersed among the piles, was exactly twenty minutes.’”

But some will say, “Why, this was a miracle!” Undoubtedly it was. It was not a natural event; but a work wrought above the power of nature, probably by the ministry of angels.

8. When he was yet very young, his father sent him to the University of Geneva. After he had gone through the usual course of study, it was the desire of his parents that he should be a Clergyman. But it was his own desire and resolution to be an Officer in the army. Not being able to gain their consent to this, he, without their consent, went away to Lisbon. Here he gathered a company of his own countrymen, accepted of a Captain’s commission, and engaged to serve the King of Portugal, on board a man-of-war, which was just then getting ready with all speed in order to sail to Brazil. He then wrote to his parents, begging them to send him a considerate sum of money. Of this he expected to make a vast advantage. But they refused him roughly: Unmoved by this, he determined to go without it, as soon as the ship sailed. But in the morning, the maid, waiting on him at breakfast, let the teakettle fall, and so scalded his leg that he kept

his bed for a considerable time after. During that time, the ship sailed for Brazil. But it was observed, that the ship was heard of no more.

9. But how is this reconcilable with the account which has been given of his piety when he was a child? Very easily: It only shows, that his piety declined while he was at the University. (And this is too often the case of other youths in our own Universities.) But it pleased God at or before his journey to England to lift up his head again.

10. His desire of being an Officer in the army continued after he returned from Lisbon. And when he was informed, that his uncle, then a Colonel in the Dutch service, had procured a commission for him, he joyfully set out for Flanders. But just at that time the peace was concluded; and his uncle dying quickly after, his hopes were blasted, and he gave up all thoughts of going into the army; and, being disengaged from all business, he thought it would not be amiss to spend a little time in England.

11. Coming to the Custom-House in London, with some other young gentlemen, none of whom could speak any English, they were treated with the utmost surliness and ill manners by some brutish Custom-House Officers. These not only took out and jumbled together all the things that were in their portmanteaus, but took away their letters of recommendation; telling them, "All letters must be sent by the post." They are such saucy and ill-mannered wretches as these that bring up an evil report on our nation. Britons might well be styled, *hospitibus feri*,³⁵ if they were all like these vermin.

12. From hence they went to an inn; but here they were under another difficulty. As they spoke no English, they could not tell how to exchange their foreign into English money; till Mr. Fletcher, going to the door, heard a well-dressed Jew talking French. He told him the difficulty they were under, with regard to the exchange of money. The Jew replied, "Give me your money, and I will get it changed in five minutes." Mr. Fletcher without delay gave him his purse, in which were ninety pounds. As soon as he came back to his company, he told them what he had done. They all cried out with one voice, "Then your money is gone. You need never expect to see a crown or a do it of it anymore. Men are constantly waiting

about the doors of these inns, on purpose to take in young strangers.” Seeing no remedy, no way to help himself, he could only commend his cause to God. And that was enough; — before they had done breakfast, in came the Jew, and brought him the whole money.

13. Inquiring for a person who was proper to perfect him in the English tongue, (the rudiments of which he had begun to learn before he left Geneva,) he was recommended to Mr. Burchell, who then kept a boarding-school at South Nimms in Hertfordshire. And when Mr. Burchell removed to Hatfield, he chose to remove with him. All the time he was both at South Nimms and at Hatfield, he was of a serious and reserved behavior; very different from that of the other young gentlemen who were his fellow-students. Here he diligently studied both the English language, and all the branches of polite literature. Meantime his easy and genteel behavior, together with his eminent sweetness of temper, gained him the esteem as well as the affliction of all that conversed with him. He frequently visited some of the first families in Hatfield, who were all fond of his conversation; so lively and ingenious at the same time, evidencing both the gentleman and the scholar. All this time he had the fear of God deeply rooted in his heart. But he had none to take him by the hand, and lead him forward in the ways of God. He stayed with Mr. Burchell about eighteen months, who loved him as his own son.

14. Afterwards, one Mr. Dechamps, a French Minister, to whom he had been recommended, procured him the place of tutor to the two sons of Thomas Hill, Esq., at Tern-Hall, in Shropshire. In the year 1752, he removed into Mr. Hill’s family, and entered upon the important province of instructing the young gentlemen. He still feared God, but had not yet an experimental sense of his love. Nor was he convinced of his own fallen state, till one Sunday evening, a servant came in to make up his fire while he was writing some music, who, looking at him with serious concern, said, “Sir, I am sorry to see you so employed on the Lord’s day.” At first his pride was alarmed, and his resentment moved, at; being reproved by a servant. But upon reflection, he felt the reproof was just. He immediately put away his music, and from that very hour became a strict observer of the Lord’s day.

15. I have heard two very different accounts of the manner wherein he had the first notice of the people called Methodists. But I think it reasonable to prefer to any other, that which I received from his own mouth. This was as follows: —

When Mr. Hill went up to London to attend the Parliament, he took his family and Mr. Fletcher with him. While they stopped at St. Alban's, he walked out into the town, and did not return till they were set out for London. A horse being left for him, he rode after, and overtook them in the evening. Mr. Hill asking him why he stayed behind, he said, "As I was walking, I met with a poor old woman who talked so sweetly of Jesus Christ, that I knew not how the time passed away." "I shall wonder," said Mrs. H., "if our tutor does not turn Methodist by and by." "Methodist, Madam," said he, "pray what is that?" She replied, "Why, the Methodists are a people that do nothing but pray; they are praying all day and all night." "Are they?" said he; "then by the help of God, I will find them out, if they be above ground." He did find them out not long after, and was admitted into the Society. And from this time, whenever he was in town, he met in Mr. Richard Edwards's class. This he found so profitable to his soul, that he lost no opportunity of meeting. And he retained a peculiar regard for Mr. Edwards till the day of his death.

CHAPTER II.

OF HIS CONVERSION TO GOD.

1. IT will be most satisfactory to the serious reader, to give an account of this in his own words. They run thus: “The 12th of January, in the year 1755, I received the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, though my heart was as hard as a stone. The following day, I felt the tyranny of sin more than ever, and an uncommon coldness in all religious duties. I felt the burden of my corruptions heavier than ever; there was no rest in my flesh. I called upon the Lord, but with such heaviness as made me fear it was lost labor. Many a time did I take up the Bible to seek comfort; but not being able to read, I shut it again. The thoughts which engrossed my mind were these: ‘I am undone. I have wandered from God more than ever. I have trampled under foot the frequent convictions which God has wrought on my heart. Instead of going straight to Christ, I have wasted my time in fighting against sin by the sole use of the means of grace; as if the means would do me good without the blessing of God. I never had faith; and without faith it is impossible to please God: Therefore all my thoughts, words, and works, however specious before men, are utterly sinful before God. And if I am not changed before I go hence, I am lost to all eternity.’

2. “When I saw that all my endeavors availed nothing against my conquering sin, I almost gave up all hope, and resolved to sin on and go to hell. Yet I had a strange thought, ‘If I do go to hell, I will praise God there. And since I cannot be a monument of his mercy in heaven, I will be a monument of his justice in hell.’ But I soon recovered my ground. I thought, ‘Christ died for all; therefore he died for me. He died to pluck such sinners as I am out of the devil’s teeth. And as I sincerely desire to be his, he will surely take me to himself. He will surely let me know before I die, that he has died for me. If He leaves me for awhile in this dreadful state, it is only to show me the depth he draws me out of.’ But then I thought, ‘Perhaps he will do it only at my dying hour. And must I sin on till then? How can I endure this?’ But I thought again, ‘My Savior was above three-and-thirty years on earth. Let me wait for him as many years, and then I may have some excuse for my impatience. Does God owe me

anything? Is he bound to time or place? Do I deserve anything at his hands but damnation?' Yet anger was always one of the sins which I could not overcome. I went on sinning and repenting, and sinning again; but still calling on God's mercy through Christ.

3. "I was now beat out of all my strongholds. I felt my helplessness, and lay at the feet of Christ. I cried, 'Save me, Lord, as a brand plucked out of the fire! Give me justifying faith; for the devil will surely reign over me, till thou takest me into thy hand. I shall only be an instrument in his hand to work wickedness, till thou stretch out thy almighty hand, and save thy lost creature by free, unmerited grace.' I seldom went to private prayer, but this thought came into my mind, 'This may be the happy hour, when thou wilt prevail with God!' But still I was disappointed. I cried to God; but my heart did not go with my lips. I prayed, but often could hardly keep awake. When overcome with heaviness, I went to bed, beseeching God to spare me till the next day, that I might renew my wrestling with him, till I should prevail.

4. "On Sunday, the 19th, in the evening, I heard an excellent sermon on these words, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' I heard it attentively, but my heart was not moved. I was only still more convinced, that I was an unbeliever, and that till I had faith, I should never have peace. The hymn after sermon suited the subject; but I could not join in singing it. So I sat mourning, while others rejoiced. I went home, still resolving to wrestle with the Lord, like Jacob, till I should become a prevailing Israel.

5. "I begged of God, the following day, to show me the wickedness of my heart. I besought him to increase my convictions; for I was afraid I did not mourn enough for my Sins. But I found relief in Mr. Wesley's Journal, where I learned, that we should not build on what we feel, but go to Christ with all our sins, and all our hardness of heart. On the 21st, I wrote down part of what filled my heart; namely, a confession of my sins, misery, and helplessness, together with a resolution to seek Christ even unto death. In the evening, I read the Scriptures, and found a sort of pleasure in seeing a picture of my own wickedness exactly drawn in the third of the Romans, and that of my present condition in the seventh. I often wished to be

acquainted with somebody who had been in my condition; and resolved to seek for one to whom I might unbosom my whole soul. On Thursday, Satan beset me hard: I sinned, and grievously too. And now I almost gave up all hope; I was on the brink of despair; and nevertheless continued to fall into sin, as often as I had temptation. But I must observe, that though I frequently thought hell would be my portion, yet I never was much afraid of it: Whether this was owing to a secret hope, or to hardness of heart, I know not. But I was continually crying on, 'What stupidity! I see myself hanging over hell, as it were by a single thread! And yet I am not afraid, but sin on! O what is man without the grace of God! A very devil in wickedness, though inferior to him in power!' In the evening I went to a sincere friend, and told him something of my state. He endeavored to administer comfort; but it was not suited to my state. When we parted, he gave me some advice which was better suited to my condition. 'God,' said he, 'is merciful; God loves you; and if he denies you anything, it is for your good. You deserve nothing at his hands; but wait patiently for him, and never give up your hope.' I went home, resolved to follow his advice, though I should stay till death.

6. "I proposed to receive the Lord's Supper on the following Sunday. I therefore returned to my room, and looked out a sacramental hymn. I learned it by heart, and prayed it over many times, intending to repeat it at the table. Then I went to bed with rather more hope and peace than I had felt for some time. But Satan waked, though I slept. I dreamed I had committed a grievous and abominable sin. I awaked amazed and confounded, but fell upon my knees and prayed with more faith than usual; and afterwards went about my business with an uncommon cheerfulness. It was not long before I was tempted by my besetting sin; but I found it had no power. My soul was not even ruffled. I took no notice of this at first. But having withstood the temptation again and again, I perceived it was the Lord's doing. Afterwards it was suggested, 'It is presumption for such a sinner to hope for so great a mercy.' I prayed, that I might not be in a delusion; and the more I prayed, the more clearly I saw it was real. For though sin stirred all the day long, I always overcame it in the name of the Lord.

7. “In the evening I read the experiences of some of God’s children, and found mine agreed with theirs. Hereby my faith was strengthened, and my hope considerably increased: I entreated the Lord to deal with his servant according to his mercy, and take all the glory to himself. I prayed earnestly, and was persuaded I should have peace with God and dominion over sin; not doubting but the full assurance also would be given in God’s good time. I continued calling on him for an increase of faith; (for still I had some fear of being in a delusion;) and having continued my supplication till near one in the morning, I opened my Bible on those words: ‘Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. He will not suffer the righteous to be moved.’ Filled with joy, I fell upon my knees, to beg of God that I might always cast my burden upon him. My hope was now greatly increased; and I thought I saw myself conqueror over sin, hell, and all manner of affliction.

8. “With this comfortable promise I shut up my Bible, being now perfectly satisfied. As I shut it, I cast my eyes on that word, ‘Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it.’ So, having asked grace of God to serve him till death, I went cheerfully to bed.”

9. So far we have Mr. Fletcher’s own account, under his own hand. From this time he “had the witness in himself;” he knew that he had “redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins.” But he still continued pleading with the Lord, to take a fuller possession of his heart; till, one day, as he was in earnest prayer, lying prostrate on his face before God, he saw, as it were, our blessed Lord, hanging and bleeding on the cross: And, at the same time, those words were spoken with power to his heart: —

Seized by the rage of sinful men,
 I see him bound, and bruised, and slain.
 ‘Tis done! The Martyr dies!
 His life to ransom ours is given;
 And, lo! the fiercest fire of heaven
 Consumes the sacrifice!

He suffers both from men and God!
 He bears the universal load
 Of guilt and misery!
 He suffers to reverse our doom;
 And, lo! my Lord is here become
 The bread of life to me!

10. I believe this was in January, 1754, in the second year after he removed to Tern. Now all his bonds were broken; he breathed a purer air, and was able to say with confidence, "The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." By means of this faith, sin was under his feet. Knowing in whom he had believed, he could continually triumph in the Lord, and praise the God of his salvation.

11. From this time he walked cheerfully, as well as valiantly, in the ways of God. He closely followed his Master, denying himself, and taking up his cross daily. And, thinking he had not leisure in the day for the great work which he had in hand, he made it an invariable rule to sit up two whole nights in a week. These he dedicated to reading, meditation, and prayer, in order to enter more deeply into that communion with the Father and the Son which was the delight of his soul. Meantime, he lived entirely on vegetable food, and for some time on bread, with milk and water. None can doubt, if these austerities were well intended: But it seems they were not well judged. It is probable, they gave the first wound to an excellent constitution, and laid the foundation of many infirmities, which nothing but death could cure.

CHAPTER III.

FROM HIS CONVERSION TO HIS SETTLING AT MADELEY.

1. IT was not long after he had himself “tasted the powers of the world to come,” that he was pressed in spirit to exhort others to seek after the same blessing. And he was the more strongly excited to this, by seeing the world all around him “lying in wickedness.” Being deeply sensible of the goodness of God on the one hand, and the misery of mankind on the other, he found an earnest longing

To pluck poor brands out of the fire,
To snatch them from the verge of hell.

This he began to do a considerable time before he was admitted into Holy Orders. And even his first labors of love were far from being in vain. For though he was by no means perfect in the English tongue, particularly with regard to the pronunciation of it; yet the earnestness with which he spoke, (seldom to be found in English Preachers,) and the unspeakably tender affection to poor, undone sinners, which breathed in every word and gesture, drew multitudes of people to hear him; and, by the blessing of God, his word made so deep an impression on their hearts, that very few went empty away.

2. From this time, till he undertook the direct care of souls, he used to being London during the sitting of the Parliament, and the rest of the year at Tern-Hall, (as it was then called,) instructing the young gentlemen. Every Sunday he attended the parish church at Atcham. But when the service was ended, instead of going home in the coach, which was always ready, he usually took a solitary walk by the Severn side, and spent some time in meditation and prayer. A pious domestic of Mr. Hill’s, having frequently observed him, one Sunday desired leave to walk with him, which he constantly did from that time. The account which he (Mr. Vaughan, still living in London) gives of Mr. Fletcher is as follows: —

“It was our ordinary custom, when the Church Service was over, to retire into the most lonely fields or meadows, where we frequently either kneeled down, or prostrated ourselves upon the ground. At those happy seasons I was a witness of such pleadings and wrestlings with God, such exercises of faith and love, as I have not known in anyone ever since. The consolations which we then received from God induced us to appoint two or three nights in a week, when we duly met after his pupils were asleep. We met also constantly on Sunday between four and five in the morning. Sometimes I stepped into his study on other days. I rarely saw any book before him besides the Bible and the ‘Christian’s Pattern.’ And he was seldom in any other company, unless when necessary business required, besides that of the unworthy writer of this paper.”

3. When he was in the country, he used to visit an Officer of Excise at Atcham, to be instructed in singing. On my desiring him to give me some account of what he recollected concerning Mr. Fletcher, he answered thus: “As to that man of God, Mr. Fletcher, it is but little that I remember of him; it being above nine-and-twenty years since the last time I saw him. But this I well remember, his conversation with me was always sweet and savory. He was too wise to suffer any of his precious moments to be trifled away. When there was company to dine at Mr. Hill’s, he frequently retired into the garden, and contentedly dined on a piece of bread, and a few bunches of currants. Indeed, in his whole manner of living, he was a pattern of abstainiousness. Meantime, how great was his sweetness of temper and heavenly-mindedness! I never saw it equaled in any one. How often, when I parted with him at Tern-Hall, have his eyes and hands been lifted up to heaven to implore a blessing upon me, with fervor and devoutness unequalled by any I ever saw! I firmly believe, he has not left in this land, or perhaps in any other, one luminary like himself. I conclude wishing this light may be so holden up, that many may see the glory thereof, and be transformed into its likeness. May you and I, and all that love the Lord Jesus Christ, be partakers of that holiness which was so conspicuous in him!”

4. “Our interviews for singing and conversation,” continues Mr. Vaughan, who was often present on these occasions, “were seldom concluded without prayer; in which we were frequently joined by her that is now my

wife; (then a servant in the family;) as likewise by a your widow in the village, who had also known the power of God into salvation, and who died some years since, praising God with her latest breath. These were the only persons in the country whom he chose for his familiar friends. But he sometimes walked over to Shrewsbury, to see Mrs. Glynne, or Mr. Appleton (who likewise now rests from his labors, after having many years adorned the gospel); he also visited any of the poor in the neighborhood, that were upon a sickbed; and, when no other person could be procured, performed even the meanest offices for them.”

5. It was in the year 1757 that he was ordained both Deacon and Priest. He was ordained at Whitehall; and the same day, being informed that I had no one to assist me at West-Street chapel, he came away as soon as ever the ordination was over, and assisted me in the administration of the Lord’s supper. He was now doubly diligent in preaching, not only in the chapels at West-Street and Spitalfields, but wherever the providence of God opened a door to proclaim the everlasting gospel. This he frequently did, not only in English, but likewise in French, his native language; of which he was allowed, by all competent judges, to be a complete master.

6. “The first time,” says Mr. Vaughan, “he preached in the country, was at Atcham church, on June 19, 1777. His text was, (a very bold beginning!) ‘Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of this world is enmity with God?’ (James 6:4.) The congregation stood amazed, and gazed upon him as if he had been a monster; but to me he appeared as a messenger sent from heaven.”

7. It was not soon that he was invited again to preach in Atcham church. But he was invited to preach in several other churches in the neighborhood. He was first invited to preach at Wroxeter, and afterwards at the Abbey church in Shrewsbury; but not being yet perfect in the English tongue, he wrote down all the sermons he preached in churches. But I doubt whether he preached above six times in the six months while he stayed in the country. On my telling him I wished he had more opportunities of preaching in this unenlightened part of the land, he answered, “The will of God be done: I am in his hands; and if he does not

call me to so much public duty, I have the more time for study, prayer, and praise.”

8. In the year 1758, there were many French prisoners on their parole at Tunbridge. Being desired to preach to them in their own language, he readily complied. Many of them appeared to be deeply affected, and earnestly requested that he would preach to them every Lord’s day. But some advised them, first, to present a petition to the Bishop of London for leave. They did so; and (who would believe it?) the good Bishop peremptorily rejected their petition! If I had known this at the time, King George should have known it; and I believe he would have given the Bishop little thanks. An odd incident followed: A few months after, the Bishop died of a cancer in his mouth. Perhaps some may think this was a just retribution for silencing such a Prophet, on such an occasion! I am not ashamed to acknowledge this is my own sentiment; and I do not think it; any breach of charity to suppose that an action, so unworthy a Christian Bishop, had its punishment in this world.

9. When he returned from London in the same year, he was more frequently invited to preach in several of the neighboring churches. And before his quitting the country he gave me a few printed papers, entitled, “A Christmas-box for Journeymen and Apprentices.” I mention it the rather because I suppose this was the first thing which he ever published.

10. It was in the beginning of June, 1759, that he returned the last time from London to Tern-Hall; and being now less frequently called to public duty, he enjoyed his beloved retirement, giving himself up to study, meditation, and prayer, and walking closely with God. Indeed his whole life was now a life of prayer; and so intensely was his mind fixed upon God, that I have heard him say, “I would not move from my seat, without lifting up my heart to God.” Wherever we met, if we were alone, his first salute was, “Do I meet you praying?” And if we were talking on any point of divinity, when we were in the depth of our discourse, he would often break off abruptly, and ask, “Where are our hearts now?” If ever the misconduct of an absent person was mentioned, his usual reply was, “Let us pray for him.”

11. It was, as I remember, about the close of this summer, that he was frequently desired, sometimes to assist, at other times to perform the whole service for, Mr. Chambers, then Vicar of Madeley. On these occasions it was, that he contracted such an affection for the people of Madeley, as nothing could hinder from increasing more and more to the day of his death. While he officiated at Madeley, as he still lived at the Hall, ten miles distant from it, a groom was ordered to get a horse ready for him every Sunday morning. But so great was his aversion for giving trouble to any one, that if the groom did not wake at the time, he seldom would suffer him to be called, but prepared the horse for himself.

12. In answer to some queries concerning him, a gentleman who was intimately acquainted with him for many years wrote to me as follows: —

“DEAR SIR,

“MY aversion to writing letters increases with my declining years. And yet I most willingly pay this debt to the precious memory of an old friend. I dwelt near him only two or three years; but our intimacy was great. And perhaps I may be able to present you with some particulars which you have not seen before.

13. “About the year 1760, he showed me, at his lodgings, a rope with pulleys, which he used for exercise; and added, with a smile, that the devil often tempted him to hang himself therewith. I said, ‘The desire of women is a temptation far more dangerous than this.’ He answered with surprise, (or rather, as it seemed to me, with a degree of contempt,) ‘In all my life I never felt that temptation; no, not in any degree.’ But it is dangerous for a Christian, how great or good soever he may be, to despise another for being tempted. When we met again, he acknowledged he had been plagued, like other men, with that formerly unknown temptation.”

14. In the same year, the living of Madeley fell vacant, and Mr. Fletcher was presented to it; which he accepted in preference to another, that was of double the value. He embraced it as his peculiar charge, the object of his most tender affection. And he was now at leisure to attend it, being fully discharged from his former employment; for his pupils were removed to

Cambridge. The elder of them died about the time of his coming of age; the younger first represented the town of Salop, as his father had done, and afterwards the county; till he took his seat in the House of Peers, as Baron Berwick, of Atcham-House: This is now the name that is given to what was formerly called Tern-Hall.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM HIS SETTLING AT MADELEY, TO HIS LEAVING TREVECKA.

1. **H**E settled at Madeley, according to his desire, in the year 1760. And from the beginning he was a laborious workman in his Lord's vineyard. At his first settling there, the hearts of several were unaccountably set against him; insomuch that he was constrained to warn some of these, that if they did not repent, God would speedily cut them off. And the truth of those predictions was shown over and over, by the signal accomplishment of them. But no opposition could hinder him from going on in his Master's work, and suppressing vice in every possible manner. Those sinners who endeavored to hide themselves from him, he pursued to every corner of his parish; by all sorts of means, public and private, early and late, in season and out of season, entreating and warning them to flee from the wrath to come. Some made it an excuse, for not attending the Church Service on a Sunday morning, that they could not awake early enough, to get their families ready. He provided for this also: Taking a bell in his hand, he set out every Sunday at five in the morning, and went round the most distant parts of the parish, inviting all the inhabitants to the house of God.

2. Yet notwithstanding all the pains he took, he saw for some time little fruit of his labor; insomuch that he was more than once in doubt, whether he had not mistaken his place; whether God had indeed called him to confine himself to one town, or to labor more at large in his vineyard. He was not free from this doubt, when a multitude of people flocked together at a funeral. He seldom let these awful opportunities slip without giving a solemn exhortation. At the close of the exhortation which was then given, one man was so grievously offended, that he could not refrain from breaking out into scurrilous, yea, menacing language. But, notwithstanding all his struggling against it, the word fastened upon his heart. At first, indeed, he roared like a lion; but he soon wept like a child. Not long after, he came to Mr. Fletcher in the most humble manner asking pardon for his outrageous behavior, and begging an interest in his prayers. This was such a refreshment as he stood in need of; and it was but a short time before this poor broken-hearted sinner was filled with joy unspeakable. He then

spared no pains in exhorting his fellow-sinners “to flee from the wrath to come.”

3. It was not long after, when, one Sunday evening, Mr. Fletcher, after performing the usual duty at Madeley, was about to set out for Madeley-Wood, to preach and catechize as usual. But just then notice was brought (which should have been given before) that a child was to be buried. His waiting till the child was brought, prevented his going to the Wood. And herein the providence of God appeared. For at this very time many of the colliers, who neither feared God nor regarded men, were baiting a bull, just by the preaching-house; and having had plenty of drink, they had all agreed, as soon as he came, to bait the Parson. Part of them were appointed to pull him off his horse, and the rest to set the dogs upon him. One of these very men afterwards confessed that he was with them when this agreement was made; and that afterwards, while they were in the most horrid manner cursing and swearing at their disappointment, a large china punchbowl, which holden above a gallon, without any apparent cause (for it was not touched by any person or thing) fell all to shivers. This so alarmed him, that he forsook all his companions, and determined to save his own soul.

4. From the beginning he did not confine his labors to his own parish. For many years he regularly preached at places, eight, ten, or sixteen miles off; returning the same night, though he seldom got home before one or two in the morning. At a little society which he had gathered about six miles from Madeley, he preached two or three times a week, beginning at five in the morning. As for visiting the sick, this was a work for which he was always ready: If he heard the knocker in the coldest winter night, his window was thrown open in a moment. And when he understood either that someone was hurt in the pit, or that a neighbor was likely to die, no consideration was ever had of the darkness of the night, or the severity of the weather; but this answer was always given: “I will attend you immediately.”

5. But in one respect Mr. Fletcher has frequently been blamed; namely, for deserting a place where God had eminently owned him; I mean Trevecka, in Wales. I believe it is therefore my bounden duty to clear up the whole affair. And I cannot do this better than by transcribing the substance of an

account which I have received from Mr. Benson, in answer to my inquiries: —

6. “My acquaintance with him,” says he, “commenced when I was at Kingswood, — I think, in the year 1768. As he now and then made a short excursion from Madeley to Bath or Bristol, in one of those excursions we invited him to give us a sermon at Kingswood. He was peculiarly assisted while he was applying those encouraging words: ‘Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.’ The people were exceedingly affected; indeed, quite melted down. The tears streamed so fast from the eyes of the poor colliers, that their grisly, black faces were washed by them, and almost universally streaked with white. And as to himself, his zealous soul had been carried out so far beyond his strength, that, when he concluded, he put off a shirt which was as wet as if it had been dipped in water. But this was nothing strange; whenever he preached, it was generally the case. From this time I conceived a particular esteem for him, chiefly on account of his piety; and wished much for a greater intimacy with him; a blessing which I soon after obtained.

7. “For, about this time, the Countess of Huntingdon erected a seminary at Trevecka, in Wales, in order to educate pious young men, of whatever denomination, for the ministry. She proposed to admit only such as were converted to God, and resolved to dedicate themselves to His service. They were at liberty to stay there three years; during which they were to have their education gratis, with every necessary of life, and a suit of clothes once a year: Afterwards those who desired it might enter into the ministry, either in the Established Church of England, or among Protestants of any other denomination. From the high opinion which the Countess had of Mr. Fletcher’s piety, learning, and abilities for such an office, she invited him to undertake the direction of that seminary. Not that he could promise to be chiefly resident there; much less constantly. His duty to his own flock at Madeley would by no means admit of this. But he was to attend as often as he conveniently could; to give advice, with regard to the appointment of Masters, the admission or exclusion of students; to oversee their studies and conduct; to assist their piety, and judge of their qualifications for the work of the ministry.

8. "As Mr. Fletcher greatly approved of the design, especially considering, First, that none were to be admitted but such as feared God; and, Secondly, that when they were prepared for it, they might enter into the ministry wherever Providence opened a door; he readily complied with the invitation, and undertook the charge. This he did without fee or reward, from the sole motive of being useful in the most important work of training up persons for the glorious office of preaching the gospel. And some months after, with the same view, through his means, and in consequence of your recommendation to her Ladyship, I was made Head Master of the school, or, as it was commonly called, the College; though I could very ill be spared from Kingswood, where I had acted in that capacity about four years.

9. "As yet I was greatly wanted at Kingswood. I had likewise a term to keep at Oxford; so that I could only pay them a short visit in January, 1770. But in spring I went to reside there; and for some time things went on excellently well. 'The young men were serious, and made a considerable progress in learning. And many of them seemed to have a talent for preaching. Mr. Fletcher visited them frequently, and was received as an angel of God. It is not possible for me to describe the veneration in which we all holden him. Like Elijah in the schools of the Prophets he was revered; he was loved; he was almost adored; and that, not only by every student, but by every member of the family. And indeed he was worthy.'

"Forgive me, my dear Sir, if you think I exceed. My heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, — shall I say, an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen Adam, so fully raised above the ruins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to earth, yet was his whole 'conversation in heaven;' yet was his life, from day to day, 'hid with Christ in God.' Prayer, praise, love, and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the element in which he himself continually lived. And as to others, his one employment was, to call, entreat, and urge them to ascend with him to the glorious Source of being and blessedness. He had leisure comparatively for nothing else. Languages, arts, sciences, grammar, rhetoric, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside, when he appeared in the school-room among

the students. His full heart would not suffer him to be silent. He must speak; and they were readier to hearken to this servant and Minister of Jesus Christ, than to attend to Sallust, Virgil, Cicero, or any Latin or Greek historian, poet, or philosopher they were reading. And they seldom hearkened long, before they were all in tears, and every heart caught fire from the flame that burned in his soul.

10. "These seasons generally terminated in this: Being convinced that to be 'filled with the Holy Ghost' was a better qualification for the ministry of the gospel than any classical learning, (though that too may be useful in its place,) after speaking awhile in the school-room, he used frequently to say, 'As many of you as are athirst for this fullness of the Spirit, follow me into my room.' On this, many of us have instantly followed him, and there continued till noon, wrestling like Jacob for the blessing, praying one after another, till we could bear to kneel no longer. This was not done once or twice, but many times. And I have sometimes seen him on these occasions, once in particular, so filled with the love of God, that he could contain no more; but cried out, 'O my God, withhold thy hand, or the vessel will burst.' But he afterwards told me, he was afraid he had grieved the Spirit of God; and that he ought rather to have prayed that the Lord would have enlarged the vessel, or have suffered it to break; that the soul might have no farther bar or interruption to its enjoyment of the supreme good."

This is certainly a just remark. The proper prayer on such an occasion would have been, —

Give me the enlarged desire,
 And open, Lord, my soul,
 Thy own fullness to require,
 And comprehend the whole!
 Stretch my faith's capacity
 Wider, and yet wider still;
 Then with all that is in thee
 My ravish'd spirit fill!

11. "Such was the ordinary employment of this man of God while he remained at Trevecka. He preached the word of life to the students and family, and as many of the neighbors as desired to be present. He was

‘instant in season, out of season;’ he ‘reproved, rebuked, exhorted, with all long-suffering.’ He was always employed, either in discovering some important truth, or exhorting to some neglected duty, or administering some needful comfort, or relating some useful anecdote, or making some profitable remark or observation upon anything that occurred. And his devout soul, always burning with love and zeal, led him to intermingle prayer with all he said. Meanwhile his manner was so solemn, and at the same time so mild and insinuating, that it was hardly possible for any who had the happiness of being in his company not to be struck with awe and charmed with love, as if in the presence of an angel or departed spirit. Indeed I frequently thought, while attending to his heavenly discourse and divine spirit, that he was so different from, and superior to, the generality of mankind, as to look more like Moses or Elijah, or some Prophet or Apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man dwelling in a house of clay. It is true, his weak and long afflicted body proclaimed him to be human. But the graces which so eminently filled and adorned his soul, manifested him to be divine. And long before his happy spirit returned to God that gave it, that which was human seemed in a great measure to be ‘swallowed up of life.’ O what a loss did Trevecka sustain, what an irreparable loss, when he left it!

12. “But why then did he leave it? Why did he give up an office, for which he was so perfectly well qualified? which he executed so entirely to the satisfaction of all the parties wherewith he was concerned, and in which it had pleased God to give so manifest a blessing to his labors? Perhaps it would be better, in tenderness to some persons, eminent for piety and usefulness, to let that matter remain still under the veil which forgiving love has cast over it. But if it be thought that justice to his character, and to the cause which from that time he so warmly espoused and so ably defended, requires some light to be cast upon it, it may be the most inoffensive way to do it in his own words.”

It will be proper to observe here, for the better understanding of the following letter, that some time before Mr. Fletcher quitted Trevecka, Mr. Benson had been discharged from his office there; not for any defect of learning or piety, or any fault found with his behavior; but wholly and solely because he did not believe the doctrine of absolute predestination.

13. “The following is an exact copy of all that is material in a letter he wrote to me, in consequence of my dismissal from the office I had been in: —

“DEAR SIR,

June 7, 1771.

“THE same post brought me yours, and two from my Lady, and one from Mr. Williams, the new Master. Those contained no charges but general ones, which with me go for nothing. If the procedure you mention is fact, and your letter is a fair account of the transaction and words relative to your discharge, a false step has been taken. I write this post to her Ladyship on the affair, with all possible plainness. If the plan of the College is overthrown, I have nothing more to say to it. I will keep to my text, for one. I trust I shall ever be a servant of all: The confined tool of any one party I never was, and never will be. If the blow that should have been struck at the dead spirit, is struck (contrary to the granted liberty of sentiment) at dead Arminius, or absent Mr. Wesley; if a Master is turned away without any fault; it is time for me to stand up with firmness, or to withdraw.’

14. “The following paragraphs are transcribed from Mr. Fletcher’s letter to my Lady: —

“Mr. Benson made a very just defense when he said, he did hold with me the possibility of salvation for all men. If this is what you call Mr. Wesley’s opinion and Arminianism, and if *every Arminian must quit the College*, I am actually discharged. For in my present view of things, I must hold that sentiment, if I believe that the Bible is true, and that God is love.

“For my part, I am no party-man. In the Lord I am your servant, and that of your every student. But I cannot give up the honor of being connected with my old friends, who, notwithstanding their failings, are entitled to my respect, gratitude, and affection. Mr. Wesley shall always be welcome to my pulpit, and I shall gladly bear my testimony in his as well as Mr. Whitefield’s. If you forbid your students to preach for the one, and offer them to preach for the other; and if a Master is discarded for believing that

Christ died for all; then prejudice reigns, charity is cruelly wounded, and party-spirit shouts, prevails, triumphs.’

15. “Two days after,” continues Mr. Benson, “he writes, ‘I am determined to stand or fall with the liberty of the College. As I entered it a free place, I must quit it the moment it is an harbor for party-spirit.’

“This he us soon constrained to do, as appears from the following letter, wrote about two months after: —

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ON my arrival at the College, I found all very quiet, I fear through the enemy’s keeping his goods in peace. While I preached the next day I found myself as much shackled as ever I was in my life. And after private prayer, I concluded I was not in my place. The same day, I resigned my office to my Lady, and on Wednesday, to the students and the Lord.

“Mr. Shirley has sent my Lady a copy of part of the Minutes of the last Conference, viz., of the year 1770. They were called *horrible* and *abominable*. My Lady told me, *she must burn against them; and that whoever did not fully disavow them must quit the College*. She accordingly ordered the Master and all the students to write their sentiments upon them without reserve. I did so; explained them according to Mr. Wesley’s sentiments; and approved the doctrine, though not cautiously worded. I concluded by observing, that as, after such a step on my part, and such a declaration on my Lady’s, I could no longer, as an honest man, stay in the College, I took my leave of it; wishing my Lady might find a Minister to preside over it less insufficient than

“JOHN FLETCHER.’

16. “These were his reasons for resigning his charge at Trevecka. As the Circular Letter now went abroad, under the name of Mr. Shirley, inviting the Clergy of all denominations to assemble in a body at Bristol to oppose you and the Preachers met in Conference, and oblige you to revoke the dreadful heresies contained in those Minutes; and as Mr. Fletcher thought

the Churches throughout Christendom to be verging very fast toward Antinomianism; he thought the propositions contained in those Minutes ought rather to be confirmed than revoked. And as he was now retired to his parish, he had more leisure for such a work than before. So, after much prayer and consideration, he determined to write in defense of them. In how able a manner he did this, I need not tell any that have read those incomparable writings. I know not how to give the character of them better, than in the words of Dr. D——, to whom I sent Mr. Fletcher's Checks, with a recommendatory letter. He answered me, —

“DEAR SIR,

“WHEN I first read yours, I must own, I suspected your friendship for Mr. Fletcher had made you too lavish in your commendation of his writings; and that when I came to read them, I should find some abatements necessary to be made. But now I have read them, I am far from thinking you have spoken extravagantly; or indeed, that too much can be said in commendation of them. I had not read his first Letter, before I was so charmed with the spirit as well as abilities of the writer, that the gushing tear could not be hindered from giving full testimony of my heart-felt satisfaction. Perhaps some part of this pleasure might arise from finding my own sentiments so fully embraced by the author. But sure I am the greatest share of it arose from finding those benevolent doctrines so firmly established, and that with such judgment, clearness, and precision, as are seldom, very seldom to be met with. What crowns the whole is, the amiable and Christian temper, which those who will not be convinced must however approve, and wish that their own doctrines may be constantly attended with the same spirit.”

17. How much good has been occasioned by the publication of that Circular Letter! This was the happy occasion of Mr. Fletcher's writing those “Checks to Antinomianism;” in which one knows not which to admire most, the purity of the language, (such as scarce any foreigner wrote before,) the strength and clearness of the argument, or the mildness and sweetness of the spirit that breathes throughout; the whole; insomuch that I nothing wonder at a serious Clergyman, who, being resolved to live and die in his own opinion, when he was pressed to read them, replied,

“No; I will never read Mr. Fletcher’s Checks; for if I did, I should be of his mind.”

18. A short extract from another of his letters will show what was his state of mind at this crisis. “How much water,” says he, “may at last rush out from a little opening! What are our dear L —’s jealousies come to? Ah, poor College. Their conduct, among other reasons, has stirred me up to write in defense of the Minutes. Methinks I dream, when I reflect I have wrote controversy! the last subject I thought I should meddle with. I expect to be roughly handled on the account. Lord, prepare me for everything thou callest me to!

“J. F.”

CHAPTER V.

FROM HIS LEAVING TREVECKA TO HIS GOING TO BRISTOL.

1. **T**HE frequent journeys he took to and from Trevecka while he presided over the College, in all weathers, and at all seasons of the year, farther impaired the firmness of his constitution; and in some of those journeys, he had not only difficulties, but dangers likewise, to encounter. One day, as he was riding over a wooden bridge, just as he got to the middle thereof, it broke in. The mare's forelegs sunk into the river, but her breast and hinder parts were kept up by the bridge. In that position she lay, as still as if she had been dead, till he got over her neck, and took off his bags, in which were several manuscripts, the spoiling of which would have occasioned him much trouble. He then endeavored to raise her up; but she would not stir, till he went over the other part of the bridge. But no sooner did he set his foot upon the ground, than she began to plunge. Immediately the remaining part of the bridge broke down, and sunk with her into the river. But presently she rose up again, swam out, and came to him.

2. About this time, Mr. Pilmoor being desirous to see the inside of a coal-pit, Mr. Fletcher went with him to the bottom of a sloping pit, which was supposed to be near a mile under the ground. They returned out of it without any inconvenience. But the next day, while several colliers were there, a damp took fire, which went off with a vast explosion, and killed all the men that were in it.

3. In February, 1773, I received from him the following letter: —

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,

“**I** HOPE the Lord, who has so wonderfully stood by you hitherto, will preserve you to see many of your sheep, and me among them, enter into rest. Should Providence call you first, I shall do my best, by the Lord's assistance, to help your brother to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent to throw away the Methodist doctrines and discipline, as soon as he that now letteth is removed out of the way.

Every help will then be necessary, and I shall not be backward to throw in my mite. In the meantime, you sometimes need an assistant to serve tables, and occasionally to fill up a gap. Providence visibly appointed me to that office many years ago. And though it no less evidently called me hither, yet I have not been without doubt, especially for some years past, whether it would not be expedient that I should resume my office as your Deacon; not with my view of presiding over the Methodists after you, but to ease you a little in your old age, and to be in the way of recovering, perhaps doing, more good. I have sometimes thought, how shameful it was, that no Clergyman should join you to keep in the Church the work God has enabled you to carry on therein. And as the little estate I have in my own country is sufficient for my maintenance, I have thought I would one day or other offer you and the Methodists my free service. While my love of retirement made me linger, I was providentially led to do something in Lady Huntingdon's plan. But being shut out there, it appears to me, I am again called to my first work. Nevertheless, I would not leave this place without a fuller persuasion that the time is quite come. Not that God uses me much here, but I have not yet sufficiently cleared my conscience from the blood of all men. Meantime, I beg the Lord to guide me by his counsel, and make me willing to go anywhere or nowhere, to be anything or nothing.

“Help, by your prayers, till you can bless by word of mouth,”

“Reverend and dear Sir,”

“Your willing, though unprofitable, servant in the gospel,”

“J. F.”

“*MADELEY, February 6, 1773.*”

4. “Providence,” says he, “visibly appointed me to that office many years ago.” Is it any wonder, then, that he should now be in doubt, whether he did right in confining himself to one spot? The more I reflect upon it, the more I am convinced, he had great reason to doubt of this. I can never believe it was the will of God, that such a burning and shining light should

be “hid under a bushel.” No; instead of being confined to a country village, it ought to have shone in every corner of our land. He was full as much called to sound an alarm through all the nation, as Mr. Whitefield himself: Nay, abundantly more so; seeing he was far better qualified for that important work. He had a more striking person, equal good breeding, an equally winning address; together with a richer flow of fancy, a stronger understanding; a far greater treasure of learning, both in languages, philosophy, philology, and divinity; and, above all, (which I can speak with fuller assurance, because I had a thorough knowledge both of one and the other,) a more deep and constant communion with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ.

5. And yet, let not anyone imagine that I depreciate Mr. Whitefield, or undervalue the grace of God, and the extraordinary gifts, which his great Master vouchsafed unto him. I believe he was highly favored of God; yea, that he was one of the most eminent Ministers that has appeared in England, or perhaps in the world, during the present century. Yet I must own, I have known many fully equal to Mr. Whitefield, both in holy tempers and holiness of conversation; but one equal herein to Mr. Fletcher I have not known, no, not in a life of fourscore years.

6. However, having chosen, at least for the present, this narrow field of action, he was more and more abundant in his ministerial labors, both in public and private; not contenting himself with preaching, but visiting his flock in every corner of his parish. And this work he attended to, early and late, whether the weather was fair or foul; regarding neither heat nor cold, rain nor snow, whether he was on horseback or on foot. But this farther weakened his constitution; which was still more effectually done by his intense and uninterrupted studies; in which he frequently continued without scarce any intermission, fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen hours a day. But still he did not allow himself such food as was necessary to sustain nature. He seldom took any regular meals, except he had company; otherwise, twice or thrice in four-and-twenty hours, he ate some bread and cheese, or fruit. Instead of this, he sometimes took a draught of milk, and then wrote on again. When one reproved him for not affording himself a sufficiency of necessary food, he replied, “Not allow myself food! Why,

our food seldom costs my housekeeper and me together less than two shillings a week.”

7. “On the tenth of May, 1774,” says Mr. Vaughan, to whom we are indebted for several of the preceding anecdotes, “he wrote to me thus: ‘My brother has sent me the rent of a little place I have abroad, eighty pounds, which I was to receive from Mr. Chauvet and Company, in London. But instead of sending the draught for the money, I have sent it back to Switzerland, with orders to distribute it among the poor. As money is rather higher there than here, that mite will go farther abroad than it would in my parish.’”

8. To show in how great a degree he was disengaged from

Wealth, honor, pleasure, or what else
This short-enduring world could give,

Mr. Vaughan gives us another little memoir, which fell within his own knowledge: “After he had published two or three small political pieces, in reference to our contest with the Americans, ‘I carried one of them,’ says he, in a letter to me, ‘to the Earl of D. His Lordship carried it to the Lord Chancellor, and the Lord Chancellor handed it to the King.’ One was immediately commissioned to ask Mr. Fletcher, whether any preferment in the Church would be acceptable; or whether he (the Chancellor) could do him any service. He answered, ‘I want nothing, but more grace.’

9. “In 1776, he deposited with me a bill of one hundred and five pounds, being (as I understood) the yearly produce of his estate in Switzerland. This was his fund for charitable uses; but it lasted only a few months before he drew upon me for the balance, which was twenty-four pounds, to complete the preaching-house in Madeley-Wood.”

10. In the same year, his health being more than ever impaired by a violent cough, accompanied with spitting of blood, of which I had had large experience myself; having frequently seen the surprising effects of constant exercise, together with change of air; I told him, nothing was so likely to restore his health as a long journey. I therefore proposed his

taking a journey of some months with me, through various parts of England and Scotland; telling him, “When you are tired, or like it best, you may come into my carriage; but remember, that riding on horseback is the best of all exercises for you, so far as your strength will permit.” He looked upon this as a call from Providence, and very willingly accepted of the proposal. We set out (as I am accustomed to do) early in the spring, and traveled, by moderate journeys, suited to his strength, which gradually increased, eleven or twelve hundred miles. When we returned to London, in the latter end of the year, he was considerably better. And I verily believe, if he had traveled with me, partly in the chaise and partly on horseback, only a few months longer, he would have quite recovered his health. But this those about him would not permit; so, being detained in London, by his kind but injudicious friends, while I pursued my journeys, his spitting of blood, with all the other symptoms, returned, and rapidly increased, till the Physicians pronounced him to be far advanced in a true, pulmonary consumption.

11. It being judged quite improper for him to remain in London, on December 16, 1776, he retired to the house of a friend, Mr. Charles Greenwood, (now with God,) to Stoke Newington. Here he had the advice of the most eminent Physicians that London could afford. He was also in a good air, and had every convenience and every help which art could bestow. One of the family, of whom I inquired concerning this part of his life, gave me the following information: —

12. “Agreeably to your desire, I endeavor to recollect some particulars of Mr. Fletcher, during his abode at Newington.

“When he first came, he was, by Dr. Fothergill’s advice, under the strictest observance of two things, — rest and silence. These, together with a milk diet, were supposed to be the only probable means of his recovery. In consequence of these directions, he spoke exceeding little. If ever he spoke more than usual, it did not fail to increase his spitting of blood; of which, indeed, he was seldom quite clear, although it was not violent: Therefore, a great part of his time was spent in being read to. But it was not possible to restrain him altogether from speaking. The fire which continually burned in his heart many waters could not quench. It often burst out unawares. And

then how did we wonder (like those who formerly heard his Lord) ‘at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth!’ He could not have sustained life without sometimes giving vent to his heart. No penance could have appeared so severe a cross to him, as to be debarred from speaking of or to God. His natural vivacity, with his intense love of Jesus, continually impelled him to speak. But, on being reminded of his rule, with a cheerful smile, he was all submission; consenting by signs only to stir up those about him to pray and praise!

13. “Whoever has read Mr. Fletcher’s Last Check to Antinomianism, and has had the privilege of observing his spirit and conduct, will not scruple to say that he was a living comment on his own account of Christian perfection. It is an alarming word which our Lord speaks ‘to the Angel of the Church of Sardis:’ ‘I have not found thy works perfect before God.’ But, as far as man is able to judge, from the whole tenor of his behavior, he did possess perfect humility, perfect resignation, and perfect love. Suitable to this was the testimony concerning him which was given in Lady Huntingdon’s chapel at Bristol, even by Mr. V., a gentleman strongly attached to those opinions which Mr. Fletcher thought it his duty to oppose: ‘I have enjoyed the privilege of being several weeks under the same roof with dear Mr. Fletcher: And during that time, I have been greatly edified by his perfect resignation to the will of God; and by being a witness to his exemplary conduct and uncommon grace.’

14. “When he was able to converse, his favorite subject was, ‘the promise of the Father, the gift of the Holy Ghost,’ including that rich, peculiar blessing of union with the Father and the son, mentioned in that prayer of our Lord which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John. Many were the sparks of living fire which occasionally darted forth on this beloved theme. ‘We must not be content,’ said he, ‘to be only cleansed from sin; we must be filled with the Spirit.’ One asking him, what was to be experienced in the full accomplishment of the promise; ‘O,’ said he, ‘what shall I say? All the sweetness of the drawings of the Father, all the love of the Son, all the rich effusions of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; — more than ever can be expressed, are comprehended here! To attain it, the Spirit maketh intercession in the soul, like a God wrestling with a God!’

15. "It was in these favored moments of converse that we found, in a particular manner, the reward which is annexed to the 'receiving a Prophet in the name of a Prophet.' And in some of these he occasionally mentioned several circumstances, which (as none knew them but himself) would otherwise have been buried in everlasting oblivion.

"One of those remarkable passages was, 'In the beginning,' said he, 'of my spiritual course, I heard the voice of God, in an articulate but inexpressibly awful sound, go through my soul in those words: *If any men will be my disciple, let him deny himself.*' He mentioned another peculiar manifestation of a later date, 'in which,' said he, 'I was favored, like Moses, with a supernatural discovery of the glory of God, in an ineffable converse with him, face to face; so that, whether I was then in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell.'

16. "At another time he said, 'About the time of my entering into the ministry, I one evening wandered into a wood, musing on the importance of the office I was going to undertake. I then began to pour out my soul in prayer; when such a feeling sense of the justice of God fell upon me, and such a sense of his displeasure at sin, as absorbed all my powers, and filled my soul with the agony of prayer for poor, lost sinners. I continued therein till the dawn of day; and I considered this as designed of God to impress upon me more deeply the meaning of those solemn words: *Therefore knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men.*'

17. "The blessed state of his soul continually manifested itself, by its overflowing goodwill to all that came in his way. And yet his spirit was so deeply impressed with those words, 'Not as though I had already attained,' that the vehemence of his desire for a fuller manifestation of God seemed sometimes to border upon unhappiness. But his ardent soul only felt the full impression of those words of the Apostle: 'Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those that are before, I press toward the marks for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

18. "One end of his retiring to Newington was, that he might hide himself from company. But this design was in nowise answered; for company came from every side. He was continually visited by high and low, and by persons of various denominations; one of whom being asked, when he went away, what he thought of Mr. Fletcher, said, 'I went to see a man that had one foot in the grave, but I found a man that had one foot in heaven.' Among them that now visited him were several of his beloved and honored opponents; to whom he confirmed his love (however roughly they had treated him) by the most respectful and affectionate behavior. But he did not give up any part of the truth for which he had publicly contended; although some (from whom one would have expected better things) did not scruple to affirm the contrary. Those of his particular friends who visited him here will not easily forget how he exhausted his whole soul in effusions of thankfulness: Mrs. Cartwright and Cavendish in particular, with his faithful and affectionate friend Mr. Ireland, will remember their interviews with him. And those of the family were almost oppressed by the outpourings of his love and gratitude, whenever they showed their love and care in the most inconsiderable instance; yea, so thankful, in proportion, would he be to even the meanest servant.

19. "It was not without some difficulty that Mr. Ireland at length prevailed upon him to sit for his picture. While the limner was drawing the outlines of it, he was exhorting both him and all that were in the room, not only to get the outlines drawn, but the colorings also, of the image of Jesus on their hearts. He had a very remarkable facility in making allusions of this kind; in raising spiritual observations from every accidental circumstance; in turning men's employments, pleasures, and pains, into means of edification: This he did, in order to engage the attention of the thoughtless, the more deeply to fix the attention of the thoughtful, and to prevent the trifling away of time in unprofitable conversation. And such little incidents as used to pass away unnoticed by almost any other person, acquired from Mr. Fletcher's fine imagination a kind of grace and dignity. To give an instance: Being ordered to be let blood, while his blood was running into the cup, he took occasion to expatiate on the precious blood shedding of the Lamb of God. And even when he did not speak at all, the seraphic spirit which beamed from his languid face, during those months of pain and weakness, was

A lecture silent, yet of sovereign use.”

20. But it is necessary to be observed, that this facility of raising useful observations from the most trifling incidents was one of those peculiarities in him which cannot be proposed to our imitation. In him it partly resulted from nature, and was partly a supernatural gift. But what was becoming and graceful in Mr. Fletcher, would be disgustful almost in any other.

21. “One of those who visited him at Newington was Mr. William Perronet; a pious, sensible, and amiable young man, who was snatched hence in the bloom of youth. He often said, the first sight of Mr. Fletcher fixed an impression upon his mind which never wore off till it issued in a real conversion to God; ever accompanied with a most affectionate regard for the instrument of that happy change.”

Soon after he left Newington, he wrote the following letter: —

“*May 28, 1777.*

“TO MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS,
CHARLES AND MARY GREENWOOD.

“MY prayer shall always be, that the merciful may find mercy, and that the great kindness I have found under your quiet roof, may be showed you everywhere under the canopy of heaven. I think with grateful joy on the days of calm retreat I have been blessed with at Newington, and lament my not having improved better the precious opportunity of sitting, Mary-like, at the feet of my Great Physician. May He requite your kind care of a dying worm, by abundantly caring for you and yours, and making all your bed in your sickness! May you enjoy full health! May you hunger and thirst after righteousness, and be abundantly filled therewith! May you sweetly rest in Christ! May His protection be as a wall of fire round about you and yours! May His rod and staff comfort you under all the troubles of life, the decays of the body, the assaults of the enemy, and the pangs of death! May you stand in the clefts of the Rock of Ages, and be safely sheltered there, when all the storms of justice blow around! And

may you always have such spiritual and temporal helps, friends and comforts, as I have found in your pleasing retreat! You have received a poor Lazarus; (though his sores were not visible;) you have had compassion, like the good Samaritan; you have admitted me to the enjoyment of your best things; and now what can I say? what but, ‘Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift;’ and thanks to my dear friends for all their favors? They will, I trust, be found faithfully recorded in my breast, when the great Rewarder of them that diligently seek him will render to every man according to his works; and a raised Lazarus shall then appear in the gate, to testify of the love of Charles and Mary Greenwood, and their godly sister!

“I was a little better, but I now spit blood, more than I had done for weeks before. Glory be to God for every providence! His will be done in me, by health or sickness, life or death. All from Him is, and, I trust, will be, welcome to

“Your obliged pensioner,”

“JOHN FLETCHER.”

CHAPTER VI.

FROM HIS LEAVING NEWINGTON, TILL HIS RETURN FROM SWITZERLAND TO MADELEY.

1. **H**E continued with Mr. Greenwood at Newington upwards of fifteen months. The Physicians then advised him to make a trial of the Hot-Well water, near Bristol. "I was desired by Mr. and Mrs. Ireland," (who took him down in April, 1777,) says Miss Thornton, "to bear them company thither; which I willingly did. Indeed I looked upon it as a call from God; nor could I desire a greater honor, than to share in the employment of angels, in ministering to a distinguished heir of salvation. At Brislington, near Bristol, he continued in the same holy, earnest course as at Newington. Every day he drank the Hot-Well water, and it agreed with him well. So that he appeared to gather a little strength; though not so swiftly as was expected. And all the strength which he received, he laid out in labors of love, for the benefit of all those, rich or poor, whom Providence cast in his way.

2. "Whenever he was in company, it was his general method, so far as his strength would admit, to pray particularly for every person present. And from his habitual prayer resulted that life and energy in his words, which everyone that was blessed with his society felt more or less. Now and then likewise he adventured to pray in the family. But he was not wary enough in this. He more than once so much exerted himself, that he was brought very low. As soon as he was well enough to write, he was intent upon finishing two treatises for the press. The Plan of Reconciliation, in particular, lay very near his heart. He longed to conclude it before he died, which he wished to do, breathing peace to Jerusalem, and pointing out to the children of God the most probable means of effecting it; of uniting together, in the bonds of peace and love, all the true Ministers and followers of Jesus."

3. From Bristol he wrote to a friend thus: "I thank God I am not afraid of any evil tidings: My heart standeth fast, believing in the Lord, and desiring Him to do with me just what pleases Him. With respect to my body, my

Physician hopes I shall do well. And so I hope and believe too. For health or sickness, life or death, is best when the Lord sends it.

“I am in hopes of seeing you soon; though my friends talk of detaining me, to make a farther trial of the waters. I am forbid preaching; but, blessed be God, I am not forbid by my Heavenly Physician to pray, believe, and love. This is a sweet work, which heals, strengthens, and delights: Let us do it, till we have recovered our spiritual strength. And then, whether we shall be seen on earth or not, it will be all alike.

“O be hearty in the cause of religion! Be either hot or cold. It is a fearful thing to be lukewarm, and thereby fall into the hands of the living God. Be humbly zealous for your own salvation and for God’s glory. And forget not to care for each other’s salvation. The case of wicked Cain is very common; the practice of many says, with that wretch, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ O pray God to keep you by his mighty power through faith unto salvation! Keep yourselves in the love of God, and keep one another by example, reproof, exhortation, encouragement, social prayer, and a faithful use of all the means of grace. Use yourselves to bow at Christ’s feet as your Prophet. Go to him continually for the holy anointing of his Spirit, who will be a Teacher always near, always with you and in you. If you have that inward Instructor, you will suffer no material loss, though your outward Teachers should be removed.

“While you have the light of God’s word, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light, fitted for the kingdom of eternal light; where, I charge you, prepare to meet with joy

“Your affectionate, though unworthy,”

“Brother and Minister,”

“JOHN FLETCHER.”

4. I subjoin part of a letter wrote some time before, in the same spirit, to his parishioners at Madeley: —

“December 28, 1776.”

“MY DEAR PARISHIONERS,

“THE weakness of my body confining me from you, I humbly submit to the divine dispensation. And I ease the trouble of my absence from you, by being present with you in spirit, and by reflecting on the pleasure I have felt in years past, in singing with you, ‘Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.’ This truth let us receive with all readiness, and we shall meet in Christ, the center of lasting union. And our hearts shall be full of the song of angels, ‘Glory be unto God in the highest! On earth peace, goodwill toward men!’ In order to this, may the eyes of your understanding be more and more opened to see the need of a Redeemer, and to behold the suitableness, freeness, and fullness of the redemption wrought out by the Son of God! This wish glows in my soul so ardently, that it brings me down upon my knees while I write. And in that posture I entreat you all to consider and improve the day of your visitation; and to prepare in good earnest to meet with joy your God and your unworthy Pastor in another world! Weak as I was when I left you, I hear that many, who were then healthy and strong, have got the start of me; and that some have been hurried into eternity without a moment’s warning. May this awful event strike a deeper consideration into all our souls! May the sound of their bodies, dashed in pieces at the bottom of the pit, rouse us to a speedy conversion, that we may never, through carelessness or delay fall into the bottomless pit! Tottering as I stand on the brink of the grave, some of you also may drop into it before me. Let us all, then, prepare for our approaching change, and never rest till we are assured it will be a happy one. Let the long-suffering of God toward us, who survive the hundreds that I have buried, lead us all to repentance. Embrace Jesus Christ, who wept for you in the manger, agonized for you in the garden, bled for you on the cross, and now pleads for you on his mediatorial throne. Meet me not at the great day in your sins and in your blood. Meet me in the robe of Christ’s merits, and in ‘the white linen’ (the purity of heart and life) ‘which is the righteousness of the saints.’ Let all wickedness be gone for ever with the old year; and with the new year begin a new life; a life of renewed devotion to God, and increasing love to our neighbor.

“Though I hope to see much more of the goodness of God in the land of the living than I do see, yet, blessed be the divine mercy, I see enough to keep my mind at all times unruffled, and to make me calmly willing to resign my soul into the hands of my faithful Creator. I desire your public thanks for all the favors which he continually showeth me. May our thankfulness crown the new year, as the Lord’s patience and goodness have renewed our life. Permit me to beseech an interest in your prayers also. Ask that I may be willing to receive all that God is willing to bestow. Ask that I may meekly suffer and zealously do all the will of God in my present circumstances; and that, living or dying, I may say, ‘To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.’ If God calls me soon, I beg he may, in his good providence, appoint a more faithful shepherd over you. You need not fear but he will. For these many months you have had no famine of the word. And what God hath done for months, he can do for years; yea, all the years of your life. Only pray. Ask, and you shall have. Meet me at the throne of grace, and you shall meet at the throne of glory

“Your affectionate, obliged, unworthy Minister,

“J. F.”

5. To a friend, meantime, he wrote thus: “With respect to my soul, I calmly wait, in unshaken resignation, for the full salvation of God; ready to trust him, to venture on his faithful love, and on the sure mercies of David, either at midnight, noonday, or cock-crowing. For my time is in his hand; and his time is best, and shall be my time. Death hath lost his sting; and I thank God I know not what hurry of spirits is, or unbelieving fears, under the most trying circumstances. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!”

6. He now spent part of his time at Bristol, but the greatest part at Brislington. In one place or the other, as well as at Newington, he was visited by many respectable persons. Many of these were Calvinists; several of whom bore witness to his deep piety and exalted spirit. But a Dissenting Minister, after pressing him hard, with regard to some of his opinions, told him, with great warmth, “Mr. Fletcher, you had better have been gasping for life with an asthma, or have had all your limbs unstrung

by a palsy, than to have wrote those Checks.” Mr. Fletcher replied, “Sir, I then wanted more love, and I do so still:” And in his highest fervors of divine love, he always acknowledged his want of more.

7. Here, also, he missed no opportunity of instructing servants and children, suiting his discourse, in a manner peculiar to himself, to their capacity or their business. And what would have appeared low in another; did not appear so when spoken by him. Thus, he advised the cook to stir up the fire of divine love in his heart, that it might burn up all the rubbish therein, and raise a flame of holy affection; to which, with the greatest cordiality, he would subjoin a short prayer. Thus, to the housemaid he said, “I entreat you to sweep every corner of your heart, that it may be fit to receive your heavenly Guest.” To a poor man, who came there in a deep consumption, but little concerned for his soul, he said, in a very solemn manner, (laying one hand on his own breast, and the other on the poor man’s,) “God has fixed a loud knocker at your breast and mine. Because we did not regard, as we ought to have done, the gentle knocks and calls of his Holy Spirit, his word, and his providences, he has taken fast hold here, and we cannot get out of his hand. O let this knocker awaken you, who are just dropping into eternal sleep!”

8. When one or another occasionally mentioned any unkind thing which had been said of him or his writings, if the person who had said it was named, he would stop the speaker immediately, and offer up the most fervent prayer for the person of whom he spoke. He did not willingly suffer anyone to say anything against his opponents; and he made all the allowances for them, which, on a change of circumstances, he would have wished them to make for him.

9. He continued at Brislington till the 1st of December, 1777. All other means having now been fairly tried, with very little effect, most of the symptoms being nearly the same as they were several months ago, it was determined, by the most skillful Physicians, that nothing could save his life but a sea voyage. When this was fixed, Mr. Ireland (a friend in need) carried him back to Newington. While he was here, preparing for his voyage, he wrote as follows to one of his flock at Madeley: —

“I HEARTILY thank you for your kind letter. May the God of all grace and love, our common Father and our All, bless you all with all spiritual blessings, and with such temporal favors, as will best serve the end of your growing in grace.

“My desire is, if I should be spared to minister to you again, to do it with more humility, diligence, love, and zeal. But as matters are, you must take the will for the deed And let us all praise God for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come. The Lord enable you all to cleave to Christ, and in him to abide in one mind, ‘striving together for the hope of the gospel,’ the fullness of the Spirit! Of this we have often discoursed together; but we have not pressed into it with sufficient ardor and violence. God give us the humble and violent faith which inherits the promises, that we may always triumph in Christ, in life and in death! I beg you would help me to thank the Author of all good for every blessing of this life; but above all, for the lively hope of the next, and for Christ, our common hope, peace, joy, wisdom, righteousness, and salvation. In him I meet and embrace you all. God bless you, and crown you with loving kindness and tender mercies! I live, if you stand. Do not let me want the reviving cordial of hearing that you stand together firm in the faith, deep in humility, and rejoicing in loving hope of the glory to come. Bless God much for the gift of his only-begotten Son. Be much in private prayer. Do not forget the assembling yourselves together, in little companies, as well as in public. Walk humbly, as in the sight of death and eternity; and pray still for

“Your unworthy servant,

“J. F.”

“Let none of your little companies want. If any do, you are welcome to my house. Take any part of the furniture there, and make use of it for their relief. And this shall be your full title for so doing.

“Witness my hand,

“JOHN FLETCHER.”

10. In the beginning of December, he set out with Mr. Ireland and his family, beside some other company. A little account of the former part of his journey is given by Mr. Ireland, in a letter to a friend: —

“WE left Calais, December 12. The north wind was very high, and penetrated us even in the chaise. We put up at Bretzul, and the next day got to Abbeville; whence we were forced, by the miserable accommodations we met with, to set out, though it was Sunday. Mr. Fletcher and I used to lead the way; but now the other chaises got before us. Nine miles from Abbeville our axletree gave way through the hard frost, and we were both left to the piercing cold, on the side of a hill, without any shelter. After waiting an hour and half, we sent the axletree and wheels back to be repaired; and, leaving the body of the chaise under a guard, procured another to carry us to the next town. On the 15th our chaise arrived in good repair. Traveling steadily forward, (though the country was all covered with snow,) on the 27th we reached Dijon. During the whole journey, Mr. Fletcher showed visible marks of a recovery. He bore both the fatigue and piercing cold as well as the best of us. On the 31st we put up at Lyons, and solemnly closed the year; bowing our knees before the Throne, which indeed we did not fail to do, all together, every day. January 4, 1778, we left Lyons, and came on the 9th to Aix. Here we rest; the weather being exceeding fine and warm. Mr. Fletcher walks out daily. He is now able to read, and to pray with us, every morning and evening. He has no remains of his cough, or of the weakness in his breast. His natural color is restored, and the sallowness quite gone. His appetite is good, and he takes a little wine.”

11. In another letter Mr. Ireland writes thus: “Soon after our arrival here, I rode out most days with my dear and valuable friend. He now and then complained of the uneasiness of the horse, and there were some remains of soreness in his breast. But this soon went off. The beginning of February was warm, which, when he walked in the fields, relaxd him too much. But when the wind got north or east, he was braced again. His appetite is good; his complexion as healthy as it was eleven years ago. As his strength increases, he increases the length of his rides. Last Tuesday he set out on a journey of a hundred and twelve miles. The first day he traveled forty miles without feeling any fatigue. The third day he traveled fifty-five. He

bore his journey as well as I did; and was as well and as active at the end of it as at the beginning. During the day he cried out, ‘Help me to praise the Lord for his goodness: I never expected to see this day.’ He now accepted a pressing invitation to preach to the Protestants here. He did so on Sunday morning, on these words: ‘Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.’ For some days before, he was afraid he had done wrong in accepting the invitation. But O how shall I be able to express the power and liberty which the Lord gave him! Both the French and English were greatly affected; the word went to the heart both of saints and sinners. If the Lord continues his strength and voice, (which is now as good as ever it was,) he has an earnest invitation to preach where we are going, near Montpelier. You would be astonished at the entreaties of Pastors as well as people. He has received a letter from a Minister in the Levine mountains, who intends to come to Montpelier, sixty miles, to press him to go and preach to his flock. Soon after this, his brother came to fetch him to Switzerland. He purposes to spend the next summer in his own country, and the following winter in these parts, or in some part of the south of France.

12. “His brother conducted him from Montpelier to Nyon, the place of his nativity. Here he lived in that which was his father’s house, in the midst of his affectionate relations, who took care that he should neither want the best advice, perhaps equal to any in Europe, nor anything that could possibly contribute to the full recovery of his health.”

13. About this time a letter was wrote to that venerable old man, Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, informing him, that there was a valuable estate at his native place, which properly belonged to him, and which might easily be recovered, if he sent one of his sons to claim it. All his friends whom he consulted on the occasion judged this information was not to be slighted; and his youngest son, Mr. William Perronet, was willing to undertake the journey. But before he set out, he wrote to Mr. Fletcher, desiring his advice. Part of his answer was as follows: —

“*NYON, June 2, 1778.*”

“WHILE I write to you to make your title clear to a precarious estate on earth, permit me to remind you of the heavenly inheritance entailed upon believers. The Will (the New Testament) by which we can recover it is proved; the Court is equitable, the Judge loving and gracious. To enter on the possession of part of the estate here, and of the whole here after, we need only to believe, and prove evangelically that we are believers. Let us set about it now with earnestness, with perseverance, and with full assurance that through grace we shall carry our point. Alas, what are estates or crowns, to grace and glory? The Lord grant we may all choose the better part!

“Since I wrote last, in order to shorten my journey, I ventured to cross the mountains, which separate France from this country. But on the third day, I found an unexpected trial; a hill, which we were to ascend by a winding road, but so steep, that the horses were hardly able to draw the empty chaise. This obliged me to walk, in the steepest places, for several hours together. The sun was hot. I perspired violently, and the next day I spat blood again. But having kept to asses’ milk ever since, I am (blessed be God) much better.

“This country is delightful. I invite you to come and see it, and share a delightful apartment. I design to try this fine air some months longer. We have a fine shady wood near the lake, where I can ride in the cool all the day, and enjoy the singing of a multitude of birds. But this, though sweet, does not come up to the singing of my dear friends in England. There I meet them in spirit several hours in the day. God bless my dear friends!”

14. About the same time he wrote to Dr. Turner as follows: —

“SHOULD I gather strength, I should, under God, acknowledge you, dear Sir, as the instrument of that blessing, as you were above twenty years ago. Ten thousand thanks I render to you, Sir, and to Mr. Perronet, for your kind and generous care and attendance. May God reward you both, by bestowing upon you all the blessings which can make life happy, death comfortable, and eternity delightful and glorious! May the richest cordials of divine love, and the balm of Gillead, a Savior’s precious blood, revive your souls and comfort your hearts! And in your every want and

extremity, may you both find such tender helpers and comforters, as have been found in you by, dear Sir,

“Your most obliged, though most unworthy,

“servant and patient,

“JOHN FLETCHER.”

15. In the latter end of the year, Mr. William Perronet set out for Switzerland. In a letter he wrote from thence to Mr. Greenwood, he gives a little farther account of Mr. Fletcher. And this letter I the rather insert, as I believe it is all that remains of that amiable young man, who nevermore saw his native land, being called hence while he was on his journey to England.

There is something in the beginning of his letter which is a little humorous; but this the candid reader will easily excuse. It runs thus: —

“*NYON, January 18, 1779.*

“DEAR SIR,

“As you desire of me to send you some account of my journey, now I am a little settled, I will do it; in the best manner I am able.

“I set out from London on Tuesday, November 17th. We arrived at Dover about three on Wednesday morning; embarked on Thursday, and arrived at Calais in about three hours.

“Though it was in war time, yet we did not meet with the least incivility, either here or in any part of France. But the badness of the inns makes the traveling through this country disagreeable. The rooms in general are so dirty, as to be fitter for swine than men. Each room, both above and below stairs, is provided with two, three, or four beds; and they are so high as to require steps to get up to them. For there is on each bed, first, a monstrous canvass bag, stuffed with a huge quantity of straw; over this a feather bed,

and on this as many mattresses as the host can furnish. But the worst is, the sheets are not damp, but rather downright wet. Yet the good woman would constantly scold us, if we attempted to dry them even at our own fire; insisting upon it, that it was impossible they should be damp at all.

“At table, everyone is furnished with a spoon and a fork, but with no knives. And in general they are not needful for both flesh and vegetables are so stewed down, as to be properly termed spoon-meat. However, at the meanest inn everyone is provided with a clean napkin; and both after dinner and after supper there is a fine dessert of fruit.

“We traveled early and late; yet, having but one set of horses, we were a whole week in getting to Paris. In Paris all is gaiety and finery; but without the least idea of neatness. The scarcity of water is one excuse for the general want of cleanliness, both in their persons and houses.

“On Tuesday, December 8, we dined at Portallier; the prettiest town in all France: The reason of which is, being burnt down some years ago, it was rebuilt by the late King. The next morning we entered Switzerland, stepping over a brook, which divides Switzerland from France. On the French side of the brook is a cross; on the other, a pillar with the arms of Switzerland. In the evening we arrived at Lausanne, a famous old town. Here I remained the next day, and on Friday, the 11th, went on to Nyon, where I had the pleasure of finding our dear friend in pretty good health and spirits. Mr. Fletcher’s house is a fine large building, agreeably situated. It is in the form of a castle, and is supposed to have been built five hundred years ago.

“In passing through France, how bitterly did I regret the want of the Sunday Service! And it was not much better with me when I came into Switzerland. For I understood so little of their language, that I could not profit much by the public Service. Indeed this loss is in some measure made up by the company and conversation of Mr. Fletcher; who, however engaged he is the greater part of the day, is generally so kind as to spend a little time with me in the evening, in prayer and conversation.

“His chief delight seems to be in the meeting of his little society of children. And as he is exceeding fond of them, they appear to be altogether as fond of him. He seldom either walks abroad or rides out, but some of them follow him; singing the hymns they have learned, and conversing with him, by the way. But you must not suppose that he is permitted to enjoy this happiness unmolested. Not only the drunkards make songs upon him and his little companions, but many of the Clergy loudly complain of such irregular proceedings. However, he is upon good terms with the three Ministers of the place; all of whom are not only serious men, but desirous of promoting true religion.

“He is certainly stronger, and in better health, than he was when he left England. But as soon as ever he ventures to preach, his spitting of blood returns. Whenever this happens, his strength and spirits decay surprisingly, which he cannot in anywise recover but by lying by for some days.

“Whether I succeed in my temporal business or not, I shall ever remember with pleasure and thankfulness the opportunities I have been blessed with of spending so much time in company with our inestimable friend; who, wherever he goes, preaches the gospel, both by his words and example, nay, by his very looks, not only to his friends, but to all he meets with. So that on the top of the frozen Alps, and in the dreary vale of Chateau d’Oex, some good seed has been sown.

“When my business constrained me to go to Chateau d’Oex, Mr. Fletcher bore me company. And here also he was visited by some of the principal inhabitants of the town; who stood round him in deep attention for almost an hour, while he both exhorted and prayed. I am, dear Sir,

“Your very sincere friend and servant,

“WILLIAM PERRONET.”

Mr. Fletcher adds upon the same paper: “Thanks to our kind Preserver, I am yet in the land of faith and hope, and want to find and make it a land of happiness and love. The Lord Jesus is alone sufficient for this. And till the

great outpouring of his love is come, we ought faithfully to stir up the gift of God which is in ourselves and others, and to supply by the depth of our humility, and the ardor of our expectation, what is yet wanting to our experience. Well; God is good; Jesus is faithful; the Spirit is truth and love. Come, Lord! and we shall experience the power of that God who turns death to life, darkness to light, weakness to strength; and ‘callethe things that are not as though they were.’”

16. Mr. Perronet in another letter to Mr. Greenwood, dated May 22, writes thus: —

“MY dear friend is much better in health now than he was in the winter. He preached last Sunday se’night in the church. He spoke with a strong, clear voice, for above three quarters of an hour; and did not find himself hurt by it. But when he rode out in the afternoon, his horse dropped down, as if he had been shot, and cut both his knees, as well as his head. Yet Mr. Fletcher was noway hurt.

“On Good Friday, there being no Service here, Mr. Fletcher and I crossed the Lake into Savoy, in order to hear a celebrated Capuchin, who was to preach that day. He made a very good discourse; and afterwards he and his brethren invited us to dine with them. This we declined; but after dinner paid our respects to them; and we spent two or three agreeable hours in serious and friendly conversation.”

17. About this time Mr. Fletcher wrote to a friend thus: —

“LET US bear with patience the decays of nature: Let us see without fear the approach of death. We must put off this sickly, corruptible body, in order to put on the immortal and glorious garment.

“I have some hopes that my poor sister will yet be my sister in Christ. Her self-righteousness, I trust, breaks as fast as her body. I am come hither to see death make havoc among my friends. I wear mourning for my father’s brother, and for my brother’s son. The same mourning will serve me for my dying sister, if I do not go before her. She lies on the same bed where my father and mother died, and where she and I were born. How

near is life to death! But, blessed be God, Christ the resurrection is nearer to the weak, dying believer. Death works through the body, and the resurrection through the soul. And our soul is our real self.”

18. I believe it was about the same time that a remarkable passage occurred, which was related to me some years ago. I may possibly have forgot some circumstances; but the substance of it was this: Mr. Fletcher having heard of a Minister in the country, as an eminently pious man, had a great desire to see him; and for that purpose one morning set out very early. When he had walked several miles, he saw a great crowd gathered together at the door of a house. He asked what was the matter; and was answered, “A poor woman and her child lie a dying.” He went in, and found a woman, who had not long been delivered, in appearance very near death. Little better was the case of the infant, which was convulsed from head to foot. The room was filled with people. He took occasion to show them, from that melancholy spectacle, the dreadful effects of sin; and afterwards spoke largely of the miserable state we are all in, through the sin of our first parent. He then expatiated on the Second Adam, and the blessings we may receive through him; adding, “He is able to raise the dead. He is able to save you all from sin, as well as save these two poor objects from death. Come, let us ask Him to save both us and them.” He found remarkable liberty in prayer. Presently the child’s convulsions ceased; and the mother was easy, lively, and strong. The people were utterly amazed, and stood speechless and almost senseless. While they were in this state, he silently withdrew. When they came to themselves, he was gone. Many of them asked who it could be; and some said, “Certainly it was an angel.”

19. When he had a little recovered his strength, he made a tour through Italy, and paid a visit to Rome. While he was here, as Mr. Ireland and he were one day going through one of the streets in a coach, they were informed, the Pope was coming forward; and it would be required of them to come out of the coach, and kneel while he went by, as all the people did: If they did not, in all probability the zealous mob would fall upon them and knock them on the head. But this, whatever might be the consequence, they flatly refused to do; judging the paying such honor to a man was neither better nor worse than idolatry. The coachman was

exceedingly terrified, not knowing what to do. However, at length he made shift to turn aside into a narrow way. The Pope was in an open landau. He waved his hands as if he had been swimming; and frequently repeated these words, "God bless you all!" Mr. Fletcher's spirit was greatly stirred, and he longed to bear a public testimony against Antichrist; and he would undoubtedly have done it, had he been able to speak Italian. He could hardly refrain from doing it in Latin, till he considered that only the Priests could have understood him. One to whom he related this, saying, if he had done this the multitude would have torn him in pieces; he answered, "I believe the Pope himself would have prevented; for he was a man of sense and humanity."

20. While he was at Paris, he was desired to visit and pray with a sick woman. Information of this was quickly given to a Magistrate, with abundance of aggravation. In consequence of this an order was procured from the King himself for the apprehending him. This might not improbably have cost him his life, or, at least, a long and expensive imprisonment. When the Officer came to the door of the house where he lodged, Mr. Ireland stepped out, and said, "Sir, have you a warrant for me?" He (supposing him to be Mr. Fletcher) answered, "I have; you must come with me." Mr. Ireland went very quietly with him. But when they came before the Magistrate, the accuser said, "This is not the man; I know nothing of this gentleman." Another messenger was then sent; but before he came to the house, Mr. Fletcher was too far off to be overtaken.

21. While he was at Nyon, he wrote (among many other letters) to good old Mr. Perronet as follows: —

"February 8, 1779."

"HONORED AND DEAR FATHER IN CHRIST,

"I HAVE had the pleasure of accompanying your son to your father's birth-place. It is a charming country for those who have a taste for highland prospects. But what is it to our heavenly Father's hill of Sion? Thither may we all travel, summer and winter, and there may we all have a happy meeting, and an eternal inheritance!"

22. September 7. Mr. William Perronet wrote a little farther account of him: “Mr. Fletcher,” says he, “has preached here” (at Nyon) “in the church, and might have preached much oftener, if his health would have permitted; for his friendly and prudent behavior has won upon all the three Ministers, so that they are now on the best terms with him. But a new difficulty has lately arisen. He has been summoned before the Seigneur Bailiff, who sharply reprehended him (noble Bailiff indeed; worthy of his office!) for preaching against Sabbath-breaking, which, he said, implied a censure of the Magistrates, as if they neglected their duty. He reprimanded him also for preaching against stage-plays, which he considered as a reflection on himself, as he had just then sent for a company of French comedians to Nyon. In consequence of this, he forbid his exercising the function of a Minister in this country. A blessed instance of Republican liberty! Who would not wish for the same in England? However, one of the Ministers has ventured to give him a room in his own house. Here he preaches two or three times a week, to a few serious persons and abundance of children. His Lordship has not yet thought proper to interfere, although the thing is no secret. And not only the seriousness, but also the number, of the congregation increases daily.”

23. In the next year, 1780, Mr. Fletcher fully intended to return to England. But not long after he wrote as follows, to one of his parishioners at Madeley: —

“I HAVE the more readily complied with the request of my friends to stay here” (at Nyon) “a little longer, as it was so earnestly backed by the little society which is gathered in this place. About three weeks ago they got about me, and besought me on their knees, with many tears, to stay till they were a little stronger, and able to stand alone. Nor would they be persuaded to rise, till they had got me to comply. Helply would it be for us all, if we prayed so earnestly to Him who can give substantial blessings!

“Two days ago I went to Geneva, and spoke to a carrier, to take me back to London; but his coach was full. Yesterday another came, and said he would take us at a fortnight’s notice. The Lord is always ready to give us a

lift to the kingdom of grace, through which we must pass to the kingdom of glory. The comfort of this journey is, that we may travel all together, though our bodies are far asunder. For Christ the way is everywhere, and faith is (like his word) one and the same in every age and place. So is holiness; for in all places we may love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. I hope you and all your brethren travel thus; and that you journey like St. Paul, who traveled so hard, that he was running a race for a prize, a crown of life.”

24. In spring, 1781, he set out for England. But Mr. Perronet was then exceeding ill, having all the symptoms of an approaching consumption. He could not therefore keep pace with Mr. Fletcher; who, being on his journey, wrote to him as follows: —

“LYONS, April 6, 1781.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“WE are both weak and both afflicted; but Jesus careth for us. He is everywhere. He has all power to deliver us; and perhaps by ways we little think of. It was of the Lord that you did not come with me; you would have been sick, as I am. I am overdone with riding and preaching; indeed twice I preached in the fields. I carry home with me much weakness: The Lord’s will be done. I know I am called to suffer and die. Let us believe and rejoice in the Lord Jesus.”

He returned to England in summer in tolerable health, being quite recovered from his consumption. Calling at London, he preached at the New chapel, slept at Newington, and the next day set out for Bristol. He stayed there only a short time, and then retired to Mr. Ireland’s, at Brislington, who, as soon as he was capable, willingly accompanied him to his beloved Madeley.

20. But he did not find such cause of rejoicing here as he had fondly expected. This may be easily gathered from the letter he then wrote to his friend at Newington. It runs thus: —

“*MADELEY, June 12, 1781.*

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

“I STAYED longer at Brislington than I designed. Mr. Ireland was ill, and would nevertheless come hither with me; so that I was obliged to stay till he was better. And indeed it was well that I did not come without him; for he has helped me to regulate my outward affairs, which were in great confusion. Mr. Greaves leaves me; and I will either leave Madeley, or have an Assistant able to stir among the people; for I had much rather be gone than stay here to see the dead bury their dead. Well, we shall soon remove out of all, and rest from our little cares and labors. You do not forget, I hope, that you have need of patience, as well as I, to inherit the promises; the best and greatest of which are not sealed, but to such as keep the word of Christ’s patience, and such as persevere with him in his temptations. Hold on, then, patient faith and joyful hope! If I were by you, I would preach to your heart and my own a lecture on this text, ‘We are saved by hope,’ and by a faith which is never stronger than when it is contrary to all the feelings of flesh and blood.

“Pray what news of the glory? Does the glory of the Lord fill the temple, your house, your heart? A cloud is over my poor parish; but, alas! it is not the luminous cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night. Even the few remaining professors stared at me the other day, when I preached to them on these words: ‘Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you.’ Well, the promise is unto us: If others despise it, still let us believe and hope. Nothing enlarges the heart and awakens the soul more than that believing, loving expectation. Let us wait together, until we are all endued with power from on high.”

CHAPTER VII.

OF HIS MARRIAGE

1. **ALTHOUGH** the great Apostle has ranked the “forbidding to marry” among the “doctrines of devils,” and has expressly declared, “Marriage is honorable in all men, and the bed undefiled;” yet a kind of prejudice hangs on the minds of many even of those that love God, inclining them to disapprove of the marriage of persons eminent in religion. Yea, many are of opinion that it is not consistent with high degrees of holiness; and that when any who have deep experience in the things of God marry, they are in some measure fallen from grace. Hence many were surprised that so eminent a Christian as Mr. Fletcher should take this step. And they could hardly help thinking that he had lost some degree of his excellent piety, and that he was not so unreservedly devoted to God as he had been some time before.

2. In order to satisfy every reasonable person that he had not sustained any loss at all, that his entire self-devotion was in novice impaired, either before or at the time of his marriage, I believe the most convincing way will be to give as particular an account as possible of what occurred at that time. The account is given by one that was an eye and ear witness of what she relates; and whoever seriously considers this account will easily perceive that his soul was at that time all alive, and wholly devoted to God. And I cannot but recommend this whole transaction to the imitation of all Christians who enter the holy state of matrimony.

3. As I think it highly expedient to premise some account of the person whom Mr. Fletcher chose as his companion for life, I am glad to find this done to my hand in the letter which I shall now subjoin: —

“REVEREND SIR,

“I THINK it my privilege, and have often found it a blessing, to comply with the request of my honored father, which I now do also in great love to my valuable and much esteemed friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. I will

therefore endeavor, with the assistance of my gracious Lord, to recollect and acquaint you with some particulars of the life and character of these truly devoted servants of God, with whose intimate acquaintance I have been favored for near thirty years. But, indeed, I feel my great insufficiency to relate what might be said with the strictest truth of these worthies.

“My acquaintance with Mrs. Fletcher began when she was about seventeen years of age. She had from her early childhood been strongly drawn to seek the Crucified, and was now athirst for a clean heart, and longed to have a right spirit renewed within her. Nor did her desire to love God with all her heart lessen, but increase, her love to her neighbor; as I, the most unworthy, am well able to testify, to whom she has been a tried friend, even to the present hour.

“To give you a clear view of this, I need only transcribe part of a letter, which she wrote to me, May 23, 1757: —

“MY DEAREST FRIEND,

“THE Lord has been indeed merciful, above all we can ask or think. I found a greater blessing the last time I was with you than ever. I am more enabled to prayer, and to an earnest seeking after holiness. But what most stirs me up is, I seem to hear the Lord calling upon me, *Depart ye, depart ye; go ye out thence; touch not the unclean thing; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.* For some time, these words have been much in my mind, with both pleasure and profit. But within this day or two, the Lord has more clearly shown me the way wherein I ought to walk. He seems to call me out to more activeness; so that I am ready to cry out, *What wouldest thou have me to do?* Then I consider, Can I do any more for the souls or bodies of the poor about me? But this does not seem to be the thing. What I am now led to wish for is, with both soul and body to serve those who are in Christ. And as soon as the Lord has prepared me for his work, and set me at liberty, my firm resolution is, by the grace of God, to be wholly given up to the Church. I plainly see, I have no more to do with the world, than to allow myself the necessaries of life. And though it has please a God that I have no need to work for my living, yet surely that is

no reason my hand should be idle. I would be like those described 1 Timothy 5:10, to bring up children, to lodge strangers, to be ready to do the meanest offices for the saints, to relieve the afflicted, to visit the fatherless and widow, and diligently to follow every good work. O pray for me, that the Lord may shorten his work in me, and quickly make an end of sin! O that he would say to my soul, *Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee!* O when shall I be wholly given up, both body and soul, to Him who gave himself for me?"

"I admired the spirit of this letter; but little expected to see these good desires brought so fully into practice, as they were in a few years after. And this may suffice as a clear proof that God fulfills the desire of them that fear him; yea, and shows unto them the path wherein he would have them to walk. That her light given before was not delusive, is plain; as it is well known, how many years she has 'brought up children, lodged strangers,' relieved the afflicted, and 'diligently followed every good work.'

"With regard to the dear saint that is now swallowed up in his beloved employment, praise and adoration, it is eight or nine and twenty years since I was first favored with his heavenly conversation, in company with Mr. Walsh and a few other friends, most of whom are now in the world of spirits. At these seasons, how frequently did we feel

The' o'erwhelming power of saving grace!

How frequently were we silenced thereby, while tears of love our eyes o'erflowed! It sweetly affects my soul while I recollect the humility, fervor of spirit, and strength of faith, with which dear Mr. Fletcher so often poured out his soul before the great Three-One, at whose feet we have lain in holy shame and divine silence, till it seemed earth was turned to heaven! With what delight does my soul recall those precious moments! Yet a little while, and we shall all magnify His name together.

"This heavenly-minded servant of the Lord resembled him likewise in his love to precious souls. I heard him preach his first sermon at West-Street chapel. I think his text was, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at

hand.' His spirit appeared in his whole attitude and action, though he could not well find words in the English language to express himself: But he supplied that defect by offering up prayers, tears, and sighs abundantly. Nearly about this time he saw Miss Bosanquet, and began his acquaintance with her. But although they had a particular esteem for each other, yet they had no correspondence for above twenty years. It was not till the yearly Conference drew near, in July, 1781, that he paid her a visit at her own house near Leeds. They had much conversation together, and contracted an intimate acquaintance. After a few days, Miss Bosanquet asked Mr. Wesley's advice concerning Mr. Fletcher's proposal, who approved it entirely; being persuaded, it would be much to the glory of God. He spent much of his time at Cross-Hall, till the following January. His general conversation was praising God, and speaking of the love of our dear Redeemer. He took opportunities likewise of speaking to every one in the family concerning the state of their souls, and giving them from time to time such directions as were suitable thereto. At other times he met us all together, and gave us proper exhortations and directions. Our daily meals were as a sacrament. When he drank to any one, it was, 'Heavenly health,' or, 'The cup of salvation.' At or after the meal, he generally begun, or called us to begin, that verse, —

'Still, O my soul, prolong
The never-ceasing song!
Christ my theme, my hope, my joy,
His be all my happy days!
Praise my every hour employ;
Every breath be spent in praise!'

After dinner he often sung several verses of 'Primitive Christianity;' particularly that, —

O that my Lord would count me meet
To wash his dear disciples' feet!

Sometimes he read many of those verses with tears streaming down his face. Thus did he walk with God, filled with the Spirit of his beloved Lord; confirming his love to all the family, and caring both for their spiritual and temporal concerns.

“My soul was much affected, when he asked each of us, in a sweet, humble manner, ‘Can you give me your friend?’ To think of parting, was indeed grievous to us all. Yet we did not dare to withhold her from him; as we all believed the union was of God, and would be to their present and eternal benefit. The first sermon which he preached in Leeds, on the Sunday morning before the Conference, will never be forgotten by any that heard it, who desire to be perfected in love. He preached in many places while in Yorkshire, and to numerous congregations. I have heard of many who were greatly blessed thereby; some convinced, others set at liberty. And whenever he either preached or conversed, the comforts of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.

“Monday, November 12, was the day appointed for the outward uniting of those whose hearts were before united by the Holy Spirit. On the morning of this day, several friends met together on this solemn occasion; who can all, as well as me, truly say, ‘I have been at one Christian wedding.’ Jesus was invited, and truly he was at our Cana. We reached Cross-Hall before family-prayers. Mr. Fletcher was dressed in his canonicals; and after giving out one of Mr. Wesley’s marriage-hymns, he read the seventh, eighth, and ninth verses of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation; and spoke from them in such a manner as greatly tended to spiritualize the solemnities of the day. He said, ‘We invite you to our wedding; but the Holy Ghost here invites you to the marriage of the Lamb. The Bride, the Lamb’s wife, has made herself ready. This Bride consists of the whole Church triumphant and militant united together. Ye may all be the Bride, and Jesus will condescend to be the Bridegroom. Make yourself ready by being filled with the spirit.’ He was very solemn in prayer, and said, ‘Lord, thou knowest, we would not take this step, if we had not eternity in view, and if we were not as willing to be carried into the churchyard as to go into the church.’ At breakfast he reminded us, ‘The positions are now ready to carry us to the church, in order to see our nuptials solemnized; but death will soon be here, to transport us to the marriage of the Lamb.’

“On the way to the church, (Batley church, which was near two miles off,) he spoke much of the mystery which is couched under marriage, namely, the union between Christ and his Church. ‘The first Adam,’ said

he, 'received his wife from his side; our heavenly Adam purchased his bride by a fountain opened in his pierced side.' They were married in the face of the congregation; the doors were opened, and everyone came in that would. We then returned home, and spent a considerable time in singing and prayer. We were near twenty of us. I then presented Mrs. Fletcher with some wedding-hymns. She looked them over, and gave them to Mr. Fletcher. He read the scripture at the top, namely, 'Husbands, love your wives;' and added, 'As Christ loved the Church.' Then turning to us, he said, 'My God, what a task! Help me, my friends, by your prayers to fulfill it. *As Christ loved the Church!* He laid aside his glory for her! He submitted to be born into our world; to be clothed with a human body, subject to all our sinless infirmities. He endured shame, contempt, pain, yea, death itself, for his Church! O my God, none is able to fulfill this task without thine almighty aid. Help me, O my God! Pray for me, O my friends!'

"He next read, 'Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands.' Mrs. Fletcher added, 'As unto the Lord.' 'Well, my dear,' returned Mr. Fletcher, 'only in the Lord; and if ever I wish you to do anything otherwise, resist me with all your might.' From dinner, which was a spiritual meal, as well as a natural one, until tea-time, our time was spent chiefly in fervent prayer or singing. After singing the covenant-hymn, Mr. Fletcher went to Mrs. Fletcher, and said to her, 'Well, my dearest friend, will you join with me in joining ourselves in a perpetual covenant to the Lord? Will you with me serve Him in his members? Will you help me to bring souls to the blessed Redeemer; and, in every possible way this day, lay yourself under the strongest ties you can, to help me to glorify my gracious Lord?' She answered, like one that well knew where her strength lay, 'May my God help me so to do!'

"In the evening Mr. Valton preached in the hall, from those most suitable words: 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.' His words did not fall to the ground: Many were greatly refreshed. After preaching, there was a sweet contest among us every one thought, 'I in particular owe the greatest debt of praise;' till we jointly agreed to sing,

‘I’ll praise my Maker, while I’ve breath;
 And when my voice is lost in death.
 Praise shall employ my nobler powers:
 My days of praise shall ne’er be past,
 While life, or thought, or being last,
 Or immortality endures.’

“On the Wednesday following the select society met; and it was a precious season. Among other things, Mr. Fletcher said, ‘Some of you perhaps may be a little surprised at the step my dearest friend and I have taken. But I assure you, it was the result of much prayer and mature deliberation. Five-and-twenty years ago, when I first saw my dear wife, I thought, if I ever married, she should be the person. But she was too rich for me to think of; so I banished every thought of the kind. For many years after, I had a distaste to a married life, thinking it impossible to be as much devoted to God in a married as in a single life. But this objection was removed, by reading, *Enoch begat sons and daughters. And Enoch walked with God, and was not; for God took him.* I then saw, if Enoch at the head of a family might walk with God, and be fit for translation; our souls under the gospel dispensation might attain the highest degree of holiness in a similar state, if too great an attachment, leading the soul from God rather than to him, did not take place; instead of that which should be a means of increasing its union with Jesus. Yet still many obstacles stood in my way; but at length they were all removed. Every mountain became a plain; and we are both well assured, that the step we took had the full approbation of God.’

“On January 2, 1782, we had a very solemn parting. But in the midst of all the sorrow which we felt, was a sweet assurance that we should meet again, not only in this world, but

Where death shall all be done away,
 And bodies part no more.

This brings to my mind a sentence which he wrote to us, a little before his death: ‘Time is short. It remains, that we die daily. Stand fast in Christ, the resurrection and the life. That we may have a happy meeting is the wish and prayer of,

‘Your affectionate friends,

‘JOHN and MARY FLETCHER.’

“To repeat all the precious sayings of this servant of God would require many volumes; for his mouth was always opened with wisdom, tending to minister grace to the hearers. My earnest prayer is, that the spirit of faith, and love, and heavenly wisdom, may rest upon you also, and guide you in all your extensive labors, till they are swallowed up in eternal rest. I remain, Reverend Sir,

“Your unworthy child and servant,

“S. C.”

4. I cannot help subjoining a reflection here, which at this time affected me much. Although I could in nowise condemn this marriage, yet on one account it gave me pain. When I was young, I was exceedingly affected with a relation in Mr. Herbert’s Life, — an account of Mr. Ferrar’s family, at Little Gidding, in Huntingdonshire; a very particular description of which is given in the “Arminian Magazine.” I longed to see such another family, in any part of the three kingdoms. At length I had my desire; I did see exactly such another family: I saw a family full as much devoted to God, full as regular in all their exercises of devotion, and at least as exemplary in every branch of Christian holiness. This I saw, by the peculiar providence of God, settled at Leytonstone. O that it had continued there! The removal of it into Yorkshire I did not advise nor approve of. However, I rejoiced to see it settled somewhere; namely, at Cross-Hall, near Leeds. Again I did all that was in my power to perpetuate this glorious institution. It was now totally dissolved; and yet by a means which I did not; dare to oppose. “O God, how unsearchable are thy judgments; and thy ways past finding out!”

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM HIS MARRIAGE TO THE BEGINNING OF HIS LAST ILLNESS.

1. FROM the time of his settling at Madeley with Mrs. Fletcher; he had no return of his consumptive disorder. On the contrary, by the blessing of God on her peculiar care and tenderness, not only his health was confirmed, but his strength restored as in the days of his youth. In the meantime he took care to employ all his returning strength in the work of faith and the labor of love: More particularly in that which he had always found to be one of the most difficult parts of his duty. We have in this parish, through the lenity of the Magistrates, no less than eight public-houses. These are well known to have been continual nurseries for sin, particularly on Sunday evenings. It had been for many years his unwearied endeavor to put an end to these abuses. Yet as he very seldom had a Churchwarden who was heartily willing to second him therein, his endeavors were almost ineffectual, producing very little fruit. But for two years God was now pleased to favor him with a Churchwarden who was resolved to act according to his oath: He then cheerfully renewed his endeavors, visiting several of these houses every Sunday; all of them in their turn. In every one he bore a faithful testimony; and in some it has been attended with much good. O that no one of those who have been at any time within the reach of his voice, may finally inherit that curse, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!"

2. For many years he had felt with the deepest sensibility the disconsolate condition of poor uninstructed children; and some years ago he began a school, wherein he taught them himself every day. After pursuing this method for some time, he erected a school in Madeley-Wood; but afterward his thoughts were much employed concerning the Sunday schools; especially since they were recommended to him in a letter from Mrs. Derby, a person whom he always found ready to promote every good work. He then earnest set about promoting them in his own parish. Three hundred children were soon gathered together, whom he took every opportunity of instructing, by regular meetings, for some time before the schools were opened. These meetings he attended, with the utmost

diligence, to the very Thursday before his illness. In order to encourage the children, his method was to give them little Hymn-Books, pointing them to some friend or neighbor, who would teach them the hymns, and instruct them to sing. The little creatures were greatly taken with this new employment; insomuch that many of them would scarce allow themselves time to eat or sleep, for the desire they had of learning their lessons. At every meeting, after inquiring who had made the greatest proficiency, he distinguished them by some little reward.

3. In the instructing of children, one great difficulty is, to draw and fix their attention. He had a singular gift for doing this, by making advantage of any incident that offered. One day, while he had a considerable number of children before him in the preaching-house, as he was persuading them to mind what they were about, and to remember the text which he was going to mention, just then a robin flew into the house, and their eyes were presently turned after him. "Now," said he, "I see you can attend to that robin. Well, I will take that robin for my text." He then gave them an useful lecture on the harmlessness of that little creature, and the tender care of its Creator.

4. When he observed that the number of children, instead of falling off, as was expected, increased continually, he wrote some proposals to the parish, which were received with the greatest unanimity. Many of the rich, as well as the trading people, lent their helping hand, not only to defray the expense of teachers, but also to raise a convenient house in Coalbrook-Dale for the instruction of the numerous children that were on that side of the parish.

5. The proposal was as follows: — "Our national depravity turns greatly on these two hinges, the profanation of the Lord's day, and the neglect of the education of children. Till some way is found of stopping up these two great inlets of wickedness, we must expect to see our workhouses filled with aged parents forsaken by their prodigal children, with wives forsaken by their faithless husbands, and with the wretched offspring of lewd women and drunken men. Nay, we may expect to see the gaols, and even the gallows, largely stocked, to the perpetual reproach of our nation, with unhappy wretches ready to fall a sacrifice to the laws of their

country. ‘It is a common observation,’ says Dr. Gibson, late Bishop of London, ‘that public criminals, when they come to their unhappy end, and make their dying declarations to the world, generally charge the sinful courses in which they have lived, to the neglect and abuse of the Lord’s day, as the first occasion of leading them into all other wickedness. And, considering how frequently these declarations are repeated, and how many other instances of the same kind, though less public, are notorious enough to those who will observe them, they may well be a warning to us, to consider a religious observation of the Lord’s day as the best preservative of virtue and religion, and the neglect and profanation of it as the greatest inlet to vice and wickedness.’

6. “A pious Clergyman farther observes: ‘The want of education in children is one of the principal causes of the misery of families, cities, and nations; ignorance, vice, and misery being constant companions. The hardest heart must melt at the melancholy sight of such a number of children, both male and female, who live in gross ignorance, and habitual profanation of the Lord’s day. What crowds fill the streets and fields, tempting each other to idleness, lewdness, and every other species of wickedness! Is it any wonder we should have so many undutiful children, unfaithful apprentices, disobedient servants, untrusty workmen, disloyal subjects, and bad members of society? Whence so much raping, fornication, and blasphemy? Do not all these evil center in ignorance and contempt of the Lord’s day? And shall we do nothing to check these growing evils?’

7. “Persons concerned for the welfare of the next generation, and well-wishers to Church and State, have already set us a fair example in Stroud, Gloucester, Birmingham, Manchester; Leeds, Bristol, and many country parishes. They have attempted to remedy these evils by setting up Sunday schools, which, by keeping children from corrupting one another; by promoting their attendance on divine worship, and by planting the first principles of useful knowledge in their minds and of piety in their hearts, bid fair for a public reformation of manners, and for nipping in the bud the ignorance and impiety which is everywhere so common among the lower and more numerous classes of people.”

8. The proposals concerning Sunday schools in the parish of Madeley, were as follows: —

- “I. It is proposed, that Sunday schools be set up in this parish, for such children as are employed all the week, and for those whose education has been hitherto totally neglected.
- “II. That the children admitted into these be taught reading, writing, and the principles of religion.
- “III. That there be a school for boys and another for girls, in Madeley, Madeley-Wood, and Coalbrook-Dale, six in all.
- “IV. That a subscription be opened, to pay each Teacher one shilling per Sunday, and to buy tables; forms, books, pens, and ink.
- “V. That two Treasurers be appointed to ask and receive the contributions of the subscribers.
- “VI. That whoever subscribes one guinea a year shall be a Governor.
- “VII. That three or four Inspectors be appointed, who are to visit the schools once a week, to see that the children attend regularly, and the Masters do their duty.
- “VIII. That a book be provided, for setting down all receipts and expenses; and another for the names of the Teachers and the scholars.
- “IX. That the schools be solemnly visited once or twice a year; and a premium given to the children that have made the greatest improvement.”

9. As to the success of his unwearied labors, although he was much discouraged when he first returned from abroad, finding so many of those who had once run well, grown weary and faint in their mind; yet it was not long before he found fresh cause to rejoice, and to know that God was with him of a truth. It was not long before he observed that a general

reformation had taken place in the parish. And it was not only an outward reformation, even of many that had been notorious for all manner of wickedness; but an inward also; many both young and old having learned to worship God “in spirit and in truth.” A considerable number of these still mourn, as sheep bereaved of their shepherd. And yet one cannot doubt, but a still larger company of his own children have hailed him on the celestial shore. But the season is coming when all secrets shall be laid open; and all the jewels of his crown shall be made manifest in that day.

10. One instance of the success of his ministry he mentioned some years since at Bristol: “One Sunday,” said he, “when I had done reading prayers at Madeley, I went up into the pulpit, intending to preach a sermon which I had prepared for that purpose, but my mind was so confused, that I could not recollect either my text or any part of my sermon. I was afraid I should be obliged to come down, without saying anything. But having recollected myself a little, I thought I would say something on the First lesson, which was the third chapter of Daniel, containing the account of the three children cast into the fiery furnace: I found in doing it such an extraordinary assistance from God, and such a peculiar enlargement of heart, that I supposed there must be some peculiar cause for it. I therefore desired, if any of the congregation found anything particular, they would acquaint me with it in the ensuing week.

“In consequence of this, the Wednesday after, a woman came, and gave me the following account: —’I have been for some time much concerned about my soul. I have attended the church at all opportunities, and have spent much time in private prayer. At this my husband (who is a butcher) has been exceedingly enraged, and threatened me severely what he would do, if I did not leave off going to John Fletcher’s church; yea, if I dared to go any more to any religious meetings whatsoever. When I told him I could not in conscience refrain from going at least to our parish church, he grew quite outrageous, and swore dreadfully, if I went any more, he would cut my throat as soon as I came home. This made me cry mightily to God, that he would support me in the trying hour. And though I did not feel any great degree of comfort, yet having a sure confidence in God I determined to go on in my duty, and leave the event to Him. Last Sunday, after many struggles with the devil and my own heart, I came down stairs ready for

church. My husband asked me, whether I was resolved to go thither. I told him, I was. Well then, said he, I shall not (as I intended) cut your throat; but I will heat the oven, and throw you into it the moment you come home. Notwithstanding this threatening, which he enforced with many bitter oaths, I went to church, praying all the way that God would strengthen me to suffer whatever might befall me. While you was speaking of the three children whom Nebuchadnezzar cast into the burning fiery furnace, I found it all belonged to me, and God applied every word to my heart. And when the sermon was ended, I thought, if I had a thousand lives, I could lay them all down for God. I felt my whole soul so filled with his love, that I hastened home, fully determined to give myself to whatsoever God pleased; nothing doubting, but that either he would take me to heaven, if he suffered me to be burned to death, or that he would some way deliver me, even as he did his three servants that trusted in Him. When I got almost to our own doors I saw the flames issuing out of the mouth of the oven. And I expected nothing else, but that I should be thrown into it immediately. I felt my heart rejoice, that if it were so, the will of the Lord would be done. I opened the door, and, to my utter astonishment, saw my husband upon his knees, wrestling with God in prayer for the forgiveness of his sins. He caught me in his arms, earnestly begged my pardon, and has continued diligently seeking God ever since. I now know why my sermon was taken from me; namely, that God might thus magnify his mercy.”

11. Many were the dangers he went through in the course of his ministry; but the Lord delivered him out of all. One of these Mrs. Fletcher relates in the following words: —

“My husband having appointed to preach one Sunday at a church, about fourteen miles off, I felt some concern for his riding so far, and doing the whole Sunday’s duty twice; especially as it was necessary for him to return home the same night. The evening being exceeding dark and wet, I was strongly led to commend him to God in prayer. While I was doing this, it was suggested to me, that his horse was fallen, and had thrown him over his head; and the whole scene appeared to be clearly represented before my eyes. ‘My God,’ said I, ‘he is thine. His life, his limbs, his health, are all thine. I commit him to thee by faith.’ Immediately that word

was impressed on my heart, 'The righteous is in the hand of the Lord; and there shall no evil touch him.' And it empowered my soul with such a sweetness, that I could feel no fear. The night was uncommonly bad, which occasioned many friends to continue with me. And while they expressed their great uneasiness at his staying two hours longer than we could well account for, I was obliged to hide the calmness I felt by silence, lest some should have supposed it insensibility. ³⁶ At last he came well, and praising God; but asked for water to wash himself, because his horse had fallen, and thrown him with great force over his head. Yet, glory be to God, he was no way hurt, except having a little skin grazed from one of his fingers. As he set the Lord always before him, so he found his help in every time of need."

12. The laying the foundation of the Sunday schools at Madeley was the last public work in which he was employed. But as the liberal man is ever devising liberal things, he had several plans in his mind for preserving a great number of desolate children, brought up only to beg and steal. Such this populous parish (and indeed most others) affords in great abundance. He had likewise proposed writing various little tracts, ³⁷ for the use of the schools. But He who cannot err saw good to call his servant hence to enjoy, rather than leave him here to do and suffer.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS CHARACTER.

1. I AM sensible, it is the method of almost all writers, to place the character of a man at the conclusion of his life. But there seems to be a particular reason for varying from the usual practice in this place. The death of Mr. Fletcher (hardly to be paralleled in the present century) was so uncommon a display of the power and goodness of God in behalf of his highly-favored servant, that it is not proper for anything to come after it. It must needs therefore close the whole account.

2. From even the imperfect account which has been given of this great and good man, any discerning person may with very little difficulty extract his character. In general, it is easy to perceive, that a more excellent man has not appeared in the Church for some ages. It is true, in several ages, and in several countries, many men have excelled in particular virtues and graces. But who can point out, in any age or nation, one that so highly excelled in all? one that was enabled in so large a measure to “put on the whole armor of God?” yea, so to “put on Christ,” as to “perfect holiness in the fear of God?”

3. Yet there is a peculiar difficulty in giving a full account of either his life or character, because we have scarce any light from himself. He was upon all occasions very uncommonly reserved in speaking of himself, whether in writing or conversation. He hardly ever said anything concerning himself, unless it slipped from him unawares. And among the great number of papers which he has left, there is scarce a page (swept that single account of his conversion to God) relative either to his own inward experience, or the transactions of his life. So that the most of the information we have is gathered up, either from short hints scattered up and down in his letters, from what he had occasionally dropped among his friends, or from what one and another remembered concerning him. In writing the lives and characters of eminent men, the Roman Catholics have a great advantage over us. The pious members of the Church of Rome make a conscience of concealing anything from their Directors, but disclose to them all the

circumstances of their lives, and all the secrets of their hearts: Whereas very few of the Protestants disclose to others, even their most intimate friends, what passes between God and their own souls; at least not of set purpose. Herein they forget, or at least disregard, that wise remark of the ancient writers (exactly agreeable to various passages that occur in the canonical Scriptures): “It is good to conceal the secrets of a King, but to declare the loving kindness of the Lord.”

4. This defect was indeed in some measure supplied by the entire intimacy which subsisted between him and Mrs. Fletcher. He did not willingly, much less designedly, conceal anything from her. They had no secrets with regard to each other, but had indeed one house, one purse, and one heart. Before her it was his invariable rule, to think aloud; always to open the window in his breast. And to this we are indebted for the knowledge of many particulars which must otherwise have been buried in oblivion.

5. But, whatever the materials were, however complete our informations, yet I am thoroughly sensible of my own inability to draw such a portrait as Mr. Fletcher deserves. I have no turn at all for panegyric: I have never accustomed myself to it. It gives me therefore no small satisfaction to find, that this is in a great measure done to my hands. The picture is already drawn; and that by no mean pencil. All then which I shall attempt is, to retouch Mrs. Fletcher’s observations, and now and then to add a few articles, either from my own knowledge, or from the information of others.

6. The following are mostly her own words, — for where they are clear and expressive, as they generally are, I do not think it right to alter them for altering’ sake: —

“Whatever he might be with regard to charity,” said she, “he was no less eminent for his spirit of faith. Indeed he was not so much led by sights or impressions (which many mistake for faith) as abundance of people have been; but by a steady, firm reliance upon the love and truth and faithfulness of God. His ardent desire was, so to believe, as to be a partaker of all the great and precious promises; to be a witness of all that mind which was in Christ Jesus. And being conscious that he must be crucified with his Master, or never reign with Him, he gave himself up to

Him, whom he continually set before him, to lie in his hand as the passive clay. He would often say, 'It is my business in all events, to hang upon the Lord, with a sure trust and confidence, that he will order all things in the best time and manner. Indeed it would be nothing to be a believer, nay, in truth, there would be no room for faith, if everything were seen here. But against hope to believe in hope, to have a full confidence in that unseen power which so mightily supports us in all our dangers and difficulties, — this is the believing which is acceptable to God.' Sometimes when I have expressed some apprehension of an approaching trial, he would answer, 'I do not doubt but the Lord orders all; therefore I leave everything to him.' In outward dangers, if they were ever so great, he seemed to know no shadow of fear. When I was speaking once, concerning a danger to which we were then particularly exposed, he answered, 'I know God always gives his angels charge concerning us: Therefore we are equally safe everywhere.'

"Not less eminent than his faith was his humility. Amidst all his laying himself out for God, and for the good of souls, he ever preserved that special grace, the making no account of his own labors. He holden himself and his own abilities in very low esteem; and seemed to have that word continually before his eyes, 'I am an unprofitable servant.' And this humility was so rooted in him, as to be moved by no affront. I have seen many, even of the most provoking kind, offered him; but he received them as his proper portion; being so far from desiring the honor which cometh of men, that he took pleasure in being little and unknown. Perhaps it might appear from some passages of his life, that in this he even leaned to an extreme; for genuine humility does not require, that any man should desire to be despised. Nay, we are to avoid it, so far as we possibly can, consistently with a good conscience; for that direction, 'Let no man despise thee,' concerns every man as well as Timothy.

"It is rare to meet with an eminent person that can bear an equal. But it was his choice and his delight to prefer everyone to himself. And this he did in so free and easy a manner, that in him it appeared perfectly natural. He never willingly suffered any unkindness shown to him to be mentioned again; and if it was, he generally answered, 'O let it drop; we will offer it in

silence to the Lord.’ And indeed the best way of bearing crosses is, to consecrate all in silence to God.

“From this root of humility sprung such a patience as I wish I could either describe or imitate. It produced in him a most ready mind, which embraced every cross with alacrity and pleasure. For the good of his neighbor, nothing seemed hard, nothing wearisome. Sometimes I have been grieved to call him out of his study two or three times in an hour; especially when he was engaged in composing some of his deepest works; but he would answer, with his usual sweetness, ‘O my dear, never think of that. It matters not, if we are but always ready to meet the will of God. It is conformity to the will of God that alone makes an employment excellent.’ He never thought anything too mean, but sin; he looked on nothing else as beneath his character. If he overtook a poor man or woman on the road, with a burden too heavy for them, he did not fail to offer his assistance to bear part of it; and he would not easily take a denial. This therefore he has frequently done.

“In bearing pain he was most exemplary, and continued more and more so to the last. Nor was it least remarkable in the most humbling part of the ministry, the coming down to the capacities of the ignorant. Nevertheless he had a most resolute courage in the reproof of sin. To daring sinners he was a son of thunder; and no worldly considerations were regarded, whenever he believed God had given him a message to deliver to any of them.

“One considerable part of humility is, to know our own place, and stand therein. Every member has its peculiar appointment in the human body, where the wise Master-builder has placed it; and it is well while each continues in its place. But, as every dislocated bone gives pain, and must continue so to do till it is replaced in its proper socket, so every dislocated affection must give pain to the soul till it is restored to its own place, till it is totally fixed in God, till we resign our whole selves to the disposal of infinite wisdom. This is the proper place of every rational creature; and in this place he invariably stood. Whatever he believed to be the will of God, he resolutely performed, though it were to pluck out a right eye, to lay his Isaac on the altar. When it appeared that God called him to any journey,

he immediately prepared for it, without the least hesitation; although, for the last years of his life, he hardly ever traveled to any considerable distance, without feeling some tendency to a relapse into his former distemper; and it was usually some weeks after his return, before he recovered his usual strength.”

Humility continually produces meekness, and the latter bears an exact proportion to the former. I received a letter on this head but a few days since, which it may not be improper to subjoin: —

“REV. SIR,

“I WAS yesterday in company with several Clergymen, who, among other things, mentioned Mr. Fletcher, and seemed particularly anxious that in the account of his life a proper degree of caution should be observed in the panegyric that may be applied to his character. They say he was extremely passionate; and that there was in many instances an austere severity and rigor in his conduct to the young people under his care, particularly at Trevecka. As this information comes from a gentleman eminent for his knowledge of mankind, and universally esteemed as one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and one whose veracity has never been questioned, it will have no small weight in the learned world.”

7. I am glad this information came to my hands in time, as it may now receive so sufficient an answer as will probably satisfy every candid and impartial reader.

Two things are here asserted concerning Mr. Fletcher: The First, that he was extremely passionate: The Second, that there was an austere severity and rigor in his conduct toward the young persons under his care, particularly at Trevecka. The former assertion is unquestionably true; such he was by nature. The latter I question much, with regard to his conduct at Tern, as well as at Trevecka. None can be a more competent witness of his conduct at Tern, than Mr. Vaughan, who lived so long in the same house; and whose testimony concerning him has been so largely given in the preceding pages. But, waving this, can it possibly be supposed, that either Mr. Hill, or his sons then verging toward manhood, would have born the

austere rigor and severity of a young man that received his head from them? yea, and that year after year? Surely the supposition shocks all credibility.

8. Equally incredible is the assertion of his “austere severity and rigor toward the young men at Trevecka. This is inconsistent with the whole account given by Mr. Benson, an eye and ear witness of all his conduct. Had it been true in any degree, would it have been possible that he should have been so esteemed and beloved by those very young men? I cannot form the least conjecture whence such an assertion could arise unless it was invented by some young man after Mr. Fletcher was dismissed, in order to ingratiate himself with his patroness.

9. The farther account which Mr. Benson gives of him from; personal knowledge is this: “Mr. Fletcher,” says he, “was naturally a man of strong passions, and prone to anger in particular; insomuch that he has frequently thrown himself on the floor, and laid there most of the night bathed in tears imploring victory over his own spirit. And he did not strive in vain; he did obtain the victory, in a very eminent degree. For twenty years and upwards before his death, no one ever saw him out of temper, or heard him utter a rash expression on any provocation whatever. I have often thought the testimony that Bishop Burnet, in the History of his own Times, bears of Archbishop Leighton, might be born of him with equal propriety: ‘After an intimate acquaintance with the Archbishop for many years, and after being with him by night and by day, at home and abroad, in public and in private, on sundry occasions and in various affairs, I must say, I never heard an idle word drop from his lips, nor any conversation which was not to the use of edifying. I never saw him in any temper in which I myself would not have wished to be found at death.’ Any that has been intimately acquainted with Mr. Fletcher will say the same of him. But they that knew him best, will say it with the most assurance.

10. His “disengagements from the world, and love of the poor,” Mrs. Fletcher joins together. “Never,” says she, “did I behold anyone more dead to the things of the world. His treasure was above; and so was his heart also. He always remembered that admonition of the Apostle, ‘No man that warreth entangleth himself with the things of this life.’ It was his constant

endeavor to preserve a mind free and disencumbered; and he was exceeding wary of undertaking any business that might distract and hurry it. Yet, in his worldly concerns, knowing himself to be a steward for God, he would not through carelessness waste one penny. He likewise judged it to be his bounden duty to demand what he knew to be his right. And yet he could well reconcile this with that word, 'He that will have thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.' Indeed, whether he had less or more, it was the same thing upon his own account, as he had no other use for it, but to spread the gospel, and to assist the poor. And he frequently said, he never was happier than when he had given away the last penny he had in his house. If at any time I had gold in my drawers, it seemed to afford him no comfort. But if he could find a handful of small silver, when he was going out to see the sick, he would express as much pleasure over it as a miser would in discovering a bag of hid treasure. He was never better pleased with my employment, than when he had set me to prepare food or physic for the poor. He was hardly able to relish his dinner, if some sick neighbor had not a part of it; and sometimes, if any one of them was in want, I could not keep the linen in his drawers. On Sundays he provided for numbers of people who came from a distance to hear the word; and his house, as well as his heart, was devoted to their convenience: To relieve them that were afflicted in body or mind was the delight of his heart. Once a poor man, who feared God, being brought into great difficulties, he took down all the pewter from the kitchen shelves, saying, 'This will help you; and I can do without it. A wooden trencher will serve me just as well.' In epidemic and contagious distempers, when the neighbors were afraid to nurse the sick, he has gone from house to house, seeking some that were willing to undertake it. And when none could he found, he has offered his service, to sit up with them himself. But this was at his first setting out here. At present, there appears in many (and has done so for many years) a most ready mind to visit and relieve the distressed.

11. "He thoroughly complied with that advice, —

'Give to all something; to a good poor man,
Till thou change hands, and be where he began.'

I have heard him say, that when he lived alone in his house, the tears have come into his eyes, when one had brought him five or six insignificant letters, at three or four pence a piece; and perhaps he had only a single shilling in the house, to distribute among the poor to whom he was going. He frequently said to me, ‘O Polly, can we not do without beer? Let us drink water, and eat less meat. Let our necessities give way to the extremities of the poor.’

12. “But with all his generosity and charity he was strictly careful to follow the advice of the Apostle, ‘Owe no man anything.’ He contracted in debt. While he gave all he had, he made it a rule to pay ready money for everything; believing this was the best way to keep the mind unencumbered and free from care. Meanwhile his substance, his time, his strength, his life, were devoted to the service of the poor. And, last of all, he gave me to them. For when we were married, he asked me solemnly, whether I was willing to marry his parish. And the first time he led me among his people in this place, he said, ‘I have not married his wife only for myself, but for you. I asked her of the Lord, for your comfort, as well as my own.’”

13. All his life, as well as during his illness, particularly at Newington and Brislington, (as has been largely related,) he was grateful in a very high degree, to those who conferred the least benefit upon him; yea, or even endeavored so to do. One of these was Mr. Richard Edwards, of London, to whose care he was committed as a Leader, when he was first admitted into the London Society. A lively sense of the kindness which Mr. Edwards then showed him, he retained to the end of his life. This he testified by repeated letters; one or two of which it may be well to transcribe.

“*TERN*, Oct. 19, 1756.

DEAREST BROTHER,

“THIS is to let you know, that (praise be to the Lord!) I am very well in body, and pretty well in soul. But I have very few Christian friends here. And God has been pleased to take away the chief of those few by a most

comfortable death. And lately I heard that my aged father is gone the way of all flesh. But the glorious circumstances of his death make me ample amends for the sorrow which I felt. For some years, I have wrote to him with as much freedom as I could have done to a son, though not with so much effect as I wished. But last spring, God visited him with a severe illness, which brought him to a sense of himself. And, after a deep repentance, he died about a month ago, in the full assurance of faith. This has put several of my friends on thinking seriously, which affords me great cause of thankfulness. I am

“Your unworthy brother and servant in the Lord,

“JOHN FLETCHER.”

14. Two years after he wrote to him as follows: —

“I THANK you for your encouraging observations I want them, and use them by the grace of God. When I received yours, I had not had one opportunity of preaching; so incensed were all the Clergy against me. One, however, let me have the use of his church, the Abbey church, at Shrewsbury. I preached in the forenoon with some degree of the demonstration of the Spirit. The congregation was very numerous; and I believe one half at least desired to hear me again. But the Minister would not let me have the pulpit any more. The next Sunday, the Minister of a neighboring parish lying a dying, I was sent for to officiate for him. He died a few days after, and the chief man in the parish offered to make interest that I might succeed him. But I could not consent. The next Sunday, I preached at Shrewsbury again; but in another church. The next day I set out for Bristol, and was much refreshed among the brethren. As I returned I called at New-Kingswood, about sixteen miles from Bristol. The Minister offering me his church, I preached to a numerous congregation, gathered on half an hour’s notice. I think the seed then sown will not be lost.”

16. “Another uncommon talent which God had given him,” says Mrs. Fletcher, “was a peculiar sensibility of spirit. He had a temper the most feeling of any I ever knew. Hardly a night passed over, but some part of it

was spent in groans for the souls and bodies committed to his care. I dreaded his hearing either of the sins or sufferings of any of his people before the time of his going to bed, knowing how strong the impressions would be on his mind, chasing the sleep from his eyes.

“And yet I have heard him speak of a time, twelve or fourteen years ago, when he was greatly tempted to think, that he was not sensible enough of the afflictions of his fellow-creatures. He thought Christ bore our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; but, said he, ‘I have not that Christ-like temper: I do not bear the sorrows of others.’ After being for some time buffeted with this temptation, he prayed, that a measure of this spirit might be given him. Not long after, as he was visiting a poor sick family, so lively a sense of their affliction on a sudden fell upon his mind, that he could scarce get home. As soon as he sat down in his house, his soul was penetrated with such a sense of the woes of mankind as utterly depressed and overcame him, and drank up his spirits; insomuch that he could not help himself, nor move from one chair to another. And he was no more able to walk or help himself, than a newborne child. At the same time he seemed to lose the use of his memory, and of all his faculties. He thought, ‘What is this? Is it a disease? Is it a stroke of the palsy? Rather, is it not an answer to my own ill-judged, though well-intended, prayer? Did I not ask a burden unsuitable to a finite, and capable of being born only by an infinite being?’ He remained some hours in this situation. Then it came into his mind, ‘If this is a purely natural event, the will of the Lord be done! But if it be the answer to an improper prayer, God will answer again by removing it.’ He cried to the Lord, and was immediately restored to strength both of body and mind.

“When we were at Leeds, in the year 1784, I had another proof of the tender sensibility of his heart. O how deeply was he affected concerning the welfare of his brethren! When any little disputes arose between them, his inmost soul groaned under the burden; and, by two or three o’clock in the morning, I was sure to hear him breathing out prayer for the peace and prosperity of Sion. When I observed to him, I was afraid it would hurt his health, and wished him to sleep more, he would answer, ‘O Polly, the cause of God lies near my heart!’

“Toward me his tenderness was exerted in its utmost extent. My soul, my body, my health, my ease and comfort, were his daily study. We had no thought, either past or present, which we purposely concealed from each other. My spiritual advancement was his constant endeavor; and to this he was continually stirring me up, inviting me to walk more closely with God; urging that thought, ‘O my dear, let us pray for dying grace; for we shall not be long here.’ His temporal affairs he committed solely to me, though he was always ready to assist me in the smallest matters.

“One article more remains to be spoken of, namely, his communion with God. Although he enjoyed this, more or less, at all times and in all places, yet I have frequently heard him observe, that the seasons of his closest communion were always in his own house, or in the church; usually in the latter. It is much to be lamented that we have no account of it from his own pen. It was his constant endeavor to maintain an uninterrupted sense of the presence of God. In order to this, he was slow of speech, and had the greatest government of his words. Indeed he both acted, and spoke, and thought, as under the eye of God. And thus setting God always before him, he remained unmoved in all occurrences; at all times and on every occasion possessing inward recollection. Nor did I ever see him diverted therefrom on any occasion whatever, either going out or coming in, whether by ourselves or in company. Sometimes he took his journeys alone; but above a thousand miles I have traveled with him; during which neither change of company, place, nor the variety of circumstances which naturally occur in traveling, ever seemed to make the least difference in his firm attention to the presence of God. To preserve this uniform habit of soul, he was so watchful and recollected, that, to such as were unexperienced in these things, it might appear like insensibility. Although no one could converse in a more lively and sensible manner, even on natural things, when he saw it was to the glory of God; he was always striving to raise his own and every other spirit to a close and immediate intercourse with, God. And I can say with truth, all his union with me was so intermingled with prayer and praise, that every employment and every meal was, as it were, perfumed therewith.”

16. I had concluded what I purposed to say concerning the character of Mr. Fletcher, when I received a long letter from Mr. Benson; an extract of

which I cannot withhold from the reader. Or although most of the particulars hereof are contained in the preceding pages, yet as they are here placed in quite another order, and have also several new circumstances intermixed, I could not doubt of their being both agreeable and profitable to every person of piety.

“As to drawing the character of that great and good man,” says Mr. Benson, “it is what I will not attempt: But if I can suggest anything that will assist you therein, I shall think my little labor well bestowed. With this view I have been looking over many of his letters, and observe in them all, what I have a thousand times observed in his conversation and behavior, the plainest marks of every Christian, grace and virtue.

“Perhaps if he followed his Master more closely in one thing than another, it was in humility. It is one branch of poverty of spirit (another word for humility) to think meanly of ourselves. As he certainly thought meanly of himself, both as a Christian, as a Preacher, and as a writer, I need not say how he shone in all those characters; but he knew not that he shone in any of them. How low an opinion he had of himself as a Christian, manifestly appears from his placing himself at the feet of all, and showing a continual desire to learn from every company he was in. He paid all due deference to the judgment of others, readily acknowledged whatever was good in them, and seemed to think himself the only person in whom there dwelt no excellency worth notice. Hence it was that he often wrote and spoke, as if he had not received that grace which he undoubtedly had received. And indeed he overlooked what he had attained, through the eager desire he had of higher and greater things. Many of his letters show how very meanly he thought of his own attainments as a Christian; through the continually increasing views which he had of the divine purity, and of the high degree of conformity thereto which is attainable even in this world.

“And however little he was in his own eyes as a Christian, he was equally so as a writer and a Preacher. In consequence of the mean opinion he had of his own abilities, he gladly offered what he wrote to be corrected by any friend, however inferior to himself. Thus in a letter, dated November 23, 1771, he says, ‘I have sent a letter of fifty pages upon Antinomianism. I beg, upon my bended knees, you would revise and correct it. I have

followed my light, small as it is. Put yours to mine.’ What a mean opinion he had of his own writings appears from a letter written March 20, 1774: ‘I do not repent of my having engaged in this controversy; for though I doubt my little publications cannot reclaim those who are confirmed in believing the lie of the day, yet they may here and there stop one from swallowing it at all, or at least from swallowing it so deeply.’ Two years after, he says, ‘I have almost run my race of scribbling; and I have preached as much as I could, though to little purpose; but I must not complain. If one person has received good by my ten years’ labor, it is an honor for which I cannot be too thankful, if my mind were as low as it should be. Let us bless the Lord in all things.’

“As difficult as it is to think meanly of ourselves, it is still more difficult to be willing that others should think meanly of us. And how eminent he was in this appears from hence, that he was constantly upon his guard, lest any expression should drop either from his lips or pen, which tended to make anyone think well of him; either on account of his family, or learning, or parts, or usefulness. Yea, he took as much pains to conceal his excellencies, as others do to show them; having the same desire to be little and unknown, which many have to be known and esteemed.

“It would have remained a secret in this kingdom, even to his most intimate friends, that he was of so great a family, had not Mr. Ireland gone over with him to Switzerland; where he was surprised to find Mr. Fletcher’s relations some of the first people in the country.

“‘Blessed are they that mourn,’ said the Lord Jesus. And this blessedness was as certainly his as the former. He was a man of a serious spirit; one that stood at the utmost distance from levity of every kind. Though he was constantly cheerful, as rejoicing in hope of his heavenly inheritance, yet had he too deep a sense of his own wants, and the wants of the Church of God, as also of the sins and miseries of mankind, to be at any time light or trifling. I have a letter before me, dated December, 1771, which at once gives us a picture of his seriousness, watchfulness, and earnestness; and contains advises well deserving the consideration of all that fear God. ‘There is undoubtedly,’ said he, ‘such a thing as the full assurance of faith. Be not discouraged on account of thousands who stop

short of it: It is our own fault if we do not attain. God would give us ample satisfaction if we did but deeply feel our wants. Both you and I want a deeper awakening, which will produce a death to outward things and speculative knowledge. Let us shut our eyes to the gilded clouds without us; let us draw inward, and search after God, if haply we may find him. Let us hold our confidence, though we are often constrained against hope to believe in hope. But let us not rest in our confidence, as thousands do; let it help us to struggle and wait till he come. Let us habituate ourselves to live inwardly. This will solemnize us, and prevent our trifling with the things of God. We may be thankful for what we have, without resting in it. We may strive, and yet not trust in our striving; but expect all from divine grace.'

'Four or five years after, he says, 'I send this to inquire after your welfare, and to let you know, that though I am pretty well in body, yet I break fast. But I want to break faster in my spirit than I do. Yet, blessed be God, I have been in such pinching, grinding circumstances, for near a year, by a series of providential and domestic trials, as have given me some deadly blows. I am not without hope of setting my eyes on you once more. Mr. Wesley kindly invites me to travel with him, and visit some of the societies. I feel an inclination to break one of my chains, parochial retirement, which may be a nest for self-indulgence. I leave the matter entirely to the Lord.'

'Meantime, he mourned, not only for himself and his friends, but also for the Church of God. 'The few professors,' says he, 'which I see in these parts, are so far from what I wish them to be, that I cannot but cry out, Lord, how long wilt thou give thy heritage up to desolation? How long shall the Heathen say, *Where is now their indwelling God?*' In another letter he writes, (dated May 8, 1776,) 'I see so little fruit in these parts, that I am almost disheartened. I am closely followed with the thought, that faith in the dispensation of the Spirit is at a very low ebb. But it may be better in other places. I shall be glad to travel a little, to see the goodness of the land. May God make and keep us humble, loving, disinterested, and zealous!'

“These quotations give us not only an example of holy mourning, but likewise of hungering and thirsting after righteousness. In this he was peculiarly worth our imitation. He never rested in anything he had either experienced or done in spiritual matters. But this one thing he did: ‘Forgetting those things that were behind, and reaching forth unto those things which were before,’ he ‘pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;’ he was a true Christian racer, always on the stretch for higher and better things. Though his attainments, both in experience and usefulness, were above the common standard, yet the language of his conversation and behavior always was, ‘Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfected; but I follow after, if by any means I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.’ He had his eye upon a full conformity to the Son of God; or what the Apostle terms, ‘the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’ Nor could he be satisfied with anything less.

“And he was meek, like his Master, as well as lowly in heart. Not that he was so by nature, but of a fiery, passionate spirit. But so thoroughly had grace subdued nature, so fully was he renewed in the spirit of his mind, that, for many years before his death, I believe he was never observed by anyone, friend or foe, to be out of temper. And yet he did not want provocation, and that sometimes in a high degree; especially from those whose religious sentiments he thought it his duty to oppose. One of these, who once loved him so well, as to be ready to pull out his eyes for him, was so exasperated on reading his Second Check, that he wrote to him in the most bitter terms. But none of these things moved him; no, not in the least degree. The keenest word he used upon the occasion was, ‘What a world, what a religious world we live in!’

“Hence arose his readiness to bear with the weaknesses, and forgive the faults of others; the more remarkable, considering his flaming zeal against sin, and deep concern for the glory of God. Such hatred to sin, and such love to the sinner, I never saw joined together before. This very circumstance convinced me of the height of his grace, bearing so much of his Master’s image, whose hatred to sin and love to sinners are equally infinite. He took all possible pains to detect what was evil in any of those that were under his care; pursuing it through all its turnings and windings,

and stripping it of all its disguises. Yet none so ready to excuse when it was confessed, and to conceal it even from his most intimate friends.

“He never mentioned the faults of an absent person, unless absolute duty required it: And then he spoke with the utmost tenderness, extenuating, rather than aggravating. None could draw his picture more exactly than St. Paul has done, in the thirteenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Every feature in that masterly piece of apostolic painting was found in him. Let all that knew him, especially his intimate friends, recollect the spirit and behavior of this servant of the God of love; and then let them judge whether I exaggerate, when I say, He ‘suffered long and was kind; he envied not; acted not rashly; was not puffed up; did not behave himself unseemly; sought not his own; was not easily provoked. He thought no evil, rejoiced not in iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth. He covered all things, believed all things, hoped all things, and endured all things.’ It would be easy to enlarge on all these particulars, and show how they were exemplified in him. But waving this, I would only observe, that, with regard to two of them, — kindness to others, and not seeking his own, — he had few equals. His kindness to others was such, that he bestowed his all upon them; his time, his talents, his substance. His knowledge, his eloquence, his health, his money, were employed, day by day, for the good of mankind. He prayed, he wrote, he preached, he visited the sick and well, he conversed, he gave, he labored, he suffered, winter and summer, night and day; he endangered, nay, destroyed, his health, and, in the end, gave his life also for the profit of his neighbors, that they might be saved from everlasting death. He denied himself even such food as was necessary for him, that he might have to give to them that had none. And when he was constrained to change his manner of living, still his diet was plain and simple; and so were his clothing and furniture, that he might save all that was possible for his poor neighbors.

“He sought not his own in any sense; not his own honor, but the honor of God in all he said or did: He sought not his own interest, but the interest of his Lord; spreading knowledge, holiness, and happiness as far as he possibly could. He sought not his own pleasure, but studied to ‘please all men, for their good to edification;’ and to please Him that had called him to his kingdom and glory. And yet it is certain, he found the greatest

pleasure in pleasing God and his neighbor. For nothing could give an higher delight than this to his pious and benevolent mind.

“In the mean time, he was a man of peace, and spared no pains to restore it where it was broken. He gave numberless proofs of this amiable disposition. When we were at Trevecka, (to mention but one instance,) two of the students were bitterly prejudiced against each other. He took them into a room by themselves, reasoned with them, wept over them, and at last prevailed. Their hearts were broken; they were melted down; they fell upon each other’s necks and wept aloud.

“The pains which he took to make peace at the Leeds Conference will not easily be forgotten. And although he could not prevail so far as might have been desired, yet his labor was not in vain.

“But I do not attempt his full character: I will only add, what the Apostle recommends to the Philippians was exactly copied by him. He was ‘blameless and harmless, a son of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; shining among them as a light in the world.’”

I think one talent wherewith God had endued Mr. Fletcher his not been sufficiently noted yet: I mean his courtesy; in which there was not the least touch either of art or affectation. It was pure and genuine, and sweetly constrained him to behave to everyone (although particularly to inferiors) in a manner not to be described, with so inexpressible a mixture of humility, love, and respect. This directed his words, the tone of his voice, his looks, his whole attitude, his every motion. This seems to be intended by St. Paul, in those words, *ουκ ασχημονει*; not so well expressed in our translation by, “behaveth not itself unseemly.” Do not the words literally mean, “is not ill bred?” — behaves on all occasions with decency and good breeding? Certainly, so did Mr. Fletcher. Never did any man more perfectly suit his whole behavior to the persons and the occasion: So that one might apply to him, with great propriety, the words of the ancient poet: —

Illum quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia tendit
*Componit furtim, subsequiturque decor.*³⁸

I cannot translate this; but I can give the English reader a parallel, and more than a parallel: —

Grace was in all his steps, heaven in his eye,
In all his gestures sanctity and love.

CHAPTER X.

HIS DEATH.

“SOME time before he was taken ill,” says Mrs. Fletcher, “he mentioned to me a peculiar manifestation of love which he received in his own house, with the application of those words, ‘Thou shalt walk with me in white.’ He added, ‘It is not a little thing so to hang upon God by faith, as to feel no departure from him, and no rising in the heart against him. But this does not satisfy me; I often feel something far beyond this; yea, I sometimes find such gleams of light and love, such wafts, as it were, of the heavenly air; so powerful, as if they would just then take my soul with them to glory! But I am not filled: I want to be filled with all the fullness of God.’ In conformity to these sentiments, when he was in his last illness, he expressed himself thus: ‘I am filled, most sweetly filled.’ This conveyed much to my mind, as I understood by it the accomplishment of his large desires.

“Some time before the beginning of his last sickness, he was peculiarly penetrated with the nearness of eternity. There was scarce an hour in which he was not calling upon us to drop every thought and every care, that we might attend to nothing but the drinking deeper into God. We spent much time in wrestling with God, and were led, in a peculiar manner, to abandon our whole selves, our souls and bodies, into the hands of God; ready to do, and willing to suffer, whatever was well pleasing to him.

“And now the time drew near, when his faith was to be called to its last grand exercise; that, eyeing his Lord, he might

True in the fiery trial prove,
And pay him back his dying love.

A little before, being on his knees in prayer for lights whether he should go to London or not; the answer to him seemed to be, ‘Not to London, but to thy grave.’³⁹ When he acquainted me with this, he said, with a heavenly smile, ‘Satan would represent it to me as something dreadful, enforcing

those words: *The cold grave! The cold grave!*’ On the Sunday following, (I think it was the next day,) that anthem was sung in the church: ‘The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing. He shall feed me in green pastures, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort. He shall convert my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil: For thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me. Thou shalt prepare a table before me, against them that trouble me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.’

“In his return home, he observed in how uncommon a degree those words had been blessed to his soul. And from that very time I do not remember to have seen in him the least marks of temptation. He showed an unusual cheerfulness and liveliness in every part of his work; and seemed to increase in strength of body, as well as in strength of soul. Truly it was to him according to his faith: He feared no evil; and his cup was filled with ‘righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’

“On Thursday, August 4, he was employed in the work of God from three in the afternoon till nine at night. When he came home, he said, ‘I have taken cold;’ but seemed not to regard it. He was far from well on Friday and Saturday; but was uncommonly drawn out in prayer. On Saturday night he was abundantly worse, and his fever appeared very strong. I begged that he would by no means think of going to church in the morning. But he told me, it was the will of the Lord; in which case I never dared to persuade. In reading Prayers, he was very near fainting away. I got through the crowd, and entreated him to come out of the desk. But he let me and others know, in his sweet manner, that we were not to interrupt the order of God. I then silently retired to my pew, where all around me were in tears. When the windows were opened, by which he appeared to be a little refreshed, he went on; and then preached with a strength and recollection that surprised us all.

“After sermon he walked up to the communion-table, uttering these words, ‘I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, before the mercy-seat.’ The service lasted till near two. Sometimes he was

constrained to stop, being hardly able to stand upon his feet. The people were deeply affected, which they were not able to conceal; groans and weeping were on every side. Gracious Lord! how was it my soul was kept so calm in the midst of the most tender feelings? Notwithstanding his extreme weakness, he gave out several verses of hymns, and lively sentences of exhortation. As soon as ever the service was over, we hurried him to bed. When he lay down, nature being quite exhausted, he immediately fainted away. He afterwards dropped into a sleep for some time, and, on waking, cried out with a pleasant smile, 'Now, my dear, thou seest I am no worse for doing the Lord's work. He never fails me when I trust in Him.' Having eaten a little dinner, he dozed most of the evening; now and then waking, with the praises of God in his mouth. At night his fever returned; but it was not violent; and yet his strength decreased amazingly. On Monday and Tuesday we had a little paradise together. He lay on a couch in the study; and, though often changing posture, was sweetly pleasant, and frequently slept a good while together. When he was awake, he delighted in hearing me read hymns, and treatises on faith and love. His words were all animating, and his patience beyond expression. When he had a very nauseous medicine to take, he seemed to enjoy the cross; according to a word which he was used often to repeat, 'We are to seek a perfect conformity to the will of God; and leave Him to give us pleasure or pain, as it seemeth him good.'

"I asked him, whether he had any advice to leave me, if he should be taken from me. He replied, 'I have nothing particular to say: The Lord will open all before thee.' I said, 'Have you any conviction that God is about to take you?' He said, 'No; not in particular. Only I always see death so inexpressibly near, that we both seem to stand on the verge of eternity.' While he slept a little, I besought the Lord, if it was his good pleasure, to spare him to me a little longer. But my prayer seemed to have no wings; and I could not help mingling continually therewith, 'Lord, give me perfect resignation!' This uncertainty made me tremble, lest God was going to put into my hands the bitter cup with which he lately threatened my husband. Some weeks before, I myself was ill of a fever, and not without danger. My husband then felt the whole parting scene, and struggled for perfect resignation. He said, 'O Polly, shall I ever see the day when thou must be carried out to bury? How will the little things which thy tender care has

prepared for me, in every part of the house, wound and distress me! How is it? I think I feel jealousy! I am jealous of the worms! I seem to shrink at the thought of giving my dear Polly to the worms.'

"Now all these reflections returned upon my heart, with the weight of a millstone. I cried to the Lord, and these words were deeply impressed on my spirit: 'Where I am, there shall my servants be, that they may behold any glory.' This promise was full of comfort to my soul. I saw that in Christ's immediate presence was our home, and that we should have our reunion in being deeply centered in him. I received it as a fresh marriage for eternity: As such, I trust for ever to hold it. All that day, whenever I thought of the expression, 'to behold my glory,' it seemed to wipe away every tear, and was as the ring whereby we were joined anew.

"Awaking some time after, he said, 'Polly, I have been thinking it was Israel's fault that they asked for signs. We will not do so; but, abandoning our whole selves to the will of God, will lie patiently before him; assured that he will do all things well.'

"My dear love,' said I, 'if ever I have done or said anything to grieve thee, how will the remembrance wound my heart, if thou shouldest be taken from me!' He entreated me, with inexpressible tenderness, not to allow the thought; declaring his thankfulness for our union, in a variety of words written on my heart, as with the adamantine pen of friendship deeply dipped in blood.

"On Wednesday, after groaning all day long, under the weight of the power of God, he told me, he had received such a manifestation of the full meaning of those words, 'God is love,' as he could never be able to express. 'It fills my heart,' said he, 'every moment. O Polly, my dear Polly *God is love!* Shout! shout aloud! I want a gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth! But it seems as if I could not speak much longer. Let us fix on a sign between ourselves. Now,' said he, (tapping me twice with his finger,) 'I mean, God is love. And we will draw each other into God. Observe! By this we will draw each other into God.'

“Sally coming in, he cried out, ‘O Sally, God is love! Shout, both of you! I want to hear you shout his praise!’ All this time the medical friend, who attended him diligently, hoped he was in no danger; as he had no headache, but much sleep without the least delirium, and an almost regular pulse. So was the disease, though commissioned to take his life, restrained by the power of God.

“On Thursday his speech began to fail. While he was able, he spoke to all that came in his way. Hearing that a stranger was in the house, he ordered her to be called up. But the uttering only two sentences made him ready to faint away. And while he had any power of speech, he would not be silent to his friendly Doctor: ‘O Sir,’ said he, ‘you take much thought for my body; permit me to take thought for your soul.’ When I could scarce understand anything he said, I spoke these words, ‘God is love.’ Instantly, as if all his powers were awakened, he broke out in a rapture, ‘God is love! love! love! O for that gust of praise! I want to sound’ — Here his voice again failed. All this time he was in much pain, and suffered many ways; but still with such unutterable patience as none but those that were present can conceive. If I did but name his sufferings, he would smile and make the sign.

“On Friday, observing his body covered with spots, I felt a sword pierce through my soul. As I was kneeling by his side, with my hand in his, entreating the Lord to be with us in this tremendous hour, he strove to say many things, but could not articulate the words. All he could do was to press my hand, and frequently repeat the sign. At last he breathed out, ‘Head of the Church, be head to my wife!’

“When I was forced to leave him for a few moments, Sally said to him, ‘My dear master, do you know me?’ He replied, ‘God will put his right hand under you.’ She added, ‘O my dear master, should you be taken away, what a disconsolate creature will my poor dear mistress be!’ He replied, ‘God will be her all in all!’

“He always took a peculiar pleasure in repeating or hearing those words,

‘Jesu’s love through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries.’

Whenever I repeated them to him, he would answer, ‘Boundless, boundless, boundless!’ He now added, though not without much difficulty,

‘Mercy’s full power I soon shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love.’

“On Saturday, in the afternoon, his fever seemed quite off, and a few friends standing near his bed, he reached his hand to each; and looking on a Minister, said, ‘Are you ready to assist tomorrow?’ His recollection surprised us, as the day of the week had not been named in the room. Many were of opinion he would recover; and one of them said to him, ‘Do you think the Lord will raise you up?’ He strove to answer, and could just pronounce, ‘Raise me up in the resurr’ — meaning in the resurrection. To another, who asked the same question, he said, ‘I leave it all to God.’

“In the evening the fever came again, and with greater violence than ever. The mucus then falling on his throat, almost strangled him. It was supposed the same painful symptom would grow more and more violent to the last. As I felt this exquisitely, I cried to the Lord to remove it; and glory be to his name, he did. From that time it returned no more.

“As night drew on, I perceived him dying very fast. His fingers could hardly make the sign, which he scarce ever forgot; and his speech seemed quite gone. I said, ‘My dear creature, I ask not for myself; I know thy soul; but for the sake of others, if Jesus is very present with thee, lift up thy right hand.’ Immediately he did. ‘If the prospect of glory sweetly opens before thee, repeat the sign.’ He instantly raised it again, and in half a minute, a second time. He then threw it up, as if he would reach the top of the bed; after this, his hands moved no more. But on my saying, ‘Art thou in pain?’ he answered, ‘No.’ from this time he lay in a kind of sleep, though with his eyes open and fixed. For the most part he sat upright, against pillows, with his head a little inclining to one side; and so remarkably composed, yea, triumphant, was his countenance, that the least trace of death was scarce discernible in it. Twenty-four hours he was

in this situation, breathing like a person in common sleep. About thirty-five minutes past ten on Sunday night, August 14, his precious soul entered into the joy of his Lord, without one struggle or groan, in the fifty-sixth year of his age.

“And here I break off my mournful story; but on my bleeding heart the fair picture of his heavenly excellencies will be for ever drawn. When I call to mind his ardent zeal, his laborious endeavours to seek and save the lost, his diligence in the employment of his time, his Christ-like condescension toward me, and his uninterrupted converse with heaven; I may well be allowed to add, My loss is beyond the power of words to paint. I have often gone through deep waters; but all my afflictions were nothing to this. Well; I want no pleasant prospect but upwards, nor anything whereon to fix my hope but immortality.

“From the time I have had the happiness and honor of being with him, every day more and more convinced me he was the Christian. I saw, I loved, in him the image of my Savior; and thought myself the happiest of women in the possession of the most sympathizing and heavenly friend. My sorrow bears a due proportion; but it is alleviated by what thought, ‘United in God, we cannot be divided.’ No; we are of one household still; we are joined in Him as our center, ‘of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.’ It is said of New Testament believers, ‘They are come to the spirits of just men made perfect;’ to the glorious privilege of communion with the Church triumphant. But this is far more apparent to the eyes of celestial spirits, than to ours, which are yet veiled with flesh and blood. Yet as there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and as the prayers of saints still on earth are represented by incense in the hands of the Elders, I can only consider departed spirits, and ministering angels, as one innumerable company, continually surrounding us. And are they not as nearly united to their fellow soldiers now, as when they were in the body? What should hinder? Gratitude and affection are natives of heaven, and live for ever there. Forgetfulness is a property of mortality, and drops off with the body. Therefore they that loved us in the Lord will surely love us for ever. Can anything material interrupt the light or presence of a spirit? Nay,

Walls within walls no more the passage bar
Than unopposing space of liquid air.

“On the 17th, his remains were deposited in Madeley churchyard, amidst the tears and lamentations of thousands. The service was performed by the Rev. Mr. Hatton, Rector of Waters-Upton, whom God enabled to speak in a pathetic manner to the weeping flock. In the conclusion, at my request, he read the following paper: —

“As it was the desire of my beloved husband to be buried in this plain manner, so out of tenderness he begged that I might not be present. And in everything I would obey him.

“Permit me then, by the mouth of a friend, to bear an open testimony to the glory of God, that I, who have known him in the most perfect manner, am constrained to declare, that I never knew any one walk so closely in the ways of God as he did. The Lord gave him a conscience tender as the apple of an eye. And he literally preferred the interest of everyone to his own.

“He was rigidly just, and perfectly loose from attachment to the world. He shared his all with the poor, who lay so close to his heart, that, at the approach of death, when he could not speak without difficulty, he cried out, ‘O my poor! What will become of my poor!’ He was blessed with so great a degree of humility, as is scarce to be found. I am witness how often he has rejoiced in being treated with contempt. Indeed it seemed the very food of his soul, to be little and unknown.

“His zeal for souls, I need not tell you. Let the labors of twenty-five years, and a martyr’s death in the conclusion, imprint it on your hearts. His diligent visiting of the sick occasioned the fever which, by God’s commission, tore him from you and me. And his vehement desire to take his last leave of you with dying lips and hands, gave (it is supposed) the finishing stroke, by preparing his blood for putrefaction. Thus has he lived and died your servant. And will any of you refuse to meet him at God’s right hand in that day?

“He walked with death always in sight. About two months ago, he came to me and said, ‘My dear love, I know not how it is, but I have a strange impression, death is near us, as if it were to be some sudden stroke upon one of us. And it draws out all my soul in prayer, that we may be ready.’ He then broke out, ‘Lord, prepare the soul thou wilt call! And O stand by the poor disconsolate one that shall be left behind!’

“A few days before his departure, he was filled with love in an uncommon manner. The same he testified as long as he had a voice, and continued to the end, by a most lamb-like patience, in which he smiled over death, and set his last seal to the glorious truths he had so long preached among you.

“Three years, nine months, and two days, I have possessed my heavenly-minded husband. But now the sun of my earthly joys is set for ever, and my soul filled with an anguish which only finds its consolation in a total resignation to the will of God. When I was asking the Lord, if he pleased, to spare him to me a little longer, the following promise was impressed on my mind: ‘Where I am, there shall my servants be, that they may behold my glory.’ Lord, hasten the time!”

18. There is little need of adding any farther character of this man of God to the foregoing account, given by one who wrote out of the fullness of her heart. I would only observe, that for many years I despaired of finding any inhabitant of Great Britain, that could stand in any degree of comparison with Gregory Lopez, or Monsieur de Renty. But let any impartial person judge if Mr. Fletcher was at all inferior to them. Did he not experience as deep communion with God, and as high a measure of inward holiness, as was experienced by either one or the other of those burning and shining lights? And it is certain, his outward light shone before men with full as bright a luster as theirs. But if any would draw a parallel between them, there are two circumstances which should be well observed. One is, we are not assured that the writers of their lives did not extenuate, if not suppress, their faults. And some faults we are assured there were; namely, some touches of superstition, and some of idolatry, as the worship of images, angels and saints; the Virgin Mary in particular. But I have not suppressed, or even extenuated, anything in Mr. Fletcher’s life. Indeed, I know nothing that needed to be extenuated, much less to be suppressed. A

second circumstance is, that the writers of their lives could not have so full a knowledge of them as I, and much more Mrs. Fletcher, had; being eye and ear witnesses of his whole conduct. Consequently, we knew that his life was not sullied with any taint of idolatry or superstition. I was intimately acquainted with him for thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon, and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles; and in all that time I never heard him speak an improper word, or saw him do an improper action. To conclude: Within fourscore years, I have known many excellent men, holy in heart and life: But one equal to him, I have not known; one so uniformly and deeply devoted to God. So unblamable a man, in every respect, I have not found either in Europe or America. Nor do I expect to find another such on this side eternity.

Yet it is possible we may be such as he was. Let us, then, endeavor to follow him as he followed Christ.

HIS EPITAPH.

Here lies the Body

OF

THE REV. JOHN WILLIAM DE LA FLECHERE,

Vicar of Madeley;

Who was born at Nyon in Switzerland,
 September 12, 1729,
 And finished his course, August 14, 1785,
 In this village,
 Where his unexampled labors
 Will never be forgotten.

He exercised his ministry for the space of twenty-five years
 In this parish,
 With uncommon zeal and ability.
 But though many believed his report,
 Yet he might with justice have adopted
 The lamentation of the Prophet:
 "All the day long have I stretched out my hands
 Unto a disobedient and gainsaying people:
 Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord,
 And my work with my God."

A

PLAIN ACCOUNT
OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION,

AS BELIEVED AND TAUGHT

BY THE REVEREND MR. JOHN WESLEY,

FROM THE YEAR 1725, TO THE YEAR 1777. ⁴⁰

1. WHAT I purpose in the following papers is, to give a plain and distinct account of the steps by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian perfection. This I owe to the serious part of mankind, those who desire to know all “the truth as it is in Jesus.” And these only are concerned in questions of this kind. To these I would nakedly declare the thing as it is, endeavoring all along to show, from one period to another, both what I thought, and why I thought so.

2. In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor’s “Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying.” In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?

3. In the year 1726, I met with Kempis’s “Christian’s Pattern.” The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now

appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God (supposing it possible to do this, and go no farther) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart, to him.

I saw, that “simplicity of intention, and purity of affection,” one design in all we speak or do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed “the wings of the soul,” without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

4. A year or two after, Mr. Law’s “Christian Perfection” and “Serious Call” were put into my hands. These convinced me, more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian; and I determined, through his grace, (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible of,) to be all-devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

Will any considerate man say, that this is carrying matters too far? or that anything less is due to Him who has given himself for us, than to give him ourselves, all we hence, and all we are?

5. In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study, the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having “the mind which was in Christ,” and of “walking as Christ also walked;” even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in him; and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as an uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of anything more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men; of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar.

6. On January 1, 1733, I preached before the University, in St. Mary’s church, on “the Circumcision of the Heart;” an account of which I gave in these words: “It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, ‘from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;’ and, by consequence,

the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so ‘renewed in the image of our mind,’ as to be ‘perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.’” (Volume 5, p. 203.)

In the same sermon I observed, “‘Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment.’ It is not only ‘the first and great’ command, but all the commandments in one. ‘Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,’ they are all comprised in this one word, love. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness: The royal law of heaven and earth is this, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.’ The one perfect good shall be your one ultimate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake, — the fruition of Him who is all in all. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls, even an union with Him that made them, the having ‘fellowship with the Father and the Son,’ the being ‘joined to the Lord in one spirit.’ One design ye are to pursue to the end of time, — the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. Desire other things, so far as they tend to this; love the creature, as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection, and thought, and word, and action, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole end, as well as source, of your being.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 207, 208.)

I concluded in these words: “Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections. — Other sacrifices from us he would not, but the living sacrifice of the heart hath he chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him; for he is a jealous God. His throne will he not divide with another; he will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has Him for its ultimate object. This is the way wherein those children of God once walked, who being dead still speak to us: ‘Desire not to live but to praise his name; let all your thoughts, words, and works tend to his glory.’ ‘Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to Him, that you may love nothing but for his sake.’ ‘Have a pure

intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions.’ For then, and not till then, is that ‘mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus,’ when in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands, we ‘pursue nothing but in relation to him, and in subordination to his pleasure;’ when we too neither think, nor speak, nor act, to fulfill ‘our own will, but the will of Him that sent us;’ when, ‘whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do,’ we do it all ‘to the glory of God.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 211.)

It may be observed, this sermon was composed the first of all my writings which have been published. This was the view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to term *perfection*. This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution. And what is there here, which any man of understanding, who believes the Bible, can object to? What can he deny, without flatly contradicting the Scripture? what retrench, without taking from the word of God?

7. In the same sentiment did my brother and I remain (with all those young gentlemen in derision termed *Methodists*) till we embarked for America, in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Savannah, that I wrote the following lines: —

Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!

In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence, the cry of my heart was,

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but thy pure love alone!
O may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange fires far from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be love!

I never heard that any one objected to this. And indeed who can object? Is not this the language, not only of every believer, but of everyone that is

truly awakened? But what have I wrote, to this day, which is either stronger or plainer?

8. In August following, I had a long conversation with Arvid Gradin, in Germany. After he had given me an account of his experience, I desired him to give me, in writing, a definition of “the full assurance of faith, “which he did in the following words: —

Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratia divina; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax; cum absentia omnis desiderii carnalis, et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.

“Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favor; the highest tranquillity, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every flesh desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins.”

This was the first account I ever heard from any living man, of what I had before learned myself from the oracles of God, and had been praying for, (with the little company of my friends,) and expecting, for several years.

9. In 1739, my brother and I published a volume of “Hymns and Sacred Poems.” In many of these we declared our sentiments strongly and explicitly. So, page 24, —

Turn the full stream of nature’s tide;
 Let all our actions tend
 To thee, their source; thy love the guide,
 Thy glory be the end.

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be;
 Sense shall point out the road;
 The creatures all shall lead to thee,
 And all we taste be God.

Again, —

Lord, arm me with thy Spirit's might,
 Since I am call'd by thy great name:
 In thee my wand'ring thoughts unite,
 Of all my works be thou the aim:
 Thy love attend me all my days,
 And my sole business be thy praise. (Page 122.)

Again, —

Eager for thee I ask and pant,
 So strong the principle divine,
 Carries me out with sweet constraint,
 Till all my hallow'd soul be thine;
 Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
 And lost in thine immensity! (Page 125.)

Once more, —

Heavenly Adam, life divine,
 Change my nature into thine;
 More and spread throughout my soul,
 Actuate and fill the whole. (Page 153.)

It would be easy to cite many more passages to the same effect. But these are sufficient to show, beyond contradiction, what our sentiments then were.

10. The first tract I ever wrote expressly on this subject was published in the latter end of this year. That none might be prejudiced before they read it, I gave it the indifferent title of "The Character of a Methodist." In this I described a perfect Christian, placing in the front; "Not as though I had already attained." Part of it I subjoin without any alteration: —

"A Methodist is one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul, which is continually crying, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee.' My God and my all! 'Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' He is therefore happy in God; yea, always happy,

as having in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. Perfect love having now cast out fear, he rejoices evermore. Yea, his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, ‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again unto a living hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for me.’

“And he, who hath this hope, thus full of immortality, in everything giveth thanks, as knowing this (whatsoever it is) is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him. From him therefore he cheerfully receives all, saying, ‘Good is the will of the Lord;’ and whether he giveth or taketh away, equally blessing the name of the Lord. Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of the heart to Him who orders it for good; into whose hands he hath wholly committed his body and soul, ‘as into the hands of a faithful Creator.’ He is therefore anxiously ‘careful for nothing,’ as having ‘cast all his care on Him that careth for him;’ and ‘in all things’ resting on him, after ‘making’ his ‘request known to him with thanksgiving.’

“For indeed he ‘prays without ceasing;’ at all times the language of his heart is this, ‘Unto thee is my mouth, though without a voice; and my silence speaketh unto thee.’ His heart is lifted up to God at all times, and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down, or rise up, ‘God is in all his thoughts.’ He walks with God continually; having the loving eye of his soul fixed on him, and everywhere ‘seeing Him that is invisible.’

“And loving God, he ‘loves his neighbor as himself;’ he loves every man as his own soul. He loves his enemies, yea, and the enemies of God. And if it be not; in his power to ‘do good to them that hate’ him, yet he ceases not to ‘pray for them,’ though they spurn his love, and still ‘despitefully use him, and persecute him.’

“For he is ‘pure in heart.’ Love has purified his heart from envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind temper. It has cleansed him from pride, whereof

‘only cometh contention;’ and he hath now ‘put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.’ And indeed all possible ground for contention, on his part, is cut off. For none can take from him what he desires, seeing he ‘loves not the world, nor any of the things of the world;’ but ‘all his desire is unto God, and to the remembrance of his name.’

“Agreeable to this his one desire, is the one design of his life; namely, ‘to do, not his own will, but the will of Him that sent him.’ His one intention at all times and in all places is, not to please himself, but Him whom his soul loveth. He hath a single eye; and because his ‘eye is single, his whole body is full of light. The whole is light, as when, the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house.’ God reigns alone; all that is in the soul is ‘holiness to the Lord.’ There is not a motion in his heart but is according to his will. Every thought that arises points to him, and is in ‘obedience to the law of Christ.’

“And the tree is known by its fruits. For, as he loves God, so he ‘keeps his commandments;’ not only some, or most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to ‘keep the whole law and offend in one point,’ but has in all points ‘a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards man.’ Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God has enjoined, he does. ‘He runs the way of God’s commandments,’ now He hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory and joy so to do; it is his daily crown of rejoicing, to ‘do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.’

“All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps, and that with all his might; for his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves him with all his strength; he continually presents his soul and ‘body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;’ entirely and without reserve devoting himself, all he has, all he is, to his glory. All the talents he has, he constantly employs according to his Master’s will; every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body.

“By consequence, ‘whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God.’ In all his employments of every kind, he not only aims at this, which is implied in having a single eye, but actually attains it; his business and his refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve to this great end. Whether he ‘sit in the house, or walk by the way,’ whether he lie down, or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life. Whether he put on his apparel, or labor, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labor, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and goodwill among men. His one invariable rule is this: ‘Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, through him.’

“Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his ‘running the race which is set before him.’ He cannot therefore ‘lay up treasures upon earth,’ no more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot speak evil of his neighbor, any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of anyone; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot ‘speak idle words; no corrupt conversation’ ever ‘comes out of his mouth;’ as is all that is not ‘good to the use of edifying,’ not fit to ‘minister grace to the hearers.’ But ‘whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are’ justly ‘of good report,’ he thinks, speaks, and acts, ‘adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.’”

These are the very words wherein I largely declared, for the first time, my sentiments of Christian perfection. And is it not easy to see,

- (1.) That this is the very point at which I aimed all along from the year 1725; and more determinately from the year 1730, when I began to be *homo unius libri*, “a man of one book,” regarding none, comparatively, but the Bible? Is it not easy to see,
- (2.) That this is the very same doctrine which I believe and teach at this day; not adding one point, either to that inward or outward holiness which I maintained eight-and-thirty years ago? And it is the same which, by the grace of God; I have continued to teach from that time till now; as will appear to every impartial person from the extracts subjoined below.

11. I do not know that any writer has made any objection against that tract to this day; and for some time, I did not find much opposition upon the head, at least, not from serious persons. But after a time, a cry arose, and, what a little surprised me, among religious men, who affirmed, not that I stated perfection wrong, but that “there is no perfection on earth;” nay, and fell vehemently on my brother and me for affirming the contrary. We scarce expected so rough an attack from these; especially as we were clear on justification by faith, and careful to ascribe the whole of salvation to the mere grace of God. But what most surprised us, was, that we were-said to “dishonor Christ,” by asserting that he “saveth to the uttermost;” by maintaining he will reign in our hearts alone, and subdue all things to himself.

12. I think it was in the latter end of the year 1740, that I had a conversation with Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London, at Whitehall. He asked me what I meant by perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking, he said, “Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world. If any one then can confute what you say, he may have free leave.” I answered, “My Lord, I will;” and accordingly wrote and published the sermon on Christian perfection.

In this I endeavored to show,

- (1.) In what sense Christians are not,
- (2.) In what sense they are, perfect.

“(1.) In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation; to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behavior. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirit return to God; neither can we expect till then to be wholly freed from temptation; for ‘the servant is not above his master.’ But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on

earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which does not admit of a continual increase.

“(2.) In what sense then are they perfect? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly; and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what, if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence, that ‘all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live.’

“But does not the Scripture say, ‘A just man sinneth seven times a day?’ It does not. Indeed it says, ‘A just man falleth seven times.’ But this is quite another thing; for, First, the words, *a day*, are not in the text. Secondly, here is no mention of *falling into sin* at all. What is here mentioned, is, *falling into temporal affliction*.

“But elsewhere Solomon says, ‘There is no man that sinneth not.’ Doubtless thus it was in the days of Solomon; yea, and from Solomon to Christ there was then no man that sinned not. But whatever was the case of those under the law, we may safely affirm, with St. John, that, since the gospel was given, ‘he that is born of God sinneth not.’

“The privileges of Christians are in nowise to be measured by what the Old Testament records concerning those who were under the Jewish dispensation; seeing the fullness of time is now come, the Holy Ghost is now given, the great salvation of God is now brought to men by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of heaven is now set up on earth, concerning which the Spirit of God declared of old time, (so far is David from being the pattern or standard of Christian perfection,) ‘He that is feeble among them, at that day, shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as the angel of the Lord before them.’” (Zechariah 12:8.)

“But the Apostles themselves committed sin; Peter by dissembling, Paul by his sharp contention with Barnabas. Suppose they did, will you argue thus: ‘If two of the Apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians, in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live?’ Nay, God forbid

we should thus speak. No necessity of sin was laid upon them; the grace of God was surely sufficient for them. And it is sufficient for us at this day.

“But St. James says, ‘In many things we offend all.’ True; but who are the persons here spoken of? Why, those ‘many masters’ or teachers whom God had not sent; not the Apostle himself, nor any real Christian. That in the word *we*, used by a figure of speech, common in all other as well as the inspired writings, the Apostle could not possibly include himself, or any other true believer, appears, First, from the ninth verse, ‘Therewith bless we God, and therewith curse we men.’ Surely not we Apostles! not we believers! Secondly, from the words preceding the text: ‘My brethren, be not many masters,’ or teachers, ‘knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all.’ *We!* Who? Not the Apostles nor true believers, but they who were to ‘receive the greater condemnation,’ because of those many offenses. Nay, Thirdly, the verse itself proves, that ‘we offend all,’ cannot be spoken either of all men or all Christians. For in it immediately follows the mention of a man who ‘offends not,’ as the *we* first mentioned did; from whom therefore he is professedly contradistinguished, and pronounced a ‘perfect man.’

“But St. John himself says, ‘If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;’ and, ‘If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.’

“I answer,

- (1.) The tenth verse fixes the sense of the eighth: ‘If we say we have no sin,’ in the former, being explained by, ‘If we say we have not sinned,’ in the latter verse.
- (2.) The point under consideration is not, whether we have or have not sinned heretofore; and neither of these verses asserts that we do sin, or commit sin now.
- (3.) The ninth verse explains both the eighth and tenth: ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ As if he had said, ‘I have before affirmed, The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.’ And no man can say, ‘I need it not; I have no sin to be cleansed from.’

‘If we say, we have no sin,’ that ‘we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves,’ and make God a liar: But ‘if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just,’ not only ‘to forgive us our sins,’ but also ‘to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,’ that we may ‘go and sin no more.’

In conformity, therefore, both to the doctrine of St. John, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this conclusion: A Christian is so far perfect, as not to commit sin.

“This is the glorious privilege of every Christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect, as, Secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. Indeed, whence should they spring? ‘Out of the heart of man,’ if at all, ‘proceed evil thoughts.’ If, therefore, the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it: For ‘a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.’

“And as they are freed from evil thoughts, so likewise from evil tempers. Every one of these can say, with St. Paul, ‘I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;’ — words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, ‘I live not,’ my evil nature, the body of sin, is destroyed; and positively, ‘Christ liveth in me,’ and therefore all that is holy, and just, and good. Indeed, both these, ‘Christ liveth in me,’ and, ‘I live not,’ are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?

“He, therefore, who liveth in these Christians hath ‘purified their hearts by faith;’ insomuch that every one that has Christ in him, ‘the hope of glory, purifieth himself even as he is pure.’ He is purified from pride; for Christ was lowly in heart: He is pure from desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father: And he is pure from anger, in the common sense of the word; for Christ was meek and gentle. I say, *in the common sense of the word*; for he is angry at sin, while he is grieved for the sinner. He feels a displacency at every offense against God, but only tender compassion to the offender.

“Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins, not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. ‘True,’ say some, ‘but not till death, not in this world.’ Nay, St. John says, ‘Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as he is, so are we in this world.’ The Apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living Christians, of whom he flatly affirms, that, not only at or after death, but ‘in this world,’ they are ‘as their Master.’

“Exactly agreeable to this are his words in the first chapter: ‘God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ And again: ‘If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ Now, it is evident, the Apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world For he saith not, The blood of Christ *will* cleanse, (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment,) but it ‘cleanseth,’ at the time present, us living Christians ‘from all sin.’ And it is equally evident, that if *any* sin remain, we are not cleansed from ‘all’ sin. If *any* unrighteousness remain in the son, it is not cleansed from ‘all’ unrighteousness. Neither let any say that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin: First, because this is confounding together what the Apostle clearly distinguishes, who mentions, first, ‘to forgive us our sins,’ and then ‘to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ Secondly, because this is asserting justification by works, in the strongest sense possible; it is making all inward, as well as all outward, holiness, necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here spoken of is no other than the cleansing us from the guilt of sin, then we are not cleansed from guilt, that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking ‘in the light, as he is in the light.’ It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers.”

It could not be, but that a discourse of this kind, which directly contradicted the favorite opinion of many, who were esteemed by others, and possibly esteemed themselves, some of the best of Christians, (whereas, if these things were so, they were not Christians at all,) should

give no small offense. Many answers or animadversions, therefore, were expected; but I was agreeably disappointed. I do not know that any appeared; so I went quietly on my way.

13. Not long after, I think in the spring, 1741, we published a second volume of Hymns. As the doctrine was still much misunderstood, and consequently misrepresented, I judged it needful to explain yet farther upon the head; which was done in the preface to it as follows: —

“This great gift of God, the salvation of our souls, is no other than the image of God fresh stamped on our hearts. It is a ‘renewal of believers in the spirit of their minds, after the likeness of Him that created them.’ God hath now laid ‘the ax unto the root of the tree, purifying their hearts by faith,’ and ‘cleansing all the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.’ Having this hope, that they shall see God as he is, they ‘purify themselves even as he is pure,’ and are ‘holy, as he that hath called them is holy, in all manner of conversation.’ Not that they have already attained all that they shall attain, either are already in this sense perfect. But they daily ‘go on from strength to strength; beholding’ now, ‘as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.’

“And ‘where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;’ such liberty ‘from the law of sin and death,’ as the children of this world will not believe, though a man declare it unto them. ‘The Son hath made them free’ who are thus ‘born of God,’ from that great root of sin and bitterness, pride. They feel that all their ‘sufficiency is of God,’ that it is He alone who ‘is in all their thoughts,’ and worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.’ They feel that ‘it is not they’ that ‘speak, but the Spirit of’ their ‘Father who speaketh’ in them, and that whatsoever is done by their hands, ‘the Father who is in them, he doeth the works.’ So that God is to them all in all, and they are nothing in his sight. They are freed from self-will, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God; not supplies in want, not ease in pain,⁴¹ nor life, or death, or any creature; but continually crying in their inmost soul, ‘Father, thy will be done.’ They are freed from evil thoughts, so that they cannot enter into them, no, not for a moment. Aforetime, when an evil thought came in, they looked up,

and it vanished away. But now it does not come in, there being no room for this, in a soul which is full of God. They are free from wanderings in prayer. Whensoever they pour out their hearts in a more immediate manner before God, they have no thought of anything past,⁴² or absent, or to come, but of God alone. In times past, they had wandering thoughts darted in, which yet fled away like smoke; but now that smoke does not rise at all. They have no fear or doubt, either as to their state in general, or as to any particular action.⁴³ The ‘unction from the Holy One’ teacheth them every hour what they shall do, and what they shall speak;⁴⁴ nor therefore have they any need to reason concerning it.⁴⁵ They are in one sense freed from temptations; for though numberless temptations fly about them, yet they trouble them not.⁴⁶ At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are steadfast and unmovable. Their peace, flowing, as a river, ‘passeth all understanding,’ and they ‘rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.’ For they ‘are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption,’ having the witness in themselves, that ‘there is laid up for’ them a ‘crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give’ them ‘in that day.’⁴⁷

“Not that every one is a child of the devil, till he is thus renewed in love: On the contrary, whoever has ‘a sure confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven,’ he is a child of God, and, if he abide in him, an heir of all the promises. Neither ought he in anywise to cast away his confidence, or to deny the faith he has received, because it is weak, or because it is ‘tried with fire,’ so that his soul is ‘in heaviness through manifold temptations.’

“Neither dare we affirm, as some have done that all this salvation is given at once. There is indeed an instantaneous, as well as a gradual, work of God in his children; and there wants not, we know, a cloud of witnesses, who have received, in one moment, either a clear sense of the forgiveness of their sins, or the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person’s receiving, in one and the same moment, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, a clean heart.

“Indeed, how God may work, we cannot tell; but the general manner wherein he does work is this: Those who once trusted in themselves that they were righteous, that they were rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, are, by the Spirit of God applying his word, convinced that they are poor and naked. All the things that they have done are brought to their remembrance and set in array before them, so that they see the wrath of God hanging over their heads, and feel that they deserve the damnation of hell. In their trouble they cry unto the Lord, and he shows them that he hath taken away their sins, and opens the kingdom of heaven in their hearts, ‘righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ Sorrow and pain are fled away, and ‘sin has no more dominion over’ them. Knowing they are justified freely through faith in his blood, they ‘have peace with God through Jesus Christ;’ they ‘rejoice in hope of the glory of God,’ and ‘the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.’

“In this peace they remain for days, or weeks, or months, and commonly suppose they shall not know war any more; till some of their old enemies, their bosom sins, or the sin which did most easily beset them, (perhaps anger or desire,) assault them again, and thrust sore at them, that they may fall. Then arises fear, that they shall not endure to the end; and often doubt, whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves in thinking their sins were forgiven. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, they go mourning all the day long. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for himself, sending them the Holy Ghost to comfort them, to bear witness continually with their spirits that they are the children of God. Then they are indeed meek and gentle and teachable, even as a little child. And now first do they see the ground of their heart;⁴⁸ which God before would not disclose unto them, lest the soul should fail before him, and the spirit which he had made. Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depths of pride, self-will, and hell; yet having the witness in themselves, ‘Thou art an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, even in the midst of this fiery trial;’ which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible hunger they feel after a full renewal in his image, in ‘righteousness and true holiness.’ Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear him, and gives them a single eye, and a pure heart; He stamps upon them his own image and

superscription; He createth them anew in Christ Jesus; He cometh unto them with his Son and blessed Spirit, and, fixing his abode in their souls, bringeth them into the ‘rest which remaineth for the people of God.’”

Here I cannot but remark,

- (1.) That this is the strongest account we ever gave of Christian perfection; indeed too strong in more than one particular, as is observed in the notes annexed.
- (2.) That there is nothing which we have since advanced upon the subject, either in verse or prose, which is not either directly or indirectly contained in this preface. So that whether our present doctrine be right or wrong, it is however the same which we taught from the beginning.

14. I need not give additional proofs of this, by multiplying quotations from the volume itself. It may suffice, to city part of one hymn only, the last in that volume: —

Lord, I believe a rest remains,
To all thy people known;
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art loved alone;

A rest where all our soul's desire
Is fix'd on things above;
Where doubt and pain and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

From every evil motion freed,
(The Son hath made us free,)
On all the powers of hell we tread,
In glorious liberty.

Safe in the way of life, above
Death, earth, and hell we rise;
We find, when perfected in love,
Our long-sought paradise.

O that I now the rest might know,
Believe, and enter in!
Now, Savior, now the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin!

Remove this hardness from my heart,
 This unbelief remove:
 To me the rest of faith impart,
 The Sabbath of thy love.

Come, O my Savior, come away
 Into my soul descend!
 No longer from thy creature stay,
 My author and my end.

The bliss thou hast for me prepared,
 No longer be delay'd:
 Come, my exceeding great reward,
 For whom I first was made.

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 And seal me thine abode!
 Let all I am in thee be lost:
 Let all be lost in God!

Can anything be more clear, than,

- (1.) That here also is as full and high a salvation as we have ever spoken of?
- (2.) That this is spoken of as receivable by mere faith, and as hindered only by unbelief?
- (3.) That this faith, and consequently the salvation which it brings, is spoken of as given in all instant?
- (4.) That it is supposed that instant may be now? that we need not stay another moment? that “now,” the very “now, is the accepted time? now is the day of” this full “salvation?” And, Lastly, that, if any speak otherwise, he is the person that brings new doctrine among us?

15. About a year after, namely, in the year 1742, we published another volume of Hymns. The dispute being now at the height, we spoke upon the head more largely than ever before. Accordingly abundance of the hymns in this volume treat expressly on this subject. And so does the preface, which, as it is short, it may not be amiss to insert entire: —

- “(1.) Perhaps the general prejudice against Christian perfection may chiefly arise from a misapprehension of the nature of it. We willingly allow, and continually declare, there is no such perfection in this life, as implies either a dispensation from doing good, and attending all the ordinances of God, or a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily connected with flesh and blood.
- “(2.) First. We not only allow, but earnestly contend, that there is no perfection in this life, which implies any dispensation from attending all the ordinances of God, or from doing good unto all men while we have time, though ‘especially unto the household of faith.’ We believe, that not only the babes in Christ, who have newly found redemption in his blood, but those also who are grown up into perfect men,’ are indispensably obliged, as often as they have opportunity, ‘to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of Him,’ and to ‘search the Scriptures;’ by fasting, as well as temperance, to ‘keep their bodies under, and bring them into subjection;’ and, above all, to pour out their souls in prayer, both secretly, and in the great congregation.
- “(3.) We Secondly believe, that there is no such perfection in this life, as implies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance, or mistake, in things not essential to salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities, wherewith the corruptible body more or less presses down the soul. We cannot find any ground in Scripture to suppose, that any inhabitant of a house of clay is wholly exempt either from bodily infirmities, or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any is incapable of mistake, or falling into diverse temptations.
- “(4.) But whom then do you mean by ‘one that is perfect?’ We mean one in whom is ‘the mind which was in Christ,’ and who so ‘walketh as Christ also walked;’ a man ‘that hath clean hands and a pure heart,’ or that is ‘cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;’ one in whom is ‘no occasion of stumbling,’ and who, accordingly, ‘does not commit sin.’ To declare this a little more

particularly: We understand by that scriptural expression, ‘a perfect man,’ one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, ‘From all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.’ We understand hereby, one whom God hath ‘sanctified throughout in body, son, and spirit;’ one who ‘walketh in the light as He is in the light, in whom is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ his Son having cleansed him from all sin.’

“(5.) This man can now testify to all mankind, ‘I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet; not I, but Christ liveth in me.’ He is ‘holy as God who called’ him ‘is holy,’ both in heart and ‘in all manner of conversation.’ He ‘loveth the Lord his God with all his heart,’ and serveth him ‘with all his strength.’ He ‘loveth his neighbor,’ every man, ‘as himself;’ yea, ‘as Christ loveth us;’ them, in particular, that ‘despiteful use him and persecute him, because they know not the Son, neither the Father.’ Indeed his soul is all love, filled with ‘bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.’ And his life agreeth thereto, full of ‘the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love.’ ‘And whatsoever’ he ‘doeth either in word or deed,’ he ‘doeth it all in the name,’ in the love and power, ‘of the Lord Jesus.’ In a word, he doeth ‘the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.’

“(6.) This it is to be a perfect man, to be ‘sanctified throughout;’ even ‘to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God,’ (to use Archbishop Usher’s words,) ‘as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.’ In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to ‘show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.’ O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus ‘be made perfect in one!’”

This is the doctrine which we preached from the beginning, and which we preach at this day. Indeed, by viewing it in every point of light, and

comparing it again and again with the word of God on the one hand, and the experience of the children of God on the other, we saw farther into the nature and properties of Christian perfection. But still there is no contrariety at all between our first and our last sentiments. Our first conception of it was, It is to have “the mind which was in Christ,” and to “walk as He walked;” to have all the mind that was in him, and always to walk as he walked: In other words, to be inwardly and outwardly devoted to God; all devoted in heart and life. And we have the same conception of it now, without either addition or diminution.

16. The hymns concerning it in this volume are too numerous to transcribe. I shall only cite a part of three: —

Savior from sin, I wait to prove
 That Jesus is thy healing name;
 To lose, when perfected in love,
 Whate'er I have, or can, or am;
 I stay me on thy faithful word,
 “The servant shall be as his Lord.”

Answer that gracious end in me
 For which thy precious life was given;
 Redeem from all iniquity,
 Restore, and make me meet for heaven.
 Unless thou purge my every stain,
 Thy suffering and my faith is vain.

Didst thou not die, that I might live,
 No longer to myself but thee?
 Might body, soul, and spirit give
 To Him who gave himself for me?
 Come then, my Master and my God,
 Take the dear purchase of thy blood.

Thy own peculiar servant claim,
 Or thy own truth and mercy's sake;
 Hallow in me thy glorious name;
 Me for thine own this moment take;
 And change and thoroughly purify;
 Thine only may I live and die.

CHOSE from the world, if now I stand,
 Adorn'd with righteousness divine;
 If, brought into the promised land,
 I justly call the Savior mine;

The sanctifying Spirit pour,
 To quench my thirst and wash me clean,
 Now, Savior, let the gracious shower
 Descend, and make me pure from sin.

Purge me from every sinful blot:
 My idols all be cast aside:
 Cleanse me from every evil thought,
 From all the filth of self and pride.

The hatred of the carnal mind
 Out of my flesh at once remove:
 Give me a tender heart, resign'd,
 And pure, and full of faith and love.

O that I now, from sin released,
 Thy word might to the utmost prove,
 Enter into thy promised rest;
 The Canaan of thy perfect love!

Now let me gain perfection's height!
 Now let me into nothing fall;
 Be less than nothing in my sight,
 And feel that Christ is all in all.

LORD, I believe, thy work of grace
 Is perfect in the soul;
 His heart is pure who sees thy face,
 His spirit is made whole.

From every sickness, by thy word,
 From every foul disease,
 Saved, and to perfect health restored,
 To perfect holiness:

He walks in glorious liberty,
 To sin entirely dead:
 The Truth, the Son hath made him free,
 And he is free indeed.

Throughout his soul thy glories shine,
 His soul is all renew'd,
 And deck'd in righteousness divine,
 And clothed and fill'd with God.

This is the rest, the life, the peace,
 Which all thy people prove;
 Love is the bond of perfectness,
 And all their soul is love.

O joyful sound of gospel grace!
 Christ shall in me appear;
 I, even I, shall see his face,
 I shall be holy here!

He visits now the house of clay,
 He shakes his future home; —
 O would'st thou, Lord, on this glad day,
 Into thy temple come!

Come, O my God, thyself reveal,
 Fill all this mighty void;
 Thou only canst my spirit fill:
 Come, O my God, my God!

Fulfill, fulfill my large desires,
 Large as infinity!
 Give, give me all my soul requires,
 All, all that is in thee!

17. On Monday, June 25, 1744, our First Conference began; six Clergymen and all our Preachers being present. The next morning we seriously considered the doctrine of sanctification, or perfection. The questions asked concerning it, and the substance of the answers given, were as follows: —

“QUESTION. What is it to be sanctified?

“ANSWER. To be renewed in the image of God, ‘in righteousness and true holiness.’

“Q. What is implied in being a perfect Christian?

“A. The loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul. (Deuteronomy 6:5.)

“Q. Does this imply, that all inward sin is taken away?

“A. Undoubtedly; or how can we be said to be ‘saved from all our uncleanness?’ (Ezekiel 36:29.)”

Our Second Conference began August 1, 1745. The next morning we spoke of sanctification as follows: —

“Q. When does inward sanctification begin?”

“A. In the moment a man is justified. (Yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout.) From that time a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace.

“Q. Is this ordinarily given till a little before death?”

“A. It is not, to those who expect it no sooner.

“Q. But may we expect it sooner?”

“A. Why not? For, although we grant,

- (1.) What the generality of believers, whom we have hitherto known, were not so sanctified till near death;
- (2.) That few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles were so at that time; nor,
- (3.) He himself at the time of writing his former Epistles; yet all this does not prove, that we may not be so today.

“Q. In what manner should we preach sanctification?”

“A. Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward: To those who are, always by way of promise; always drawing, rather than driving.”

Our Third Conference began Tuesday, May 13, 1746.

In this we carefully read over the Minutes of the two preceding Conferences, to observe whether anything contained therein might be retrenched or altered on more mature consideration. But we did not see cause to alter in any respect what we had agreed upon before.

Our Fourth Conference began on Tuesday, June the 16th, 1747. As several persons were present, who did not believe the doctrine of perfection, we agreed to examine it from the foundation.

In order to this, it was asked,

“How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification?”

“A. They grant,

- (1.) That every one must; be entirely sanctified in the article of death.
- (2.) That; till then a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection.
- (3.) That we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do.

“Q. What do we allow them?”

“A. We grant,

- (1.) That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not perfected in love till a little before their death.
- (2.) That the term *sanctified* is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified.
- (3.) That by this term alone, he rarely, if ever, means ‘saved from all sin.’
- (4.) That, consequently, it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word *wholly, entirely*, or the like.
- (5.) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified, but very rarely of or to those who were wholly sanctified.⁴⁹
- (6.) That, consequently, it behooves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification; but more rarely,⁵⁰ ‘at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.’

“Q. What then is the point where we divide?”

“A. It is this: Should we expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death?

“Q. Is there any clear Scripture promise of this, — that God will save us from all sin?

“A. There is: ‘He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.’ (Psalm 130:8.)

“This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel: ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.’ (36:25, 29.) No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation: ‘Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’ (2 Corinthians 7:1.) Equally clear and express is that ancient promise: ‘The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.’ (Deuteronomy 30:6.)

“Q. But does any assertion answerable to this occur in the New Testament?

“A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So 1 John 3:8: ‘For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil;’ the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction; but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is the assertion of St. Paul: ‘Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish.’ (Ephesians 5:25-27.)

“And to the same effect is his assertion in the eighth of the Romans, verses 3, 4: ‘God sent his Son, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.’

“Q. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?

“A. Undoubtedly it does; both in those prayers and commands, which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

“Q. What prayers do you mean?

“A. Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such in particular are,

- (1.) ‘Deliver us from evil.’ Now, when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining.
- (2.) ‘Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also only be one in us; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.’ (John 17:20-23.)
- (3.) ‘I bow my knees unto the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God.’ (Ephesians 3:14, etc.)
- (4.) ‘The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ (1 Thessalonians 5:23.)

“Q. What command is there to the same effect?

“A.

- (1.) ‘Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.’ (Matthew 5:48.)
- (2.) ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’ (Matthew 22:37.) But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin therein.

“Q. But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?

“A.

(1.) From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, ‘Thou shalt love God with all thy heart,’ cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest; but, while thou livest.

“(2.) From express texts of Scripture:

(a.) ‘The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that, having renounced ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.’ (Titus 2:11-14.)

(b.) ‘He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.’ (Luke 1:69, etc.)

“Q. Is there any example in Scripture of persons who had attained to this?

“A. Yes; St. John, and all those of whom he says, ‘Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as he is, so are we in this world.’ (1 John 4:17.)

“Q. Can you show one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?

“A. To some that make this inquiry one might answer, If I knew one here, I would not tell you; for you do not inquire out of love. You are like Herod; you only seek the young child to slay it.

“But more directly we answer: There are many reasons why there should be few, if any, indisputable examples. What inconveniences would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at! And how unprofitable would it be to gainsayers! ‘For if they hear not Moses and the Prophets,’ Christ and his Apostles, ‘neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.’

“Q. Are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin?

“A. It is very possible we may, and that upon several grounds; partly from a concern for the good of souls, who may be hurt if these are not what they profess; partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainments than our own; and partly from our natural slowness and unreadiness of heart to believe the works of God.

“Q. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith till we are perfected in love?

“A. Why indeed? since holy grief does not quench this joy; since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.”

From these extracts it undeniably appears, not only what was mine and my brother’s judgment, but what was the judgment of all the Preachers in connection with us, in the years 1744, 45, 46 and 47. Nor do I remember that, in any one of these Conferences, we had one dissenting voice; but whatever doubts any one had when we met, they were all removed before we parted.

18. In the year 1749, my brother printed two volumes of “Hymns and Sacred Poems.” As I did not see these before they were published, there were some things in them which I did not approve of. But I quite approved of the main of the hymns on this head; a few verses of which are subjoined: —

COME, Lord, be manifested here,
 And all the devil's works destroy;
 Now, without sin, in me appear,
 And fill with everlasting joy:
 Thy beatific face display;
 Thy presence is the perfect day. (Vol. I.)

SWIFT to my rescue come,
 Thy own this moment seize;
 Gather my wand'ring spirit home,
 And keep in perfect peace.

Suffer'd no more to rove
 O'er all the earth abroad,
 Arrest the pris'ner of thy love,
 And shut me up in God!

THY pristine release, Vouchsafe us thy peace;
 And our sorrows and sins in a moment shall cease.
 That moment be now! Our petition allow,
 Our present Redeemer and Comforter thou! (Vol. II.)

FROM this inbred sin deliver;
 Let the yoke Now be broke;
 Make me thine for ever.

Partner of thy perfect nature,
 Let me be Now in thee
 A new, sinless creature.

TURN me, Lord, and turn me now,
 To thy yoke my spirit bow;
 Grant me now the pearl to find
 Of a meek and quiet mind.

Calm, O calm my troubled breast;
 Let me gain that second rest:
 From my works for ever cease,
 Perfected in holiness.

COME in this accepted hour,
 Bring thy heavenly kingdom in!
 Fill us with the glorious power,
 Rooting out the seeds of sin.

COME, thou dear Lamb, for sinned slain,
 Bring in the cleansing flood;
 Apply, to wash out every stain,
 Thine efficacious blood.

O let it sink into our soul
 Deep as the inbred sin:
 Make every wounded spirit whole,
 And every leper clean!

PRIS'NERS of hope, arise,
 And see your Lord appear:
 Lo! on the wings of love he flies,
 And brings redemption near.

Redemption in his blood
 He calls you to receive:
 "Come unto me, the pard'ning God:
 Believe," he cries, "believe!"

Jesus, to thee we look,
 Till saved from sin's remains,
 Reject the inbred tyrant's yoke,
 And cast away his chains.

Our nature shall no more
 O'er us dominion have:
 By faith we apprehend the power,
 Which shall for ever save.

JESU, our life, in us appear,
 Who daily die thy death:
 Reveal thyself the finisher;
 Thy quick'ning Spirit breathe!

Unfold the hidden mystery,
 The second gift impart;
 Reveal thy glorious self in me,
 In every waiting heart.

IN Him we have peace, In Him we have power!
 Preserved by his grace Throughout the dark hour,
 In all our temptation He keeps us, to prove
 His utmost salvation, His fullness of love.

Pronounce the glad word, And bid us be free!
 Ah, hast thou not, Lord, A blessing for me?
 The peace thou hast given, This moment impart,
 And open thy heaven, O Love, in my heart!

A second edition of these hymns was published in the year 1752; and that without any other alteration, than that of a few literal mistakes.

I have been the more large in these extracts, because hence it appears, beyond all possibility of exception, that to this day both my brother and I maintained,

- (1.) That Christian perfection is that love of God and our neighbor, which implies deliverance from all sin.
- (2.) That this is received merely by faith.
- (3.) That it is given instantaneously, in one moment.
- (4.) That we are to expect it, not at death, but every moment; that how is the accepted time, now is the day of this salvation.

19. At the Conference in the year 1759, perceiving some danger that a diversity of sentiments should insensibly steal in among us, we again largely considered this doctrine; and soon after I published “Thoughts on Christian Perfection,” prefaced with the following advertisement: —

“The following tract is by no means designed to gratify the curiosity of any man. It is not intended to prove the doctrine at large, in opposition to those who explode and ridicule it; no, nor to answer the numerous objections against it, which may be raised even by serious men. All I intend here is, simply to declare what are my sentiments on this head; what Christian perfection does, according to my apprehension, include, and what it does not; and to add a few practical observations and directions relative to the subject.

“As these thoughts were at first thrown together by way of question and answer, I let them continue in the same form. They are just the same that I have entertained for above twenty years.

“QUESTION. What is Christian perfection?

“ANSWER. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies, that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love.

“Q. Do you affirm, that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?

“A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

“Q. But how can every thought, word, and work, be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?

“A. I see no contradiction here: ‘A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.’ Indeed I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes, till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the souls dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes thinking wrong, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

“But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty’s mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin. However, it cannot bear the rigor of God’s justice, but needs the atoning blood.

“Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol in August, 1758, on this head?

“A. It was expressed in these words:

- (1.) Everyone may mistake as long as he lives.
- (2.) A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice.
- (3.) Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law.
Therefore,
- (4.) Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation.
- (5.) It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, ‘Forgive us our trespasses.’

“This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable; namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living without sin. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

“Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

“A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with, himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: ‘As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: Without’ (or separate from) ‘me ye can do nothing.’

“In every state we need Christ in the following respects.

- (1.) Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from him.
- (2.) We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid.

- (3.) We have this grace, not only from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but, severed from it, is dried up and withered.
- (4.) All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need.
- (5.) The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office, to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings, (as some not improperly speak,) their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, 'He that loveth, hath fulfilled the law; for love is the fulfilling of the law.' (Romans 13:10.) Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love; nor therefore, in the Scripture sense, sin.

“To explain myself a little farther on this head:

- (1.) Not only sin, properly so called, (that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law,) but sin, improperly so called, (that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown,) needs the atoning blood.
- (2.) I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality.
- (3.) Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself.
- (4.) I believe, a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions.
- (5.) Such transgressions you may call sins, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above-mentioned.

“Q. What advice would you give to those that do, and those that do not, call them so?

“A. Let those that do not call them sins, never think that themselves or any other persons are in such a state as that they can stand before infinite justice without a Mediator. This must argue either the deepest ignorance, or the highest arrogance and presumption.

“Let those who do call them so, beware how they confound these defects with sins, properly so called.

“But how will they avoid it? How will these be distinguished from those, if they are all promiscuously called sins? I am much afraid, if we should allow any sins to be consistent with perfection, few would confine the idea to those defects concerning which only the assertion could be true.

“Q. But how can a liableness to mistake consist with perfect love? Is not a person who is perfected in love every moment under its influence? And can any mistake flow from pure love?

“A. I answer,

- (1.) Many mistakes may consist with pure love;
- (2.) Some may accidentally flow from it: I mean, love itself may incline us to mistake. The pure love of our neighbor, springing from the love of God, thinketh no evil, believeth and hopeth all things. Now, this very temper, unsuspecting, ready to believe and hope the best of all men, may occasion our thinking some men better than they really are. Here then is a manifest mistake, accidentally flowing from pure love.

“Q. How shall we avoid setting perfection too high or too low?

“A. By keeping to the Bible, and setting it just as high as the Scripture does. It is nothing higher and nothing lower than this, — the pure love of God and man; the loving God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and actions.

“Q. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

“A. At first perhaps he would scarce be able to refrain, the fire would be so hot within him; his desire to declare the loving kindness of the Lord carrying him away like a torrent. But afterwards he might; and then it would be advisable, not to speak of it to them that know not God; (it is most likely, it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme;) nor to others, without some particular reason, without some good in view. And then he should have especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting; to speak with the deepest humility and reverence, giving all the glory to God.

“Q. But would it not be better to be entirely silent, not to speak of it at all?

“A. By silence, he might avoid many crosses, which will naturally and necessarily ensue, if he simply declare, even among believers, what God has wrought in his soul. If, therefore, such a one were to confer with flesh and blood, he would be entirely silent. But this could not be done with a clear conscience; for undoubtedly he ought to speak. Men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel; much less does the all-wise God. He does not raise such a monument of His power and love, to hide it from all mankind. Rather, he intends it as a general blessing to those who are simple of heart. He designs thereby, not barely the happiness of that individual person, but the animating and encouraging others to follow after the same blessing. His will is, ‘that many shall see it’ and rejoice, ‘and put their trust in the Lord.’ Nor does anything under heaven more quicken the desires of those who are justified, than to converse with those whom they believe to have experienced a still higher salvation. This places that salvation full in their view, and increases their hunger and thirst after it; an advantage which must have been entirely lost, had the person so saved buried himself in silence.

“Q. But is there no way to prevent these crosses which usually fall on those who speak of being thus saved?

“A. It seems they cannot be prevented altogether, while so much of nature remains even in believers. But something might be done, if the Preacher in every place would,

- (1.) Talk freely with all who speak thus; and
- (2.) Labor to prevent the unjust or unkind treatment of those in favor of whom there is reasonable proof.

“Q. What is reasonable proof? How may we certainly know one that is saved from all sin?

“A. We cannot infallibly know one that is thus saved, (no, nor even one that is justified,) unless it should please God to endow us with the miraculous discernment of spirits. But we apprehend those would be sufficient proofs to any reasonable man, and such as would leave little room to doubt either the truth or depth of the work:

- (1.) If we had clear evidence of his exemplary behavior for some time before this supposed change. This would give us reason to believe, he would not ‘lie for God,’ but speak neither more nor less than he felt;
- (2.) If he gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein the change was wrought with sound speech which could not be reproved; and,
- (3.) If it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblamable.

“The short of the matter is this:

- (1.) I have abundant reason to believe, this person will not lie;
- (2.) He testifies before God, ‘I feel no sin, but all love; I pray, rejoice, and give thanks without ceasing; and I have as clear an inward witness, that I am fully renewed, as that I am justified.’ Now, if I have nothing to oppose to this plain testimony, I ought in reason to believe it.

“It avails nothing to object, ‘But I know several things wherein he is quite mistaken.’ For it has been allowed, that all who are in the body are liable to mistake; and that a mistake in judgment may sometimes occasion a mistake in practice; though great care is to be taken that no ill use be made of this concession. For instance: Even one that is perfected in love may mistake with regard to another person, and may think him, in a particular case, to be more or less faulty than he really is. And hence he may speak to him with more or less severity than the truth requires. And in this sense, (though that be not the primary meaning of St. James,) ‘in many things we offend all.’ This therefore is no proof at all, that the person so speaking is not perfect.

“Q. But is it not a proof, if he is surprised or fluttered by a noise, a fall, or some sudden danger?

“A. It is not; for one may start, tremble, change color, or be otherwise disordered in body, while the soul is calmly stayed on God, and remains in perfect peace. Nay, the mind itself may be deeply distressed, may be exceeding sorrowful, may be perplexed and pressed down by heaviness and anguish, even to agony, while the heart cleaves to God by perfect love, and the will is wholly resigned to him. Was it not so with the son of God himself? Does any child of man endure the distress, the anguish, the agony, which he sustained? And yet he knew no sin.

“Q. But can anyone who has a pure heart prefer pleasing to unpleasing food; or use any pleasure of sense which is not strictly necessary? If so, how do they differ from others?

“A. The difference between these and others in taking pleasant food is,

- (1.) They need none of these things to make them happy; for they have a spring of happiness within. They see and love God. Hence they rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks.
- (2.) They may use them, but they do not seek them.
- (3.) They use them sparingly, and not for the sake of the thing itself. This being premised, we answer directly, — Such a one may use pleasing food, without the danger which attends those who are not saved from sin. He may prefer it to unpleasing, though

equally wholesome, food, as a means of increasing thankfulness, with a single eye to God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy: On the same principle, he may smell to a flower, or eat a bunch of grapes, or take any other pleasure which does not lessen but increase his delight in God.

Therefore, neither can we say that one perfected in love would be incapable of marriage, and of worldly business: If he were called thereto, he would be more capable than ever; as being able to do all things without hurry or carefulness, without any distraction of spirit.

“Q. But if two perfect Christians had children, how could they be born in sin, since there was none in the parents?”

“A. It is a possible, but not a probable, case; I doubt whether it ever was or ever will be. But waving this, I answer, Sin is entailed upon me, not by immediate generation, but by my first parent. ‘In Adam all died; by the disobedience of one, all men were made sinners;’ all men, without exception, who were in his loins when he ate the forbidden fruit.

“We have a remarkable illustration of this in gardening: Grafts on a crab-stock bear excellent fruit; but sow the kernels of this fruit, and what will be the event? They produce as mere crabs as ever were eaten.

“Q. But what does the perfect one do more than others? more than the common believers?”

“A. Perhaps nothing; so may the providence of God have hedged him in by outward circumstances. Perhaps not so much; though he desires and longs to spend and be spent for God; at least, not externally: He neither speaks so many words, nor does so many works. As neither did our Lord himself speak so many words, or do so many, no, nor so great works, as some of his Apostles. (John 14:12.) But what then? This is no proof that he has not more grace; and by this God measures the outward work. Hear ye Him: ‘Verily, I say unto you, this poor widow has cast in more than them all.’ Verily, this poor man, with his few broken words, hath spoken more than them all. Verily, this poor woman, that hath given a cup of cold

water, hath done more than them all. O cease to ‘judge according to appearance,’ and learn to ‘judge righteous judgment!’

“Q. But is not this a proof against him, — I feel no power either in his words or prayer?

“A. It is not; for perhaps that is your own fault. You are not likely to feel any power therein, if any of these hindrances lie in the way:

- (1.) Your own deadness of soul. The dead Pharisees felt no power even in His words who ‘spake as never man spake.’
- (2.) The guilt of some unrepented sin lying upon the conscience.
- (3.) Prejudice toward him of any kind.
- (4.) Your not believing that state to be attainable wherein he professes to be.
- (5.) Unreadiness to think or own he has attained it.
- (6.) Overvaluing or idolizing him.
- (7.) Overvaluing yourself and your own judgment.

If any of these is the case, what wonder is it that you feel no power in anything he says? But do not others feel it? If they do, your argument falls to the ground. And if they do not, do none of these hindrances lie in their way too? You must be certain of this before you can build any argument thereon; and even then your argument will prove no more than that grace and gifts do not always go together.

“‘But he does not come up to my idea of a perfect Christian.’ And perhaps no one ever did, or ever will. For your idea may go beyond, or at least beside, the scriptural account. It may include more than the Bible includes therein, or, however, something which that does not include. Scripture perfection is, pure love filling the heart, and governing all the words and actions. If your idea includes anything more or anything else, it is not scriptural; and then no wonder, that a scripturally perfect Christian does not come up to it.

“I fear many stumble on this stumbling block. They include as many ingredients as they please, not according to Scripture, but their own imagination, in their idea of one that is perfect; and then readily deny any one to be such, who does not answer that imaginary idea.

“The more care should we take to keep the simple, scriptural account continually in our eye. Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life, — this is the whole of scriptural perfection.

“Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this?

“A. When, after having been fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. Not that ‘to feel all love and no sin’ is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time, before their souls were fully revenged. None therefore ought to believe that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification.

“Q. But whence is it, that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not?

“A. It is hence; they do not judge by all the preceding marks, but either by part of them, or by others that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person attending to them all, and yet deceived in this matter. I believe, there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterwards an entire renewal in the image of God; if to this change, immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal; I judge it as impossible this man should be deceived herein, as that God should lie. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

“Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous?

“A. A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in

that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone, when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought, when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he stills grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

“Q. How are we to wait for this change?

“A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way, (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure,) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith: But God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

“This consideration may satisfy those who inquire, why so few have received the blessing. Inquire, how many are seeking it in this way; and you have a sufficient answer.

“Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein? Who wrestles with God for this very thing? So, ‘we have not, because ye ask not; or because ye ask amiss,’ namely, that you may be renewed before you die. *Before you die!* Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now; today, while it is called today. Do not call this ‘setting God a time.’ Certainly, today is his time as well as tomorrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let

Thy soul break out in strong desire
The perfect bliss to prove;
Thy longing heart be all on fire

To be dissolved in love!

“Q. But may we not continue in peace and joy till we are perfected in love?

“A. Certainly we may; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself; therefore, let not believers be discouraged from ‘rejoicing in the Lord always.’ And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to ‘press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.’ And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound.

“Q. How should we treat those who think they have attained?

“A. Examine them candidly, and exhort them to pray fervently, that God would show them all that is in their hearts. The most earnest exhortations to abound in every grace, and the strongest cautions to avoid all evil, are given throughout the New Testament, to those who are in the highest state of grace. But this should be done with the utmost tenderness; and without any harshness, sternness, or sourness. We should carefully avoid the very appearance of anger, unkindness, or contempt. Leave it to Satan thus to tempt, and to his children to cry out, ‘Let us examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness and prove his patience.’ If they are faithful to the grace given, they are in no danger of perishing thereby; no, not if they remain in that mistake till their spirit is returning to God.

“Q. But what hurt can it do to deal harshly with them?

“A. Either they are mistaken, or they are not. If they are, it may destroy their souls. This is nothing impossible, no, nor improbable. It may so enrage or so discourage them, that they will sink and rise no more. If they are not mistaken, it may grieve those whom God has not grieved, and do much hurt unto our own souls. For undoubtedly he that toucheth them,

toucheth, as it were, the apple of God's eye. If they are indeed full of his Spirit, to behave unkindly or contemptuously to them is doing no little despite to the Spirit of grace. Hereby, likewise, we feed and increase in ourselves evil surmising, and many wrong tempers. To instance only in one: What self-sufficiency is this, to set ourselves up for inquisitors-general, for peremptory judges in these deep things of God! Are we qualified for the office? Can we pronounce, in all cases, how far infirmity reaches? what may, and what may not, be resolved into it? what may in all circumstances, and what may not, consist with perfect love? Can we precisely determine, how it will influence the look, the gesture, the tone of voice? If we can, doubtless we are 'the men, and wisdom shall die with us.'

“Q. But if they are displeased at our not believing them, is not this a full proof against them?

“A. According as that displeasure is: If they are angry, it is a proof against them; if they are grieved, it is not. They ought to be grieved, if we disbelieve a real work of God, and thereby deprive ourselves of the advantage we might have received from it. And we may easily mistake this grief for anger, as the outward expressions of both are much alike.

“Q. But is it not well to find out those who fancy they have attained when they have not?

“A. It is well to do it by mild, loving examination. But it is not well to triumph even over these. It is extremely wrong, if we find such an instance, to rejoice as if we had found great spoils. Ought we not rather to grieve, to be deeply concerned, to let our eyes run down with tears? Here is one who seemed to be a living proof of God's power to save to the uttermost; but, alas, it is not as we hoped. He is weighed in the balance, and found wanting! And is this matter of joy? Ought we not to rejoice a thousand times more, if we can find nothing but pure love?

“‘But he is deceived.’ What then? It is a harmless mistake, while he feels nothing but love in his heart. It is a mistake which generally argues great grace, an high degree both of holiness and happiness. This should be a

matter of real joy to all that are simple of heart; not the mistake itself, but the height of grace which for a time occasions it. I rejoice that this soul is always happy in Christ, always full of prayer and thanksgiving. I rejoice that he feels no unholy temper, but the pure love of God continually. And I will rejoice, if sin is suspended till it is totally destroyed.

“Q. Is there no danger then in a man’s being thus deceived?

“A. Not at the time that he feels no sin. There was danger before, and there will be again when he comes into fresh trials. But so long as he feels nothing but love animating all his thoughts, and words, and actions, he is in no danger; he is not only happy, but safe, ‘under the shadow of the Almighty;’ and, for God’s sake, let him continue in that love as long as he can. Meantime, you may do well to warn him of the danger that will be, if his love grow cold and sin revive; even the danger of casting away hope, and supposing, that, because he hath not attained yet, therefore he never shall.

“Q. But what, if none have attained it yet? What, if all who think so are deceived?

“A. Convince me of this, and I will preach it no more. But understand me right: I do not build any doctrine on this or that person. This or any other man may be deceived, and I am not moved. But; if there are none made perfect yet, God has not sent me to preach perfection.

“Put a parallel case: For many years I have preached, ‘There is a peace of God which passeth all understanding.’ Convince me that this word has fallen to the ground; that in all these years none have attained this peace; that there is no living witness of it at this day; and I will preach it no more.

“‘O, but several persons have died in that peace.’ Perhaps so; but I want living witnesses. I cannot indeed be infallibly certain that this or that person is a witness; but if I were certain there are none such, I must have done with this doctrine.

“You misunderstand me. I believe some who died in this love, enjoyed it long before their death. But I was not certain that their former testimony was true till some hours before they died.’

“You had not an infallible certainty then: And a reasonable certainty you might have had before; such a certainty as might have quickened and comforted your own soul, and answered all other Christian purposes. Such a certainty as this, any candid person may have, suppose there be any living witness, by talking one hour with that person in the love and fear of God.

“Q. But what does it signify, whether any have attained it or no, seeing so many scriptures witness for it?

“A. If I were convinced that none in England had attained what has been so clearly and strongly preached by such a number of Preachers, in so many places, and for so long a time, I should be clearly convinced that we had all mistaken the meaning of those scriptures; and therefore, for the time to come, I too must teach that ‘sin will remain till death.’”

20. In the year 1762, there was a great increase of the work of God in London. Many, who had hitherto cared for none of these things, were deeply convinced of their lost estate; many found redemption in the blood of Christ; not a few backsliders were healed; and a considerable number of persons believed that God had saved them from all sin. Easily foreseeing that Satan would be endeavoring to sow tares among the wheat, I took much pains to apprise them of the danger, particularly with regard to pride and enthusiasm. And while I stayed in town, I had reason to hope they continued both humble and sober-minded. But almost as soon as I was gone enthusiasm broke in. Two or three began to take their own imaginations for impressions from God, and thence to suppose that they should never die; and these, laboring to bring others into the same opinion, occasioned much noise and confusion. Soon after, the same persons, with a few more, ran into other extravagances; fancying they could not be tempted; that they should feel no more pain; and that they had the gift of prophecy, and of discerning of spirits. At my return to London, in autumn, some of them stood reprov'd; but others were got above

instruction. Meantime, a flood of reproach came upon me almost from every quarter; from themselves, because I was checking them on all occasions; and from others, because, they said, I did not check them. However, the hand of the Lord was not stayed, but more and more sinners were convinced; while some were almost daily converted to God, and others enabled to love him with all their heart.

21. About this time, a friend at some distance from London wrote to me as follows: —

“BE not over alarmed that Satan sows tares among the wheat of Christ. It ever has been so, especially on any remarkable outpouring of his Spirit; and ever will be so, till he is chained up for a thousand years. Till then he will always ape, and endeavor to counteract, the work of the Spirit of Christ.

“One melancholy effect of this has been, that a world, who is always asleep in the arms of the evil one, has ridiculed every work of the Holy Spirit.

“But what can real Christians do? Why, if they would act worthy of themselves, they should,

(1.) Pray that every deluded soul may be delivered;

(2.) Endeavor to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness; and,

Lastly, take the utmost care, both by prayer and watchfulness, that the delusion of others may not lessen their zeal in seeking after that universal holiness of soul, body, and spirit, ‘without which no man shall see the Lord.’

“Indeed this complete new creature is mere madness to a mad world. But it is, notwithstanding, the will and wisdom of God. May we all seek after it!

“But some who maintain this doctrine in its full extent are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses his gifts just as he pleases; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a

believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a high degree of the Spirit of holiness.

“God’s usual method is one thing, but his sovereign pleasure is another. He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding his work. Sometimes he comes suddenly and unexpected; sometimes, not till we have long looked for him.

“Indeed it has been my opinion for many years, that one great cause why men make so little improvement in the divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief. And yet I here speak of believers.

“May the Spirit of Christ give us a right judgment in all things, and ‘fill us with all the fullness of God;’ that so we may be ‘perfect and entire, wanting nothing.’”

22. About the same time, five or six honest enthusiasts foretold the world was to end on the 28th of February. I immediately withstood them, by every possible means, both in public and private. I preached expressly upon the subject, both at West-Street and Spitalfields. I warned the society, again and again, and spoke severally to as many as I could; and I saw the fruit of my labor. They made exceeding few converts: I believe scarce thirty in our whole society. Nevertheless, they made abundance of noise, gave huge occasion of offense to those who took care to improve to the uttermost every occasion against me, and greatly increased both the number and courage of those who opposed Christian perfection.

23. Some questions, now published by one of these, induced a plain man to write the following —

“QUERIES, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

- “(1.) Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the Gospel, than under the Jewish dispensation? If not, in what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? (John 7:39.)

- “(2.) Was that ‘glory which followed the sufferings of Christ,’ (1 Peter 1:11,) an external glory, or an internal, viz., the glory of holiness?
- “(3.) Has God any here in Scripture commanded us more than he has promised to us?
- “(4.) Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?
- “(5.) Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to ‘write in our hearts?’ (Jeremiah 31:31, etc.; Hebrews 8:10.)
- “(6.) In what sense is ‘the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?’ (Romans 8:4.)
- “(7.) Is it impossible for any one in this life to ‘love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength?’ And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?
- “(8.) Does the soul’s going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?
- “(9.) If so, is it not something else, not ‘the blood of Christ which cleanseth’ it ‘from all sin?’
- “(10.) If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life?
- “(11.) If when that union ceases, is it not in the next? And is not this too late?
- “(12.) If in the article of death; what situation is the soul in, when it is neither in the body nor out of it?

“(13.) Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what he never designs to give?”

“(14.) Has he not taught us to pray, ‘Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven?’ And is it not done perfectly in heaven?”

“(15.) If so, has he not taught us to pray for perfection on earth? Does he not then design to give it?”

“(16.) Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be ‘sanctified wholly, and preserved’ (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead) ‘blameless in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?’

“(17.) Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?”

“(18.) If you do, did not God give you that desire?”

“(19.) If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?”

“(20.) If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you?”

“(21.) Do you ever pray God to ‘cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that’ you ‘may perfectly love him?’

“(22.) If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?”

“God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!”

24. In the latter end of this year, God called to himself that burning and shining light, Jane Cooper. As she was both a living and a dying witness of

Christian perfection, it will not be at all foreign to the subject to add a short account of her death; with one of her own letters, containing a plain and artless relation of the manner wherein it pleased God to work that great change in her soul: —

“*May 2, 1761.*

“I BELIEVE while memory remains in me, gratitude will continue. From the time you preached on Galatians 5:5, I saw clearly the true state of my soul. That sermon described my heart, and what it wanted to be; namely, truly happy. You read Mr. M——’s letter, and it described the religion which I desired. From that time the prize appeared in view, and I was enabled to follow hard after it. I was kept watching unto prayer, sometimes in much distress, at other times in patient expectation of the blessing. For some days before you left London, my soul was stayed on a promise I had applied to me in prayer: ‘The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.’ I believed he would, and that he would sit there as a refiner’s fire. The Tuesday after you went, I thought I could not sleep, unless he fulfilled his word that night. I never knew as I did then the force of these words: ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’ I became nothing before Him, and enjoyed perfect calmness in my soul. I knew not whether he had destroyed my sin; but I desired to know, that I might praise Him. Yet I soon found the return of unbelief, and groaned, being burdened. On Wednesday I went to London, and sought the Lord without ceasing. I promised, if he would save me from sin, I would praise him. I could part with all things, so I might win Christ. But I found all these pleas to be nothing worth; and that if He saved me, it must be freely, for his own name’s sake. On Thursday I was so much tempted, that I thought of destroying myself, or never conversing more with the people of God: And yet I had no doubt of his pardoning love; but, —

‘Twas worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone.

On Friday my distress was deepened. I endeavored to pray, and could not. I went to Mrs. D., who prayed for me, and told me it was the death of nature. I opened the Bible, on, ‘The fearful and unbelieving shall have their

part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.' I could not bear it. I opened again, on Mark 16:6, 7: 'Be not affrighted; ye seek Jesus of Nazareth. Go your way; tell his disciples he goeth before you into Galilee; there ye shall see him.' I was encouraged, and enabled to pray, believing I should see Jesus at home. I returned that night, and found Mrs. G. She prayed for me; and the Predestinarian had no plea, but, 'Lord, thou art no respecter of persons.' He proved he was not, by blessing me. I was in a moment enabled to lay hold on Jesus Christ, and found salvation by simple faith. He assured me, the Lord, the King, was in the midst of me, and that I should see evil no more. I now blessed Him who had visited and redeemed me, and was become my 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' I saw Jesus altogether lovely; and knew he was mine in all his offices. And, glory be to Him, He now reigns in my heart without a rival. I find no will but his. I feel no pride; nor any affection but what is placed on Him. I know it is by faith I stand; and that watching unto prayer must be the guard of faith. I am happy in God this moment, and I believe for the next. I have often read the chapter you mention, (1 Corinthians 13,) and compared my heart and life with it. In so doing, I feel my shortcomings, and the need I have of the atoning blood. Yet I dare not say, I do not feel a measure of the love there described, though I am not all I shall be. I desire to be lost in that 'love which passeth knowledge.' I see 'the just shall live by faith;' and unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. If I were an archangel, I should veil my face before him, and let silence speak his praise!"

The following account is given by one who was an eye and ear witness of what she relates: —

“(1.) In the beginning of November, she seemed to have a foresight of what was coming upon her, and used frequently to sing these words: —

‘When pain o’er this weak flesh prevails,
With lamb-like patience arm my breast.’

And when she sent to me, to let me know she was ill, she wrote in her note, 'I suffer the will of Jesus. All he sends is sweetened by His love. I am as happy as if I heard a voice say, —

'For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come!'

“(2.) Upon my telling her, 'I cannot choose life or death for you,' she said, 'I asked the Lord, that, if it was His will, I might die first. And he told me, you should survive me, and that you should close my eyes.' When we perceived it was the small pox, I said to her, 'My dear, you will not be frightened if we tell you what is your distemper.' She said, 'I cannot be frightened at His will.'

“(3.) The distemper was soon very heavy upon her; but so much the more was her faith strengthened. Tuesday, November 16, she said to me, 'I have been worshipping before the throne in a glorious manner; my soul was so let into God!' I said, 'Did the Lord give you any particular promise?' 'No,' replied she; 'it was all

That sacred awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

“(4.) On Thursday, upon my asking, 'What have you to say to me?' she said, 'Nay, nothing but what you know already: God is love.' I asked, 'Have you any particular promise?' She replied, 'I do not seem to want any; I can live without. I shall die a lump of deformity, but shall meet you all-glorious: And, meantime, I shall still have fellowship with your spirit.'

“(5.) Mr. M. asked, what she thought the most excellent way to walk in, and what were its chief hindrances. She answered: 'The greatest hindrance is generally from the natural constitution. It was mine to be reserved, to be very quiet, to suffer much, and to say little. Some may think one way more excellent, and some another: But the thing is to live in the will of God. For some

months past, when I have been particularly devoted to this, I have felt such a guidance of his Spirit, and the unction which I have received from the Holy One has so taught me of all things, that I needed not any man should teach me, save as this anointing teacheth.’

- “(6.) On Friday morning she said, ‘I believe I shall die.’ She then sat up in her bed and said, ‘Lord, I bless thee, that thou art ever with me, and all thou hast is mine. Thy love is greater than my weakness, greater than my helplessness, greater than my unworthiness. Lord, thou sayest *to corruption, Thou art my sister!* And glory be to thee, O Jesus, thou art my Brother. Let me comprehend, with all saints, the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of thy love! Bless these;’ (some that were present;) ‘let them be every moment exercised in all things as thou wouldest have them to be.’
- “(7.) Some hours after, it seemed as if the agonies of death were just coming upon her; but her face was full of smiles of triumph, and she clapped her hands for joy. Mrs. C. said, ‘My dear, you are more than conqueror through the blood of the Lamb.’ She answered: ‘Yes, O yes, sweet Jesus! O death, where is thy sting?’ She then lay as in a doze for some time. Afterwards, she strove to speak, but could not: However, she testified her love, by shaking hands with all in the room.
- “(8.) Mr. W. then came. She said, ‘Sir, I did not know that I should live to see you. But I am glad the Lord has given me this opportunity, and likewise power to speak to you. I love you. You have always preached the strictest doctrine; and I loved to follow it. Do so still, whoever is pleased or displeased.’ He asked, ‘Do you now believe you are saved from sin?’ She said, ‘Yes; I have had no doubt of it for many months. That I ever had, was, because I did not abide in the faith. I now feel I have kept the faith; and perfect love casteth out all fear. As to you, the Lord promised me, your latter works should exceed your former, though I do not live to see it. I have been a great

enthusiast, as they term it, these six months; but never lived so near the heart of Christ in my life. You, Sir, desire to comfort the hearts of hundreds by following that simplicity your soul loves.’

“(9.) To one who had received the love of God under her prayer, she said, ‘I feel I have not followed a cunningly-devised fable; for I am as happy as I can live. Do you press on, and stop not short of the mark.’ To Miss M——s she said, ‘Love Christ; he loves you. I believe I shall see you at the right hand of God: But *as one star differs from another star in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection*. I charge you, in the presence of God, meet me in that day all-glorious within. Avoid all conformity to the world. You are robbed of many of your privileges. I know I shall be found blameless. Do you labor to be found of him *in peace, without spot*.’

“(10.) Saturday morning, she prayed nearly as follows: ‘I know, my Lord, my life is prolonged only to do thy will. And though I should never eat or drink more,’ (she had not swallowed anything for near eight-and-twenty hours,) ‘thy will be done. I am willing to be kept so a twelvemonth: *Man liveth not by bread alone*. I praise thee that there is not a shadow of complaining in our streets. In that sense we know not what sickness means. Indeed, Lord, *neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, no, nor any creature, shall separate us from thy love* one moment. Bless these, that there may be no lack in their souls. I believe there shall not. I pray in faith.’

“On Sunday and Monday she was light-headed, but sensible at times. It then plainly appeared, her heart was still in heaven. One said to her, ‘Jesus is our mark.’ She replied: ‘I have but one mark; I am all spiritual.’ Miss M. said to her, ‘You dwell in God.’ She answered: ‘Altogether.’ A person asked her: ‘Do you love me?’ She said, ‘O, I love Christ; I love my Christ.’ To another she said, ‘I shall not long be here; Jesus is precious, very precious indeed.’ She said to Miss M., ‘The Lord is very good; he keeps my soul above all.’ For fifteen hours before she died, she was in

strong convulsions: Her sufferings were extreme. One said, ‘You are made perfect through sufferings.’ She said, ‘More and more so.’ After lying quiet some time, she said, ‘Lord, thou art strong!’ Then pausing a considerable space, she uttered her last words, ‘My Jesus is all in all to me: Glory be to him through time and eternity.’ After this, she lay still for about half an hour; and then expired without a sigh or groan.”

25. The next year, the number of those who believed they were saved from sin still increasing, I judged it needful to publish, chiefly for their use, “Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection:” —

“QUESTION 1. How is ‘Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?’ (Romans 10:4.)

“ANSWER. In order to understand this, you must understand what law is here spoken of; and this, I apprehend, is,

- (1.) The Mosaic law, the whole Mosaic dispensation; which St. Paul continually speaks of as one, though containing three parts, the political, moral, and ceremonial.
- (2.) The Adamic law, that given to Adam in innocence, properly called ‘the law of works.’ This is in substance the same with the angelic law, being common to angels and men. It required that man should use, to the glory of God, all the powers with which he was created.

Now, he was created free from any defect, either in his understanding or his affections. His body was then no clog to the mind; it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly, if he reasoned at all. I say, *if he reasoned*; for possibly he did not. Perhaps he had no need of reasoning, till his corruptible body pressed down the mind, and impaired its native faculties. Perhaps, till then, the mind saw every truth that offered as directly as the eye now sees the light.

“Consequently, this law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right, in every point whatever. He was well able so to do: And God could not but require the service he was able to pay.

“But Adam fell; and his incorruptible body became corruptible; and ever since, it is a clog to the soul, and hinders its operations. Hence, at present, no child of man can at all times apprehend clearly, or judge truly. And where either the judgment or apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore, it is as natural for a man to mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without the one than without the other: Consequently, no man is able to perform the service which the Adamic law requires.

“And no man is obliged to perform it; God does not require it of any man: For Christ is the end of the Adamic, as well as the Mosaic, law. By his death, he hath put an end to both; he hath abolished both the one and the other, with regard to man; and the obligation to observe either the one or the other is vanished away. Nor is any man living bound to observe the Adamic more than the Mosaic law.⁵¹

“In the room of this, Christ hath established another namely, the law of faith. Not everyone that doeth, but everyone that believeth, now receiveth righteousness, in the full sense of the word; that is, he is justified, sanctified, and glorified.

“Q. 2. Are we then dead to the law?

“A. We are ‘dead to the law, by the body of Christ’ given for us; (Romans 7:4;) to the Adamic as well as Mosaic law. We are wholly freed therefrom by his death; that law expiring with him.

“Q. 3. How, then, are we ‘not without law to God, but under the law to Christ?’ (1 Corinthians 9:21.)

“A. We are without that law; but it does not follow that we are without any law: For God has established another law in its place, even the law of faith: And we are all under this law to God and to Christ; both our Creator and our Redeemer require us to observe it.

“Q. 4. Is love the fulfilling of this law?

“A. Unquestionably it is. The whole law under which we now are, is fulfilled by love. (Romans 13:9, 10.) Faith working or animated by love is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted (not sincerity, but) love, in the room of angelic perfection.

“Q. 5. How is ‘love the end of the commandment?’ (1 Timothy 1:5.)

“A. It is the end of every commandment of God. It is the point aimed at by the whole and every part of the Christian institution. The foundation is faith, purifying the heart; the end love, preserving a good conscience.

“Q. 6. What love is this?

“A. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and the loving our neighbor, every man, as ourselves, as our own souls.

“Q. 7. What are the fruits or properties of this love?

“A. St. Paul informs us at large, love is long-suffering. It suffers all the weaknesses of the children of God, all the wickedness of the children of the world; and that not for a little time only, but as long as God pleases. In all, it sees the hand of God, and willingly submits thereto. Meantime, it is kind. In all, and after all, it suffers, it is soft, mild, tender, benign. ‘Love envieth not;’ it excludes every kind and degree of envy out of the heart: ‘love acteth not rashly,’ in a violent, headstrong manner, nor passes any rash or severe judgment: It ‘doth not behave itself indecently;’ is not rude, does not act out of character: ‘Seeketh not her own’ ease, pleasure, honor, or profit: ‘Is not provoked;’ expels all anger from the heart: ‘Thinketh no evil;’ casteth out all jealousy, suspiciousness, and readiness to believe evil: ‘Rejoiceth not in iniquity;’ yea, weeps at the sin or folly of its bitterest enemies: ‘But rejoiceth in the truth;’ in the holiness and happiness of every child of man. ‘Love covereth all things,’ speaks evil of no man; ‘believeth all things’ that tend to the advantage of another’s character. It ‘hopeth all things,’ whatever may extenuate the faults which cannot be

denied; and it 'endureth all things' which God can permit, or men and devils inflict. This is 'the law of Christ, the perfect law, the law of liberty.'

"And this distinction between the 'law of faith' (or love) and 'the law of works,' is neither a subtle nor an unnecessary distinction. It is plain, easy, and intelligible to any common understanding. And it is absolutely necessary, to prevent a thousand doubts and fears, even in those who do 'walk in love.'

"Q. 8. But do we not 'in many things offend all,' yea, the best of us, even against this law?

"A. In one sense we do not, while all our tempers, and thoughts, and words, and works, spring from love. But in another we do, and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the body. For neither love nor the 'unction of the Holy One' makes us infallible: Therefore, through unavoidable defect of understanding, we cannot but mistake in many things. And these mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our temper, and words, and actions. From mistaking his character, we may love a person less than he really deserves. And by the same mistake we are unavoidably led to speak or act, with regard to that person, in such a manner as is contrary to this law, in some or other of the preceding instances.

"Q. 9. Do we not then need Christ, even on this account?

"A. The holiest of men still need Christ, as their prophet, as 'the light of the world.' For he does not give them light, but from moment to moment: The instant he withdraws, all is darkness. They still need Christ as their King; for God does not give them a stock of holiness. But unless they receive a supply every moment, nothing but unholiness would remain. They still need Christ as their Priest, to make atonement for their holy things. Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ.

“Q. 10. May not, then, the very best of men adopt the dying Martyr’s confession: ‘I am in myself nothing but sin, darkness, hell; but thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven?’

“A. Not exactly. But the best of men may say, ‘Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven. Through my union with thee, I am full of light, of holiness, and happiness. But if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but sin, darkness, hell.’

“But to proceed: The best of men need Christ as their Priest, their Atonement, their Advocate with the Father; not only as the continuance of their every blessing depends on his death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so. You who feel all love, compare yourselves with the preceding description. Weigh yourselves in this balance, and see if you are not wanting in many particulars.

“Q. 11. But if all this be consistent with Christian perfection, that perfection is not freedom from all sin; seeing ‘sin is the transgression of the law:’ And the perfect transgress the very law they are under. Besides, they need the atonement of Christ; and he is the atonement of nothing but sin. Is, then, the term *sinless perfection*, proper?

“A. It is not worth disputing about. But observe in what sense the persons in question need the atonement of Christ. They do not need him to reconcile them to God afresh; for they are reconciled. They do not need him to restore the favor of God, but to continue it. He does not procure pardon for them anew, but ‘ever liveth to make intercession for them;’ and ‘by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.’ (Hebrews 10:14.)

“For want of duly considering this, some deny that they need the atonement of Christ. Indeed, exceeding few; I do not remember to have found five of them in England. Of the two, I would sooner give up perfection; but we need not give up either one or the other. The perfection I hold, ‘Love rejoicing evermore, praying, without ceasing, and in

everything giving thanks,' is well consistent with it; if any hold a perfection which is not, they must look to it.

“Q. 12. Does then Christian perfection imply any more than sincerity?”

“A. Not if you mean by that word, love filling the heart, expelling pride, anger, desire, self-will; rejoicing evermore, praying, without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks. But I doubt, few use sincerity in this sense. Therefore, I think the old word is best.

“A person may be sincere who has all his natural tempers, pride, anger, lust, self-will. But he is not perfect till his heart is cleansed from these, and all its other corruptions.

“To clear this point a little farther: I know many that love God with all their heart. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in him. They love their neighbors as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks. Their souls are continually streaming up to God, in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is a point of fact; and this is plain, sound, scriptural experience.

“But even these souls dwell in a shattered body, and are so pressed down thereby, that they cannot always exert themselves as they would, by thinking, speaking, and acting precisely right. For want of better bodily organs, they must at times think, speak, or act wrong; not indeed through a defect of love, but through a defect of knowledge. And while this is the case, notwithstanding that defect, and its consequences, they fulfill the law of love.

“Yet as, even in this case, there is not a full conformity to the perfect law, so the most perfect do, on this very account, need the blood of atonement, and may properly for themselves, as well as for their brethren, say, ‘Forgive us our trespasses.’

“Q. 13. But if Christ has put an end to that law, what need of any atonement for their transgressing it?

“A. Observe in what sense he has put an end to it, and the difficulty vanishes. Were it not for the abiding merit of his death, and his continual intercession for us, that law would condemn us still. These, therefore, we still need for every transgression of it.

“Q. 14. But can one that is saved from sin be tempted?

“A. Yes; for Christ was tempted.

“Q. 15. However, what you call temptation, I call the corruption of my heart. And how will you distinguish one from the other?

“A. In some cases it is impossible to distinguish, without the direct witness of the Spirit. But in general one may distinguish thus: —

“One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride. But instantly my soul is humbled before God. And I feel no pride; of which I am as sure, as that pride is not humility.

“A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows with love. And I feel no anger at all; of which I can be as sure, as that love and anger are not the same.

“A woman solicits me. Here is a temptation to lust. But in the instant I shrink back. And I feel no desire or lust at all; of which I can be as sure, as that my hand is cold or hot.

“Thus it is, if I am tempted by a present object; and it is just the same, if, when it is absent, the devil recalls a commendation, an injury, or a woman, to my mind. In the instant the soul repels the temptation, and remains filled with pure love.

“And the difference is still plainer, when I compare my present state with my past, wherein I felt temptation and corruption too.

“Q. 16. But how do you know, that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?

“A. I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. ‘Hereby know we that we are of God,’ in either sense, ‘by the Spirit that he hath given us.’

“We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit. And, First, by the witness. As, when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our spirit, that our sins were forgiven; so, when we were sanctified, he bore witness, that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of justification;) neither is it afterward always the same, but, like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.

“Q. 17. But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a real change, not a relative only, like justification?

“A. But is the new birth a relative change only? Is not this a real change? Therefore, if we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a real change, for the same reason we should need none, that we are born of or are the children of God.

“Q. 18. But does not sanctification shine by its own light?

“A. And does not the new birth too? Sometimes it does; and so does sanctification; at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness; without which the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the soul could not then abide in the love of God; much less could it rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks. In these

circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony that we are sanctified is necessary in the highest degree.

“But I have no witness that I am saved from sin. And yet I have no doubt of it.’ Very well: As long as you have no doubt, it is enough; when you have, you will need that witness.

“Q. 19. But what scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it?

“A. That scripture, ‘We have received, not the spirit that is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things which are freely given us of God.’ (1 Corinthians 2:12.)

“Now surely sanctification is one of ‘the things which are freely given us of God.’ And no possible reason can be assigned why this should be excepted, when the Apostle says, ‘We receive the Spirit’ for this very end, ‘that we may know the things which are’ thus ‘freely given us.’

“Is not the same thing implied in that well-known scripture, ‘The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit, that we are the children of God?’ (Romans 8:16.) Does he witness this only to those who are children of God in the lowest sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest sense. And does he not witness, that they are such in the highest sense? What reason have we to doubt it?

“What, if a man were to affirm, (as indeed many do,) that this witness belongs only to the highest class of Christians? Would not you answer, ‘The Apostle makes no restriction; therefore doubtless it belongs to all the children of God?’ And will not the same answer hold, if any affirm, that it belongs only to the lowest class?

“Consider likewise 1 John 5:19: ‘We know that we are of God.’ How? ‘By the Spirit that he hath given us.’ Nay, ‘hereby we know that he abideth in us.’ And what ground have we, either from Scripture or reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit, of the Spirit, from being here intended? By this then also ‘we know that we are of God,’ and in

what sense we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

“Not that I affirm that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment. There may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God; but those intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ; and some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all; which I presume more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God.

“Q. 20. May not some of them have a testimony from the Spirit, that they shall not finally fall from God?

“A. They may. And this persuasion, that neither life nor death shall separate them from him, far from being hurtful, may in some circumstances be extremely useful. These therefore we should in nowise grieve, but earnestly encourage them to ‘hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end.’

“Q. 21. But have any a testimony from the Spirit that they shall never sin?

“A. We know not what God may vouchsafe to some particular persons; but we do not find any general state described in Scripture, from which a man cannot draw back to sin. If there were any state wherein this was impossible, it would be that of these who are sanctified, who are ‘fathers in Christ, who rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks;’ but it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are sanctified, yet may fall and perish. (Hebrews 10:29.) Even fathers in Christ need that warning: ‘Love not the world.’ (1 John 2:15.) They who ‘rejoice, pray,’ and ‘give thanks without ceasing,’ may nevertheless, ‘quench the Spirit.’ (1 Thessalonians 5:16, etc.) Nay, even they who are ‘sealed unto the day of redemption,’ may yet ‘grieve the Holy Spirit of God.’ (Ephesians 4:30.)

“Although, therefore, God may give such a witness to some particular persons, yet it is not to be expected by Christians in general; there being no scripture whereon to ground such an expectation.

“Q. 22. By what ‘fruit of the Spirit’ may we ‘know that we are of God,’ even in the highest sense?

“A. By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable long-suffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, godly sincerity; by meekness, calmness, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

“Q. 23. But what great matter is there in this? Have we not all this when we are justified?

“A. What, total resignation to the will of God, without any mixture of self-will? gentleness, without any touch of anger, even the moment we are provoked? Love to God, without the least love to the creature, but in and for God, excluding all pride? Love to man, excluding all envy, all jealousy, and rash judging? meekness, keeping the whole soul inviolably calm and temperance in all things? Deny that any ever came up to this, if you please; but do not say, all who are justified do.

“Q. 24. But some who are newly justified do. What then will you say to these?

“A. If they really do, I will say they are sanctified; saved from sin in that moment; and that they never need lose what God has given, or feel sin any more.

“But certainly this is an exempt case. It is otherwise with the generality of those that are justified: They feel in themselves more or less pride, anger, self-will, a heart bent to backsliding. And, till they have gradually mortified these, they are not fully renewed in love.

“Q. 25. But is not this the case of all that are justified? Do they not gradually die to sin and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before, death God perfects them in love?”

“A. I believe this is the case of most, but not all. God usually gives a considerable time for men to receive light, to grow in grace, to do and suffer his will, before they are either justified or sanctified; but he does not invariably adhere to this; sometimes he ‘cuts short his work.’ He does the work of many years in a few weeks; perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have done or suffered nothing, and who have not had time for a gradual growth either in light or grace. And ‘may he not do what he will with his own? Is thine eye evil, because he is good?’

“It need not, therefore, be affirmed over and over, and proved by forty texts of Scripture, either that most men are perfected in love at last, that there is a gradual work of God in the soul, or that, generally speaking, it is a long time, even many years, before sin is destroyed. All this we know: But we know likewise, that God may, with man’s good leave, ‘cut short his work,’ in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. He does so in many instances; and yet there is a gradual work, both before and after that moment: So that one may affirm the work as gradual, another, it is instantaneous, without any manner of contradiction.

“Q. 26. Does St. Paul mean any more by being ‘sealed with the Spirit,’ than being ‘renewed in love?’

“A. Perhaps in one place, (2 Corinthians 1:22,) he does not mean so much; but in another, (Ephesians 1:13,) he seems to include both the fruit and the witness; and that in a higher degree than we experience even when we are first ‘renewed in love;’ God ‘sealeth us with the Spirit of promise,’ by giving us ‘the full assurance of hope;’ such a confidence of receiving all the promises of God, as excludes the possibility of doubting; with that Holy Spirit, by universal holiness, stamping the whole image of God on our hearts.

“Q. 27. But how can those who are thus sealed ‘grieve the Holy Spirit of God?’

“A. St. Paul tells you very particularly,

- (1.) By such conversation as is not profitable, not to the use of edifying, not apt to minister grace to the hearers.
- (2.) By relapsing into bitterness or want of kindness.
- (3.) By wrath, lasting displeasure, or want of tender-heartedness.
- (4.) By anger, however soon it is over; want of instantly forgiving one another.
- (5.) By clamor or bawling, loud, harsh, rough speaking.
- (6.) By evil-speaking, whispering, tale-bearing; needlessly mentioning the fault of an absent person, though in ever so soft a manner.

“Q. 28. What do you think of those in London, who seem to have been lately ‘renewed in love?’

“A. There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greater part of them. One would expect that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin; whereas these were emptied of sin first, and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner, to make his work more plain and undeniable; and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love, which is often felt even in a justified state.

“It seems likewise most agreeable to the great promise: ‘From all your filthiness I will cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.’ (Ezekiel 36:25, 26.)

“But I do not think of them all alike: There is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these I believe are renewed in love, and have the direct witness of it; and they manifest the fruit above described, in all their words and actions. Now, let any man call this what he will; it is what I call perfection.

“But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness; and others who think they have, are nevertheless, manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say; perhaps one in ten; perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in everything give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy; at least, not always happy; for sometimes they complain. They say, this or that is hard!

“Some are wanting in gentleness. They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reproved or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well; they behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reproved or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly, when they reprove others; and behave roughly to their inferiors.

“Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behavior; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without respect of persons; particularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long, study, endeavor by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned; perhaps they make them so; and then wipe their mouths and say, ‘Why, they deserve it; it is their own fault.’

“Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly without dissimulation; something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

“Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low; their

mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion; they have too much of one, too little of another; or they are not duly mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

“Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigor of the body: Or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind; otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour: Or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul: Or they use neither fasting nor abstinence: Or they prefer (which are so many sorts of intemperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation, which gives them transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified; it doth not tend to, and terminate in, the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not center in God, but rather in itself.

“So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy, and peace. Yet you who are particularly concerned know each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respects above-mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not, then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

“You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

“Q. 29. Can those who are perfect grow in grace?

“A. Undoubtedly they can; and that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity.

“Q. 30. Can they fall from it?”

“A. I am well assured they call; matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought, one saved from sin could not fall; now we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit, and the witness; but they have now lost both. Neither does any one stand by virtue of anything that is implied in the nature of the state. There is no such height or strength of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that cannot fall, this wholly depends on the promise of God.

“Q. 31. Can those who fall from this state recover it?”

“A. Why not? We have many instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common thing for persons to lose it more than once, before they are established therein.

“It is therefore to guard them who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices. But first I shall speak plainly concerning the work itself.

“I esteem this late work to be of God; probably the greatest now upon earth. Yet, like all others, this also is mixed with much human frailty. But these weaknesses are far less than might have been expected; and ought to have been joyfully born by all that loved and followed after righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed men, is no reproach to the work itself, no just ground for accusing a multitude of sober-minded men, who are patterns of strict holiness. Yet (just the contrary to what ought to have been) the opposition is great; the helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking faith and holiness by the false zeal of others; and some who at first began to run well are turned out of the way.

“Q. 32. What is the First advice⁵² that you would give them?”

“A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more: It is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares; especially if you think there is no danger of it.

‘Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God.’ So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not. Mr. L —, for instance, ascribed all the light he had to God, and so far he was humble; but then he thought he had more light than any man living; and this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have; or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man’s teaching; pride lieth at the door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. Morgan, by one another, by Mr. Maxfield, or me, but by the weakest Preacher in London; yea, by all men. For God sendeth by whom he will send.

“Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, ‘You are blind; you cannot teach me.’ Do not say, ‘This is your wisdom, your carnal reason;’ but calmly weigh the thing before God.

“Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is but little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, ‘I have no need of thee.’

“To imagine none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment; it would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No; dominion is not founded in grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard ‘them that are over you in the Lord,’ and do not think you know better than them. Know their place and your own; always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

“The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. O beware of the appearance, and the thing! Let there ‘be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus.’ And ‘be ye likewise clothed with humility.’ Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self-diffidence appear in all your words and

actions. Let all you speak and do show that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes.

“As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God; no, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank, when you are taxed with anything; do not seek either to evade or disguise it; but let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn, the gospel.

“Q. 33. What is the Second advice which you would give them?

“A. Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. O keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, ‘believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.’ Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

“I advise you, never to use the words, wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean worldly wisdom, useless knowledge, false reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff, but not the wheat.

“One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer, and steady watchfulness; the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

“Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, ‘God writes all the Scriptures on my heart. Therefore, I have no need to read it.’ Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. O take warning, you who are concerned herein! You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was ‘once delivered to the saints;’ the way that even a Heathen bore testimony of: ‘That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.’

“The very desire of ‘growing in grace’ may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new, beside new degrees of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a new kind, after a new heart, as,

- (1.) The loving God with all our mind;
- (2.) With all our soul;
- (3.) With all our strength:
- (4.) Oneness with God:
- (5.) Oneness with Christ:
- (6.) Having our life hid with Christ in God:
- (7.) Being dead with Christ:
- (8.) Rising with him:
- (9.) The sitting with him in heavenly places:
- (10.) The being taken up into his throne:
- (11.) The being in the New Jerusalem:
- (12.) The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men:
- (13.) The being dead to all works:
- (14.) The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

“One ground of many of these mistakes is, the taking every fresh, strong application of any of these scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a new kind; not knowing that several of these scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the moment we are sanctified. It remains only to experience them in higher degrees. This is all we have to expect.

“Another ground of these, and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God; humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above-mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to, it.

“It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this, — ‘the heaven of heavens is love.’ There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, ‘Have you received this or that blessing?’ if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham’s bosom.

“I say yet again, beware of enthusiasm. Such is, the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings. This is no scriptural way of judging. O keep close to ‘the law and to the testimony!’

“Q. 34. What is the Third?

“A. Beware of Antinomianism; ‘making void the law,’ or any part of it, ‘through faith.’ Enthusiasm naturally leads to this; indeed they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of everything, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that ‘Christ is the end of the law,’ may betray us into it, if we do not consider that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, ‘Because I am filled with love, I need not have so much holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination.’ Let us ‘magnify the law,’ the whole written

word, 'and make it honorable.' Let this be our voice: 'I prize thy commandments above gold or precious stones. O what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it.' Beware of Antinomian books; particularly the works of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things; and this makes them the more dangerous. O be warned in time! Do not play with fire. Do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice' den. I entreat you, beware of bigotry. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists, so called, only; much less to that very small part of them who seem to be renewed in love; or to those who believe yours and their report. O make not this your Shibboleth! Beware of stillness; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many: 'You have received,' says one, 'a great blessing. But you began to talk of it, and to do this and that; so you lost it. You should have been still.'

"Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censoriousness; thinking or calling them that anyways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or 'enemies to the work.' Once more, beware of Solifidianism; crying nothing but, 'Believe, believe!' and condemning those as ignorant or legal who speak in a more scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness; but, in general, our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest bunches; as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honor all men. So, likewise, the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of 'whatsoever is lovely.' And this with the greatest propriety: For as 'by works faith is made perfect,' so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favor, or suffering the displeasure, of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience.

“Q. 35. What is the Fourth?

“A. Beware of sins of omission; lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works; willingly omit no work, either of piety or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can to the bodies and souls of men. Particularly, ‘thou shalt in anywise reprove thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.’ Be active. Give no place to indolence or sloth; give no occasion to say, ‘Ye are idle, ye are idle.’ Many will say so still; but let your whole spirit and behavior refute the slander. Be always employed; lose no shred of time; gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost. And whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Be ‘slow to speak,’ and wary in speaking. ‘In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin.’ Do not talk much; neither long at a time. Few can converse profitably above an hour. Keep at the utmost distance from pious chit-chat, from religious gossiping.

“Q. 36. What is the Fifth?

“A. Beware of desiring anything but God. Now you desire nothing else; every other desire is driven out; see that none enter again. ‘Keep thyself pure;’ let your ‘eye’ remain ‘single, and your whole body shall be fill of light.’ Admit no desire of pleasing food, or any other pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye or the imagination, by anything grand, or new, or beautiful; no desire of money, of praise, or esteem; of happiness in any creature. You may bring these desires back; but you need not; you need feel them no more. O stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

“Be patterns to all, of denying yourselves, and taking up your cross daily. Let them see that you make no account of any pleasure which does not bring you nearer to God, nor regard any pain which does; that you simply aim at pleasing him, whether by doing or suffering; that the constant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honor or dishonor, riches or poverty, is,

‘All’s alike to me, so I
In my Lord may live and die!’

“Q. 37. What is the Sixth?

“A. Beware of schism, of making a rent in the Church of Christ. That inward disunion, the members ceasing to have a reciprocal love ‘one for another,’ (1 Corinthians 12:25,) is the very root of all contention, and every outward separation. Beware of everything tending thereto. Beware of a dividing spirit; shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore, say not, ‘I am of Paul or of Apollos;’ the very thing which occasioned the schism at Corinth. Say not, ‘This is my Preacher; the best Preacher in England. Give me him, and take all the rest.’ All this tends to breed or foment division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not despise or run down any Preacher; do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both him and the cause of God. On the other hand, do not bear hard upon any by reason of some incoherency or inaccuracy of expression; no, nor for some mistakes, were they really such.

“Likewise, if you would avoid schism, observe every rule of the Society, and of the Bands, for conscience’ sake. Never omit meeting your Class or Band; never absent yourself from any public meeting. These are the very sinews of our Society; and whatever weakens, or tends to weaken, our regard for these, or our exactness in attending them, strikes at the very root of our community. As one saith, ‘That part; of our economy, the private weekly meetings for prayer, examination, and particular exhortation, has been the greatest means of deepening and confirming every blessing that was received by the word preached, and of diffusing it to others, who could not attend the public ministry; whereas, without this religious connection and intercourse, the most ardent attempts, by mere preaching, have proved of no lasting use.’

“Suffer not one thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with yours or not. Do not dream that any man sins in not believing you, in not taking your word; or that this or that opinion is essential to the work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of impatience of contradiction. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or a small. I fear some of us have thought hardly of

others, merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to division; and, by everything of this kind, we are teaching them an evil lesson against ourselves.

“O beware of touchiness, of testiness, not bearing to be spoken to; starting at the least word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another’s sayings!

“Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul: ‘To you it is given, in the behalf of Christ,’ — for his sake, as a fruit of his death and intercession for you, — ‘not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake.’ (Philippians 1:29.) *It is given!* God gives you this opposition or reproach; it is a fresh token of his love. And will you disown the Giver; or spurn his gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you not rather say, ‘Father, the hour is come, that thou shouldest be glorified: Now thou givest thy child to suffer something for thee: Do with me according to thy will?’ Know that these things, far from being hindrances to the work of God, or to your soul, unless by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of Providence, but profitable, yea, necessary, for you. Therefore, receive them from God (not from chance) with willingness, with thankfulness. Receive them from men with humility, meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness. Why should not even your outward appearance and manner be soft? Remember the character of Lady Cutts: ‘It was said of the Roman Emperor Titus, Never anyone came displeased from him. But it might be said of her, Never anyone went displeased to her: So secure were all of the kind and favorable reception which they would meet with from her.’

“Beware of tempting others to separate from you. Give no offense which can possibly be avoided; see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself: You may not, indeed, deny the work of God; but speak of it, when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words; indeed, you need give it no general name; neither perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you. You may say, ‘At such a time I felt a change

which I am not able to express; and since that time, I have not felt pride, or self-will, or anger, or unbelief; nor anything but a fullness of love to God and to all mankind.’ And answer any other plain question that is asked with modesty and simplicity.

“And if any of you should at any time fall from what you now are, if you should again feel pride or unbelief, or any temper from which you are now delivered; do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the peril of your soul. At all events go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a word in season, which shall be health to your soul. And surely He will again lift up your head, and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice.

“Q. 38. What is the last advice that you would give them?

“A. Be exemplary in all things; particularly in outward things, (as in dress,) in little things, in the laying out of your money, (avoiding every needless expense,) in deep, steady seriousness, and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation. So shall you be ‘a light shining in a dark place.’ So shall you daily ‘grow in grace,’ till ‘an entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.’

“Most of the preceding advises are strongly enforced in the following reflections; which I recommend to your deep and frequent consideration, next to the holy Scriptures: —

“(1.) The sea is an excellent figure of the fullness of God, and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return into the sea; so the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous, return into God, to live there in his eternal repose.

“Although all the graces of God depend on his mere bounty, yet is He pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, the instructions, and the holiness of those with whom we are. By strong though invisible attractions He draws some souls through their intercourse with others.

“The sympathies formed by grace far surpass those formed by nature.

“The truly devout show that passions as naturally flow from true as from false love; so deeply sensible are they of the goods and evils of those whom they love for God’s sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love.

“The bottom of the soul may be in repose, even while we are in many outward troubles; just as the bottom of the sea is calm, while the surface is strongly agitated.

“The best helps to growth in grace are the ill usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account, — that our will has no part therein.

“The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is, to be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

“If we suffer persecution and affliction in a right manner, we attain a larger measure of conformity to Christ, by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating his mercy, in abundance of good works.

“One of the greatest evidences of God’s love to those that love him is, to send them afflictions, with grace to bear them.

“Even in the greatest afflictions, we ought to testify to God, that, in receiving them from his hand, we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by Him who loves us, and whom we love.

“The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to himself is, to afflict him in that he loves most, and with good reason; and to

cause this affliction to arise from some good action done with a single eye; because nothing can more clearly show him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

- “(2.) True resignation consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God; who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. In order to this we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as His will.

“In the greatest afflictions which can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immovable in peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving regard to Him, uniting in one all the powers of their souls.

“We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us, to bear the defects of others and our own, to confess them to God in secret prayer, or with groans which cannot be uttered; but never to speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine; but; thoroughly willing that God should treat you in the manner that pleases him. We are his lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer, even to the death, without complaining.

“We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true resignation. And since He has born our infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for His sake.

“To abandon all, to strip one’s self of all, in order to seek and to follow Jesus Christ naked to Bethlehem, where he was born; naked to the hall where he was scourged; and naked to Calvary, where he died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing, nor the knowledge of it, is given to any, but through faith in the Son of God.

- “(3.) There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit.

“Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.

impossible to draw profit from suffering; or indeed, to avoid complaint, especially when we think we have given no occasion for what men make us suffer.

“True humility is a kind of self-annihilation; and this is the center of all virtues.

“A soul returned to God ought to be attentive to everything which is said to him, on the head of salvation, with a desire to profit thereby.

“Of the sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper humility in the heart, and a stricter regulation in our words, in our actions, and in our sufferings.

“(4.) The bearing men, and suffering evils in meekness and silence, is the sum of a Christian life.

“God is the first object of our love: Its next office is, to bear the defects of others. And we should begin the practice of this amidst our own household.

“We should chiefly exercise our love towards them who most shock either our way of thinking, or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

“(5.) God hardly gives his Spirit even to those whom he has established in grace, if they do not pray for it on all occasions not only once, but many times.

“God does nothing but in answer to prayer; and even they who have been converted to God without praying for it themselves, (which is exceeding rare,) were not without the prayers of others.

Every new victory which a soul gains is the effect of a new prayer.

“On every occasion of uneasiness, we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain about what success they may have.

“In the greatest temptations, a single look to Christ, and the barely pronouncing his name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

“God’s command to ‘pray without ceasing’ is founded on the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.

“Whether we think of, or speak to, God, whether we act; or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love, and the desire of pleasing him.

“All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice.

“Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

“In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

“As the furious hate which the devil bears us is termed the roaring of a lion, so our vehement love may be termed crying after God.

“God only requires of his adult children, that their hearts be truly purified, and that they offer him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love. For these desires, being the genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers that can spring from it.

“(6.) It is scarce conceivable how strait the way is wherein God leads them that follow him; and how dependent on him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to him.

“It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God the smallest things are; and what great inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

“As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin which is upon the heart will hinder its right motion towards God.

“We ought to be in the church as the saints are in heaven, and in the house as the holiest men are in the church; doing our work in the house as we pray in the church; worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

“We should be continually laboring to cut off all the useless things that surround us; and God usually retrenches the superfluities of our souls in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

“The best means of resisting the devil is, to destroy whatever of the world remains in us, in order to raise for God, upon its ruins, a building all of love. Then shall we begin, in this fleeting life, to love God as we shall love him in eternity.

“We scarce conceive how easy it is to rob God of his due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produce lasting sorrow, that is

a clear proof that we had before two treasures, between which we divided our heart.

“(7.) If, after having renounced all, we do not watch incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with his, we shall be again entangled and overcome.

“As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

“It is good to renew ourselves, from time to time, by closely examining the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before; for nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by this means in humility, and the exercise of all good works.

“To continual watchfulness and prayer ought to be added continual employment. For grace flies a vacuum as well as nature; and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

“There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a guide of souls and the person directed by him. They ought continually to regard each other in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and all their words directed with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the things of men; but these are peculiarly the things of God.

“(8.) The words of St. Paul, ‘No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,’ show us the necessity of eyeing God in our good works, and even in our minutest thoughts; known, that none are pleasing to him, but those which he forms in us and with us. From hence we learn that we cannot serve him, unless he use our tongue, hands, and heart, to do by himself and his Spirit whatever he would have us to do.

“If we were not utterly impotent, our good works would be our own property; whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from him and his grace: While raising our works, and making them all divine, he honors himself in us through them.

“One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And, since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbor; which he receives as if done to himself in person, standing visibly before us.

“God does not love men that are inconstant, nor good works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing to him, but what has a resemblance of his own immutability.

“A constant attention to the work which God entrusts us with is a mark of solid piety.

“Love fasts when it can, and as much as it can. It leads to all the ordinances of God, and employs itself in all the outward works whereof it is capable. It flies, as it were, like Elijah over the plain, to find God upon his holy mountain.

“God is so great, that he communicates greatness to the least thing that is done for his service.

“Happy are they who are sick, yea, or lose their life, for having done a good work.

“God frequently conceals the part which his children have in the conversion of other souls. Yet one may boldly say, that person who long groans before him for the conversion of another, whenever that soul is converted to God, is one of the chief causes of it.

“Charity cannot be practiced right, unless, First, we exercise it the moment God gives the occasion; and, Secondly, retire the instant after to offer it to God by humble thanksgiving. And this for three reasons: First, to render him what we have received from him. The Second, to avoid the dangerous

temptation which springs from the very goodness of these works. And the Third, to unite ourselves to God, in whom the soul expands itself in prayer, with all the graces we have received, and the good works we have done, to draw from him new strength against the bad effects which these very works, may produce in us, if we do not make use of the antidotes which God has ordained against these poisons. The true means to be filled anew with the riches of grace is thus to strip ourselves of it; and without this it is extremely difficult not to grow faint in the practice of good works.

“Good works do not receive their last perfection, till they, as it were, lose themselves in God. This is a kind of death to them, resembling that of our bodies, which will not attain their highest life, their immortality, till they lose themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God, wherewith they shall be filled. And it is only what they had of earth and mortal, which good works lose by this spiritual death.

“Fire is the symbol of love; and the love of God is the principle and the end of all our good works. But truth surpasses figure; and the fire of divine love has this advantage over material fire, that it can re-ascend to its source, and raise thither with it all the good works which it produces. And by this means it prevents their being corrupted by pride, vanity, or any evil mixture. But this cannot be done otherwise than by making these good works in a spiritual manner die in God, by a deep gratitude, which plunges the soul in him as in an abyss, with all that it is, and all the grace and works for which it is indebted to him; a gratitude, whereby the soul seems to empty itself of them, that they may return to their source, as rivers seem willing to empty themselves, when they pour themselves with all their waters into the sea.

“When we have received any favor from God, we ought to retire, if not into our closets, into our hearts, and say, ‘I come, Lord, to restore to thee what thou hast given; and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own nothingness. For what; is the most perfect creature in heaven or earth in thy presence, but a void capable of being filled with thee and by thee; as the air, which is void and dark, is capable of being filled with the light of the sun, who withdraws it every day to restore it the next, there being

nothing in the air that either appropriates this light or resists it? O give me the same facility of receiving and restoring thy grace and good works! I say, *thine*; for I acknowledge the root from which they spring is in thee, and not in me.”

26. In the year 1764, upon a review of the whole subject, I wrote down the sum of what I had observed in the following short propositions: —

- “(1.) There is such a thing as perfection; for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.
- “(2.) It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to ‘go on unto perfection.’ (Hebrews 6:1.)
- “(3.) It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect. (Philippians 3:15.)
- “(4.) It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels, but to God alone.
- “(5.) It does not make a man infallible: None is infallible, while he remains in the body.
- “(6.) Is it sinless? It is not worth while to contend for a term. It is ‘salvation from sin.’
- “(7.) It is ‘perfect love.’ (1 John 4:18.) This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are, rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks. (1 Thessalonians 5:16, etc.)
- “(8.) It is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.

“(9.) It is amissible, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this, till five or six years ago.

“(10.) It is constantly both preceded and followed by a gradual work.

“(11.) But is it in itself instantaneous or not? In examining this, let us go on step by step.

“An instantaneous change has been wrought in some believers: None can deny this.

“Since that change, they enjoy perfect love; they feel this, and this alone; they ‘rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.’ Now, this is all that I mean by perfection; therefore, these are witnesses on the perfection which I preach.

“‘But in some this change was not instantaneous.’ They did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies; yet there is an instant in which life ceases. And if ever sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

“‘But if they have this love now, they will lose it.’ They may; but they need not. And whether they do or no, they have it now; they now experience what we teach. They now are all love; they now rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing.

“‘However, sin is only suspended in them; it is not destroyed.’ Call it which you please. They are all love today; and they take no thought for the morrow.

“‘But this doctrine has been much abused.’ So has that of justification by faith. But that is no reason for giving up either this or any other scriptural doctrine. ‘When you wash your child,’ as one speaks, ‘throw away the water; but do not throw away the child.’

“But those who think they are saved from sin say they have no need of the merits of Christ.’ They say just the contrary. Their language is, —

‘Every moment, Lord, I want
The merit of thy death!’

They never before had so deep, so unspeakable, a conviction of the need of Christ in all his offices as they have now.

“Therefore, all our Preachers should make a point of preaching perfection to believers constantly, strongly, and explicitly; and all believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it.”

27. I have now done what I proposed. I have given a plain and simple account of the manner wherein I first received the doctrine of perfection, and the sense wherein I received, and wherein I do receive, and teach it to this day. I have declared the whole and every part of what I mean by that scriptural expression. I have drawn the picture of it at full length, without either disguise or covering. And I would now ask any impartial person, What is there so frightful therein? Whence is all this outcry, which, for these twenty years and upwards, has been made throughout the kingdom; as if all Christianity were destroyed, and all religion torn up by the roots? Why is it, that the very name of perfection has been cast out of the mouths of Christians; yea, exploded and abhorred, as if it contained the most pernicious heresy? Why have the Preachers of it been hooted at, like mad dogs, even by men that fear God; nay, and by some of their own children, some whom they, under God, had begotten through the gospel? What reason is there for this, or what pretense? Reason, sound reason, there is none. It is impossible there should. But pretenses there are, and those in great abundance. Indeed, there is ground to fear that, with some who treat us thus, it is mere pretense; that it is no more than a copy of their countenance, from the beginning to the end. They wanted, they sought, occasion against me; and here they found what they sought. “This is Mr. Wesley’s doctrine! He preaches perfection!” He does; yet this is not his doctrine any more than it is yours, or any one’s else, that is a Minister of Christ. For it is His doctrine, peculiarly, emphatically His; it is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Those are his words, not mine: **Εσεσθε ουν υμεις τελειοι, ωσπερ ο Πατηρ υμων ο εν τοις ουρσνοις**

τελειος εστι, — “Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.” And who says, ye shall not; or, at least, not till your soul is separated from the body? It is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James, of St. Peter, and St. John; and no otherwise Mr. Wesley’s, than as it is the doctrine of everyone who preaches the pure and the whole gospel. I tell you, as plain as I can speak, where and when I found this. I found it in the oracles of God, in the Old and New Testament; when I read them with no other view or desire but to save my own soul. But whose soever this doctrine is, I pray you, what harm is there in it? Look at it again; survey it on every side, and that with the closest attention. In one view, it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Now, take it in which of these views you please, (for there is no material difference,) and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765.

28. Now let this perfection appear in its native form, and who can speak one word against it? Will any dare to speak against loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves? against a renewal of heart, not only in part, but in the whole image of God? Who is he that will open his mouth against being cleansed from all pollution both of flesh and spirit; or against having all the mind that was in Christ, and walking in all things as Christ walked? What man, who calls himself a Christian, has the hardiness to object to the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God? What serious man would oppose the giving God all our heart, and the having one design ruling all our tempers? I say, again, let this perfection appear in its own shape, and who will fight against it? It must be disguised before it can be opposed. It must be covered with a bear skin first, or even the wild beasts of the people will scarce be induced to worry it. But whatever these do, let not the children of God any longer fight

against the image of God. Let not the members of Christ say anything against having the whole mind that was in Christ. Let not those who are alive to God oppose the dedicating all our life to Him. Why should you who have his love shed abroad in your heart withstand the giving him all your heart? Does not all that is within you cry out, "O who that loves can love enough?" What pity that those who desire and design to please him should have any other design or desire! much more, that they should dread, as a fatal delusion, yea, abhor as an abomination to God, the having this one desire and design ruling every temper! Why should devout men be afraid of devoting all their soul, body, and substance to God? Why should those who love Christ count it a damnable error, to think we may have all the mind that was in him? We allow, we contend, that we are justified freely through the righteousness and the blood of Christ. And why are you so hot against us, because we expect likewise to be sanctified wholly through his Spirit? We look for no favor either from the open servants of sin, or from those who have only the form of religion. But how long will you who worship God in spirit, who are "circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands," set your battle in array against those who seek an entire circumcision of heart, who thirst to be cleansed "from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," and to "perfect holiness in the fear of God?" Are we your enemies, because we look for a full deliverance from that "carnal mind which is enmity against God?" Nay, we are your brethren, your fellow-laborers in the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus. Although this we confess, (if we are fools therein, yet as fools bear with us,) we do expect to love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Yea, we do believe, that he will in this world so "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name."

BRIEF THOUGHTS

ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

SOME thoughts occurred to my mind this morning concerning Christian perfection, and the manner and time of receiving it, which I believe may be useful to set down.

1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God, and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions.

I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore, I retract several expressions in our Hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility.

And I do not contend for the term *sinless*, though I do not object against it.

2. As to the manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant.

But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant.

3. As to the time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before.

I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it may be within five years or five months after it, I know no conclusive argument to the contrary.

If it must be many years after justification, I would be glad to know how many. *Pretium quotus arroget annus?*⁵³

And how many days or months, or even years, can any one allow to be between perfection and death? How far from justification must it be; and how near to death?

LONDON, Jan. 27, 1767.

SOME THOUGHTS

ON

AN EXPRESSION OF ST. PAUL, IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS,

CHAPTER 5, VERSE 23.

1. THE words, as literally translated as the English tongue will bear, run thus: “May the whole of you, the spirit, and the soul, and the body, be preserved blameless.”

What does St. Paul here mean by dividing man into three parts, “the spirit, and the soul, and the body?”

This creates what has been thought an insurmountable difficulty by those who argue thus: —

“How is it possible to contradistinguish the soul both from the Spirit and from the body? For it must be either material or immaterial, matter or not matter: There is no medium. But if it be matter, does it not coincide with the body? If it be not matter, does it not coincide with the spirit?”

But perhaps a way may be found of untying this knot, of unraveling this difficulty, by simply declaring the (at least probable) meaning of these three terms.

May not *the spirit* mean (so it has been understood by the Christians in all ages) the highest principle in man, the immortal spirit made in the image of God, endued (as all spirits are, so far as we can conceive) with self-motion, understanding, will, and liberty?

Is not *the body* that portion of organized matter which every man receives in the womb, with which he is born into the world, and which he carries with him to the grave? At present it is connected with flesh and blood. But these are not the body. They are only the temporary clothing of the body, which it wholly puts off in the grave.

The soul seems to be the immediate clothing of the spirit, the vehicle with which it is connected from its first existence, and which is never separated from it, either in life or in death. Probably it consists of ethereal or electric fire, the purest of all matter. It does not seem to be affected by the death of the body, but envelopes the separate, as it does the embodied, spirit; neither will it undergo any essential change, when it is clothed upon with the immortal body at the resurrection.

May not the Apostle have an eye to this in those remarkable words: — “We that are in this tabernacle” (this corruptible flesh and blood) “do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed,” (divested of all covering, which belongs only to the Father of spirits,) “but clothed upon” with the glorious resurrection-body, covering both our soul and spirit? (2 Corinthians 5:4.) This will swallow up, totally destroy, **το θνητον**, — *that which was mortal*, namely, the flesh and blood, which alone was liable to death.

If we understand the words of the Apostle in this sense, all the difficulty vanishes away. We allow, there can be no medium between material and immaterial. But still there is room for a wide and essential difference between the soul and the body; the latter implying that original portion of matter which is now clothed with flesh and blood; the former, that vehicle of ethereal fire which immediately covers the immortal spirit.

CONGLETON,
March 31, 1786.

ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

TO THE REVEREND MR. DODD.

REV. SIR,

February 5, 1756.

I AM favored with yours of January 26, for which I return you my sincere thanks. Your frank and open manner of writing is far from needing any apology, and I hope will never occasion your receiving such treatment from me, as I did from Mr. Law, who, after some very keen expressions, in answer to the second private letter I sent him, plainly told me he desired to hear “no more on that head.” I do desire to hear, and am very willing to consider, whatever you have to advance on the head of Christian perfection.

When I began to make the Scriptures my chief study, (about seven-and-twenty years ago,) I began to see that Christians are called to love God with all their heart, and to serve him with all their strength; which is precisely what I apprehend to be meant by the scriptural term perfection. After weighing this for some years, I openly declared my sentiments before the University, in the sermon on the Circumcision of the Heart, now printed in the second volume.⁵⁴ About six years after, in consequence of an advice I received from Bishop Gibson, “Tell all the world what you mean by perfection,” I published my coolest and latest thoughts in the sermon on that subject. You easily observe, I therein build on no authority, ancient or modern, but the Scripture. If this supports any doctrine, it will stand; if not, the sooner it falls, the better. Neither the doctrine in question, nor any other, is anything to me, unless it; be the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles. If, therefore, you will please to point out to me any passages in that sermon which are either contrary to Scripture, or not supported by it, and to show that they are not, I shall be full as willing to oppose as ever I was to defend them. I search for truth, plain, Bible truth, without any regard to the praise or dispraise of men.

If you will assist me in this search, more especially by showing me where I have mistaken my way, it will be gratefully acknowledged by,

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

N.B. I had at this time no acquaintance with Dr. Dodd; nor did I ever see him till I saw him in prison.

AN ANSWER TO THE REV. MR. DODD. ⁵⁵

1. YOU and I may the more easily bear with each other, because we are both of us rapid writers, and therefore the more liable to mistake. I will thank you for showing me any mistake I am in; being not so tenacious of my opinions none, as I was twenty or thirty years ago. Indeed, I am not fond of any opinion as such. I read the Bible with what attention I can, and regulate all my opinions thereby, to the best of my understanding. But I am always willing to receive more light; particularly with regard to any less common opinions, because the explaining and defending of them takes up much time, which I can ill spare from other employments. Whoever, therefore, will give me more light with regard to Christian perfection, will do me a singular favor. The opinion I have concerning it at present, I espouse merely because I think it is scriptural. If therefore I am convinced it is not scriptural, I shall willingly relinquish it.

2. I have no particular fondness for the term. It seldom occurs either in my preaching or writings. It is my opponents who thrust it upon me continually, and ask me what I mean by it. So did Bishop Gibson, till by his advice I publicly declared what I did not mean by it, and what I did. This I supposed might be best done in the form of a sermon, having a text prefixed, wherein that term occurred. But that text is there used only as an occasion or introduction to the subject. I do not build any doctrine thereupon, nor undertake critically to explain it.

3. What is the meaning of the term perfection? is another question; but that it is a scriptural term is undeniable. Therefore, none ought to object to the use of the term, whatever they may do to this or that explication of it. I am very willing to consider whatever you have to object to what is advanced under the first head of that sermon. But I still think that perfection is only another term for holiness, or the image of God in man. "God made man perfect," I think is just the same as, "He made him holy," or "in his own image;" and you are the first person I ever read of or spoke with, who made any doubt of it. Now this perfection does certainly admit

of degrees. Therefore, I readily allow the propriety of that distinction, — perfection of kinds, and perfection of degrees. Nor do I remember one writer, ancient or modern, who excepts against it.

4. In the sermon of Salvation by Faith, I say, “He that is born of God sinneth not,” (a proposition explained at large in another sermon, and everywhere either explicitly or virtually connected with, “while he keepeth himself,”) “by any sinful desire; my unholy desire he stiflenth in the birth.” (Assuredly he does, “while he keepeth himself.”) “Nor doth he sin by infirmities; for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will; and without this they are not properly sins.” Taking the words as they lie in connection thus, (and taken otherwise they are not my words but yours,) I must still aver, they speak both my own experience, and that of many hundred children of God whom I personally know. And all this, with abundantly more than this, is contained in that single expression, “the loving God with all our heart, and serving him with all our strength.” Nor did I ever say or mean any more by perfection, than thus loving and serving God. But I dare not say less than this; for it might be attended with worse consequences than you seem to be aware of. If there be a mistake, it is far more dangerous on the one side than on the other. If I set the mark too high, I drive men into needless fears; if you set it too low, you, drive them into hell-fire.

5. We agree, that true “Christianity implies a destruction of the kingdom of sin, and a renewal of the soul in righteousness; which even babes in Christ do in a measure experience, though not in so large a measure as young men and fathers.” But here we divide. I believe even babes in Christ, “while they keep themselves, do not commit sin.” By sin, I mean, outward sin; and the word *commit*, I take in its plain, literal meaning. And this I think is fully proved by all the texts cited Sermon 3, from the sixth chapter to the Romans. Nor do I conceive there is any material difference between committing sin, and continuing therein. I tell my neighbor here, “William, you are a child of the devil, for you commit sin; you was drunk yesterday.” “No, Sir,” says the man, “I do not live or continue in sin” (which Mr. Dodd says is the true meaning of the text); “I am not drunk continually, but only now and then, once in a fortnight, or once in a month.” Now, Sir, how shall I deal with this man? Shall I tell him he is in

the way to heaven or hell? I think he is in the high road to destruction; and that if I tell him otherwise his blood will be upon my head. And all that you say of living, continuing in, serving sin, as different from committing it, and of its not reigning, not having dominion, over him who still frequently commits it, is making so many loopholes whereby any impenitent sinner may escape from all the terrors of the Lord. I dare not therefore give up the plain, literal meaning either of St. Paul's or St. Peter's words.

6. As to those of St. John, cited Sermon 5, I do not think you have proved they are not to be taken literally. In every single act of obedience, as well as in a continued course of it, **ποιει δικαιοσυνην**: And in either an act or a course of sin **ποιει αμαρτιαν**. Therefore, that I may give no countenance to any kind or degree of sin, I still interpret these words by those in the fifth chapter, and believe, "he that is born of God" (while he keepeth himself) "sinneth not;" doth not commit outward sin.

7. But "it is absolutely necessary," as you observe, "to add sometimes explanatory words to those of the sacred penmen." It is so; to add words explanatory of their sense, but not subversive of it. The words added to this text, "Ye know all things," are such; and you yourself allow them so to be. But I do not allow the words willfully and habitually to be such. These do not explain, but overthrow, the text. That the first Fathers thus explained it, I deny; as also that I ever spoke lightly of them.

8. You proceed: "You allow in another sermon, in evident contradiction to yourself, that the true children of God could, and did, commit sin." This is no contradiction to anything I ever advanced. I everywhere allow that a child of God can and will commit sin, if he does not keep himself. "But this," you say, "is nothing to the present argument." Yes, it; is the whole thing. If they keep themselves, they do not; otherwise, they can and do commit sin. I say nothing contrary to this in either sermon. But "hence," you say, "we conclude that he who is born of God, may possibly commit sin." An idle conclusion as ever was formed; for who ever denied it? I flatly affirm it in both the sermons, and in the very paragraph now before us. The only conclusion which I deny is, that "all Christians do and will commit sin, as long as they live." Now this you yourself (though you

seem to start at it) maintain from the beginning of your Letter to the end; namely, that all Christians do sin, and cannot but sin, more or less, to their lives' end. Therefore I do not "artfully put this conclusion;" but it is your own conclusion, from your own premises. Indeed were I artfully to put in anything in expounding the word of God, I must be an arrant knave. But I do not; my conscience bears me witness, that I speak the very truth, so far as I know it, in simplicity and godly sincerity.

9. I think that all this time you are directly pleading for looseness of manners, and that everything you advance naturally tends thereto. This is my grand objection to that doctrine of the necessity of sinning: Not only that it is false, but that it is directly subversive of all holiness. The doctrine of the Gnostics was, not that a child of God does not commit sin, that is, act the things which are forbidden in Scripture, but that they are not sin in him, that he is a child of God still; so they contend, not for sinless, but sinful, perfection; just as different from what I contend for, as heaven is from hell. What the Donatists were, I do not know; but I suspect they were the real Christians of that age; and were therefore served by St. Augustine and his warm adherents, as the Methodists are now by their zealous adversaries. It is extremely easy to blacken; and could I give myself leave, I could paint the consequences of your doctrine, in at least as dark and odious colors as you could paint mine.

10. The passage of St. Peter, mentioned Sermon 12, I still think proves all which I brought it to prove.

"But you allow, (Sermon 14,) that Paul and Barnabas did commit sin. And these were, without all controversy, fathers in Christ." That is not without controversy, — that either Barnabas when he left Paul, or Peter when he dissembled at Antioch, was at that time a father in Christ in St. John's sense; though by office undoubtedly they were. Their example, therefore, only proves what no one denies, namely, that if a believer keeps not himself, he may commit sin. Would the conclusions here drawn "be made only by a very weak opponent?" Then you are a weak opponent; for you make them all, either from these or other premises: For you believe and maintain,

(1.) That all the other Apostles committed sin sometimes.

- (2.) That all the other Christians of the apostolic age sometimes committed sin.
- (3.) That all other Christians, in all ages, do and will commit sin as long as they live. And,
- (4.) That every man must commit sin, cannot help it, as long as he is in the body. You cannot deny one of these propositions, if you understand your own premises.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your affectionate brother,

J. WESLEY.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LATE DR. DODD.

1. I HAVE been frequently desired to give some account of the conversations I had with Dr. Dodd. I could have done this more accurately some years ago, when they were fresh in my memory.⁵⁶ However, I will now set down what I can recollect. And it may enable many who love to think for themselves to form an impartial judgment of one that has been so variously represented.

2. I had no knowledge of Dr. Dodd till he told that excellent woman, Mrs. Lefevre, that he was going to publish something against Mr. Wesley. She advised him to send it to me first. He did so, and was so far at least satisfied with my answer, that his treatise against Christian perfection never saw the light. This was about thirty years ago. And here our intercourse ended; which indeed was very slight, as I had never seen him, either in private or public.

3. When he was imprisoned, he sent to me, desiring to see me. But I was not willing to go, supposing he only wanted me to intercede for him with great men; which I judged would be lost labor. He sent a second time, but I did not go. The gentleman who brought the third message told me plainly, "Sir, I will not go without you." I then went with him to Wood-Street Compter, where the Doctor then was. The Keeper (an extremely well-behaved man) told me, "Sir, of all the prisoners that have been in this place, I have not seen such a one as Dr. Dodd. I could trust him in any part of the house. Nay, he has gained the affection of even these wretches, my turnkeys." When I came into his room, and sat down by his bedside, (for he had then a fever,) we were both of us silent for some time; till he began, "Sir, I have long desired to see you; but I little thought our first interview would be in such a place as this." I replied, "Sir, I am persuaded God saw this was the best, if not the only, way of bringing you to himself; and I trust it will have that happy effect." He said earnestly, "God grant it may! God grant it may!" We conversed about an hour; but I was agreeably disappointed. He spoke of nothing but his own soul, and appeared to

regard nothing in comparison of it. So that I went away far better satisfied than I came.

4. A few days after, I saw him again: the day before he was removed to Newgate, in order to his trial, which was to be the day following. I then stayed but about half an hour. I found him in the same temper as before, affected as one in such circumstances ought to be; but withall, calm and composed. I asked, "Sir, do not you find it difficult to preserve your recollection, amidst all these lawyers and witnesses?" He answered, "It is difficult; but I have one sure hold, —'Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt.'"

5. Being obliged to take a long journey, I did not see him again till after he had lost the hope of life; the sentence which had been referred to the twelve Judges having been confirmed by them. He was now in Newgate. Entering into that house of woe, I was utterly surprised: It was as quiet and still as a College in the University. It seemed as if even the felons were unwilling to disturb him. We conversed about an hour; but had not one word about any but spiritual things. I found his mind still quiet and composed; sorrowing, but not without hope. And I could not but observe, that all these times he never blamed anyone but himself: He did not appear to have the least touch of resentment to any man, receiving everything as at the hand of God.

6. On Wednesday (two days before his death) I paid him one visit more. As we were talking, Mrs. Dodd came in; but when she came near him, she sunk down. He caught her in his arms, and carried her to a chair; but had such a command over himself, that his eyes only spoke, though without tears, being afraid of adding to her distress. I now told him, "Sir, I think you do not ask enough, or expect enough, from God, your Savior. The present blessing you may expect from him is, to be filled with all joy, as well as peace in believing." "O Sir," said he, "it is not for such a sinner as me to expect any joy in this world. The utmost I can desire is peace; and, through the mercy of God, that I have." We then spent a little time in prayer, and I solemnly commended him to God.

7. On Friday morning all the prisoners were gathered together, when he came down into the court. He seemed entirely composed. But when he observed most of them lifting up their hands, praying for him, blessing him, and weeping aloud, he was melted down, burst into tears too, and prayed God to bless them all. When he came out of the gate, an innumerable multitude were waiting, many of whom seemed ready to insult him. But the moment they saw him, their hearts were changed, and they began to bless him and pray for him too. A Clergyman, (Mr. P.,) being desirous to see the last of him, pressed on, though with much difficulty and danger, and kept near him quite to the place of execution. One of his fellow-prisoners seemed to be in utter despair. Dr. Dodd, forgetting himself, labored to comfort him; and strongly applied the promises. After some time spent in prayer, he pulled his cap over his eyes; and, sinking down, seemed to die in a moment. I make no doubt, but in that moment the angels were ready to carry him into Abraham's bosom.

JOHN WESLEY.

THOUGHTS ON A SINGLE LIFE ⁵⁷

1. THE forbidding to marry, as it is well known the Church of Rome does, and has done for several ages, (in which, marriage is absolutely forbidden, not only to all religious orders, but to the whole body of the Clergy,) is numbered, by the great Apostle, among “the doctrines of devils.” And among the same we need not scruple to number the despising or condemning marriage; as do many of those in the Romish Church who are usually termed Mystic writers. One of these does not scruple to affirm, “Marriage is only licensed fornication.” But the Holy Ghost says, “Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled.” Nor can it be doubted but persons may be as holy in a married as in a single state.

2. In the latter clause of the sentence, the Apostle seems to guard against a mistake, into which some sincere Christians have fallen; particularly when they have just found such a liberty of spirit as they had not before experienced. They imagine a defilement where there is none, “and fear where no fear is.” And it is possible this very fear of sin may betray them into sin. For it may induce persons to defraud each other, forgetting the express determination of the Apostle: “The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.” (1 Corinthians 7:4.)

3. And yet we must not forget what the Apostle subjoins in the following verses: “I say to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them, if they abide even as I. Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife. But if thou marry, thou hast not sinned. Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh. I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she

may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit, that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction.” (Verses 8, 27, 28, 32-35.)

4. But though “it is good for a man not to touch a woman,” (verse 1,) yet this is not an universal rule. “I would,” indeed, says the Apostle, “that all men were as myself.” (Verse 7.) But that cannot be; for “every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, another after that.” “If,” then, “they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn.” (Verse 9.) “To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.” Exactly agreeable to this are the words of our Lord. When the Apostles said, “If the case be so, it is good not to marry; he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, who were so born from their mother’s womb; there are some, who were made eunuchs by men; and there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” (Matthew 19:10-12.)

5. But who is able to “receive this saying,” — to abstain from marriage, and yet not burn? It behooves everyone here to judge for himself; none is called to judge for another. In general, I believe every man is able to receive it when he is first justified. I believe every one there receives this gift; but with most it does not continue long. Thus much is clear; it is a plain matter of fact, which no man can deny. It is not so clear, whether God withdraws it of his own good pleasure, or for any fault of ours. I incline to think, it is not; withdrawn without some fault on our part. But, be that as it may, I have now only to do with those who are still able to “receive this saying.”

6. To this happy few I say, (1.) Know the advantages you enjoy, many of which are pointed out by the Apostle himself. You may be without carefulness. You are under no necessity of “caring for the things of the world.” You have only to “care for the things of the Lord, how you may please the Lord.” One care alone lies upon you, how you “may be holy both in body and spirit.”

You may “attend upon the Lord without distraction;” while others, like Martha, are cumbered with much serving, and drawn hither and thither by

many things, you may remain centered in God, sitting, like Mary, at the Master's feet, and listening to every word of his mouth.

You enjoy a blessed liberty from the "trouble in the flesh," which must more or less attend a married state, from a thousand nameless domestic trials which are found, sooner or later, in every family. You are exempt from numberless occasions of sorrow and anxiety, with which heads of families are entangled; especially those who have sickly, or weak, or unhappy, or disobedient children. If your servants are wicked, you may put them away, and your relation to them ceases. But what could you do with a wicked son or daughter? How could you dissolve that relation?

Above all, you are at liberty from the greatest of all entanglements; the loving one creature above all others. It is possible to do this without sin, without any impeachment of our love to God. But how inconceivably difficult! to give God our whole heart, while a creature has so large a share of it! How much more easily may we do this, when the heart is, tenderly indeed, but equally attached to more than one; or, at least, without any great inequality! What angelic wisdom does it require to give enough of our affection, and not too much, to so near a relation!

And how much easier is it (just to touch on one point more) wholly to conquer our natural desires, than to gratify them exactly so far as Christian temperance allows! just so far as every pleasure of sense prepares us for taking pleasure in God.

7. You have leisure to improve yourself in every kind, to wait upon God in public and private, and to do good to your neighbor in various ways, as Christian prudence shall suggest; whereas those who are married are necessarily taken up with the things of the world. You may give all your time to God without interruption, and need ask leave of none but yourself so to do. You may employ every hour in what you judge to be the most excellent way. But if you was married, you may ask leave of your companion; otherwise what complaints or disgust would follow! And how hard is it even to know (how much more to act suitably to that knowledge) how far you ought to give way, for peace' sake, and where to stop! What wisdom is requisite, in order to know how far you can recede from what is

most excellent, particularly with regard to conversation that is not “to the use of edifying,” in order to please your good-natured or ill-natured partner, without displeasing God!

8. You may give all your worldly substance to God; nothing need hinder. You have no increasing family, you have no wife or children to provide for, which might occasion a thousand doubts, (without any extraordinary measure of divine light,) whether you had done either too much or too little for them. You may “make yourself friends of” all “the mammon of unrighteousness” which God entrusts you with; having none that has any right to complain, or to charge you with unkindness for so doing. You may lay out all your talents of every kind entirely for the glory of God; as you have none else to please, none to regard, but Him that lived and died for you.

9. I say, Secondly, prize the advantages you enjoy; know the value of them. Esteem them as highly while you have them, as others do after they have lost them. Pray constantly and fervently for this very thing, that God would teach you to set a due value upon them. And let it be matter of daily thanksgiving to God, that he has made you a partaker of these benefits. Indeed, the more full and explicit you are herein, the more sensible you will be of the cause you have to be thankful; the more lively conviction you will have of the greatness of the blessing.

10. If you know and duly prize the advantages you enjoy, then, (3.) Be careful to keep them. But this (as easy as it may seem) it is impossible you should do by your own strength; so various, so frequent, and so strong, are the temptations which you will meet with to cast them away. Not only the children of the world, but the children of God, will undoubtedly tempt you thereto; and that partly by the most plausible reasons, partly by the most artful persuasions. Meantime, the old deceiver will not be wanting to give an edge to all those reasons and persuasions, and to recall the temptation again and again, and press it close upon your heart. You have need, therefore, to use every help: And the First of these is earnest prayer. Let no day pass without this, without praying for this very thing, — that God would work what with men is impossible; that he would vouchsafe to preserve his own gift, and that you may not suffer

any loss this day, either by the subtlety or power of devils or men, or the deceitfulness of your own heart.

11. A Second help may be, the conversing frequently and freely with those of your own sex who are like-minded. It may be of infinite service to disclose to these the very secrets of your hearts; especially the weaknesses springing from your natural constitution, or education, or long-contracted habit, and the temptations which, from time to time, most easily beset you. Advise with them on every circumstance that occurs; open your heart without reserve. By this means a thousand devices of Satan will be brought to nought; innumerable snares will be prevented; or you will pass through them without being hurt. Yea, and if at some time you should have suffered a little, the wound will speedily be healed.

12. I say, *of your own sex*; for, in the Third place, it will be highly expedient to avoid all needless conversation, much more all intimacy, with those of the other sex; so expedient, that unless you observe this, you will surely cast away the gift of God. Say not, “But they have much grace and much understanding.” So much the greater is the danger. There would be less fear of your receiving hurt from them, if they had less grace or less understanding. And whenever any of these are thrown in your way, “make a covenant with your eyes,” your ears, your hands, that you do not indulge yourself in any that are called innocent freedoms. Above all, “keep your heart with all diligence.” Check the first risings of desire. Watch against every sally of imagination, particularly if it be pleasing. If it is darted in, whether you will or no, yet, let no “vain thought lodge within you.” Cry out, “My God and my all, I am thine, thine alone! I will be thine for ever! O save me from setting up an idol in my heart! Save me from taking any step toward it. Still bring my ‘every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.’”

13. “But holy shall I attain to, or how preserve, this strength and firmness of spirit?” In order to this, I advise you, Fourthly, (need I say, to avoid the sin of Onan, seeing Satan will not cast out Satan? or rather) avoid with the utmost care, all softness and effeminacy; remembering the express denunciation of an inspired writer, *οι μαλακοι*, the *soft* or *effeminate*, whether poor or rich, (the Apostle does not make any difference upon that

account,) “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Avoid all delicacy, first in spirit, then in apparel, food, lodging, and a thousand nameless things; and this the more speedily and the more resolutely, if you have been long accustomed thereto. Avoid all needless self-indulgence, as well as delicacy and softness. All these tend to breed or cherish those appetites and passions which you have renounced for Christ’s sake. They either create or increase those desires which, “for the kingdom of heaven’s sake,” you are determined not to gratify. Avoid all sloth, inactivity, indolence. Sleep no more than nature requires. Be never idle; and use as much bodily exercise as your strength will allow. I dare not add Monsieur Pascal’s rule, — Avoid all pleasure. It is not possible to avoid all pleasure, even of sense, without destroying the body. Neither doth God require it at our hands; it is not his will concerning us. On the contrary, he “giveth us all things to enjoy,” so we enjoy them to his glory. But I say, avoid all that pleasure which anyway hinders you from enjoying him; yea, all such pleasure as does not prepare you for taking pleasure in God. Add to this constant and continued course of universal self-denial, the taking up your cross daily, the enduring “hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” Remember, “the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.” This is the way; walk therein; think not of a smoother path. Add to your other exercises constant and prudent fasting, and the Lord will uphold you with his hand.

14. I advise you, Lastly, if you desire to keep them, use all the advantages you enjoy. Indeed, without this, it is utterly impossible to keep them; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken the word which cannot be broken, which must be fulfilled with regard to all the good gifts of God: “To him that hath,” uses what he hath, “shall be given and he shall have more abundantly: But from him that hath not,” uses it not, “shall be taken even that which he hath.” Would you therefore retain what you now have, what God hath already given? If so, “giving all diligence,” use it to the uttermost. “Stand fast in” every instance of “the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.” Be not “entangled” again in the “cares of this life;” but “cast all your care on Him that careth for you. Be careful for nothing, but in everything make your requests known unto God with thanksgiving.”

See that you “wait upon the Lord without distraction:” Let nothing move you from your center. “One thing is needful;” to see, love, follow Christ, in every thought, word, and work.

Flee the “sorrow of this world;” it “worketh death.” Let not your heart be troubled. In all circumstances, let your soul magnify the Lord, and your spirit rejoice in God your Savior. Preserve a constant serenity of mind, an even cheerfulness of spirit.

Keep at the utmost distance from foolish desires, from desiring any happiness but in God. Still let all your “desire be to him, and to the remembrance of his name.”

Make full use of all the leisure you have; never be unemployed, never triflingly employed; let every hour turn to some good account. Let not a scrap of time be squandered away; “gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.” Give all your time to God; lay out the whole as you judge will be most to his glory. In particular, see that you waste no part; of it in unprofitable conversation; but let all your discourse “be seasoned with salt, and meet to minister grace to the hearers.”

Give all your money to God. You have no pretense for laying up treasure upon earth. While you “gain all you can,” and “save all you can,” “give all you can,” that is, all you have.

Lay out your talents of every kind in doing all good to all men; knowing that “every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor.”

15. Upon the whole, without disputing whether the married or single life be the more perfect state, (an idle dispute; since perfection does not consist in any outward state whatever, but in an absolute devotion of all our heart and all our life to God,) we may safely say, Blessed are “they who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake;” who abstain from things lawful in themselves, in order to be more devoted to God. Let these never forget those remarkable words: “Peter said, Lo, we have left all and followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you,” (a preface denoting both the certainty and importance of what

is spoken,) “There is no man that hath left” (either by giving them up, or by not accepting them) “house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time; and in the world to come eternal life.” (Mark 10:28-30.)

A THOUGHT UPON MARRIAGE.

If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

1. I AM not now about to speak to men of the world, or to them that have only the form of religion; but to you who have experienced, if you do not now, the “faith which worketh by love:” And, in speaking to you, I do not peremptorily assert anything. I barely propose a thought that rises in my mind, and beg you to consider it.

2. You have some thoughts of altering your condition; and we know, “marriage is honorable in all men.” But is your eye single herein? This is worthy your most serious consideration. Retire a little into yourself, and ask your own heart: “What is it moves me to think of this?”

3. I will tell you how it was with me: Though I do not know I was ever low-spirited, (my spirits being always the same, whether in sickness or in health,) yet I was often uneasy. Even in vigorous health, in plenty, and in the midst of my friends, I wanted something; I was not satisfied. I looked about for happiness, but could not find it. Then I thought, “O, if I had but such a person with me, I should surely be happy.” I mused with myself, “How lovely is her look! How agreeably she talks!” I thought of Sappho’s words: —

“Bless’d as the’ immortal gods is he,
The youth that fondly sits by thee;
And hears and sees thee all the while
Softly speak and sweetly smile.”

“Surely, this is the very thing I want; and could I attain it, I should then no more be solitary! For, —

Thou from all shades the darkness wouldst exclude,
And from a desert banish solitude:

Therefore, with her I can be happy; without her I never can.”

4. Perhaps your case is something like mine. Let me then ask you a few questions.

Were you ever convinced of sin? of your lost, undone state? Did you feel the wrath of God abiding on you? If so, what did you then want to make you happy? “To know, my God is reconciled.” You had your wish. You were enabled to say boldly, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” And were not you then happy? “Indeed I was.” In what? In the knowledge and love of God.

5. And if you have now the same knowledge and love of God, does it not answer the same end? Will not the same cause still produce the same effect? If, therefore, you are not happy now, is it not because you have not that intercourse with God which you then had? And are you seeking to supply the want of that intercourse by the enjoyment of a creature? You imagine that near connection with a woman will make amends for distance from God! Have you so learned Christ? Has your experience taught you no better than this?

6. You were happy once; you knew you were; happy in God, without being beholden to any creature. You did not need

Love’s all-sufficient sea to raise
With drops of creature-happiness.

And is it wise to seek it now anywhere else than where you found it before? You have not the same excuse with those who never were happy in God. And how little is the seeking it in any creature better than idolatry! Is it not, in effect, loving the creature more than the Creator? Does it not imply that you are “a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God?”

7. O return to Him that made you happy before, and He will make you happy again. Repeat your prayer, —

“Keep me dead to all below;
 Only Christ resolved to know:
 Firm, and disengaged, and free;
 Seeking all my bliss in thee!”

Seek, accept of nothing in the room of, God. Let all the springs of your happiness be in him. “Seek first,” just as you did before, “the kingdom of God and his righteousness;” the knowledge and love of God; “fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ;” “and all other things shall be added unto you;” particularly joy in the Holy Ghost. Again, —

Know God, and teach thy soul to know
 The joys that from religion flow:
 Then every grace shall be thy guest,
 And peace be there to crown the rest.

JOHN WESLEY.

LISBURN, June 11, 1785.

ADVICE

TO

THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS,

WITH REGARD TO DRESS.

I.

1. I AM not fond of saying the same thing over and over; especially when I have so many things to say, that the day of life (which with me is far spent) is not likely to suffice for them. But, in some cases, it is needful for you that I should; and then it is not grievous to me. And it may be best to speak freely and fully at once, that there may be the less need of speaking on this head hereafter.

2. When we look into the Bible with any attention, and then look round into the world, to see who believes and who lives according to this book; we may easily discern that the system of practice, as well as the system of truth, there delivered, is torn in pieces, and scattered abroad, like the members of Absyrtus. Every denomination of Christians retains some part either of Christian truth or practice; these hold fast one part, and those another, as their fathers did before them. What is the duty, meantime, of those who desire to follow the whole word of God? Undoubtedly, to “gather up” all these “fragments,” that, if possible, “nothing be lost;” with all diligence to follow all those we see about us, so far as they follow the Bible; and to join together in one scheme of truth and practice what almost all the world put asunder.

3. Many years ago I observed several parts of Christian practice among the people called Quakers. Two things I particularly remarked among them, — plainness of speech, and plainness of dress. I willingly adopted both, with some restrictions, and particularly plainness of dress; the same I recommended to you, when God first called you out of the world; and

after the addition of more than twenty years' experience, I recommend it to you still.

4. But before I go any farther, I must entreat you, in the name of God, be open to conviction. Whatever prejudices you have contracted from education, custom, or example, divest; yourselves of them, as far as possible. Be willing to receive light either from God or man; do not shut your eyes against it. Rather, be glad to see more than you did before; to "have the eyes of your understanding opened." Receive the truth in the love thereof, and you will have reason to bless God for ever.

II.

1. Not that I would advise you to imitate the people called Quakers in those little particularities of dress which can answer no possible end but to distinguish them from all other people. To be singular, merely for singularity's sake, is not the part of a Christian: I do not, therefore, advise you to wear a hat of such dimensions, or a coat of a particular form. Rather, in things that are absolutely indifferent, that are of no consequence at all, humility and courtesy require you to conform to the customs of your country.

2. But I advise you to imitate them, First; in the neatness of their apparel. This is highly to be commended, and quite suitable to your Christian calling. Let all your apparel, therefore, be as clean as your situation in life will allow. It is certain the poor cannot be as clean as they would, as having little change of raiment. But let even these be as clean as they can, as care and diligence can keep them. Indeed, they have particular need so to be; because cleanliness is one great branch of frugality. It is likewise more conducive to health than is generally considered. Let the poor, then, especially labor to be clean, and provoke those of higher rank to jealousy.

3. I advise you to imitate them, Secondly, in the plainness of their apparel. In this are implied two things:

- (1.) That your apparel be cheap, not expensive; far cheaper than others in your circumstances wear, or than you would wear, if you knew not God:

(2.) That it be grave, not gay, airy, or showy; not in the point of the fashion. And these easy rules may be applied both to the materials whereof it is made, and the manner wherein it is made or put on.

4. Would you have a farther rule with respect to both? Then take one, which you may always carry in your bosom: “Do everything herein with a single eye;” and this will direct you in every circumstance. Let a single intention to please God prescribe both what clothing you shall buy, and the manner wherein it shall be made, and how you shall put on and wear it. To express the same thing in other words: Let all you do, in this respect, be so done that you may offer it to God, a sacrifice acceptable through Christ Jesus; so that, consequently, it may increase your reward and brighten your crown in heaven. And so it will do, if it be agreeable to Christian humility seriousness, and charity.

5. Shall I be more particular still? Then I “exhort all those who desire me to watch over their souls,” Wear no gold, (whatever Officers of State may do; or Magistrates, as the ensign of their office,) no pearls, or precious stones; use no curling of hair, or costly apparel, how grave soever. I advise those who are able to receive this saving, Buy no velvets, no silks, no fine linen, no superfluities, no mere ornaments, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing, though you have it already, which is of a glaring color, or which is in any kind gay, glistening, or showy; nothing made in the very height of the fashion, nothing apt to attract the eyes of the bystanders. I do not advise women to wear rings, earrings, necklaces, lace, (of whatever kind or color,) or ruffles, which, by little and little, may easily shoot out from one to twelve inches deep. Neither do I advise men to wear colored waistcoats, shining stockings, glittering or costly buckles or buttons, either on their coats, or in their sleeves, any more than gay, fashionable, or expensive perukes. It is true, these are little, very little things, which are not worth defending; therefore, give them up, let them drop, throw them away without another word; else, a little needle may cause much pain in your flesh, a little self-indulgence much hurt to your soul.

III.

1. For the preceding exhortation I have the authority of God, in clear and express terms: "I will that women" (and, by parity of reason, men too) "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered" (curled) "hair, or gold, or pearls," (one kind of precious stones, which was then most in use, put for all,) "or costly apparel; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." (1 Timothy 2:9, 10.) Again: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting" (curling) "the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the ornament of a meet and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (1 Peter 3:3, 4.) Nothing can be more express; the wearing of gold, of precious stones, and of costly apparel, together with curling of hair, is here forbidden by name: Nor is there any restriction made, either here, or in any other scripture. Whoever, therefore, says, "There is no harm in these things," may as well say, "There is no harm in stealing or adultery."

2. There is something peculiarly observable in the manner wherein both St. Peter and St. Paul speak of these things. "Let not your adorning," says St. Peter, "be that outward adorning; but let it be the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." The latter clause is not added barely to fill up the sentence, but with strong and weighty reason. For there is a direct contrariety (as little as we may suspect it) between that outward, and this inward, adorning; and that, both with regard to their source, and with regard to their tendency. As to their source, all that adorning springs from nature; a meek and quiet spirit, from grace; the former, from conforming to our own will, and the will of man; the latter, from conformity to the will of God. And as to their tendency, nothing more directly tends to destroy meekness and quietness of spirit than all that outward adorning, whereby we seek to commend ourselves to men, and not to God. For this cherishes all those passions and tempers which overthrow the quiet of every soul wherein they dwell.

3. Let "them adorn themselves," saith St. Paul, "not with curling of hair, or with gold, pearls, or costly apparel; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." The latter clause is here likewise added for plain and weighty reasons. For,

- (1.) That kind of adorning cannot spring from godliness; from either the love or fear of God; from a desire of conforming to his will, or from the mind which was in Christ Jesus.
- (2.) It no way tends to increase godliness; it is not conducive to any holy temper. But,
- (3.) It manifestly tends to destroy several of the tempers most essential to godliness. It has no friendly influence on humility; whether we aim at pleasing others or ourselves hereby. Either in one case or the other, it will rather increase pride or vanity than lowliness of heart. It does not at all minister to the seriousness which becomes a sinner born to die.

It is utterly inconsistent with simplicity; no one uses it merely to please God. Whoever acts with a single eye, does all things to be seen and approved of God; and can no more dress, than he can pray, or give alms, "to be seen of men."

4. "O, but one may be as humble in velvet and embroidery, as another is in sackcloth." True; for a person may wear sackcloth, and have no humility at all. The heart may be filled with pride and vanity, whatever the raiment be. Again: Women under the yoke of unbelieving parents or husbands, as well as men in office, may, on several occasions, be constrained to put on gold or costly apparel; and in cases of this kind, plain experience allows, that the baleful influence of it is suspended. So that wherever it is not our choice, but our cross, it may consist with godliness, with a meek and quiet spirit, with lowliness of heart, with Christian seriousness. But it is not true that any one can choose this from a single eye to please God; or, consequently, without sustaining, great loss as to lowliness and every other Christian temper.

5. But, however this be, can you be adorned at the same time with costly apparel and with good works; that is, in the same degree as you might have been, had you bestowed less cost on your apparel? You know this is impossible; the more you expend on the one, the less you have to expend on the other. Costliness of apparel, in every branch, is therefore immediately; directly, inevitably destructive of good works. You see a brother, for whom Christ died, ready to perish for want of needful clothing. You would give it him gladly; but, alas, "it is corban, whereby he

might have been profited." It is given already, not indeed for the service of God, not to the treasury of the temple; but either to please the folly of others, or to feed vanity or the lust of the eye in yourself. Now (even suppose these were harmless tempers, yet) what an unspeakable loss is this, if it be really true, that "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor!" if there be indeed a reward in heaven for every work of faith, for every degree of the labor of love!

IV.

1. As to the advice subjoined, it is easy to observe, that all those smaller things are, in their degree, liable to the same objections as the greater. If they are gay, showy, pleasing to the eye, the putting them on does not spring from a single view to please God. It neither flows from, nor tends to advance, a meek and quiet spirit. It does not arise from, nor anyway promote, real, vital godliness.
2. And if they are in anywise costly, if they are purchased with any unnecessary expense, they cannot but, in proportion to that expense, be destructive of good works. Of consequence, they are destructive of that charity which is fed thereby; hardening our heart against the cry of the poor and needy, by inuring us to shut up our bowels of compassion toward them.
3. At least, all unnecessary expenses of this kind, whether small or great, are senseless and foolish. This we may defy any man living to get over, if he allows there is another world. For there is no reward in heaven for laying out your money in ornaments, or costly apparel; whereas you may have an eternal reward for whatever you expend on earth.
4. Consider this more closely: Here are two ways proposed of laying out such a sum of money. I may lay it out in expensive apparel for myself, or in necessary clothing for my neighbor. The former will please my own eye, or that of others; the latter will please God. Now suppose there were no more harm in one than in the other; in that which pleases man, than in that which pleases God; is there as much good in it? If they were equally innocent, are they equally wise? By the one, I gratify the desire of the eye, and gain a pleasure that perishes in the using; by the other I gain a larger

share of those pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore. By the former, I obtain the applause of men; by the latter, the praise of God. In this way I meet with the admiration of fools; in that, I hear from the Judge of all, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

5. Brethren, whatever ye are accounted by men, I would not have you fools in God's account. "Walk ye circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise;" not in those ways which God may possibly forgive, (to put things in the most favorable light,) but in those which he will certainly reward. "In wickedness be ye children" still; "but in understanding be ye men." I want to see a visible body of people who are standing examples of this wisdom; patterns of doing all things, great and small, with an eye to God and eternity.

V.

1. But we may be assured, the wisdom of the world will find out abundance of objections to this. Accordingly, it is objected, First, "If God has given us plentiful fortunes, if we are placed in the higher ranks of life, we must act suitably to our fortune. We ought to dress according to our rank; that is, in gold and costly apparel." Not to insist that none of you are of this rank, I answer, Where is this written? Our Savior once occasionally said, "Behold, they who wear gorgeous" (splendid) "apparel, are in Kings' courts;" but he does not say, they ought to be even there; he neither enjoins nor countenances it. And where is this either enjoined or allowed by Him or any of his Apostles? Bring me plain, scriptural proof for your assertion, or I cannot allow it.

2. "But did not God give express command by Moses, that some even among his chosen people should be adorned in the most exquisite manner with gold and precious stones, and costly array?" Indeed he did; he expressly commanded this with regard to Aaron and his successors in the High Priesthood. But to this I answer, First, This direction which God gave, with regard to the Jewish High Priest, can certainly affect no person in England, unless the Archbishop of Canterbury; and I apprehend, he does not plead the precedent. Secondly, The Jews and we are under different dispensations. The glory of the whole Mosaic dispensation was

chiefly visible and external; whereas the glory of the Christian dispensation is of an invisible and spiritual nature.

3. “But what then are gold and precious stones for? Why have they a place in the creation?” What, if I say I cannot tell? There are abundance of things in the creation which I do not know the use of. What are crocodiles, lions, tigers, scorpions for? Why have so many poisons a place in the creation? Some of them are for medicine: But whatever they are for, in whatever manner they may be useful, they are certainly not to be used in such a manner as God has expressly forbidden.

4. “But if they were not thus adorned, Kings and Generals would be despised by their subjects and soldiers.” Supposing they would, that is nothing to you; for you are neither Kings nor Generals. But it is absolutely certain they would not, if they were not despised on other accounts. If they are valiant and wise, they will never be despised for the plainness of their dress. Was ever General or King more esteemed or beloved by his subjects and soldiers than King Charles of Sweden? And it is sure he wore no gold or costly apparel, not so much as a common Officer. But we need not go so many years back. Who is the Prince that is now honored and beloved both by his subjects and soldiers, far beyond any other King or General in Europe? There is no need to repeat his name. But does he gain this honor and love by the costliness of his apparel? So far from it, that he rarely uses any other dress than the uniform of his own guards.

5. “But if all men were to dress like him, how would tradesmen live?” I answer,

- (1.) God certainly considered this before ever he gave these commands. And he would never have given them, had he not seen, that, if they were universally observed, men in general would live better than they otherwise could; better in this world, as well as that to come. But,
- (2.) There is no danger at all that they should be universally observed. Only a little flock in any civilized nation will observe them, till the knowledge of God covers the earth.
- (3.) If those who do observe them, employ the money they thus save in the most excellent manner, then a part of what before only

served to fat a few rich tradesmen for hell, will suffice to feed and clothe and employ many poor that seek the kingdom of heaven.

- (4.) “And how will those tradesmen themselves live?” They will live like men, by honest labor; most of whom before lived like swine, wallowing in all gluttony and sensuality. But,
- (5.) This is all mere trifling. It is only a copy of your countenance; for it is not this, it is not a regard to trade, or the good of the nation, that makes you disobey God. No; it is pride, vanity, or some other sinful temper, which is the real cause of these sinful actions.

6. “But we cannot carry on our own trade without dressing like other people.” If you mean only conforming to those customs of your country that are neither gay nor costly, why should you not dress like other people? I really think you should. Let an Englishman dress like other Englishmen, not like a Turk or a Tartar. Let an English woman dress like other English women, not like a French woman, or a German. But if you mean conformity to them in what God has forbidden, the answer is ready at hand: If you cannot carry on your trade without breaking God’s command, you must not carry it on. But I doubt the fact; I know no trade which may not be carried on by one who uses plain and modest apparel. I fear, therefore, this too is but a copy of your countenance; you love these things, and therefore think them necessary. Your heart carries away your judgment; if you were not fond of them, you would never dream of their necessity.

7. In one single case these things may be necessary, that is, unavoidable; namely, that of women who are under the yoke of self-willed, unreasonable husbands or parents. Such may be constrained to do, in some degree, what otherwise they would not. And they are blameless herein, if,

- (1.) They use all possible means, arguments, entreaties, to be excused from it; and, when they cannot prevail,
- (2.) Do it just so far as they are constrained, and no farther.

VI.

1. And how, brethren, what remains, but that I beseech you who are not under the yoke, who are under God the directors of your own actions, to

set prejudice, obstinacy, fashion aside, and to yield to Scripture, to reason, to truth. Suppose, as some affirm, you acted on no higher motive than to please me herein, I know not that you would have need to be ashamed; even this you might avow in the face of the sun. You owe something to me; perhaps it is not my fault if you owe not your own souls also. If then you did an indifferent thing only on this principle, not to give me any uneasiness, but to oblige, to comfort me in my labor, would you do much amiss? How much more may you be excused in doing what I advise, when truth, reason, and Scripture advise the same? when the thing in question is not an indifferent thing, but clearly determined by God himself?

2. Some years ago, when I first landed at Savannah, in Georgia, a gentlewoman told me, "I assure you, Sir, you will see as well-dressed a congregation on Sunday, as most you have seen in London." I did so; and, soon after, took occasion to expound those scriptures which relate to dress, and to press them freely upon my audience, in a plain and close application. All the time that I afterward ministered at Savannah, I saw neither gold in the church, nor costly apparel; but the congregation in general was almost constantly clothed in plain, clean linen or woolen.

3. And why should not my advice, grounded on Scripture and reason, weigh with you as much as with them? I will tell you why:

- (1.) You are surrounded with saints of the world, persons fashionably, reputably religious. And these are constant opposers of all who would go farther in religion than themselves. These are continually warning you against running into extremes, and striving to beguile you from the simplicity of the Gospel.
- (2.) You have near you still more dangerous enemies than these, — Antinomians, whether German or English; who, when any Christian practice is enforced, come in with the cuckoo's note, "The law, the law!" and, while they themselves glory in their shame make you ashamed of what should be your glory.
- (3.) You have suffered by false Teachers of our own, who undermined the doctrine you had received; negatively, in public, by not insisting upon it, by not exhorting you to dress as persons professing godliness; (and not to speak for a Christian duty is, in effect, to speak against it;) and positively, in private, either by

jesting upon your exactness in observing the Scripture rule, or by insinuations, which, if you did not mind them then, yet would afterward weaken your soul.

4. You have been, and are at this day, “in perils among false brethren;” I mean, not only those of other congregations, who count strictness all one with bondage, but many of our own; in particular those who were once clearly convinced of the truth; but they have sinned away the conviction themselves, and now endeavor to harden others against it, at least by example; by returning again to the folly from which they were once clean escaped. But what is the example of all mankind, when it runs counter to Scripture and reason? I have warned you a thousand times not to regard any example which contradicts reason or Scripture. If it ever should be, (pray that it may not be, but if ever it should,) that I or my brother, my wife or his, or all of us together, should set an example contrary to Scripture and reason, I entreat you, regard it not at all; still let Scripture and reason prevail.

5. You who have passed the morning, perhaps the noon, of life, who find the shadows of the evening approach, set a better example to those that are to come, to the now rising generation. With you the day of life is far spent; the night of death is at hand. You have no time to lose; see that you redeem every moment that remains. Remove everything out of the way, be it ever so small, (though indeed gay or costly apparel is not so,) that might anyways obstruct your loneliness and meekness, your seriousness of spirit, your single intention to glorify God, in all your thoughts and words and actions. Let no needless expense hinder your being, in the highest degree you possibly can, “rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate,” till you are clothed with glory and immortality.

Our carcasses will soon fall into the dust; then let the survivors adorn them with flowers. Meantime, let us regard those ornaments only that will accompany us into eternity.

6. You that are in the morning of your days, either your form is agreeable, or it is not. If it is not, do not make your person remarkable; rather let it lie hid in common apparel. On every account, it is your wisdom to

recommend yourself to the eye of the mind; but especially to the eye of God, who reads the secrets of your hearts, and in whose sight the incorruptible ornaments alone are of great price. But if you would recommend yourself by dress, is anything comparable to plain neatness? What kind of persons are those to whom you could be recommended by gay or costly apparel? None that are any way likely to make you happy; this pleases only the silliest and worst of men. At most, it gratifies only the silliest and worst principle in those who are of a nobler character.

7. To you, whom God has entrusted with a more pleasing form, those ornaments are quite needless:

The' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a barbarous skill;
'Tis like the poisoning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.

That is, to express ourselves in plain English, without any figure of poetry, it only tends to drag them into death everlasting, who were going fast enough before, by additional provocations to lust, or, at least, inordinate affection. Did you actually design to raise either of these in those who looked upon you? What! while you and they were in the more immediate presence of God? What profaneness and inhumanity mixed together. But if you designed it not, did you not foresee it? You might have done so without any extraordinary sagacity. "Nay, I did not care or think about it." And do you say this by way of excuse? You "scatter abroad arrows, firebrands, and death," and do not care or think about it!

8. O let us walk more charitably and more wisely for the time to come! Let us all cast aside, from this very hour, whatever does not become men and women professing godliness; whatever does not spring from the love and fear of God, and minister thereto. Let our seriousness "shine before men," not our dress. Let all who see us know that we are not of this world. Let our adorning be that which fadeth not away; even righteousness and true holiness. If ye regard not weakening my hands, and grieving my spirit, yet grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Do you ask, "But what shall I do with the gay or costly apparel, and with the ornaments, I have already? Must I suffer them to be lost? Ought I not to wear them, now I have them?" I

answer, There is no loss like that of using them; wearing them is the greatest loss of all. But what then shalt thou do with them? Burn them, rather than wear them; throw them in the depth of the sea. Or, if thou canst with a clear conscience, sell them, and give the money to them that want; but buy no more at the peril of thy soul. Now be a faithful steward: After providing for those of thine own household, things needful for life and godliness, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the sick, the prisoner, the stranger, with all that thou hast: Then shall God clothe thee with glory and honor in the presence of men and angels; and thou shalt “shine as the brightness of the firmament,” yea, “as the stars for ever and ever.”

THOUGHTS UPON DRESS.

LOUD complaint has been made concerning a passage taken out of a little tract, entitled, "The Refined Courtier," which is inserted in the last April Magazine, page 197.⁵⁸ The passage objected to runs thus: "Let everyone, when he appears in public, be decently clothed, according to his age, and the custom of the place where he lives." There is no fault in this. It is exactly right. Accordingly, when I appear in public, I am decently appareled, according to my age and the custom of England; sometimes in a short coat, sometimes in a nightgown, sometimes in a gown and cassock. "He that does otherwise, seems to affect singularity." And though a Christian frequently may, yea, must, be singular, yet he never affects singularity; he only takes up his cross so far as conscience requires. Thus far, then, there is nothing which is not capable of a fair construction. "Nor is it sufficient that our garment be made of good cloth," (the author speaks all along of people of rank; particularly those that attend the Court,) "but we should constrain ourselves to follow the garb where we reside," suppose at St. James's. "Seeing custom is the law and standard of decency, in all things of this nature." It certainly is; and I advise all the King's Lords of the Bedchamber, the Queen's Maids of honor, to follow it. All this, therefore, may bear a sound construction; nor does it contradict anything which I have said or written.

JOHN WESLEY.

A LETTER

TO

THE REV. MR. THOMAS MAXFIELD.

OCCASIONED BY A LATE PUBLICATION.

(PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1778.)

I WAS a little surprised to read, in a late publication of yours, the following assertions: —

1. Thomas Maxfield was “some of the first-fruits of Mr. Whitefield’s ministry.” (Page 18.)

2. “When he went abroad, he delivered me, and many thousands more, into the hands of those he thought he could have trusted them with, and who would have given *them back to him again* at his return. But, alas! it was not so.” (*Ibid.*)

“I heard Mr. Whitefield say, at the Tabernacle, in the presence of five or six Ministers, to Mr.—, a little before he left England for the last time, ‘I delivered thirty thousand people into the hands of your brother and you, when I went abroad. And by the time I came back, you had so turned their hearts against me, that not three hundred of them would come to hear me.’ I knew this was true.” (*Ibid.*)

3. “I heard Mr. Whitefield say, ‘When I came back from Georgia, there was no speaking evil of each other. O what would I not give, or suffer, or do, to see such times again! But O that division! that division! What slaughter it has made!’

“It was doctrine that caused the difference; or, at least, it was so pretended.” (*Ibid.*)

“He preached a few times in connection with his old friends. But, ah! how soon was the sword of contention drawn!” (Page 19.)

4. “Where can you now find any loving ones, of *either* party? They have no more love to each other than Turks.” (*Ibid.*)

“Read their vile contentions, and the evil characters they give of each other, raking the filthiest ashes, to find some black story against their fellow-Preachers.” (Page 20.)

They “slay with the sword of bitterness, wrath, and envy. Still more their shame is what they have sent out into the world against each other, on *both sides*, about five or six years ago, and till this very day.” (Page 21.)

To satisfy both friends and foes, I propose a few queries on each of these four heads.

I.

As to the first, I read a remarkable passage in the third Journal, (vol. I., page 196,) the truth of which may be still attested by Mr. Durbin, Mr. Westell, and several others then present, who are yet alive: — “A young man who stood behind, sunk down, as one dead; but soon began to roar out, and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarce hold him. This was Thomas Maxfield.” Was this *you*? If it was, how are you “the first-fruits of Mr. Whitefield’s ministry?” And how is it, that neither I, nor your fellow-laborers, ever heard one word of this during all those years wherein you labored in connection with us?

2. “When he went abroad again, he delivered me, and many thousands, into the hands of Mr. —.”

When? where? in what manner? This is quite new to me! I never heard one word of it before!

But stay! here is something more curious still! “I heard Mr. Whitefield say, at the Tabernacle, in the presence of five or six Ministers, a little before he left England the last time, ‘I delivered thirty thousand people into the hands of you and your brother when I went abroad.’”

Mr. Whitefield’s going abroad, which is here referred to, was in the year 1741. Did he then deliver *you* into my hands? Was you not in my hands before? Had you not then, for above a year, been a member of the society under my care? Nay, was you not, at the very time, one of *my* Preachers? Did you not *then* serve me as a son in the Gospel? Did you not eat my bread, and lodge in my house? Is not this then a total misrepresentation? Would to God it be not a willful one!

“I heard,” you say, “Mr. Whitefield say, at the Tabernacle, in the presence of five or six Ministers, a little before he left England the last time:” — Who then can doubt the truth of what follows? For here is chapter and verse! Here both the time, the place, and the persons present, are specified. And they ought to be; seeing the crime alleged is one of a very heinous nature. Many a man has been justly sentenced to death for sins which, in the sight of God, were not equal to this. The point, therefore, requires a little more examination. And, first, I desire to know what are the names of those five or six Ministers? and which of them heard Mr. Whitefield say, “When I went abroad (in 1741,) I delivered thirty thousand people into the hands of you and your brother?” Thirty thousand people! Whence did they come? Did they spring out of the earth? Why, there were not, at that time, five thousand. Methodists in England, or in the world. The societies in London, Bristol, and Kingswood, (the only ones I had,) contained fourteen or fifteen hundred members. I believe not so many were in *his* societies. But were they fewer, or mores they were nothing to *me*. He never entrusted *me* with them. He never delivered into mine, or my brother’s hands, either his society at the Tabernacle in London, or that in Bristol, or in Kingswood, or any other place whatever. He never delivered (that I remember) one single society into my hands. I bless God, I needed it not. I did not need to build upon another man’s foundation. A dispensation of the Gospel was given me also; and my labor was not in vain. I was constrained to cry out (and you yourself used the same words to God in my behalf), —

“O the fathomless love
 Which has deign'd to approve
 And prosper the work of my hands!
 With my pastoral crook
 I went over the brook,
 And, behold! I am spread into bands!”

With what view then can you charge me with that perfidy, which I am no more guilty of than of high treason? For what end can you affirm, “When he went abroad, he delivered many thousands into the hands of those he thought he could have trusted them with?” Delivered! when? where? how? what can you mean? I flatly deny that ever he delivered one thousand, or one hundred, souls into *my* hands. Do you mean, “He spoke honorably of you to them at Kennington-common and Rose-green?” True: But not so honorably as I spoke of *you*, even at London; yea, as late as the year 1763! Yet was this the same thing with “delivering the people” at London “into your hands?” Nay, but “Mr. Whitefield trusted that you would have given them back at his return.” Them! whom? His society at London, or Bristol? I had them not to give. He never entrusted me with them. Therefore I could not “give them back.”

But how melancholy is the exclamation that follows: “Alas! It was not so!” Was not how? Why, I did not give back what I never had received; but went straight on my way, taking the best care I could of those who *entrusted themselves* to me.

III.

So much for the second article. As to the third, your words are, “I heard Mr. Whitefield say, ‘O that division! that division! what slaughter it has made!’”

But who made that division? It was not I. It was not my brother. It was Mr. Whitefield himself; and that notwithstanding all admonitions, arguments, and entreaties. Mr. Whitefield first wrote a treatise against me by name. He sent it to my brother, who endorsed it with these words: “Put up again thy sword into its place.” It slept a while; but after a time he published it. I made no reply. Soon after Mr. Whitefield preached

against my brother and me by name. This he did constantly, both in Moorfields, and in all other public places. We never returned railing for railing, but spoke honorably of him, at all times, and in all places. But is it any wonder, that those who loved us should no longer choose to hear him? Meantime, was it *we* that “turned their hearts against him?” Was it not *himself*?

But you say, “It was doctrine that caused the difference;” (oddly enough expressed!) “at least, it was so pretended!” “It was so pretended!” What do you mean? that difference of doctrine was only *pretended*? that we were agreed at the bottom, and only fought, like prize-fighters, to show our skill? Nay, here was no pretense. The thing was as plain as the sun at noonday. Did not Mr. Whitefield proclaim, upon the house top, the difference between us and him? And yet it was not merely the difference of doctrine that caused the division. It was rather the *manner* wherein he maintained his doctrine, and treated us in every place. Otherwise difference of doctrine would not have created any difference of affection; but he might lovingly have holden particular redemption, and we general, to our lives’ end.

He did indeed “preach a few times in connection with his old friends; but how soon was the sword of contention drawn!” By whom? Truly, by himself. Do not you know, (thousands do, if you do not,) that when he preached in the very Foundery, and my brother sat by him, he preached the absolute decrees in the most peremptory and offensive manner? What was this, but drawing the sword and throwing away the scabbard? Who then is chargeable with the contention and division that ensued?

IV.

“But where,” you ask, “can you now find any loving ones of either party?” Blessed be God, I can find many thousands, both in London, in Bristol, in Kingswood, and in various parts, not only of England, but also of Scotland and Ireland; persons as full of love, both to God and man, as any I knew forty years ago.

Some of these I find (and much rejoice to find) in Mr. Whitefield's societies. And I pray God, they may increase a thousand-fold, both in number and in strength. "Nay, they have no more love to each other than Turks." They! who? This is not the case with our societies. They not only love each other, but love their enemies, even those that still despitely use them. But "read their vile contentions, and the evil character they give each other, raking the filthiest ashes, to find some black story." I will answer for one. I give no "evil character" of my "fellow-Preachers." I "rake into no filthy ashes, for black stories." Let him who does, take it to himself. "They slay with the sword of bitterness, wrath, and envy." I do not. I plead, Not guilty. As I envy no man, so neither my wrath nor bitterness slays any human creature. "Still more to their shame is what they have sent out into the world, against each other, on both sides, about five or six years ago, and till this very day."

"What they have sent out against each other, on both sides, about five or six years ago." Within five or six years I have been vehemently called to answer for myself; twice by Mr. Richard Hill, and afterwards by his brother. Have you read what we "have sent out into the world, against each other, on both sides?" If you have not, how can you so peremptorily affirm what "both sides" have done? You cannot possibly be a judge of what you have not read; and if you *had* read, you could not have passed such a sentence. Three tracts I have wrote; but in none of these do I "slay with the sword of bitterness, or wrath, or envy." In none of them do I speak one bitter, or passionate, or disrespectful word. Bitterness and wrath, yea, low, base, virulent invective, both Mr. Richard and Mr. Rowland Hill (as well as Mr. Toplady) have poured out upon me, in great abundance. But where have I, in one single instance, returned them railing for railing? I have not so learned Christ. I dare not rail, either at them or you. I return not cursing, but blessing. That the God of love may bless both them and you, is the prayer of your injured,

Yet still affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

February 14, 1778.

A

CLEAR AND CONCISE DEMONSTRATION**OF THE****DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.**

THERE are four grand and powerful arguments which strongly induce us to believe that the Bible must be from God; viz., miracles, prophecies, the goodness of the doctrine, and the moral character of the penmen. All the miracles flow from divine power; all the prophecies, from divine understanding; the goodness of the doctrine, from divine goodness; and the moral character of the penmen, from divine holiness.

Thus Christianity is built upon four grand pillars; viz., the power, understanding, goodness, and holiness of God. Divine power is the source of all the miracles; divine understanding, of all the prophecies; divine goodness, of the goodness of the doctrine; and divine holiness of the moral character of the penmen.

I beg leave to propose a short, clear, and strong arguments prove the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures.

The Bible must be the invention either of good men or angels, bad men or devils, or of God.

1. It could not be the invention of good men or angels; nor they neither would nor could make a book, and tell lies all the time they were writing it, saying, "Thus saith the Lord," when it was their own invention.

2. It could not be the invention of bad men or devils; for they would not make a book which commands all duty, forbids all sin, and condemns their souls to hell to all eternity.

3. Therefore, I draw this conclusion, that the Bible must be given by divine inspiration.

THE REAL CHARACTER OF MONTANUS.

THERE is great variety of opinions, says a late eminent historian, about the time when Montanus first appeared to work signs and miracles; either by the operation of God, as the historian supposes, or by that of the devil transformed; and that in such a manner as nobody was able to discern, because both his life and doctrine were holy and blameless. The time when it began to be doubted, concerning the spirit which operated in him, and moved him after an extraordinary manner, whether it were a good or an evil one, is very uncertain; but it seems to be between the years of Christ 150 and 170. However, so it was, that the sentiments of those sound in the faith, or the Christians in general, were much divided in their judgments. Of all the ancients, none was more express than he in the mystery of the incarnation, or seemed more to honor the person of Christ, and extol his merits. All the ancient heretics erred greatly from the truth, as to this; but he was clear in this respect, preaching up repentance, and faith in the name of the Lord Jesus alone, as the; one Mediator between God and man. Neither is it denied that he was orthodox in the notion of the Church, as to Christian fellowship, rightly formed, according to the pattern delivered by Christ himself, and knit together by the bond of the Spirit, under Pastors and Officers of several orders, having a clear and certain mission from Him whom they represent; but he, under the character of a Prophet, as an order established in the Church, appeared (without bringing any new doctrine) for reviving what was decayed, and reforming what might be amiss; whereas others that had been judged heretics, were not only preachers of strange and monstrous opinions, but were utter enemies to all manner of discipline in the Church.

It seems, therefore, by the best information we can procure at this distance of time, that Montanus was not only a truly good man, but one of the best men then upon earth; and that his real crime was, the severely reprovng those who professed themselves Christians, while they neither had the mind that was in Christ, nor walked as Christ walked; but were conformable both in their temper and practice to the present evil world.

LETTER ON PREACHING CHRIST.

LONDON, December 20, 1751.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE point you speak of in your letter of September 21 is of a very important nature. I have had many serious thoughts concerning it, particularly for some months last past; therefore, I was not willing to speak hastily or slightly of it, but rather delayed till I could consider it thoroughly.

I mean by *preaching the gospel*, preaching the love of God to sinners, preaching the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, with all the blessings which, in consequence thereof, are freely given to true believers.

By *preaching the law*, I mean, explaining and enforcing the commands of Christ, briefly comprised in the Sermon on the Mount.

Now, it is certain, preaching the gospel to penitent sinners “begets faith;” that it “sustains and increases spiritual life in true believers.”

Nay, sometimes it “teaches and guides” them that believe; yea, and “convinces them that believe not.”

So far all are agreed. But what is the stated means of feeding and comforting believers? What is the means, as of begetting spiritual life where it is not, so of sustaining and increasing it where it is?

Here they divide. Some think, preaching the law only; others, preaching the gospel only. I think, neither the one nor the other; but duly mixing both, in every place, if not in every sermon.

I think, the right method of preaching is this: At our first beginning to preach at any place, after a general declaration of the love of God to sinners, and his willingness that they should be saved, to preach the law, in the strongest, the closest, the most searching manner possible; only intermixing the gospel here and there, and showing it, as it were, afar off.

After more and more persons are convinced of sin, we may mix more and more of the gospel, in order to “beget faith,” to raise into spiritual life those whom the law hath slain; but this is not to be done too hastily neither. Therefore, it is not expedient wholly to omit the law; not only because we may well suppose that many of our hearers are still unconvinced; but because otherwise there is danger, that many who are convinced will heal their own wounds slightly; therefore, it is only in private converse with a thoroughly convinced sinner, that we should preach nothing but the gospel.

If, indeed, we could suppose a whole congregation to be thus convinced, we should need to preach only the gospel: And the same we might do, if our whole congregation were supposed to be newly justified. But when these grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, a wise builder would preach the law to them again; only taking particular care to place every part of it in a gospel light, as not only a command, but a privilege also, as a branch of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He would take equal care to remind them, that this is not the cause, but the fruit, of their acceptance with God; that other cause, “other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ;” that we are still forgiven and accepted, only for the sake of what he hath done and suffered for us; and that all true obedience springs from love to him, grounded on his first loving us. He would labor, therefore, in preaching any part of the law, to keep the love of Christ continually before their eyes; that thence they might draw fresh life, vigor, and strength, to run the way of his commandments.

Thus would he preach the law even to those who were pressing on to the mark. But to those who were careless, or drawing back, he would preach it in another manner, nearly as he did before these were convinced of sin. To those, meanwhile, who were earnest, but feeble minded, he would preach

the gospel chiefly; yet variously intermixing more or less of the law, according to their various necessities.

By preaching the law in the manner above described, he would teach them how to walk in Him whom they had received. Yea, and the same means (the main point wherein, it seems, your mistake lies) would both sustain and increase their spiritual life. For the commands are food, as well as the promises; food equally wholesome, equally substantial. These, also, duly applied, not only direct, but likewise nourish and strengthen, the soul.

Of this you appear not to have the least conception; therefore, I will endeavor to explain it. I ask, then, Do not all the children of God experience, that when God gives them to see deeper into his blessed law, whenever he gives a new degree of light, he gives, likewise, a new degree of strength? Now I see, he that loves me, bids me do this; and now I feel I can do it, through Christ strengthening me.

Thus light and strength are given by the same means, and frequently in the same moment; although sometimes there is a space between. For instance: I hear the command, "Let your communication be always in grace, meet to minister grace to the hearers." God gives me more light into this command. I see the exceeding height and depth of it. At the same time I see (by the same light from above) how far I have fallen short. I am ashamed; I am humbled before God. I earnestly desire to keep it better; I pray to him that hath loved me for more strength, and I have the petition I ask of him. Thus the law not only convicts the unbeliever, and enlightens the believing soul, but also conveys food to a believer; sustains and increases his spiritual life and strength.

And if it increases his spiritual life and strength, it cannot but increase his comfort also. For, doubtless, the more we are alive to God, the more we shall rejoice in him; the greater measure of his strength we receive, the greater will be our consolation also.

And all this, I conceive, is clearly declared in one single passage of Scripture: —

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also them honey, and the honeycomb.” They are both food and medicine; they both refresh, strengthen, and nourish the soul.

Not that I would advise to preach the law without the gospel, any more than the gospel without the law. Undoubtedly, both should be preached in their turns; yea, both at once, or both in one: All the conditional promises are instances of this. They are law and gospel mixed together.

According to this model, I should advise every Preacher continually to preach the law; the law grafted upon, tempered by, and animated with, the spirit of the gospel. I advise him to declare, explain, and enforce every command of God; but, meantime, to declare, in every sermon, (and the more explicitly the better,) that the first and great command to a Christian is, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;” that Christ is all in all, our “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;” that all life, love, strength, are from him alone, and all freely given to us through faith. And it will ever be found, that the law thus preached both enlightens and strengthens the soul; that it both nourishes and teaches; that it is the guide, “food, medicine, and stay,” of the believing soul.

Thus all the Apostles built up believers; witness all the Epistles of St. Paul, James, Peter, and John. And upon this plan all the Methodists first set out. In this manner, not only my brother and I, but Mr. Maxfield, Nelson, James Jones, Westell, and Reeves, all preached at the beginning.

By this preaching it pleased God to work those mighty effects in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Yorkshire, and Newcastle. By means of this, twenty-nine persons received remission of sins in one day at Bristol only; most of them, while I was opening and enforcing, in this manner, our Lord’s Sermon upon the Mount.

In this manner John Downes, John Bennet, John Haughton, and all the other Methodists, preached, till James Wheatly came among them, who

never was clear, perhaps not sound, in the faith. According, to his understanding was his preaching; an unconnected rhapsody of unmeaning words, like Sir John Suckling's —

Verses, smooth and soft as cream,
In which was neither depth nor stream.

Yet (to the utter reproach of the Methodist congregations) this man became a most popular Preacher. He was admired more and more wherever he went, till he went over the second time into Ireland, and conversed more intimately than before with some of the Moravian Preachers.

The consequence was, that he leaned more and more both to their doctrine and manner of preaching. At first, several of our Preachers complained of this; but, in the space of a few months, (so incredible is the force of soft words,) he, by slow and imperceptible degrees, brought almost all the Preachers then in the kingdom to think and speak like himself.

These, returning to England, spread the contagion to some others of their brethren. But still the far greater part of the Methodist Preachers thought and spoke as they had done from the beginning.

This is the plain fact. As to the fruit of this new manner of preaching, (entirely new to the Methodists,) speaking much of the promises, little of the commands; (even to unbelievers, and still less to believers;) you think it has done great good; I think it has done great harm.

I think it has done great harm to the Preachers; not only to James Wheatly himself, but to those who have learned of him, — David Trathen, Thomas Webb, Robert Swindells, and John Maddern: I fear to others also; all of whom are but shadows of what they were; most of them have exalted themselves above measure, as if they only “preached Christ, preached the gospel.” And as highly as they have exalted themselves, so deeply have they despised their brethren; calling them “legal Preachers, legal wretches,” and (by a cant name) “Doctors,” or “Doctors of Divinity.” They have not a little despised their Ministers also, for “countenancing the Doctors,” as they termed them. They have make their faults (real or supposed)

common topics of conversation; hereby cherishing in themselves the very spirit of Harn; yea, of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

I think it has likewise done great harm to their hearers; diffusing among them their own prejudice against the other Preachers; against their Ministers, me in particular, (of which you have been an undeniable instance,) against the scriptural, Methodist manner of preaching Christ, so that they could no longer bear sound doctrine; they could no longer hear the plain old truth with profit or pleasure, nay, hardly with patience.

After hearing such Preachers for a time, you yourself (need we further witnesses?) could find in my preaching no food for your soul; nothing to strengthen you in the way; no inward experience of a believer; it was all barren and dry; that is, you had no taste for mine or John Nelson's preaching; it neither refreshed nor nourished you.

Why, this is the very thing I assert: That the gospel Preachers, so called, corrupt their hearers; they vitiate their taste, so that they cannot relish sound doctrine; and spoil their appetite, so that they cannot turn it into nourishment; they, as it were, feed them with sweetmeats, till the genuine wine of the kingdom seems quite insipid to them. They give them cordial upon cordial, which make them all life and spirit for the present; but, meantime, their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the word.

Hence it is, that (according to the constant observation I have made, in all parts both of England and Ireland) Preachers of this kind (though quite the contrary appears at first) spread death, not life, among their hearers. As soon as that flow of spirits goes off, they are without life, without power, without any strength or vigor of soul; and it is extremely difficult to recover them, because they still cry out, "Cordials! Cordials!" of which they have had too much already, and have no taste for the food which is convenient for them. Nay, they have an utter aversion to it, and that confirmed by principle, having been taught to call it husks, if not poison: How much more to those bitters which are previously needful to restore their decayed appetite!

This was the very case when I went last into the north. For some time before my coming, John Downes had scarce been able to preach at all; the three others in the round were such as styled themselves Gospel Preachers. When I came to review the societies, with great expectation of finding a vast increase, I found most of them lessened by one-third; one entirely broken up. That of Newcastle itself was less by a hundred members than when I visited it before. And of those that remained, the far greater number in every place were cold, weary, heartless, dead. Such were the blessed effects of this gospel preaching! of this new method of preaching Christ!

On the other hand, when, in my return, I took an account of the societies in Yorkshire, chiefly under the care of John Nelson, one of the old way, in whose preaching you could find no life, no food, I found them all alive, strong, and vigorous of soul, believing, loving, and praising God their Savior; and increased in number from eighteen or nineteen hundred, to upwards of three thousand. These had been continually fed with that wholesome food which you could neither relish nor digest. From the beginning they had been taught both the law and the gospel. "God loves you; therefore, love and obey him. Christ died for you; therefore, die to sin. Christ is risen; therefore, rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore; therefore, live to God, till you live with him in glory."

So we preached; and so you believed. This is the scriptural way, the Methodist way, the true way. God grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left!

I am,

My dear friend,

Your ever affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

THOUGHTS ON SALVATION BY FAITH.

(PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1779.)

1. It is now upwards of forty years since my brother and I were convinced of that important truth, which is the foundation of all real religion, that “by grace we are saved through faith.” And as soon as we believed, we spoke; when we saw it ourselves, we immediately began declaring it to others. And, indeed, we could hardly speak of anything else, either in public or private. It shone upon our minds with so strong a light, that it was our constant theme. It was our daily subject, both in verse and prose; and we vehemently defended it against all mankind.

2. But in doing this we met with abundance of difficulty; we were assaulted and abused on every side. We were everywhere represented as mad dogs, and treated accordingly. We were stoned in the streets, and several times narrowly escaped with our lives. In sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets of all kinds, we were painted as unheard-of monsters. But this moved us not; we went on, by the help of God, testifying salvation by faith both to small and great, and not counting our lives dear unto ourselves, so we might finish our course with joy.

3. While we were thus employed, another storm arose from a quarter whence we least expected it. Some of our familiar friends declared open war against us for preaching salvation by works! This we could not in anywise understand; we wondered what they meant. We utterly disavowed the charge; we denied it in the strongest terms. We declared, over and over, both in public and private, “We believe, and constantly preach, salvation by faith. Salvation by works is a doctrine we abhor; we neither preach nor believe it.” But it did not avail: Say what we would, the same charge was still repeated; and that not only when we were at a convenient distance, but even before our face.

4. At first we were inclined to think, that many who affirmed this, did not believe themselves; that it was merely a copy of their countenance, spoken

*ad movendam invidiam.*⁵⁹ And could we have been fully persuaded of this, the difficulty would have been solved. But we did not dare to give way to the thought: Whatever they might think or say of us, we could not but think they were upright men, and spoke according to their real sentiments. The wonder therefore remained, how they could impute to us a doctrine which our soul abhorred, and which we were continually opposing, and confuting with all our might.

5. I was in this perplexity when a thought shot across my mind, which solved the matter at once: “This is the key. Those that hold, ‘Everyone is absolutely predestinated either to salvation or damnation,’ see no medium between salvation by works and salvation by absolute decrees.” It follows, that whosoever denies salvation by absolute decrees, in so doing (according to their apprehension) asserts salvation by works.

6. And herein I verily believe they are right. As averse as I once was to the thought, upon further consideration, I allow there is, there can be, no medium. Either salvation is by absolute decree, or it is (in a scriptural sense) by works. Yea, this I will proclaim on the housetop, — there is no medium between these. You must either assert unconditional decrees, or (in a sound sense) salvation by works.

7. This deserves a fuller examination: Let us consider it more attentively. If the salvation of every man that ever was, is, or shall be, finally saved, depends wholly and solely upon an absolute, irresistible, unchangeable decree of God, without any regard either to faith or works foreseen, then it is not, in any sense, by works. But neither is it by faith: For unconditional decree excludes faith as well as works; since, if it is either by faith or works foreseen, it is not by unconditional decree. Therefore, salvation by absolute decree excludes both one and the other; and, consequently, upon this supposition, salvation is neither by faith nor by works.

8. If, on the other hand, we deny all absolute decrees, and admit only the conditional one, (the same which our blessed Lord hath revealed,) “He that believeth shall be saved;” we must, according to their apprehension, assert salvation by works. We must do this, (in a sound sense of the expression,) if we believe the Bible. For seeing no faith avails, but that “which worketh

by love,” which produces both inward and outward good works, to affirm, No man is finally saved without this, is, in effect, to affirm, No man is finally saved without works. It is plain, then, if we affirm, No man is saved by an absolute, unconditional decree, but; only by a conditional one; we must expect, all who hold unconditional decrees will say, we teach salvation by works.

9. Let none, therefore, who hold universal redemption be surprised at being charged with this. Let us deny it no more; let us frankly and fairly meet those who advance it upon their own ground. If they charge you with holding salvation by works, answer plainly, “In your sense, I do; for I deny that our final salvation depends upon any absolute, unconditional decree. If, therefore, there be no medium, I do hold salvation by works. But observe: In allowing this, I allow no more than that I am no Calvinist. So that, by my making you this concession, you gain — just nothing.”

10. I am therefore still consistent with myself, as well as consistent with the Bible. I still hold, (as I have done above these forty years,) that “by grace we are saved through faith;” yet so as not to contradict that other expression of the same Apostle, “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Meantime, those who maintain absolute predestination, who hold decrees that have no condition at all, cannot be consistent with themselves, unless they deny salvation by faith, as well as salvation by works. For, if only “he that believeth shall be saved,” then is faith a condition of salvation; and God hath decreed, from all eternity, that it should be such. But if the decree admit of any condition, it is not an unconditional decree. Either, therefore, you must renounce your unconditional decrees, or deny that faith is the condition of salvation; or (which is just the same thing) affirm, that a man may be saved without either faith or works.

11. And I am consistent with myself; as well as with the Bible, when I affirm, that none shall be finally saved by any “faith” but that “which worketh by love,” both inward and outward holiness. I fear, many of them that hold unconditional decrees are not sensible of this. For they seriously believe themselves to be in the high road to salvation, though they are far from inward (if not outward) holiness. They have not “put on humbleness of mind, bowels of mercy, brotherly-kindness.” They have no gentleness,

no meekness, no long-suffering; so far are they from the “love that endureth all things.” They are under the power of sin; of evil-surmising; of anger; yea, of outward sin. For they scruple not to say to their brother, “Thou fool!” They not only, on a slight provocation, make no scruple of rendering evil for evil, of returning railing for railing; but they bring railing accusations unprovoked; they pour out floods of the lowest, basest invectives. And yet they are within the decree! I instance in the two late publications of Mr. Rowland Hill. “O,” says Mr. Hill, “but Mr. Wesley is a wicked man.” What then? Is he more wicked than him that disputed with Michael about the body of Moses? How, then, durst he bring a railing accusation against a man, when an archangel durst not bring one against the devil? O fight, fight for an unconditional decree! For if there be any condition, how can you be saved?

GOD'S EYES ARE OVER ALL THE EARTH.

MANY years ago, as my eldest brother was walking in the back street of Hackney, a gentleman accosted him, and said, "Sir, I am old, and I would willingly inform you of a remarkable scene of Providence, that it may be remembered when I am gone hence: I was walking here some time since, (as I frequently do,) early in a morning, when a chariot stopped at a little distance from me, and a young lady, stepping out, ran by me with all her might. A gentleman quickly followed her, caught her, and brought her back; when I just heard her say, 'What, my dear, will you serve me so?' Immediately that door over against us opened, and he thrust her in before him. I mused upon it all day and, all night, and was very uneasy. In the morning, a gardener which I employed coming in, I asked him, 'Do you know such a house in Hackney?' He answered, 'Sir, I am going to trim the trees in the garden next to it; and I will make any inquiries which you desire, and bring you back the best account I can.' The account he gave me the next morning was this: — When I went to work, I saw over a low hedge a gardener trimming the trees in the other garden; and I asked him, 'Pray, who lives in that house?' On his answering, 'A mad Doctor;' I asked, 'Has he many patients?' He said, 'I do not know, though I dine in the house; for he never suffers any to see them.' I said, 'I will give you a pot of beer, if you can find the name of a young lady that came in a day or two ago.' He answered, 'I cannot promise; but I will do my best when I go in to dinner.' When I saw him again, he said, 'No patient in the house dares speak to anyone; and I could get no pen, ink, and paper; but I got a pin and a card, on which a young woman has pricked her name: Here it is.' I took the card, and knew the name. The next day I went to her father, and asked, 'Sir, where is your daughter?' He said, 'She is lately married to a very worthy man, and is gone with her husband into the country.' I then told him the story, and we went together to the Lord Chief Justice. Early in the morning we went to the Doctor's house, and knocked at the door. He looked through a little grate, and bade us go on our way; we had no business with him. I answered, 'Here is the Lord Chief Justice's warrant, and his tip-staff. Open the door, or we shall break it open.' He then

opened it, and I asked, 'Where is the young lady that was brought in hither three days ago?' He answered, 'There is no such person in my house; you may search it from top to bottom.' We did so; but could not find any trace of her. Coming down the stairs, I said, 'Is there no one under these stairs?' The Doctor answered, 'There is a poor creature; but she is so outrageous, that we are obliged to shut her up in the dark.' On his opening the door, she put out her head. My friend sighed, and said, 'I know nothing of this poor thing.' She answered, 'What, Sir, am I so altered in three days, that you do not know your own daughter?' He immediately knew her voice, and took her home. Her husband was very glad to refund her fortune."

JOHN WESLEY.

A REMARKABLE PROVIDENCE.

A GENTLEMAN walking with Mr. Chapoon, (uncle to Mr. Roquet,) in Moorfields, proposed stepping into Bedlam. After they had walked there awhile, they were turning, to get out, when a young woman cried, "Sir, I desire to speak with you." His friend said, "Sure, you will not stay to hear a mad woman's tale." He answered, "Indeed I will:" On which the other went away. She then said, "My father left me and my fortune in the hands of my uncle. A young gentleman offered me marriage, and all things were agreed on; when one morning my uncle took me out with him in the chariot, as he said, to see a friend; but instead of this he brought me to Bedlam, where I have been confined ever since."

"Your story is plausible," said Mr. C.; "but how shall I know it is the truth?" "Very easily," said she. "The gentleman that was to marry me lives within a day's journey of London. Write to him; and tell him you have something to say concerning me, and would be glad to meet him at such a place in town. If he does not come, let this all pass for a mad woman's dream." Mr. C. wrote, and asked the gentleman, who came to the place appointed, whether he knew such a person. He answered, "Perfectly well. We were to have been married before now; but her uncle sent me word she was taken ill." Mr. C. then told him the whole story. He immediately sent to her uncle; who was very ready to take her out, and pay her fortune, to avoid farther trouble.

So the curiosity of one to see a strange place, and of another to hear a strange tale, was a means of detecting a notorious scene of villany, and of setting an innocent sufferer at liberty!

JOHN WESLEY.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BROTHERS' STEPS.

LAST summer (1780) I received a letter from a friend, wherein were these words: —

“I THINK it would be worth your while to take a view of those wonderful marks of the Lord’s hatred to dueling, called The Brothers’ Steps. They are in the fields, about a third of a mile northward from Montague-House; and the awful tradition concerning them is, that two brothers quarreled about a worthless woman, and, according to the fashion of those days, fought with sword and pistol. The prints of their feet are about the depth of three inches, and nothing will vegetate so much as to disfigure them. The number is only eighty-three; but probably some are at present; filled up; for I think there were formerly more in the center, where each unhappy combatant wounded the other to death: And a bank on which the first who fell died, retains the form of his agonizing couch, by the curse of barrenness, while grass flourishes all about it. Mr. George Hall, who was the Librarian of Lincoln’s-Inn, first showed me those steps twenty-eight years ago, when, I think, they were not quite so deep as now. He remembered them about thirty years, and the man who first showed them him, about thirty more, which goes back to the year 1692; but I suppose they originated in King Charles the Second’s reign. My mother well remembered their being ploughed up, and corn sown, to deface them, about fifty years ago: But all was labor in vain; for the prints returned in a while to their pristine form; as probably will those that are now filled up. Indeed I think an account of them in your Magazine would be a pious memorial of their lasting reality.

“These hints are only offered as a small token of my goodwill to yourself and the work, by

“Your son and brother in the gospel,”

“JOHN WALSH.”

This account appeared to me so very extraordinary, that I knew not what to think of it. I knew Mr. Walsh to be a person of good understanding and real piety; and he testified what he had seen with his own eyes: But still I wanted more witnesses, till, awhile ago, being at Mr. Cary's in Copthall-Buildings, I occasionally mentioned The Brothers' Footsteps; and asked the company if they had heard anything of them. "Sir," said Mr. Cary, "sixteen years ago, I saw and counted them myself." Another added, "And I saw them four years ago." I could then no longer doubt but they had been; and a week or two after I went with Mr. Cary and another person to seek them.

We sought for near half an hour in vain. We could find no steps at all within a quarter of a mile, no, nor half a mile, north of Montague-House. We were almost out of hope, when an honest man, who was at work, directed us to the next ground, adjoining to a pond. There we found what we sought for, about three-quarters of a mile north of Montague-House, and about five hundred yards east of Tottenham-Court Road. The steps answer Mr. Walsh's description. They are of the size of a large human foot, about three inches deep, and lie nearly from northeast to southwest. We counted only seventy-six; but we were not exact in counting. The place where one or both the brothers are supposed to have fallen, is still bare of grass. The laborer showed us also the bank, where (the tradition is) the wretched woman sat to see the combat.

What shall we say to these things? Why, to Atheists, or Infidels of any kind, I would not say one word about them. For "if they hear not Moses and the Prophets," they will not regard anything of this kind. But to men of candor, who believe the Bible to be of God, I would say, Is not this an astonishing instance, holden forth to all the inhabitants of London, of the justice and power of God? Does not the curse he has denounced upon this ground bear some little resemblance to that of our Lord on the barren fig tree, "Henceforth let no fruit grow upon thee for ever?" I see no reason or pretense for any rational man to doubt of the truth of the story; since it has been confirmed by these open, visible tokens for more than a hundred years successively.

A PROVIDENTIAL EVENT.

THE forty King's Scholars at Westminster-School lodge in one room, which is called the dormitory. While my eldest brother was at school, the head boy cried out vehemently one morning, "Lads, lads! you oversleep yourselves! you lie too late: It is time to be at school." They all started up, dressed as quick as they could, and ran down with him. When they came into the cloisters, one who was a little before the rest saw something white, and cried out, "What have we got here?" They went up to it, and found a man stark naked, and so benumbed that he could not speak. Just then the clock struck two. They took him up, carried him into the dormitory, and put him into a warm bed. After some rest he recovered his senses and speech; and being asked how he came into that condition, he told them, as he was coming over Chelsea-Fields, he was robbed by two footpads, who then stripped him stark naked, tied him neck and heels, and threw him into a ditch. There he must have perished, but that some young women, coming to market very early in the morning, heard him groan, and, going to the ditch, untied him, and then ran away. He made toward the town as well as he could, till, being unable to walk any farther, he crept into the cloisters upon his hands and feet, where he lay till the King's Scholars came. Probably in an hour or two he would have expired. After he had slept some hours, they gave him something warm to drink; then one gave him a shirt, another a coat or waistcoat, others what they could spare, till they had clothed him from head to foot. They then collected for him among themselves about forty shillings, and wished him well home.

See the wisdom of God, making the sport of a boy the means of saving a poor man's life!

John WESLEY.

AN EXTRAORDINARY CURE.

BISHOP HALL, speaking of the good offices which angels do to God's servants, says, "Of this kind was that marvellous cure which was wrought upon a poor cripple, at St. Madern's in Cornwall; whereof, besides the attestation of many hundreds of the neighbors, I took a strict examination in my last visitation: This man, for sixteen years together, was obliged to walk upon his hands, by reason the sinews of his legs were so contracted. Upon an admonition in his dream, to wash in a certain well, he was suddenly so restored to his limbs that I saw him able to walk and get his own maintenance. The name of this cripple was John Trebble."

And were "many hundreds of the neighbors," together with Bishop Hall, deceived in so notorious a matter of fact? Or did they all join together to palm such a falsehood on the world? O incredulity! what ridiculous shifts art thou driven to! what absurdities wilt thou not believe, rather than own any extraordinary work of God!

MURDER PREVENTED BY A THREE-FOLD DREAM.

MONDAY, April 2, 1781, I was informed by a person in an eminent station, of a very uncommon incident: —

He had occasion to correct, with a few stripes, a lad that lived with him at Rochester, which he resented so as to leave his place. But sometime after, he seemed to repent, humbled himself, and was received again. He now behaved in a most becoming manner, and was doubly diligent in his service.

But his mistress dreamed one night, that this lad was going to cut her throat: And she had a twin sister, between whom and her there is so strange a sympathy, that if either of them is ill, or particularly affected at any time, the other is so likewise. This sister wrote to her from another part of the kingdom, that she had dreamed the very same thing. She carried this letter to her father, a gentleman that lives not far off, and was surprised to hear that he likewise, on the same night, had had a dream to the same effect.

The lad had been observed to come up, about noon, into his lady's apartment, with a case-knife in his hand; and being asked why he did so, he said, he was going into the adjoining room, to scrape the dirt off from his master's embroidered clothes.

His master now took the lad aside, and examined him strictly. After denying it for a considerable time, it was at length extorted from him, that he had always remembered, with indignation, his master's severity to him, and that he was fully resolved to be revenged, but in what particular manner he would not confess. On this he was totally dismissed without delay.

AN ANSWER TO A REPORT.

I HAVE lately heard, to my no small surprise, that a person professing himself a Quaker, and supposed to be a man of some character, has confidently reported, that he had been at Sunderland himself, and inquired into the case of Elizabeth Hobson; that she was a woman of a very indifferent character; that the story she told was purely her invention; and that John Wesley himself was now fully convinced that there was no truth in it.

From what motive a man should invent and publish all over England (for I have heard this in various places) a whole train of absolute, notorious falsehoods, I cannot at all imagine. On the contrary, I declare to all the world,

1. That Elizabeth Hobson was an eminently pious woman; that she lived and died without the least blemish of any kind, without the least stain upon her character.
2. That the relation could not possibly be her own invention, as there were many witnesses to several parts of it; as Mr. Parker, the two Attorneys whom she employed, Miss Hosmer, and many others. And,
3. That I myself am fully persuaded, that every circumstance of it is literally and punctually true.

I know that those who fashionably deny the existence of spirits are hugely disgusted at accounts of this kind. I know that they incessantly labor to spread this disgust among those that are of a better mind; because if one of these accounts be admitted, their whole system falls to the ground. But, whoever is pleased or displeased, I must testify what I believe to be the truth. Indeed I never myself saw the appearance of an unbodied spirit; and I never saw the commission of a murder. Yet, upon the testimony of unexceptionable witnesses, I can firmly believe both one and the other.

JOHN WESLEY.

FROME,
September 12, 1782.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND, CONCERNING TEA.

NEWINGTON, December 10, 1748.

DEAR SIR,

1. I HAVE read your letter with attention, and much approve of the spirit with which it is wrote. You speak in love. I desire to do so too; and then no harm can be done on either side. You appear not to be wedded to your own opinion, but open to further conviction. I would willingly be of the same temper; not obstinately attached to either side of the question. I am clearly satisfied of the necessity of this; a willingness to see what as yet I see not. For I know, an unwillingness to be convinced would utterly blind either you or me; and that if we are resolved to retain our present opinion, reason and argument signify nothing.

2. I shall not therefore think it is time or pains misemployed, to give the whole cause a second hearing; to recite the occasion of every step I have taken, and the motives inducing me so to do; and then to consider whatsoever either you or others have urged on the contrary side of the question.

3. Twenty-nine years since, when I had spent a few months at Oxford, having, as I apprehended, an exceeding good constitution, and being otherwise in health, I was a little surprised at some symptoms of a paralytic disorder. I could not imagine what should occasion the shaking of my hand; till I observed it was always worst after breakfast; and that if I intermitted drinking tea for two or three days, it did not shake at all. Upon inquiry, I found tea had the same effect upon others also of my acquaintance; and therefore saw that this was one of its natural effects, (as several Physicians have often remarked,) especially when it is largely and frequently drank; and most of all on persons of weak nerves. Upon this I

lessened the quantity, drank it weaker, and added more milk and sugar. But still for above six-and-twenty years, was more or less subject to the same disorder.

4. July was two years I began to observe that abundance of the people of London, with whom I conversed, labored under the same, and many other, paralytic disorders, and that in a much higher degree; insomuch that some of their nerves were quite unstrung; their bodily strength quite decayed, and they could not go through their daily labor. I inquired, “Are you not a hard drinker?” and was answered by one and another, and another, “No, indeed, Sir, not I; I drink scarce anything but a little tea, morning and night.” I immediately remembered my own case; and, after weighing the matter thoroughly, easily gathered from many concurring circumstances, that it was the same case with them.

5. I considered, “What an advantage would it be to these poor enfeebled people, if they would leave off what so manifestly impairs their health, and thereby hurts their business also! Is there nothing equally cheap which they could use? Yes, surely; and cheaper too. If they used English herbs in its stead, (which would cost either nothing, or what is next to nothing,) with the same bread, butter, and milk, they would save just the price of the tea. And hereby they might not only lessen their pain, but in some degree their poverty too; for they would be able to work (as well as to save) considerably more than they can do now. And by this means, if they are in debt, they might be more just, paying away what they either earned or saved. If they are not in debt, they might be more merciful, giving it; away to them that want.”

6. I considered farther: “What an advantage might this be, particularly in such a body of men as those are who are united together in these societies, who are both so numerous and so poor! How much might be saved in so numerous a body; even in this single article of expense! And how greatly is all that can possibly be saved, in every article, wanted daily by those who have not even food convenient for them!”

7. I soon perceived that this latter consideration was of a more general nature than the former; and that it affected many of those whom the other

did not so immediately concern; seeing it was as needful for all to save needless expenses, as for some to regain the health they had impaired; especially, considered as members of a society, the wants of which they could not be unapprised of. They knew, of those to whom they were so peculiarly united, some had not food to sustain nature; some were destitute of even necessary clothing; some had not where to lay their head. They knew, or might know, that the little contributions made weekly did in nowise suffice to remove these wants, being barely sufficient to relieve the sick; and even that in so scanty a manner, that I know not if some of them have not, with their allowance, pined away, and at length died for want. If you and I have not saved all we could to relieve these, how shall we face them at the throne of God?

8. I reflected: “If one only would save all that he could in this single instance, he might surely feed or clothe one of his brethren, and perhaps save one life. What then might be done, if ten thousand, or one thousand, or only five hundred, would do it? yea, if half that number should say, ‘I will compute this day what I have expended in tea, weekly or yearly. I will immediately enter on cheaper food: And whatever is saved hereby, I will put into that poor-box weekly, to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked.’ I am mistaken, if any among us need want either food or raiment from that hour.”

9. I thought farther: “It is said, nay, many tell me to my face, I can persuade this people to anything. I will make a fair trial. If I cannot persuade them, there may be some good effect. All who do not willfully shut their eyes will see that; I have no such influence as they supposed. If I can persuade any number, many who are now weak or sick will be restored to health and strength. Many will pay those debts, which others, perhaps equally poor, can but ill afford to lose. Many will be less straitened in their own families. Many, by helping their neighbor, will lay up for themselves treasures in heaven.”

10. Immediately it struck into my mind, “But example must go before precept; therefore I must not plead an exemption for myself, from a daily practice of twenty-seven years. I must begin.” I did so. I left it off myself in August, 1746. And I have now had sufficient time to try the effects,

which have fully answered my expectation. My paralytic complaints are all gone; my hand is steady as it was at fifteen; although I must expect that or other weaknesses soon, as I decline into the vale of years. And so considerable a difference do I find in my expense, that I can make it appear, from the accounts now in being, in only those four families at London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle, I save upwards of fifty pounds a year.

11. The first to whom I explained these things at large, and whom I advised to set the same example to their brethren, were a few of those who rejoice to assist my brother and me, as our sons in the gospel. A week after, I proposed it to about forty of those whom I believed to be strong in faith; and the next morning to about sixty more, entreating them all to speak their minds freely. They did so; and, in the end, saw the good which might ensue; yielded to the force of Scripture and reason; and resolved all, (but two or three,) by the grace of God, to make the trial without delay.

12. In a short time, I proposed it, but with all the tenderness I could, first, to the body of those who are supposed to have living faith, and, after staying a few days, (that I might judge the better how to speak,) to the whole society. It soon appeared (as I doubted not but it would) how far these were from calling me Rabbi, from implicitly submitting to my judgment, or implicitly following my example. Objections rose in abundance from all sides. These I now proceed to consider; whether they are advanced by you, or by others; and whether pointed at the premises, or directly at the conclusion.

13. **I.** Some objected: “Tea is not unwholesome at all; not in any kind prejudicial to health.”

To these I reply, First, You should not be so sure of this. Even that casual circumstance, related in Dr. Short’s history of it, might incline you to doubt; namely, that “while the Chinese dry the leaves, and turn it with their hands upon the tin plates, the moisture of them is so extremely corrosive, that it eats into the flesh, if not wiped off immediately.” It is not probable, then, that what remains in the leaves is quite friendly to the human body.

Secondly, many eminent Physicians have declared their judgment, that it is prejudicial in several respects; that it gives rise to numberless disorders, particularly those of the nervous kind; and that, if frequently used by those of weak nerves, it is no other than a slow poison.

Thirdly, If all physicians were silent in the case, let plain fact is against you. And this speaks loud enough. It was prejudicial to *my* health; it is so to many to this day.

14. “But it is not so to me,” says the objector: “Why then should I leave it off?”

I answer, First, To give an example to those to whom it is undeniably prejudicial.

Secondly, That you may have the more wherewith to give bread to the hungry, and raiment to the naked.

15. “But I cannot leave it off; for it helps my health. Nothing else will agree with me.”

I answer, First, Will nothing else agree with you? I know not how to believe that. I suppose your body is much of the same kind with that of your great-grandmother. And do you think nothing else agreed with her, or with any of her progenitors? What poor, puling, sickly things, must all the English then have been, till within these hundred years! But you know they were not so. Other things agreed with them; and why not with you?

Secondly, If, in fact, nothing else will, if tea has already weakened your stomach, and impaired your digestion to such a degree, it has hurt you more than you are aware. It has prejudiced your health extremely. You have need to abhor it as deadly poison, and to renounce it from this very hour.

So says a drinker of drams: “Nothing else will agree with me. Nothing else will raise my spirits. I can digest nothing without them.” Indeed! Is it so? Then touch no more, if you love your life.

Thirdly, Suppose nothing else agrees with you at first; yet in a while many things will. When I first left off tea, I was half asleep all day long; my head ached from morning to night. I could not remember a question asked, even till I could return an answer; but in a week’s time all these inconveniences were gone, and have never returned since.

Fourthly, I have not found one single exception yet; not one person in all England, with whom, after sufficient trial made, nothing else would agree.

It is therefore well worth while for you to try again, if you have any true regard for your own health, or any compassion for those who are perishing all around you for want of the common necessaries of life.

16. If you are sincere in this plea, if you do not talk of your health, while the real objection is your inclination, make a fair trial thus:

- (1.) Take half a pint of milk every morning, with a little bread, not boiled, but warmed only: A man in tolerable health might double the quantity.
- (2.) If this is too heavy, add as much water, and boil it together, with a spoonful of oatmeal.
- (3.) If this agrees not, try half a pint, or a little more, of water gruel, neither thick nor thin; not sweetened, for that may be apt to make him sick, but with a very little butter, salt, and bread.
- (4.) If this disagrees, try sage, green balm, mint, or penny-royal tea, infusing only so much of the herb as just to change the color of the water.
- (5.) Try two or three of these mixed, in various proportions.
- (6.) Try ten or twelve other English herbs.
- (7.) Try foltron, a mixture of herbs to be had at many grocers, far healthier, as well as cheaper, than tea.
- (8.) Try cocoa. If, after having tried each of these for a week or ten days, you find none of them will agree with your constitution, then use (weak green) tea again; but at the same time know, that

your having used it so long has brought you near the chambers of death.

17. **II.** “I do not know,” says another, “but tea may hurt me; but there is nothing saved by leaving it off; for I am sure other things cost full as much.” I pray, what other things? Sack-and-sugar costs more; and so do ragouts, or pheasants, or ortolans. But what is this to the point? We do not say, All things are cheaper: But any of the things above mentioned are; at least, if prudently managed. Therefore, if you really desire to save what you can, you will drink tea no more.

18. “Well, I do not design to buy any more myself; but where others drink it, there is nothing saved by my abstaining.” I answer, First, Yes, something is saved, though but little; especially if you tell them before, “I shall not drink tea.” And many a little you know, put together, will make a great sum.

Secondly, If the whole saved were ever so little, if it were but two mites, when you save this for God, and your brethren’s sake, it is much.

Thirdly, Your example in saving a little now, may occasion the saving of more by and by.

Fourthly, It is not a little advantage which you may reap even now, to your own soul; by habituating yourself not to be ashamed of being singular in a good thing; by taking up your cross, and denying yourself even in so small an instance, and by accustoming yourself to act on rational grounds, whether in a little matter or a great.

19. “But what is saved will be no better employed.” Do you say this with regard to yourself, or others? If with regard to yourself, it will be your fault if you do not employ it better. I do not say you will, but I am sure you may; and if you do not, it is your own sin, and your own shame.

If with regard to others, how do you know that it will not be employed better? I trust it will. It cannot be denied that it often has, and that it

always may be. And it is highly probable all who save anything from the best motive, will lay it out to the best purpose.

20. "As to example," you say, "I have lately been without hopes of doing any good by it." I suppose you mean, because so exceeding few will follow either your example or mine. I am sorry for it. This only gives me a fresh objection to this unwholesome, expensive food; viz., that it has too much hold on the hearts of them that use it; that, to use a scriptural phrase, they are "under the power of" this trifle. If it be so, were there no other reason than this, they ought to throw it away at once; else they no more regard St. Paul than they do you or me; for his rule is home to the point: "All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any." Away with it then, however lawful, (that is, though it were wholesome as well as cheap,) if you are already brought "under the power of" it.

And the fewer they are who follow this rule, the greater reason there is that you should add one example more to those few. Though, blessed be God, they are not so few as you suppose. I have met with very many in London who use less of it than they had done for many years; and above an hundred who have plucked out the right eye and cast it from them, who wholly abstain from it.

21. You add, "But I am equally, yea, abundantly more, concerned to set an example in all Christian behavior." I grant it: This, therefore, "ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

22. But "one day," you add, "I saw your brother drink tea; which he said was for fear of giving offense."

I answer, First, Learn from hence to follow neither his nor my practice implicitly; but weigh the reason of each, and then follow reason, wheresoever it stands. But,

Secondly, Examine your heart, and beware inclination does not put on the shape of reason.

Thirdly, You see with your own eyes, I do not drink it at all, and yet I seldom give offense thereby. It is not then the bare abstaining, but the manner of doing it, which usually gives the offense.

Fourthly, There is therefore a manner wherein you may do it too, and yet give no more offense than I. For instance: If any ask you, simply reply, "I do not drink tea; I never use it." If they say, "Why, you did drink it;" answer; "I did so; but I have left it off a considerable time." Those who have either good nature or good manners will say no more. But if any should impertinently add, "O, but why did you leave it off?" answer, mildly, "Because I thought water-gruel (suppose) was wholesomer, as well as cheaper." If they, with still greater ill manners and impertinence, go on, "What, you do it because Mr. Wesley bids you;" reply, calmly, "True; I do it because Mr. Wesley, on good reasons, advises me so to do." If they add the trite cant phrase, "What, you follow man!" reply, without any emotion, "Yes, I follow any man, you or him, or any other, who gives me good reason for so doing." If they persist in calling, close the whole matter with, "I neither drink it, nor dispute about it."

23. If you proceed in this manner, with mildness and love, exceeding few will be offended. "But you ought," say some, "to give up an indifferent thing, rather than give an offense to any. So St. Paul: 'I will eat no flesh whilst the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.'" I reply, This is not an indifferent thing, if it affects the health either of myself or my brethren. Therefore that rule relating wholly to things indifferent is not applicable to this case. Would St. Paul have said, "I will drink drams while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend?" "But tea is not so hurtful as drams." I do not believe it is. But it is hurtful; and that is enough. The question does not turn on the degree of hurtfulness. "However, it is but a small thing." Nay, nothing is small if it touches conscience: Much less is it a small thing to preserve my own or my brother's health, or to be a faithful steward even of the mammon of unrighteousness. O think it not a small thing, whether only one for whom Christ died be fed or hungry, clothed or naked!

To conclude the head of offense: You must at least know that all this is no plea at all for your drinking tea at home. "Yes, it is; for my husband or

parents are offended if I do not drink it.” I answer, First, Perhaps this, in some rare cases, may be a sufficient reason why a wife or a child should use this food, that is, with them; but nowhere else. But, Secondly, try, and not once or twice only, if you cannot overcome that offense by reason, softness, love, patience, long-suffering, joined with constant and fervent prayer.

24. Your next objection is, “I cannot bear to give trouble; therefore, I drink whatever others drink where I come, else there is so much hurry about insignificant me.” I answer,

First, This is no plea at all for your drinking tea at home. Therefore, touch it not there, whatever you do abroad.

Secondly, Where is the trouble given, even when you are abroad, if they drink tea, and you fill your cup with milk and water?

Thirdly, Whatever trouble is taken, is not for “insignificant me,” but for that poor man who is half-starved with cold and hunger; for that miserable woman who, while she is poisoning herself, wipes her mouth, and says she does no evil; who will not believe the poison will hurt her, because it does not (sensibly at least) hurt you. O throw it away! let her have one plea less for destroying her body; if not her soul, before the time!

25. You object, farther, “It is my desire to be unknown for any particularity, unless a peculiar love to the souls of those who are present.” And I hope, to the souls of the absent too; yea, and to their bodies also, in a due proportion, that they may be healthy, and fed, and clothed, and warm, and may praise God for the consolation.

26. You subjoin: “When I had left it off for some months, I was continually puzzled with, Why, What, etc.; and I have seen no good effects, but impertinent questions and answers, and unedifying conversation about eating and drinking.”

I answer, First, Those who were so uneasy about it, plainly showed that you touched the apple of their eye. Consequently, these, of all others,

ought to leave it off; for they are evidently “brought under the power of it.”

Secondly, Those impertinent questions might have been cut short? by a very little steadiness and common sense. You need only have taken the method mentioned above, and they would have dropped in the midst.

Thirdly, It is not strange you saw no good effects of leaving it off, where it was not left off at all. But you saw very bad effects of not leaving it off; viz., the adding sin to sin; the joining much unedifying conversation to wasteful, unhealthy self-indulgence.

Fourthly, You need not go far to see many good effects of leaving it off: You may see them in me. I have recovered thereby that healthy state of the whole nervous system, which I had in a great degree, and I almost thought irrecoverably, lost for considerably more than twenty years. I have been enabled hereby to assist, in one year, above fifty poor with food or raiment, whom I must otherwise have left (for I had before begged for them all I could) as hungry and naked as I found them. You may see the good effects in above thirty poor people just now before you, who have been restored to health, through the medicines bought by that money which a single person has saved in this article. And a thousand more good effects you will not fail to see, when her example is more generally followed.

27. Neither is there any need that conversation should be unedifying, even when it turns upon eating and drinking. Nay, from such a conversation, if duly improved, numberless good effects may flow. For how few understand, “Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God!” And how glad ought you to be of a fair occasion to observe, that though the kingdom of God does not consist in “meats and drinks,” yet, without exact temperance in these, we cannot have either “righteousness, or peace, or joy in the Holy Ghost!”

It may therefore have a very happy effect, if, whenever people introduce the subject, you directly close in, and push it home, that they may understand a little more of this important truth.

28. But “I find at present very little desire to change either my thoughts or practice.” Shall I speak plain? I fear, by not standing your ground, by easiness, cowardice, and false shame, you have grieved the Spirit of God, and thereby lost your conviction and desire at once.

Yet you add: “I advise everyone to leave off tea, if it hurts their health, or is inconsistent with frugality; as I advise everyone to avoid dainties in meat, and vanity in dress, from the same principle.” Enough, enough! Let this only be well pursued, and it will secure all that I contend for. I advise no persons living to leave it off, if it does not hurt the health either of them or their brethren; and if it is not inconsistent with the Christian frugality of cutting off every needless expense.

29. But “to be subject to the consequences of leaving it off again! this I cannot bear.”

I answer, First, It may be so. You cannot easily bear it. For, by your giving up the point once, you have made it much harder to stand your ground now than it was at first. Yet still it is worth all your courage and labor; since the reasons for it are as strong as at the beginning.

Secondly, As to the consequences you fear, they are shadowy all; they are a mere lion in the streets. “Much trouble to others.” Absolutely none at all, if you take the teakettle, and fill your cup with water. “Much foolish discourse.” Take the preceding advice, and it will be just the reverse. “Nothing helpful toward the renewal of my soul in the image of Jesus Christ.” What a deep mistake is this! Is it not helpful to speak closely of the nature of his inward kingdom? to encourage one another in casting off every weight, in removing every hindrance of it? to inure ourselves to the bearing his cross? to bring Christianity into common life, and accustom ourselves to conduct even our minutest actions by the great rules of reason and religion?

30. Is it “not of any importance” to do this? I think, it is of vast importance. However, “it is a very small circumstance in self-denial.” It is well if you find it so. I am sure I did not. And I believe the case is the same

with many others at this day. But you say, "I have so many other assaults of self-indulgence, that this is nothing." "It is nothing," said one to a young woman, "to fast once or twice a week; to deny yourself a little food. Why do not you deny yourself as to anger and fretfulness, as to peevishness and discontent?" She replied, "That I want; so I deny myself in little things first, till I am able to do it in greater." Neither you nor I can mend her reply. Go thou and do likewise.

31. I have done what I proposed; and indeed in many more words than I at first intended. I have told you the occasions of every step I have taken, and the motives inducing me thereto; and have considered what either you or others have urged on the contrary side of the question.

And now, the advice I would give upon the whole is this: First, Pray earnestly to God for clear light; for a full, piercing, and steady conviction, that this is the more excellent way. Pray for a spirit of universal self-denial, of cheerful temperance, of wise frugality; for bowels of mercies; for a kind, compassionate spirit, tenderly sensible of the various wants of your brethren; and for firmness of mind; for a mild, even courage, without fear, anger, or shame. Then you will once more, with all readiness of heart, make this little (or great) sacrifice to God; and withal present your soul and body a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ.

THOUGHTS ON NERVOUS DISORDERS; PARTICULARLY THAT WHICH IS USUALLY TERMED LONNESS OF SPIRITS.

1. **WHEN** Physicians meet with disorders which they do not understand, they commonly term them *nervous*; a word that conveys to us no determinate idea, but it is a good cover for learned ignorance. But these are often no natural disorder of the body, but the hand of God upon the soul, being a dull consciousness of the want of God, and the unsatisfactoriness of everything here below. At other times it is conviction of sin, either in a higher or a lower degree. It is no wonder that those who are strangers to religion should not know what to make of this; and that, consequently, all their prescriptions should be useless, seeing they quite mistake the case.

2. But undoubtedly there are nervous disorders which are purely natural. Many of these are connected with other diseases, whether acute or chronicle. Many are the forerunners of various distempers, and many the consequences of them. But there are those which are not connected with others, being themselves a distinct, original distemper. And this frequently arises to such a height, that it seems to be one species of madness. So, one man imagines himself to be made of glass; another thinks he is too tall to go in at the door. This is often termed the *spleen*, or *vapors*; often, *lowness of spirits*; a phrase that, having scarce any meaning, is so much the utter to be given to this unintelligible disorder. It seems to have taken its rise from hence: We sometimes say, "A man is in high spirits;" and the proper opposite to this is, "He is low spirited." Does not this imply, that a kind of faintness, weariness, and listlessness affects the whole body, so that he is disinclined to any motion, and hardly cares to move hand or foot? But the mind seems chiefly to be affected, having lost its relish of everything, and being no longer capable of enjoying the things it once delighted in most. Nay, everything round about is not only flat and insipid, but dreary and uncomfortable. It is not strange if, to one in this state, life itself is become a burden; yea, so insupportable a burden, that

many who have all this world can give, desperately rush into an unknown world, rather than bear it any longer.

3. But what are the causes of this strange disorder? One cause is, the use of spirituous liquors. This is one of the horrid effects which naturally follow the swallowing that fashionable poison. That liquid fire lays the foundation of numberless diseases, and of this in particular. It is amazing that the preparing or selling this poison should be permitted (I will not say in any Christian country, but) in any civilized state. "O, it brings in a considerable sum of money to Government." True; but is it wise to barter men's lives for money? Surely, that gold is bought too dear, if it is the price of blood. Does not the strength of every country consist in the number of its inhabitants? If so, the lessening their number is a loss which no money can compensate. So that it is inexcusable ill husbandry, to give the lives of useful men for any sum of money whatever.

4. But a more extensive cause of this disorder than the use of drams, I apprehend, is the use of tea; particularly where it is taken either in large quantities, or strong, or without cream and sugar. "Nay, weak tea is far more hurtful." This is a senseless, shameless falsehood. I long drank hot sugar-and-water instead of tea; and it did me no hurt at all. But three cups of strong tea will now make my hand shake, so that I can hardly write. And let any try the experiment: If any tea make his hand shake, it will not be weak tea, but strong. This has exceedingly increased the number of nervous complaints throughout the three kingdoms. And this furnishes us with a satisfactory answer to the common question, "Why are these complaints so general now, which were scarce heard of two or three centuries ago?" For this plain reason: Two or three centuries ago, no tea was drank in either Britain or Ireland.

5. But allowing both tea and spirituous liquors to have contributed largely to the increase of nervous disorders, yet it may be doubted, whether one or both of them are the principal causes of them. The principal causes of them (particularly among those who do not work for their living) are, as Dr. Cadogan justly observes, indolence, intemperance, and irregular passions.

First. Indolence, the not using such a degree of exercise as the constitution requires. To illustrate this: Our body is composed of earth, water, air, and fire; and the two latter are as necessary as the two former. To supply these, that curious engine, the lungs, continually takes in the air; to every particle of which a particle of fire is attached, which, being detached from it, is mingled with the blood. Now, exercise quickens the motion of the lungs, and enables them to collect from the air a due quantity of fire. The nerves are the conductors of this ethereal fire, vulgarly called the animal spirits. If this is duly diffused through the whole body, we are lively and vigorous; if it is not, (which without exercise it cannot be,) we soon grow faint and languid. And if other disorders do not ensue, those termed nervous surely will, with that whole train of symptoms which are usually comprised in what is termed *lowness of spirits*.

6. Intemperate we is another principal cause of this; — if not intemperance in drink, which is not quite so common, yet intemperance in meat; the taking more of it than nature requires. Dr. Cheyne well observes, it is not generally the quality, but the quantity, of what we eat which hurts us. What hurts the nerves in particular, is the eating too much animal food, especially at night; much more the eating at one meal foods of several different kinds. If we consider how few observe this, we shall not wonder that so many have nervous disorders; especially among those that have an opportunity of indulging themselves daily its variety, and who are hereby continually tempted to eat more than nature requires.

7. But there is another sort of intemperance, of which I think Dr. Cadogan does not take the least notion. And yet it is the source of more nervous disorders than even intemperance in food; I mean, intemperance in sleep; the sleeping longer than nature requires. This alone will account for the weak nerves of most of our Nobility and Gentry. Not that I would insist upon the old rule, —

Sex horas quivis poscit, septemque scholaris;
*Octo viator habet; nebulo quisque novem.*⁶⁰

I would allow between six and seven hours, at an average, to a healthy man; or an hour more, between seven and eight hours, to an unhealthy

man. And I do not remember, that in threescore years I have known either man or woman who laid longer in bed than this, (whether they slept or no,) but in some years they complained of lowness of spirits.

The plain reason of which seems to be, while we sleep all the springs of nature are unbent. And if we sleep longer that is sufficient, they are relaxed more than is sufficient, and of course grow weaker and weaker. And if we lie longer in bed, though without sleep, the very posture relaxs the whole body; much more when we are covered up with clothes, which throw back on the body whatever perspires from it. By this means it is stewed in the moist vapor: It sucks in again what nature has cast out, and the flesh is, as it were, parboiled therein, and becomes more and more soft and flabby; and the nerves suffer at least as much hereby as any other part of the habit. I cannot therefore but account this, the lying too long in bed, the grand cause of our nervous disorders.

8. And this alone sufficiently answers this question, “Why are we more nervous than our forefathers?” Because we lie longer in bed: They, rich and poor, slept about eight, when they heard the curfew-bell, and rose at four; the bell ringing at that hour (as well as at eight) in every parish in England. We rise (if not obliged to work for our living) at ten, eleven, or twelve. Is it any wonder then, were there no other cause, that we complain of lowness of spirits?

9. Yet something may be allowed to irregular passions. For as long as the soul and body are united, these undoubtedly affect the body; the nerves in particular. Even violent joy, though it raises the spirits for a time, does afterwards sink them greatly. And everyone knows what an influence fear has upon our whole frame. Nay, even “hope deferred maketh the heart sick;” puts the mind all out of tune. The same effect have all foolish and hurtful desires. They “pierce us through with many sorrows;” they occasion a deep depression of the spirits: So, above all, does inordinate affection; whereby so many, refusing to be comforted, sorrow even unto death.

10. But is there no cure for this sore evil? Is there no remedy for lowness of spirits? Undoubtedly there is; a most certain cure, if you are willing to

pay the price of it. But this price is not silver or gold, nor anything purchasable thereby. If you would give all the substance of your house for it, it would be utterly despised; and all the medicines under the sun avail nothing in this distemper. The whole *materia medica* put together, will do you no lasting service; they do not strike at the root of the disease: But you must remove the cause, if you wish to remove the effect.

But this cannot be done by your own strength; it can only be done by the mighty power of God. If you are convinced of this, set about it, trusting in Him, and you will surely conquer.

First. Sacredly abstain from all spirituous liquors. Touch them not, on any pretense whatever. To others they may sometimes be of use; but to nervous persons they are deadly poison.

Secondly. If you drink any, drink but little tea, and none at all without eating, or without sugar and cream. "But you like it without." No matter; prefer health before taste.

Thirdly. Every day of your life take at least an hour's exercise, between breakfast and dinner. If you will, take another hour before supper, or before you sleep. If you can, take it in the open air; otherwise, in the house. If you cannot ride or walk abroad, use, within, a dumb-bell, or a wooden horse. If you have not strength to do this for an hour at a time, do it at twice or thrice. Let nothing hinder you. Your life is at stake. Make everything yield to this.

Fourthly. Take no more food than nature requires. Dine upon one thing, — except pudding or pie. Eat no flesh at supper; but something light and easy of digestion.

Fifthly. Sleep early and rise early; unless you are ill, never lie in bed much above seven hours. Then you will never lie awake. Your flesh will be firm, and your spirits lively.

Sixthly. Above all, —

Give not your passions way;
God gave them to thee under lock and key.

Beware of anger; beware of worldly sorrow; beware of the fear that hath torment; beware of foolish and hurtful desires; beware of inordinate affection; remember the kind command, “My son, give me thy heart!” Then shall there be no more complaining of lowness of spirits! But “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,” shall keep thy heart and mind in Christ Jesus!

MELVILL-HOUSE

May 20, 1784.

A SCHEME OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

USED BY THE FIRST METHODISTS IN OXFORD.

*Sunday. — Love of God and Simplicity: Means of which are,
Prayer and Meditation.*

1. **HAVE** I been simple and recollected in everything I said or did? Have I
 (1.) been simple in everything, that is, looked upon God, my Good, my
 Pattern, my one Desire, my Disposer, Parent of Good; acted
 wholly for Him; bounded my views with the present action or
 hour?
 (2.) Recollected? that is, has this simple view been distinct and
 uninterrupted? Have I, in order to keep it so, used the signs agreed
 upon with my friends, wherever I was?

Have I done anything without a previous perception of its being the will
 of God? or without a perception of its being an exercise or a means of the
 virtue of the day? Have I said anything without it?

2. Have I prayed with fervor? at going in and out of church? in the church?
 morning and evening in private? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with
 my friends, at rising? before lying down? on Saturday noon? all the time I
 am engaged in exterior work in private? before I go into the place of public
 or private prayer, for help therein? Have I, wherever I was, gone to church
 morning and evening, unless for necessary mercy? and spent from one
 hour to three in private? Have I, in private prayer, frequently stopped
 short and observed what fervor? Have I repeated it over and over, till I
 adverted to every word? Have I at the beginning of every prayer or
 paragraph owned I cannot pray? Have I paused before I concluded in his
 name, and adverted to my Savior now interceding for me at the right hand
 of God, and offering up these prayers?

3. Have I duly used ejaculations? that is, have I every hour prayed for
 humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day? considered
 with whom I was the last hour, what I did, and how? with regard to

recollection, love of man, humility, self-denial, resignation, and thankfulness? considered the next hour in the same respects, offered up all I do to my Redeemer, begged his assistance in every particular, and commended my soul to his keeping? Have I done this deliberately, not in haste, seriously, not doing my thing else the while, and fervently as I could?

4. Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day? that is, have I prayed for it at going out and coming in? deliberately, seriously, fervently?

5. Have I used a Collect at nine, twelve, and three? and grace before and after eating? aloud at my own room? deliberately, seriously, fervently?

6. Have I duly meditated? every day, unless for necessary mercy,

(1.) From six, etc., to prayers?

(2.) From four to five? What was particular in the providence of this day? How ought the virtue of the day to have been exerted upon it? How did it fall short? (Here faults.)

(3.) On Sunday, from six to seven, with Kempis? from three to four on redemption, or God's attributes? Wednesday and Friday, from twelve to one, on the Passion? after ending a book, on what I had marked in it?

Monday. — Love of Man.

1. **HAVE** I been zealous to do, and active in doing, good? that is,

(1.) Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and preventing, removing, or lessening evil?

(2.) Have I pursued it with my might?

(3.) Have I thought anything too dear to part with, to serve my neighbor?

(4.) Have I spent an hour at least every day in speaking to some one or other?

(5.) Have I given anyone up till he expressly renounced me?

(6.) Have I, before I spoke to any, learned, as far as I could, his temper, way of thinking, past life, and peculiar hindrances,

internal and external? fixed the point to be aimed at? then the means to it?

- (7.) Have I in speaking proposed the motives, then the difficulties, then balanced them, then exhorted him to consider both calmly and deeply, and to pray earnestly for help?
- (8.) Have I in speaking to a stranger explained what religion is not? (not negative, not external;) and what it is? (a recovery of the image of God;) searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop there? exhorted and directed him?
- (9.) Have I persuaded all I could to attend public prayers, sermons, and sacraments, and in general to obey the laws of the Church Catholic, the Church of England, the State, the University, and their respective Colleges?
- (10.) Have I, when taxed with any act of obedience, avowed it, and turned the attack with sweetness and firmness?
- (11.) Have I disputed upon any practical point, unless it was to be practiced just then?
- (12.) Have I in disputing,
 - (a.) Desired him to define the terms of the question; to limit it; what he grants, what denies?
 - (b.) Delayed speaking my opinion? let him explain and prove his? then insinuated and pressed objections?
- (13.) Have I after every visit asked him who went with me, "Did I say anything wrong?"
- (14.) Have I when any one asked advice, directed and exhorted him with all my power?

2. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbor in virtue or pleasure? grieved with him in pain, for him in sin?

3. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not anger?

4. Have I thought or spoke unkindly of or to him? Have I revealed any evil of anyone, unless it was necessary to some particular good I had in view? Have I then done it with all the tenderness of phrase and manner consistent with that end? Have I anyway appeared to approve them that did otherwise?

5. Has goodwill been, and appeared to be, the spring of all my actions toward others?

6. Have I duly used intercession?

- (1.) Before,
- (2.) After, speaking to any?
- (3.) For my friends on Sunday?
- (4.) For my pupils on Monday?
- (5.) For those who have particularly desired it, on Wednesday and Friday?
- (6.) For the family in which I am, every day?

THOUGHTS UPON DISSIPATION.

1. **P**ERHAPS nothing can be more seasonable at the present time than to bestow a few thoughts on this. It is a fashionable subject, very frequently spoken of, especially in good company. An ingenious writer has lately given us an essay upon the subject. When it fell into my hands a few days since, I was filled with a pleasing expectation of seeing it thoroughly explained. But my expectation was not answered; for although many just and lively things are said there, yet in above twenty pages I could find no definition of dissipation, either bad or good.

2. But “the love of dissipation,” says the author, “is the reigning evil of the present day.” Allowing it is; I ask, What do you mean by dissipation? Sometimes you use the word pleasure as an equivalent term. But what pleasure do you mean; the pleasures of sense, or of the imagination in general; or any particular pleasure of one or the other? At other times you seem to make dissipation the same with luxury; at least with a high degree of it. Sometimes, again, you use *the love of amusement* as the same with *the love of dissipation*. But the question recurs, That amusement do you mean; for there are numberless sorts. So that still, after talking about them so long, we have only a vague, indeterminate notion of a dissipated age, a dissipated nation, or a dissipated man; without having any clear or distinct idea what the word *dissipation* means.

3. Those who are content with slight and superficial views of things, may rest in the general account, that a dissipated age is one wherein the bulk of mankind, especially those of any rank or fashion, spend the main of their time in eating and drinking, and diversions, and the other pleasures of sense and imagination. And that we live in a dissipated age, in this meaning of the word, is as plain as that the sun shines at noonday. Most of those that are commonly termed *innocent amusements* fall under this head, — the pleasures of imagination. Whenever, therefore, a general fondness of these prevails, that is a dissipated age. A dissipated nation is one where the people in general are vehemently attached to the pleasures of sense and

imagination. The smaller vulgar in England are at present passionately fond of the lowest pleasures both of sense and fancy; while the great vulgar are equally engrossed by those they account a higher kind. Meantime they are all equally dissipated, although in different ways; and so indeed is every man and woman that is passionately attached to external pleasure.

4. But without dwelling any longer on the surface of things, let us search the matter to the bottom, and inquire, wherein lies the original ground of human dissipation. Let this be once pointed out, and it will place the whole question in the clearest light.

5. Man is an immortal spirit, created in the image and for the enjoyment of God. This is the one, the only end of his being; he exists for no other purpose. God is the center of all spirits; and while they cleave to Him, they are wise, holy, and happy; but in the same proportion as they are separated from Him, they are foolish, unholy, and unhappy. This disunion from God is the very essence of human dissipation; which is no other than the scattering the thoughts and affections of the creature from the Creator. Wherefore fondness; for sensual enjoyments of any kind; love of silly, irrational pleasures; love of trifling amusements; luxury, vanity, and a thousand foolish desires and tempers, are not so properly dissipation itself, as they are the fruits of it, the natural effects of being unhinged from the Creator, the Father, the center of all intelligent spirits.

6. It is this against which the Apostle guards in his advice to the Christians at Corinth: "This I speak, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." It might as well be rendered, *without dissipation*, without having your thoughts any way scattered from God. The having our thoughts and affections centered in God, this is Christian simplicity; the having them in any degree uncentered from God, this is dissipation. And it little differs in the real nature of things and in the eye of God, the Judge of all, whether a man be kept in a state of dissipation from God, by crowns and empires, and thousands of gold and silver, or by cards, and dancing, and drinking, and dressing, and mistressing, and masquerades, and picking straws.

7. Dissipation is then, in the very root of it, separation from God; in other words, Atheism, or the being without God in the world. It is the negative branch of ungodliness. And, in this true sense of the word, certainly, England is the most dissipated nation that is to be found under heaven. And whether our thoughts and affections are dissipated, scattered from God, by women, or food, or dress, or one or ten thousand pretty trifles, that dissipation (innocent as it may seem) is equally subversive of all real virtue and all real happiness. It carries its own punishment: Though we are loaded with blessings, it often makes our very existence a burden; and, by an unaccountable anxiety, gives a foretaste of what it is to be “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord!”

JOHN WESLEY.

HILTON-PARK,
March 26, 1783.

A QUESTION

CONCERNING DEW ON COACH-GLASSES.

WHEN two or three persons are in a coach, and draw up the glasses, it is observed they become so covered with dew, that we can scarce see through them; but when that is once wiped off, there is no more dew gathered upon the glass, but it continues transparent. You will oblige your readers with the reason of this phenomenon.

THE ANSWER.

THE reason is, that in comparison of the moist vapors that come from the persons in the coach, the glass is cold, and condenses them, remaining cold longer than any other part of the coach; as we find in damp weather, that marble will become wet by condensing the moisture of the air. Then by degrees, the glass, partaking of the warmth of the persons in the coach, is no longer able to condense the floating vapors into water. The proof of this is plain by letting down the glass into its place, because there it cools, and then being brought up it again condenses the vapor and gathers a dew; without which it would not condense the vapor, though in many hours' traveling.

SOME ACCOUNT OF AN EMINENT MAN.

PHILIP VERHEYEN, Doctor of Physic, in the University of Louvain, and Royal Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, was, towards the end of the last and in the beginning of the present century, one of the most eminent Physicians in Europe. He died at Louvain on the 28th of February, 1710, aged sixty-two. He was a man of eminent piety, wholly detached both from the goods and glory of this world. He gave orders not to bury him in the church, but in the churchyard; all the will which he left being in the following words: —

Philippus Verheyen, Medicinæ Doctor et Professor, partem sui materialem hoc in coemeterio condi voluit; ne templum dehonestaret, aut nocivis halitibus inficeret. Requiescat in pace.

That is, — “Philip Verheyen, Doctor and Professor of Physic, ordered his body to be buried in this churchyard, that he might not lessen the honor of the church, or infect it with unwholesome vapors.”

What pity it is, that so few persons, even of sense and piety, feel the force of these considerations! I am so sensible of their weight, that I have likewise left orders to bury my remains, not in the New Chapel, but in the burying-ground adjoining to it.

JOHN WESLEY.

NOTES

1. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —

“‘Tis your own interest that calls
When flames invade your neighbor’s walls.”

— EDIT.

2. Merchants who have lived in Portugal inform us, that the King had a large building filled with diamonds; and more gold stored up, coined and uncoined, than all the other princes of Europe together.

3. The title which the Inquisition of Portugal (if not in other countries also) takes to itself.

4. What security is there against all this, upon the infidel hypothesis? But upon the Christian, there is abundant security: For the Scripture prophecies are not yet fulfilled.

5. This quotation from Ovid is thus translated by Dryden: —

“When all his blazing worlds above shall burn,
And all the inferior globs to cinders turn?”

— EDIT.

6. Let this pleasing mental error remain. — EDIT.

7. Thus translated by Francis: —

“You treat adventurous, and incautious tread
On fires with faithless embers overspread.”

— EDIT.

8. These quotations from Virgil are thus translated by Pitt: —

“Thus o’er the corn, while furious winds conspire,
Rolls on a wide-devouring blaze of fire;
Or some big torrent, from a mountain’s brow,
Bursts, pours, and thunders down the vale below,” —
“And” rolls “resistless o’er the levell’d mounds.”

— EDIT.

9. This was wrote before the Princess Dowager went abroad.

10. What I am reluctant to express. — EDIT.

11. You are yourself also a log of wood. — EDIT.

12. Scandalizing the nobility. — EDIT.
13. See Woodrow's "History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland."
14. If the famous Middlesex election was an exception to this, yet observe, one swallow makes no summer.
15. This has already been put to the proof. — EDIT.
16. Rudely insulted by a turbulent mob, as he was going into the House.
17. See Mr. Hargrave's Plea for Somerset the Negro.
18. Thus translated by Pitt: —

"O check your wrath, my sons; the nations spare;
And save your country from the woes of war;
Nor in her sacred breast, with rage abhorr'd,
So fiercely plunge her own victorious sword!"

— EDIT.

19. Or writers. For I am informed by a correspondent in Bristol, that this letter as wrote by two Anabaptist Ministers, assisted by a gentleman and a tradesman of the Church of England.
20. That is, in connection with the Lords and Commons.
21. See a tract, entitled, "Thoughts upon Liberty."
22. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —

"Sense, morals, 'gainst such laws unite,
And public good, true source of right."

— EDIT.

23. Thoughts on the Origin of Power.
24. But many of them are of a better mind.
25. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —

"How fine this house, or that estate;
How great a favorite dancer's skill,
Whether he caper well or ill."

— EDIT.

26. This quotation from Virgil is thus translated by Pitt: —

“Not those insulting empty vaunts I dread;
No; but the gods with fear my bosom move,
And he, my greatest foe, almighty Jove.”

— EDIT.

27. This quotation from the same poet is thus translated by Pitt: —

“But, Heaven against us, all attempts must fail.”

— EDIT.

28. This was published at the beginning of the late rebellion.

29. This was wrote during the late rebellion.

30. (—) Here mention the particular persons you would pray for.

31. (—) Here mention the particular persons you would pray for.

32. (—) Here you may mention any particular mercy received.

33. Ignatius.

34. I follow him, but at a great distance. — EDIT.

35. Rude and inhospitable to foreigners. — EDIT.

36. Nay, I would have proclaimed it aloud, giving the glory to God, for the comfort of all that were present.

37. I do not regret his not living to write those tracts; because I despair of seeing any in the English tongue superior to those extracts from Abbe Fleary and Mr. Poiret, published under the title of “Instructions for Children.” I have never yet seen anything comparable to them, either for depth of sense, or plainness of language.

38. This quotation from Tibullus is thus rendered by Dr. Grainger: —

“A secret grace his every act improves,
And pleasing follows wheresoe'er he moves.”

— EDIT.

39. I verily believe, if he had then gone to London, he would have been alive at this day. But I blame no one for thinking otherwise.

40. It is not to be understood, that Mr. Wesley's sentiments concerning Christian Perfection were in any measure changed after the year 1777. This tract underwent several revisions and enlargements during his

lifetime; and in every successive edition the date of the most recent revision was specified. The last revision appears to have been made in the year 1777; and since that period, this date has been generally continued on the title page of the several editions or the pamphlet. — EDIT.

41. This is too strong. Our Lord himself desired ease in pain. He asked for it, only with resignation: "Not as I will," I desire, "but as thou wilt."
42. This is far too strong. See the sermon "On Wandering Thoughts."
43. Frequently this is the case; but only for a time.
44. For a time it may be so; but not always.
45. Sometimes they have no need: at other times they have.
46. Sometimes they do not; at other times they do, and that grievously.
47. Not all who are saved from sin; many of them have not attained it yet.
48. Is it not astonishing, that while this book is extant, which was published four-and-twenty years ago, anyone should face me down, that this is a new doctrine, and what I never taught before? — (This note was first published in the year 1765. — EDIT.)
49. That is, unto those alone, exclusive of others; but they speak to them, jointly with others, almost continually.
50. More rarely, I allow; but yet in some places very frequently, strongly, and explicitly.
51. I mean, it is not the condition either of present or future salvation.
52. The advices which follow were published in a separate tract in the year 1762, under the title of "Cautions and Directions given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies," with the following motto: —

"Set the false witnesses aside,
Yet hold the truth for ever fast."

It was evidently intended to guard the people against the mischievous extravagances of George Bell and his friends, a particular account of whom is given in Mr. Wesley's Journal about that period. — EDIT.

53. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —

“How many years give sanction to our lines?” — EDIT.

54. Volume 5, Page 202, Of The Present Edition. — EDIT.

55. At what time this answer was written, it is perhaps impossible exactly to ascertain. It appears to have been sent as a private letter to Mr. Dodd, before he had become a Doctor of Divinity; and not to have been published till the year 1782, when it was inserted in the Arminian Magazine. — EDIT.

56. Dr. Dodd was executed for forgery, June 27th, 1777; and this account was published in July, 1783. — EDIT.

57. In the year 1743 Mr. Wesley published a small pamphlet under the title of, “Thoughts on Marriage and a Single Life.” It was afterwards superseded by the tract now before the reader; which embodies the principal sentiment contained in the former publication. — EDIT.

58. The Arminian Magazine for 1788. — EDIT.

59. To excite ill-will. — EDIT.

60. Thus paraphrastically translated by an anonymous writer in the Arminian Magazine: —

“Six hours for sleep the human frame requires;
 Hard students may to seven incline;
 To eight, the men whom toil or traveling tires;
 But lazy knaves will all have nine.”

— EDIT.

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