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**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
JOHN WESLEY, VOLUME 12
LETTERS**

by John Wesley

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THE WORKS
OF
JOHN WESLEY

Third Edition

Complete and Unabridged
1872 Edition

VOLUME XII

Letters

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LETTERS

from

THE REVEREND JOHN WESLEY,

TO

VARIOUS PERSONS.

I. — *To his Father.*

DEAR SIR,

LINCOLN COLLEGE, *December 19 1729.*

AS I was looking over, the other day, Mr. Ditton's Discourse on the Resurrection of Christ, I found, toward the end of it, a sort of essay on the Origin of Evil. I fancied the shortness of it, if nothing else, would make you willing to read it; though very probably you will not find much in it which has not occurred to your thoughts before.

“Since the supreme Being must needs be infinitely and essentially good, as well as wise and powerful, it has been esteemed no little difficulty to show how evil came into the world. *Unde malum*,¹ has been a mighty question.” (Page 424.)

There were some who, in order to solve this, supposed two supreme, governing principles; the one a good, the other an evil one: Which latter has independent on, and of equal power with, the former, and the author of all that was irregular or bad in the universe. This monstrous scheme the

Manichees fell into, and much improved; but were sufficiently confuted by St. Austin, who had reason to be particularly acquainted with their tenets.

But the plain truth is, the hypothesis requires no more to the confutation of it, than the bare proposing it. Two supreme, independent principles, is next door to a contradiction in terms. It is the very same thing, in result and consequence, as saying two absolute infinites; and he that says two, had as good say ten or fifty, or any other number whatever. Nay, if there can be two essentially distinct, absolute infinites, there may be an infinity of such absolute infinites; that is as much as to say, none of them all would be an absolute infinite, or, that none of them all would be properly and really infinite. “For real infinity is strict and absolute infinity, and only that.”

“From the nature of liberty and free will, we may deduce a very possible and satisfactory (perhaps the only possible just) account of the origin of evil.

“There are, and necessarily must be, some original, intrinsic agreements and disagreements, fitnesses and unfitnesses of certain things and circumstances, to and with each other; which are antecedent to all positive institutions, founded on the very nature of those things and circumstances, considered in themselves, and in their relation to each other.

“As these all fall within the comprehension of an infinite, discerning mind, who is likewise infinite, essential rectitude and reason; so those on the one side must necessarily (to speak after the manner of men) be chosen or approved of by him, as the other disliked and disapproved; and this on the score of the eternal, intrinsic agreeableness and disagreeableness of them.

“Farther: It no way derogated from any one perfection of an infinite Being to endow other beings which he made with such a power as we call liberty; that is, to furnish them with such capacities, dispositions, and principles of action, that it should be possible for them either to observe or to deviate from those eternal rules and measures of fitness and agreeableness, with respect to certain things and circumstances, which were conformable to the infinite rectitude of his own will, and which infinite reason must

necessarily discover. Now, evil a deviation from those measures of eternal, unerring order and reason; not to choose what is worthy to be chosen, and is accordingly chose by such a will as the divine. And to bring this about, no more is necessary, than the exerting certain acts of that power we call free will. By which power we are enabled to choose or refuse, and to determine ourselves to action accordingly. Therefore, without having recourse to any ill principle, we may fairly account for the origin of evil, from the possibility of a various use of our liberty; even as that capacity or possibility itself is ultimately founded on the delectability and finiteness of a created nature.”

I am, dear Sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate son.

II. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

January, 1731.

THOUGH some of the postulata upon which Archbishop King builds his hypothesis of the Origin of Evil be such as very few will admit of, yet since the superstructure is regular and well contrived, I thought you would not be unwilling to see the scheme of that celebrated work. He divides it into five chapters.

The sum of the first chapter is this: — The first notions we have of outward things are our conceptions of motion, matter, and space. Concerning each of these, we soon observe that it does not exist of itself; and, consequently that there must be some first cause, to which all of them owe their existence. Although we have no faculty for the direct perception of this First Cause, and so can know very little more of Him than a blind man of light, yet thus much we know of him, by the faculties we have, that He is one, infinite in nature and power, free, intelligent, and omniscient; that, consequently, he proposes to himself an end in every one of his actions; and that the end of his creating the world was, the exercise of his power, and wisdom, and goodness; which he therefore made as perfect as it could be made by infinite goodness, and power, wisdom.

Chapter II. But, if so, how came evil into the world? If the world was made by such an agent, with such an intention, how is it that either imperfection or natural or moral evils have a place in it? Is not this difficulty best solved by the Manichæan supposition, that there is an evil as well as a good principle? By no means; for it is just as repugnant to infinite goodness to create what it foresaw would be spoiled by another, as to create what would be spoiled by the constitution of its own nature: Their supposition therefore leaves the difficulty as it found it. But if it could be proved, that to permit evils in the world is consistent with, nay, necessarily results from, infinite goodness, then the difficulty would vanish; and to prove this, is the design of the following treatise.

Chapter III. All created beings, as such, are necessarily imperfect; nay, infinitely distant from supreme perfection; Nor can they all be equally perfect; since some must be only parts of others. As to their properties too, some must be perfecter than others; for suppose any number of the most perfect beings created, infinite goodness would prompt the Creator to add less perfect beings to those, if their existence neither lessened the number nor conveniences of the more perfect. The existence of matter, for instance, neither lessens the number nor the conveniences of pure spirits. Therefore, the addition of material beings to spiritual, was not contrary to, but resulted from, infinite goodness.

Chapter IV. As the evils of imperfection necessarily spring from this, that the imperfect things were made out of nothing, so natural evils necessarily spring from their being made out of matter. For matter is totally useless without motion, or even without such a motion as will divide it into parts; but this cannot be done without a contrariety of motions; and from this necessarily flows generation and corruption.

The material part of us being thus liable to corruption pain is necessary to make us watchful against it, and to warn, us of what tends toward it; as is the fear of death likewise which is of use in many cases that pain does not reach. From these all the passions necessarily spring; nor can these be extinguished while those remain. But if pain and the fear of death were extinguished, no animal could long subsist. Since, therefore, these evils are necessarily joined with more than equivalent goods, the permitting these is

not repugnant to, but flows from, infinite goodness. The same observation holds as to hunger, thirst, childhood, age, diseases, wild beasts, and poisons. They are all, therefore, permitted because each of them is necessarily connected with such a good as outweighs the evil.

Chapter V. Touching moral evils, (by which I mean “inconveniences arising from the choice of the sufferer,”) I propose to show,

1. What is the nature of choice or election.
2. That our happiness consists in the elections or choices we make.
3. What elections are improper to be made.
4. How we come to make such elections. And,
5. How our making them is consistent with the divine power and goodness.

1. By liberty, I mean, an active, self determining power, which does not choose things because they are pleasing, but is pleased with them because it chooses them.

That God is endued with such a power, I conclude,

- (1.) Because nothing is good or evil, pleasing or displeasing, to him, before he chooses it.
- (2.) Because his will or choice is the cause of goodness in all created things.
- (3.) Because if God had not been endued with such a principle, he would never have created anything.

But it is to be observed, farther, that God sees and chooses whatever is connected with what he chooses in the same instant; and that he likewise chooses whatever is convenient for his creatures, in the same moment wherein he chooses to create them.

That man partakes of this principle I conclude,

- (1.) Because experience shows it.
- (2.) Because we observe in ourselves the signs and properties of such a power. We observe we can counteract our appetites, senses, and even our reason, if we so choose; which we can no otherwise account for, than by admitting such a power in ourselves.

2. The more of this power any being possesses, the less subject he is to the impulses of eternal agents; and the more commodious is his condition. Happiness rises from a blue use of our faculties: If, therefore, this be the noblest of all our faculties, then our chief happiness lies in the due use of this; that is, in our elections. And, farther, election is, the cause why things please us: He therefore who has an uncontrolled power of electing, may please himself always; and if things fall out contrary to what he chooses, he may change his choice and suit it to them, and so still be happy. Indeed in this life his natural appetites will sometimes disturb his elections, and so prevent his perfect happiness; yet is it a fair step towards it, that he has a power that can at all times find pleasure in itself, however outward things wary.

3. True it is, that this power sometimes gives pain; namely, when it falls short of what it chooses; which may come to pass, if we choose either things impossible to be had, or inconsistent with each other, or such as are out of our power; (perhaps because others chose them before us;) or, lastly, such as necessarily lead us into natural evils.

4. And into these foolish choices we may be betrayed either by ignorance, negligence, by indulging the exercise of liberty too far, by obstinacy or habit; or, lastly by the importunity of our natural appetites. Hence it appears how cautious we ought to be in choosing; for though we may alter our choice; yet to make that alteration is painful; the more painful, the longer we have persisted in it.

5. There are three ways by which God might have hindered his creatures from thus abusing their liberty. First by not creating any being free; but had this method been taken, then,

- (1.) The whole universe would have been a mere machine.
- (2.) That would have been wanting which is most pleasing to God of anything in the universe; namely, the free service of his reasonable creatures.
- (3.) His reasonable creatures would have been in a worse state than they are now: For only free agents can be perfectly: happy; as, without a possibility of choosing wrong, there can be no freedom.

The Second way by which God might prevent the abuse of liberty, is by overruling this power, and constraining us to choose right. But this would be to do and undo, to contradict himself, to take away what he had given.

The Third way by which God might have hindered his creatures from making an ill use of liberty, is; by placing them where they should have no temptation to abuse it. But this too would have been the same, in effect, as to have given them no liberty at all.

I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate and dutiful son.

III. — *To the Same.*

June 11, 1731.

OUR walk was not so pleasant to Oxford as from it, though in one respect it was more useful; for it let us see that four or five and twenty miles is an easy and safe day's journey in hot weather as well as cold. We have made another discovery too, which may be of some service; that it is easy to read as we walk ten or twelve miles; and that it neither makes us faint, nor gives us any other symptom of weariness, more than the mere walking without reading at all.

Since our return, our little company that used to meet us on a Sunday evening is shrunk into almost none at all. Mr. Morgan is sick at Holt; Mr. Boyce is at his father's house at Barton; Mr. Kirkham must very shortly leave Oxford, to be his uncle's Curate; and a young gentleman of Christ Church who used to make a fourth, either afraid or ashamed or both, is returned to the ways of the world, and studiously shuns our company. However, the poor at the Castle have still the gospel preached to them, and some of their temporal wants supplied, our little fund rather increasing than diminishing. Nor have we yet been forced to discharge any of the children which Mr. Morgan left to our care: Though I wish they too do not find the want of him; I am sure some of their parents will.

Some, however, give us a better prospect; John Whitelamb in particular. ² I believe with this you will receive some account from himself how his time is employed. He reads one English, one Latin, and one Greek book alternately; and never meddles with a new one in any of the Languages till he has ended the old one. If he goes on as he has begun I dare take upon me to say, that by the time he has been here four or five years, there will not be such an one, of is standing in Lincoln College, perhaps not in the University of Oxford.

IV. — *To the Same.*

June 13, 1733.

THE effects of my last journey, I believe, will make me more cautious of staying any time from Oxford for the future; at least till I have no pupils to take care of, which probably will be within a year or two. One of my young gentlemen told me at my return, that he was more and more afraid of singularity; another, that he had read an excellent piece of Mr. Locke's, which had convinced him of the mischief of regarding authority. Both of them agreed, that the observing of Wednesday as a fast was an unnecessary singularity; the Catholic Church (that is, the majority of it) having long since repealed, by contrary custom, the injunction she formerly gave concerning it. A third, who could not yield to this argument, has been convinced by a fever, and Dr. Erewin. Our seven and twenty communicants at St. Mary's were on Monday shrunk to five; and the day before, the last of Mr. Clayton's pupils, who continued with us, informed me, that he did not design to meet us any more.

My ill success, as they call it, seems to be what has frightened every one away from a falling house. On Sunday I was considering the matter a little more nearly; and imagined, that all the ill consequences of my singularity were reducible to three, — diminution of fortune, loss of friends and of reputation. As to my *fortune*, I well know, though perhaps others do not, that I could not have born a larger than I have; and as for that most plausible excuse for desiring it, "While I have so little, I cannot do the good I would," I ask, Can you do the good God would have you do? It is enough! Look no further. For *friends*, they were either trifling or serious: If

triflers, fare them well; a noble escape: If serious, those who are more serious are left, whom the others would rather have opposed than forwarded in the service they have done, and still do, us. If it be said, "But these may leave you too; for they are no firmer than the others were:" First, I doubt that fact; but, next, suppose they should, we hope then they would only teach us a nobler and harder lesson than they have done hitherto: "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man." And as for *reputation*, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that, — a clean heart, a single eye, a soul full of God! A fair exchange, if by the loss of reputation we can purchase the lowest degree of purity of heart! We beg my mother and you would not cease to work together with us, that, whatever we lose, we may gain this; and that, having tasted of this good gift, we may count all things else but dung and dross in comparison of it

V. — *To his Mother*

June 18, 1725.

YOU have so well satisfied me as to the tenets of Thomas a Kempis, that I have ventured to trouble you once more on a more dubious subject. I have heard one I take to be a person of good judgment say, that she would advise no one very young to read Dr. Taylor on Holy Living and Dying. She added, that he almost put her out of her senses when she was fifteen or sixteen years old; because he seemed to exclude all from being in a way of salvation who did not come up to his rules, some of which are altogether impracticable. A fear of being tedious will make me confine myself to one or two instances, in which I am doubtful; though several others might be produced of almost equal consequence. In reference to humility, the Bishop says, "We must be sure, in some sense or other, to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come." And in treating of repentance he says, "Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not; therefore be sorrowful for ever having sinned." I take the more notice of this last sentence, because it seems to contradict his own words in the next

section, where he says, that by the Lord's supper all the members are united to one another, and to Christ the Head. The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces necessary for, and our souls receive the seeds of; an immortal nature. Now surely these graces are not of so little force as that we cannot perceive whether we have them or not; if we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, which he will not do unless we are regenerate, certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is, that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then undoubtedly, in this life, we are of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this! Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation; and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble, who can be saved?

VI. — *To the Same.*

January, 1727.

I AM shortly to take my Master's Degree. As I shall from that time be less interrupted by business not of my own choosing, I have drawn up for myself a scheme of studies, from which I do not intend, for some years at least, to vary. I am perfectly come over to your opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. Curiosity, indeed, might be a sufficient plea for our laying out some time upon them, if we had half a dozen centuries of life to come; but methinks it is great ill-husbandry to spend a considerable part of the small pittance now allowed us, in what makes us neither a quick nor a sure return.

Two days ago I was reading a dispute between those celebrated masters of controversy, Bishop Atterbury and Bishop Hoadly; but must own, I was so injudicious as to break off in the middle. I could not conceive that the dignity of the end was at all proportioned to the difficulty of attaining it. And I thought the labor of twenty or thirty hours, if I was sure of succeeding, which I was not, would be but ill rewarded by that important piece of knowledge, whether Bishop Hoadly had misunderstood Bishop Atterbury or no.

About a year and a half ago I stole out of company at eight in the evening, with a young gentleman with whom I was intimate. As we took a turn in an aisle of St. Mary's church, in expectation of a young lady's funeral, with whom we were both acquainted, I asked him if he really thought himself my friend; and, if he did, why he would not do me: all the good he could. He began to protest; in which I cut him short, by desiring him to oblige me in an instance, which he could not deny to be in his own power; to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already; that he could not do me a greater kindness, as both of us would be fully convinced when we came to follow that young woman.

He turned exceedingly serious, and kept something of that disposition ever since. Yesterday was a fortnight, he died of a consumption. I saw him three days before he died; and, On the Sunday following, did him the last good office I could here, by preaching his funeral sermon; which was his desired when living.

VII. — *To the Same.*

March 19, 1727.

ONE advantage, at least, my degree has given me: I am now at liberty, and shall be in a great measure for some time, to choose my own employment. And as I believe I know my own deficiencies best, and which of them are most necessary to be supplied, I hope my time will turn to somewhat better account than when it was not so much in my own disposal.

The conversation of one or two persons, whom you may have heard me speak of, (I hope never without gratitude,) first took off my relish for most other pleasures; so far that I despised them in comparison of that. I have since proceeded a step further; to slight them absolutely. And I am so little at present in love with even company, — the most elegant entertainment next to books, — that, unless the persons have a religious turn of thought, I am much better pleased without them. I think it is the settled temper of my soul, that I should prefer at least for some time, such at retirement would seclude me from all the world, to the station I am now

in. Not that this is by any means unpleasant to me; but I imagine it would be more improving to be in a place where I might confirm or implant in my mind what habits I would without interruption, before the flexibility of youth be over.

A school in Yorkshire was proposed to me lately, on which I shall think more when it appears whether I may have it or not. A good salary is annexed to it. But what has made me wish for it most, is the frightful description, as they call it, which some gentlemen who know the place gave me of it yesterday. "It lies in a little vale, so pent up between two hills, that it is scarcely accessible on any side; so that you can expect little company from without, and within there is none at all." I should therefore be entirely at liberty to converse with company of my own choosing, whom for that reason I would bring with me; and company equally agreeable, wherever I fixed, could not put me to less expense.

The sun that walks his airy way
 To cheer the world, and bring the day;
 The moon that shines with borrow'd light
 The stars that gild the gloomy night;
 All of these, and all I see,
 Should be sung, and sung by me:
 These praise their Maker as they can,
 But want and ask the tongue of man.

I am full of business; but have found a way to write without taking any time from that. It is but rising an hour sooner in the morning, and going into company an hour later in the evening; both which may be done without any inconvenience.

VIII. — *To the Same.*

June 11, 1731.

THE motion and sun together, in our last hundred and fifty miles' walk, so thoroughly carried off all our superfluous humors; that we continue perfectly in health, though it is here a very sickly season. And Mr. Kirkham assures us on the word of a Priest and a Physician, that if we will but take the same medicine once or twice a year, we shall never need any

other to keep us from the gout. When we were with him, we touched two or three times upon a nice subject, but, did not come to any full conclusion. The point debated was, what is the meaning of being *righteous over much*, or by the more common phrase of being *too strict in religion?* and what danger there was of any of us falling into that extreme?

All the ways of being too righteous or too strict which we would think of, were these: Either the carrying some one particular virtue to so great a height, as to make it clash with some others; or, the laying too much stress on the instituted means of grace, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; or, the multiplying prudential means upon ourselves so far, and binding ourselves to the observance of them so strictly, as to obstruct the end we aimed at by them, either by hindering our advance in heavenly affections in general, or by retarding our progress in some particular virtue. Our opponents seemed to think my brother and I [were] in some danger of being too strict in this last sense; of laying burdens on ourselves too heavy to be born, and, consequently, too heavy to be of any use to us.

It is easy to observe, that almost every one thinks that rule totally needless which he does not need himself; and as to the Christian spirit itself, almost every one calls that degree of it which he does not himself aim at, enthusiasm. If therefore we plead for either, (not as if we thought the former absolutely needful, neither as if we had attained the latter,) it is no great wonder that they who are not for us in practice should be against us. If you, who are a less, prejudiced judge, have perceived us faulty in this matter, too superstitious or enthusiastic, or whatever it is to be called; we earnestly desire to be speedily informed of our terror, that we may no longer spend our strength on that which profiteth not. Or whatever there may be on the other hand, in which you have observed us to be too remiss, that likewise we desire to know as soon as possible. This is a subject which we would understand with as much accuracy as possible; it being hard to say which is of the worse, consequence, — the being too strict, the really carrying things too far, the wearying ourselves and spending our strength in burdens that are unnecessary, — or the being frightened by those terrible words, from what, if not directly necessary, would at least be useful.

IX. — *To the Same.*

February 28, 1732.

ONE consideration is enough to make me assent to his and your judgment concerning the holy sacrament; which is, that we cannot allow Christ's human nature to be present in it, without allowing either CON- or TRANS-substantiation. But that his divinity is so united to us then, as he never is but to worthy receivers, I firmly believe, though the manner of that union is utterly a mystery to me.

That none but worthy receivers should find this effect, is not strange to me, when I observe how small effect many means of improvement have upon an unprepared mind. Mr. Morgan and my brother were affected, as they ought, by the observations you made on that glorious subject; but though my understanding approved what was excellent, yet my heart did not feel it. Why was this, but because it was pre-engaged by those affections with which wisdom will not dwell? because the animal mind cannot relish those truths which are spiritually discerned? Yet I have those writings which the Good Spirit gave to that end! I have many off those which he hath since assisted his servants to give us; I have retirement to apply these to my own soul daily; I have means both of public and private prayer; and, above all, of partaking in that sacrament once a week. What shall I do to make all these blessings effectual, to gain from them that mind which was also in Christ Jesus?

To all who give signs of their not being strangers to it, I propose this question, — and why not to any rather than any? Shall I quite break of my pursuit of all learning, but what immediately tends to practice? I once desired to make a fair show in languages and philosophy: But it is past; there is a more excellent way, and if I cannot attain to any progress in the one, without throwing up all thoughts of the others why, fare it well! Yet a little while, and we shall all be equal in knowledge, if we are in virtue.

You say you “have renounced the world.” And what have I been doing all this time? What have I done ever since I was born? Why I have been plunging myself into it more and more. It is enough: “Awake, thou that

sleepest.” Is there not “one Lord, one Spirit, one hope of our calling? “one way of attaining that hope? Then I am to renounce the world, as well as you. That is the very thing I want to do; to draw off my affections from this world, and fix them on a better. But how? What is the surest and the shortest way? Is it not to be humble? Surely, this is a large step in the way. But the question recurs, How am I to do this? To own the necessity of it is not to be humble. In many things you have interceded for me and prevailed. Who knows but in this too you may be successful? If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening, which you formerly bestowed upon me in another manner, I doubt not but it would be as useful now for correcting my heart, as it was then for forming my judgment.

When I observe how fast life flies away, and how slow improvement comes, I think one can never be too much afraid of dying before one has learned to live; I mean, even in the course of nature. For were I sure that “the silver cord” should not be violently “loosed;” that “the wheel” should not “be broken at the cistern,” till it was quite worn away by its own motion; yet what a time would this give for such a work? A moment to transact the business of eternity! What are forty years in comparison of this? So that were I sure of what never man yet was sure of, how little would it alter the case! How justly still might I cry out, —

“Downward I hasten to my destined place;
There none obtain thy aid, none sing thy praise!
Soon shall I lie in death’s deep ocean drown’d;
Is mercy there, is sweet forgiveness found?
O save me yet, while on the brink I stand;
Rebuke these storms, and set me safe on land!
O make my longings and thy mercy sure!
Thou art the God of power.”

X. — *To the Same.*

August 17, 1733.

THE thing that gives offense here, is, the being singular with regard to time, expense, and company. This is evident beyond exception, from the case of Mr. Smith, one of our Fellows, who no sooner began to husband his time,

to retrench unnecessary expenses, and to avoid his irreligious acquaintance, but he was set upon, by not only all those acquaintance, but many others too, as if he had entered into a conspiracy to cut all their throats; though to this day he has not advised any single person, unless in a word or two and by accident, to act as he did in any of those instances.

It is true, indeed, that “the devil hates offensive war most;” and that whoever tries to rescue more than his own soul from his hands, will have more enemies; and meet with greater opposition, than if he was content with “having his own life for a prey.” That I try to do this, is likewise certain; but I cannot say whether I “rigorously impose any observances on others,” till I know what that phrase means. What I do, is this: When I am entrusted with a person who is first to understand and practice, and then to teach, the law of Christ, I endeavor, by an intermixture of reading and conversation, to show him what that law is; that is, to renounce all insubordinate love of the world, and to love and obey God with all his strength. When he appears seriously sensible of this, I propose to him the means God hath commanded him to use, in order to that end; and, a week, or a month, or a year after, as the state of his soul seems to require it, the several prudential means recommended by wise and good men. As to the times, order, measure, and manner, therein these are to be proposed, I depend upon the Holy Spirit to direct me, in and by my own experience and reflection, joined to the advises of my religious friends here and elsewhere. Only two rules it is my principle to observe in all cases: First to begin, continue, and end all my advises in the spirit of meekness; as knowing that “the wrath” or severity “of man worketh not the righteousness of God:” And, Secondly, to add to meekness, longsuffering; in pursuance of a rule which I fixed long since, — never to give up any one till I have tried him, at least, ten years. How long hath God had pity on thee?

If the wise and goodwill believe those falsehoods which the bad invent, because I endeavor to save myself and my friends from them; then I shall lose my reputation, even among them, for (though not perhaps good, yet) the best actions I ever did in my life. This is the very case. I try to act as my Lord commands; ill men say all manner of evil of me, and good men believe them. There is a way, and there is but one, of making my peace:

God forbid I should ever take it! I have as many pupils as I need, and as many friends; when more are better for me, I shall have more. If I have no more pupils after these are gone from me, I shall then be glad of a curacy near you: If I have, I shall take in as a signal that I am to remain here. Whether here or there, my desire is, to know and feel that I am nothing that I have nothing, and that I can do nothing. For whenever I am empty of myself, then know I of a surety, that neither friends nor foes, nor any creature, can hinder me from being “filled with all the fullness of God.” Let not my father’s or your prayers be ever slack in behalf of your affectionate son.

XI. — *To The Same.*

March 18, 1736.

I DOUBT not but you are already informed of the many blessings which God gave us in our passage; as my brother Wesley must, before now, have received a particular account of the circumstances of our voyage; which he would not fail to transmit to you by the first opportunity.

We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination; and, by all I can learn, exceeding healthful, — even in summer, for those who are not intemperate. It has pleased God that I have not had a moment’s illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the Continent; nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners who is sick at this time. Many of them, indeed, are, I believe, very angry already: For a gentleman, no longer ago than last night, made a ball; but the public prayers happening to begin about the same time the church was full, and the ball-room so empty, that the entertainment could not go forward.

I should be heartily glad, if any poor and religious men or women of Epworth, or Wroote, would come over to me And so would Mr. Oglethorpe too: He would give them land enough, and provisions gratis, till they could live on the produce of it. I was fully determined to have wrote to my dear Emmy ³ today; but time will not permit. O hope ye still in God; for ye shall yet give him thanks, who is the help of your countenance; and your God! Renounce the world; deny yourselves; bear

your cross with Christ, and reign with him! My brother Hooper, too, has a constant place in our prayers. May the good God give him the same zeal for holiness which he has given to a young gentleman at Rotterdam, who was with me last night. Pray for us, and especially for, dear mother,
Your dutiful and affectionate son.

XII. — *To his Brother Samuel.*

DEAR BROTHER,

Lincoln College, OXON., April 4, 1726.

I SHOULD have written long before now, had not a Gentleman of Exeter made me put it off from day to day, in hopes of getting some little poems of his, which he promised to write out for me. Yesterday I saw them, though not much to my satisfaction, as being all on very wrong subjects, and run chiefly on the romantic notions of love and gallantry. I have transcribed one which is much shorter than any of the rest, and am promised by tomorrow night, if that will do me any service, another of a more serious nature.

I believe, I have given Mr. Leybourn, at different times, five or six short copies of verses: The latest were a translation of part of the Second Georgic, and an imitation of the sixty fifth Psalm. If he has lost them, as it is likely he has, in so long a time, I can write them over in less than an hour, and send them by the post.

My father, very unexpectedly, a week ago, sent me, in a letter, a bill on Dr. Morley, for twelve pounds, which he had paid to the Rector's use, at Gainsborough; so that, now several of my debts are paid, and the expenses of my treat defrayed, I have above ten pounds remaining; and if I could have leave to stay in the country till my College allowance commences, this money would abundantly suffice me till then.

As far as I have ever observed, I never knew a College besides ours, whereof the members were so perfectly satisfied with one another, and so

inoffensive to the other part of the University. All I have yet seen of the Fellows are both well natured and well bred; men admirably disposed as well to preserve peace and good neighborhood among themselves, as to promote it wherever else they have any acquaintance.

THE SEVEN FORMER VERSES OF THE FORTY SIXTH PSALM. ⁴

On God supreme our hope depends,
 Whose omnipresent sight
 Even to the pathless realms extends
 Of uncreated night.

Plunged in the' abyss of deep distress,
 To Him we raise our cry;
 His mercy bids our sorrows cease,
 And fills our tongue with joy

Though earth her ancient seat forsake,
 By pages convulsive torn
 Though her self-balanced fabric shake,
 And ruin'd nature mourn;

Though hills be in the ocean lost,
 With all their shaggy load;
 No fear shall e'er molest the just,
 Or shake his trust in God.

What though the' ungovern'd, wild abyss
 His fires tumultuous pours;
 What though the watery legions rise,
 And lash the' affrighted shores;

What though the trembling mountains nod,
 Nor stand the rolling war;
 Sion, secure, enjoys the flood,
 Loud echoing from afar

The God most high on Sion's hill
 Has fix'd his sure abode;
 Nor dare the' impetuous waves assail.
 The city of our God.

Nations remote, and realms unknown,
 In vain reject his sway
 For, lo! Jehovah's voice is shown,
 And earth shall melt away.

Let war's devouring surges rise,
 And rage on every side;
 The Lord of Hosts our refuge is,
 And Jacob's God our guide.

Mr. Le Hunte and Mr. Sherman send their service.

I am
 Your loving brother.

I believe I could put off two or three more receipts if I had them. Pray, my love to my brother and sister.

On Friday, St. Peter's church in the Baily was beaten down, by the fall of the steeple. Saturday morning; a chandler here murdered two men and wounded a third; in; the evening, a fire broke out at the Mitre, but was stopped in a few hours.

XIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

[*Without date.*]

I RETURN you thanks for your favorable judgment on my sermon, and for the alterations you direct me to make in it; yet, in order to be still better informed, I take the liberty to make some objections to some of them in one or two of which I believe you misunderstood me.

I.

The reasons why I conceive the Samaritans to have been idolaters, are, First, because our Savior says of them, "Ye worship ye know not what;" which seems to refer plainly to the object of their worship: And, Secondly, because the old inhabitants of Samaria, who succeeded the Israelites, were undoubtedly so; and I never heard that they were much amended in after times! "These nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children and their children's children" (2 King 17:4)

II.

Were the Jews obliged to love wicked men? And is not our commandment extended to some cases to which theirs did not reach? to the excluding some instances of revenge, which were indulged to them?

We are doubtless to love good men more than others; but to have inserted it, where has only to prove that we were to love them, and not how much, would not, I think, have been to my purpose. Where our Savior exerts his authority against his opposers, I cannot think it safe for me to follow him. I would much sooner, in those cases, act by his precepts than example; the one was certainly designed for me, the other possibly was not. The Author had power to dispense with his own laws, and wisdom to know when it was necessary; I have neither.

No one would blame a man for using such sharpness of speech as St. Stephen does; especially in a prayer made in the article of death, with the same intention as his.

III.

What you understand as spoken of rulers, I expressly say of private men: "As well every ruler as every private man must act in a legal way; and the latter might, with equal reason, apply the civil sword himself, as use violent means" (by which I here mean reviling, studiously and unnecessarily defaming or handing about ill stories of wicked men) "to preserve the church."

1. I believe it to be more especially the duty of Governors, to try to amend scandalous offenders.
2. That flagrant immorality is a sufficient reason to shun any one.
3. That to the weak and private Christian, it is an unanswerable reason for so doing.
4. That in many cases a private Christian, in some, a Clergyman, is not obliged to admonish more than once. But this being allowed, still the main argument stands, that the Scripture nowhere authorizes a private person to do more than to shun an heretic, or (which I expressly mention) an obstinate offender. I had not the least thought of any

retrospect in them, neither when I wrote or spoke those words: “If Providence has pointed you out,” etc.

My mother’s reason for my cutting off my hair, is, because she fancies it prejudices my health. As to my looks, it would doubtless mend my complexion to have it off, by letting me get a little more color, and perhaps it might contribute to my making a more genteel appearance. But these, till ill health is added to them, I cannot persuade myself to be sufficient grounds for losing two or three pounds a year: I am ill enough able to spare them.

Mr. Sherman says, there are garrets somewhere in Peckwater to be let for fifty shillings a year; that there are, too, some honest fellows in College, who would be willing to chum in one of them; and that, could my brother but find one of these garrets, and get acquainted with one of these honest fellows, he might very possibly prevail upon him to join in taking it; and then, if he could but prevail upon some one else to give him seven pounds a year for his own room, he would gain almost six pounds a year clear, if his rent were well paid. He appealed to me, whether the proposal was not exceeding reasonable; but as I could not give him such an answer as he desired, I did not choose to give him any at all.

Leisure and I have taken leave of one another; I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged to me. In health and sickness I hope I shall ever continue, with the same sincerity,

Your loving brother.

My love and service to my sister.

XIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

Lincoln College, November 17, 1731.

CONSIDERING the other changes that I remember in myself, I shall not at all wonder if the time comes when we differ as little in our conclusions as we do now in our premises. In most we seem to agree already; especially as to rising, not keeping much company, and sitting by a fire, which I always

do, if any one in the room does, whether at home or abroad. But these are the very things about which others will never agree with me. Had I given up these, or but one of them, — rising early, which implies going to bed early, (though I never am sleepy now,) and keeping so little company, not one man in ten of those that are offended at me, as it is, would ever open their mouth against any of the other particulars. For the sake of these, those are mentioned; the root of the matter lies here. Would I but employ a third of my money, and about half my time, as other folks do, smaller matters would be easily overlooked. But I think *nil tanti est*.⁵ As to my hair, I am much more sure that what this enables me to do is according to the Scripture, than I am that the length of it is contrary to it.

I have often thought of a saying of Dr. Hayward's, when he examined me for Priest's orders: "Do you know what you are about? You are bidding defiance to all mankind. He that would live a Christian Priest ought to know that, whether his hand be against every man or no, he must expect every man's hand should be against him." It is not strange that every man's hand who is not a Christian, should be against him that endeavors to be so. But is it not hard, that even those that are with us should be against us? that a man's enemies (in some degree) should be those of the same household of faith? Yet so it is. From the time that a man sets himself to his business, very many, even of those who travel the same road, many of those who are before, as well as behind, him, will lay stumbling blocks in his way. One blames him for not going fast enough; another, for having made no greater progress; another, for going too far, which, perhaps, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two: For this comes from people of all sorts; not only Infidels, not only half Christians, but some of the best of men are very apt to make this reflection: "He lays unnecessary burdens upon himself; he is too precise; he does what God has nowhere required to be done." True, he has not required it of those that are perfect; and even as to those who are not, all men are not required to use all means; but every man is required to use those which he finds most useful to himself. And who can tell better than: himself, whether he finds them so or no? "Who knoweth the things of a man better than the spirit of a man that is in him?"

This being a point of no common concern, I desire to explain myself upon it once for all, and to tell you, freely and clearly those general positions on which I ground (I think) all those practices, for which (as you would have seen, had you read that paper through) I am generally accused of singularity. First. As to the end of my being, I lay it down for a rule, that I cannot be too happy, or, therefore, too holy; and thence infer, that the more steadily I keep my eye upon the prize of our high calling, the better, and the more of my thoughts, and words, and actions are directly pointed at the attainment of it. Secondly. As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time I may. Thirdly. As to prudential means, I believe this rule holds of things indifferent in themselves: Whatever I know to do me hurt that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be abstained from; whatever I know to do me good, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be embraced.

But it will be said, I am whimsical. True; and what then? If by whimsical be meant simply *singular*, I own it; if *singular without any reason*, I deny it with both my hands, and am ready to give a reason to any that asks me, of every custom wherein I willfully differ from the world. I grant in many single actions, I differ unreasonably from others; but not willfully; no, I shall extremely thank any one who will teach me to help it. But can I totally help it, till I have more breeding, or more prudence? to neither of which I am much disposed naturally; and I greatly fear my acquired stock of either will give me small assistance.

I have but one thing to add, and that is, as to my being formal. If by that be meant, that I am not easy and unaffected enough in my carriage, it is very true; but how shall I help it? I cannot be genteelly behaved by instinct; and if I am to try after it by experience and observation of others, that is not the work of a month, but of years. If by formal be meant, that I am serious, this, too, is very true; but why should I help it? Mirth, I grant, is fit for you; but does it follow that it is fit for me? Are the same tempers, any more than the same words or actions; fit for all circumstances? If you are to “rejoice evermore,” because you have put your enemies to flight, am I to do the same while they continually assault me? You are glad, because you are “passed from death to life:” Well, but let him be afraid, who knows not whether he is to live or die. Whether this be my condition or

no, who can tell better than myself? Him who can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I can.

John Whitelamb wants a gown much, and I am not rich enough to buy him one at present. If you are willing my twenty shillings (that were) should go toward that, I will add ten to them, and let it lie till I have tied my interest with my friends to make up the price of a new one.

I am, dear brother,

Yours, and my sister's, affectionate brother.

The Rector is much at your service I fancy I shall some time or other, have much to say to you about him. All are pretty well at Epworth, my sister Molly says.

XV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

OXON., *January 15, 1734-5.*

HAD not my brother Charles desired it might be otherwise, I should have sent you only an extract of the following letter. ⁶ But if you will be at the pains, you will soon reduce the argument of it to two or three points, which, if to be answered at all, will be easily answered. By it you may observe my present purpose is founded on my present weakness. But it is not indeed probable that my father should live till that weakness is removed.

Your second argument I had no occasion to mention before. To it I answer, that I do not, nor ever did, resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. There are four cues belonging to our College, and consistent with a Fellowship. I do not know but I may take one of them at Michaelmas. Not that I am clearly assured that I should be false to my engagement, were I only to instruct and exhort the pupils committed to my charge. But of that I should think more.

I desire your full thoughts upon the whole, as well as your prayers, for,

Dear brother,

Your obliged and affectionate brother.

XVI. To the Same.

DEAR BROTHER,

February 13, 1734.

NEITHER you nor I have any time to spare; so I must be as short as I can.

There are two questions between us; one relating to being, good, the other to doing good. With regard to the former,

1. You allow I enjoy more of friends, retirement, freedom from care, and divine ordinances, than I could do elsewhere, and I add,

(1.) I feel all this to be but just enough:

(2.) I have always found less than this to be too little for me; and therefore,

(3.) Whatever others do, I could not throw up any part of it, without manifest hazard to my salvation. As to the latter,

2. I am not careful to answer, what good I have done at Oxford; because I cannot think of it without the utmost danger. I am careful about what good I may do at Epworth,

(1.) Because I can think of it without any danger at all.

(2.) Because I cannot, as matters now stand, avoid thinking of it without sin.

3. Another can supply my place at Epworth better than at Oxford; and the good done here is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain, than to do the same to particular streams.

4. To the objection, "You are despised at Oxford; therefore, you can do no good there:" I answer,

(1.) A Christian will be despised any where.

(2.) No one is a Christian till he is despised.

- (3.) His being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much further it, by making him a better Christian. Without contradicting any of these propositions, I allow that every one to whom you do good directly must esteem you, first or last. N.B. A man may despise you for one thing, hate you for a second, and envy you for a third.

5. God may suffer Epworth to be worse than before; but may not attempt to prevent it, with so great hazard to my own soul.

Your last argument is either *ignoratio elenchi*, or implies these two propositions:

- (1.) "You resolve against any parochial cure of souls."
- (2.) "The Priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers is perjured." Let us add a third: "The Tutor who, being in orders, never accepts of a parish is perjured;" and then I deny all three.

I am, dear brother,

Your obliged and affectionate brother.

XVII. — *To the Same.*

March 4, 1735.

I HAD rather dispute with you, if I must dispute, than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expense of time and words. The question is now brought to one point, and the whole argument will lie in one single syllogism: "Neither hope of doing greater good, nor fear of; any evil, ought to deter you from what you have engaged yourself to do: But you have engaged yourself to undertake the cure of a parish; therefore, neither that hope nor that fear ought to deter you from it." The only doubt which remains is, whether I have so engaged myself or not. You think I did at my ordination, "before God and his High Priest:" I think, I did not. However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took; it being certain, and allowed by all, *Verbis, in quae quis jurejurando adigitur, sensum genuinum, ut et obligationi sacramenti modum ac mensuram,*

praestitui a mente non praestantis sed exigentis juramentum: “That the true sense of the words of an oath, and the mode and extent of its obligation, are not to be determined by him who takes it, but by him who requires it.” Therefore, it is not I, but the High Priest of God before whom I contracted that engagement, who is to judge of the nature and extent of it.

Accordingly, the post after I received yours, I referred it entirely to him, proposing, this single question to him, — Whether I had, at my ordination, engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no. His answer runs in the word is; “It doth not seem to me, that, at your ordination, you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish; provided you can, as a Clergyman, better serve God and his Church in your present or some other station.” Now, that I can, as a Clergyman, better serve God and his Church in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence.

XVIII. — *To the Same.*

GRAVESEND, *on board the Simmonds*, October 15, 1735.

DEAR BROTHER,

I PRESENTED “Job”⁷ to the Queen on Sunday, and had many good words and smiles. Out of what is due to me on that account, I beg you would first pay yourself what I owe you; and if I live till spring, I can then direct what I would have done with the remainder.

The uncertainty of my having another opportunity to tell you my thoughts in this life obliges me to tell you what I have often thought of, and that in as few and plain words as I can. Elegance of style is not to be weighed against purity of heart; purity both from the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. Therefore, whatever has any tendency to impair that purity is not to be tolerated, much less recommended, for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort (I speak not from the reason of the thing only, or from my single experience) are the most of the classics usually read in great schools; many of them tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh, (besides Ovid, Virgil’s “Aeneid,” and Terence’s “Eunuch,”) and more to feed the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I beseech you, therefore; by the mercies of God, who would have us

holy, as he is holy, that you banish all such poison from your school, that you introduce in their place such Christian authors as will work together with you in building up your flock in the knowledge and love of God. For assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of Heathens, as well as I.

So many souls are committed to your charge by God, to be prepared for a happy eternity. You are to instruct them, not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more in the gospel. You are to labor with all your might to convince them that Christianity is not a negation; or an external thing, but a new heart; a mind conformed to that of Christ, “faith working by love.”

We recommend you and yours to God. Pray for us.

I am

Your affectionate brother and servant in Christ.

XIX. — *To the Same.*

SAVANNAH, *November 23, 1736.*

O PRAY write, and, if it may be, speak, that they may remember him again, who did run well, but are now hindered!

I think the rock on which I had the nearest made ship wreck of the faith, was, the writings of the Mystics; under which term I comprehend all, and only those, who slight any of the means of grace.

I have drawn up a short scheme of their doctrines, partly from conversations I have had, and letters and partly from their most approved writers, such as Tauler Molinos, and the author of “Theologia Germanica.” I beg your thoughts upon it, as soon as you can conveniently; and that you would give me them as particularly, fully, and strongly as your time will permit. They may be of consequence not only to all this province, but to nations of Christians yet unborne.

“All means are not necessary for all men; therefore each person must use such means, and such only, as he finds necessary for him. But since we can never attain our end by being wedded to the same means; therefore we must not obstinately cleave unto anything, lest it become a hindrance, not a help.

“Observe, further, when the end is attained, the means cease. Now, all the other things enjoined are means to love; and love is attained by them who are in the inferior way, who are utterly divested of free will, of self love, and self activity and are entered into the passive state. These deified men, in whom the superior will has extinguished the inferior, enjoy such a contemplation as is not only above faith, but above sight, such as is entirely free from images thoughts, and discourse and never interrupted by sins of infirmity, or voluntary distractions. They have absolutely renounced their reason and understanding; else they could not be guided by a divine light. They seek no clear or particular knowledge of anything; but only an obscure, general knowledge, which is far better. They know it is mercenary to look for a reward from God, and inconsistent with perfect love.

“Having thus attained the end, the means must cease. Hope is swallowed up in love. Sight, or something more than sight, takes place of faith. All particular virtues they possess in the essence, being wholly given up to the divine will, and therefore need not the distinct exercise of them. They work likewise all good works essentially, not accidentally, and use all outward means, only as they are moved thereto and then to obey superiors, or to avoid giving offense; but not as necessary or helpful to them.

“Public prayer, or any forms, they need not; for they pray without ceasing. Sensible devotion in any prayer they despise; it being a great hindrance to perfection. The Scripture they need not read; for it is only His letter with whom they converse face to face. And if they do read it now and then, as for expounders, living or dead, reason, philosophy, (which only puffs up and vainly tries to bind God by logical definitions and divisions,) as for knowledge of, tongues, or ancient customs, they need none of them, any more than the Apostles did, for they have the same Spirit. Neither do they need the Lord’s supper; for they never cease to

remember Christ in the most acceptable manner; any more than fasting, since, by constant temperance, they can keep a continual fast.

“You that are to advise them that have not yet attained perfection, press them to nothing, not to self denial, constant private prayer, reading the Scriptures, fasting, communicating. If they love heathen poets, let them take their full swing in them; speak but little to them, in the mean time, of eternity. If they are affected at any time with what you say, say no more; let them apply it, not you. You may advise them to some religious books, but stop there; let them use them as they please, and form their own reflections upon them without your intermeddling. If one who was religious falls off, let him alone. Either a man is converted to God, or not: If he is not, his own will must guide him, in spite of all you can do; if he is, he is so guided by the Spirit of God, as not to need your direction.

“You that are yourselves imperfect, know love is your end. All things else are but means. Choose such means as leads you most to love; those alone are necessary for you. The means that others need are nothing to you: Different men are led in different ways. And be sure be not wedded to any means. When anything helps you no longer, lay it aside; So you can never attain your end, by cleaving obstinately to the same means: You must be changing them continually. Conversation, meditation, forms of prayer, prudential rules, fixed return of public or private prayer, are helps to some; but you must judge for yourself. Perhaps fasting may help you for a time, and perhaps the holy communion. But you will be taught by the Holy Spirit, and by experience, how soon, how often, and how long it is good for you to take it. Perhaps too you may need the Holy Scripture. But if you can renounce yourself without reading, it is better than all the reading in the world. And whenever you do read it, trouble yourself about no helps: The Holy Ghost will lead you into all truth.

“As to doing good, take care of yourself first. When you are converted, then strengthen your brethren. Beware of (what is incident to all beginners) an eager desire to set others a good example. Beware of an earnestness to make others feel what you feel yourself. Let your light shine as nothing to you. Beware of a zeal to do great things for God. Be charitable first; then do works of charity; do them when you are not dissipated thereby, or in

danger of losing your soul by pride and vanity. Indeed, till then, you can do no good to, men's souls; and without that, all done to their bodies is nothing. The command of doing good concerns not you yet. Above all, take care never to dispute about any of these points. Disputing can do no good. Is the man wicked? Cast not pearls before swine. Is he imperfect? He that disputes any advice, is not yet ripe for it. Is he good? All good men agree in judgment; they differ only in words, which all are in their own nature ambiguous."

May God deliver you and yours from all error, and all unholiness! My prayers will never, I trust, be wanting for you.

I am, dear brother,
My sister's and your most affectionate brother.

Pray remember me to Philly.

XX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *April 4, 1738.*

I REJOICE greatly at the temper with which you now write, and trust there is not only mildness but love also in your heart. If so, you shall know of this doctrine, whether it be of God; though, perhaps not by my minister.

To this hour you have pursued an *ignoratio elenchi*. Your assurance and mine are as different as light and darkness. I mean, an assurance that I am now in a state of salvation, you, an assurance that I shall persevere therein; The very definition of the term cuts off your Second and Third observation. As to the First, I would take notice,

1. No kind of assurance, (that I know,) or of faith or repentance, is essential to their salvation in who die infants.
2. I believe God is ready to give all true penitents who fly to his free grace in Christ a fuller sense of pardon than they had before they fell. I know this to be true of several: Whether these are exempt cases, I know not.

3. Persons that were of a melancholy and gloomy constitution, even to some degree of madness, I have known in a moment (let it be called a miracle, I quarrel not) brought into a state of firm, lasting peace and joy

My dear brother, the whole question turns chiefly, if not wholly on matter of fact. You deny that God does now work these effects; at least, that he works them in such a manner. I affirm both, because I have heard those facts with my ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen as far as it can be seen, very many persons changed in a moment from the spirit of horror, fear and despair, to the spirit of hope, joy, peace; and from sinful desires, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact; whereof I have been, and almost daily am, eye or ear witness. What (upon the same evidence, as to the suddenness and reality of the change) I believe, or know, touching visions and dreams. This I know Several persons in whom this great change from the power of Satan unto God was wrought either in sleep, or during a strong representation to the eye of their minds of Christ, either on the cross or in glory. This is the fact. Let any judge of it as they please. But that such a change was then wrought, appears, not from their shedding tears only, or singing, or singing psalms, as your poor correspondent did by the woman of Oxford, but from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked; from that time holy, just, and good.

Saw you him that was a lion till then and is now a lamb; he that; was a drunkard, but now exemplarily sober; the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very lusts of the flesh? These are my living arguments for what I assert; (that God now, as aforetime, gives remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost, which may be called visions. If it be not so, I am found false witness; but, however, I do and will testify the things have both seen and heard.

I do not now expect to see your face in the flesh. Not that I believe God will discharge you yet; but I believe I have nearly finished my course. O may I be found in him, not having my own righteousness!

When I thy promised Christ have seen,

And clasp'd him in my soul's embrace,
 Possess'd of thy salvations, then,
 Then may I, Lord, depart in peace.

The great blessing of God be upon you and yours,

I am, dear brother,
 Your ever affectionate and obliged brother.

I expect to stay here some time, perhaps as long as I am in the body.

XXI.—To the Same.

MARIENBOURN, *near Frankfort July 7, (O.S.), 1738.*

DEAR BROTHER,

GOD has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in who is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as he walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one Spirit, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing Christianity is! and how widely distant from that (I know not what) which is so called; though it neither purifies the heart, nor renews the life after the image of our blessed Redeemer!

I grieve to think how that holy name by which we are called, must blasphemed among the Heathen, while they see discontented Christians, passionate Christians, resentful Christians, earthly minded Christians; yea, (to come to what we are apt to count small things,) while they see Christians judging one another, ridiculing, one another, speaking evil of one another, increasing, instead of bearing, one another's burdens. How bitterly would Julian have applied to these, "See, how these Christians love one another!" I know I myself, I doubt you sometimes, and my sister often, have been under this condemnation. O may God grant we may never more think to do Him service, by breaking those commands which are the very life of his religion! But may we utterly put away all anger, and wrath, and malice, and bitterness, and evil speaking.

I was much concerned when my brother Charles once incidentally mentioned a passage that occurred at Tiverton: “Upon my offering to read,” said he, “a chapter in the Serious Call, my sister said, ‘Who do you read that to? Not to these young ladies, I presume; and your brother and I do not want it.’ Yes, my sister, I must tell you, in the spirit of love, and before God, who searcheth the heart, you do want it; you want it exceedingly. I know no one soul that wants to read, and consider deeply, so much the chapter of Universal Love, and that of Intercession. The character of Susurrus there, is your own. I should be false to God and you, did I not tell you so. O may it be so no longer; but may you love your neighbor as yourself, both in word and tongue, and in deed and truth!

I believe in a week Mr. Ingham and I shall set out for Hernhuth, about three hundred and fifty miles from hence. O pray for us, that God would sanctify to us all those precious opportunities, that we may be continually built up more and more in the spirit of power, and love, and of a sound mind!

I am, dear Brother,
Your most affectionate friend and brother.

XXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 30, 1738.*

THAT YOU will always receive kindly what is so intended, I doubt not. Therefore I again recommend the character of Susurrus both to you and my sister, as (whether real or feigned) striking at the root of a fault, of which both she and you were, I think, more guilty than any other two persons I have known in my life. O may God deliver both you and me from all bitterness and evil speaking, as well as from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism!

With regard to my own character, and my doctrine like wise, I shall answer you very plainly. By a Christian, I mean one who so believes in Christ, as that sin hath no more dominion over him: And in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till May the 24th last past. For till then sin

had the dominion over me, although I fought with it continually; but surely, then, from that time to this it hath not; — such is the free grace of God in Christ. What sins they were which till then reigned over me, and from which, by the grace of God, I am now free, I am ready to declare on the housetop, if it may be for the glory of God.

If you asked by what means I am made free, (though not perfect, neither infallibly sure of my perseverance,) I answer, By faith in Christ; by such a sort or degree of faith as I had not till that day. My desire of this faith I knew long before, though not so clearly till Sunday, January the 8th last, when being in the midst of the great deep, I wrote a few lines, in the bitterness of my soul, some of which I have transcribed; and may the good God sanctify them both to you and me!

By the most infallible of all proofs, inward feeling, I am convinced,

1. Of unbelief; having no such faith in Christ, as will prevent my heart's being troubled; which it could not be is I believed in God, and rightly believed also in him.

2. Of pride throughout my life past; inasmuch as I thought; I had what I find I had not. Lord, save, or I perish! Save me,

(1.) By such a faith in thee and in thy Christ as implies trust, confidence, peace in life and in death.

(2.) By such humility as may fill my heart, from this hour for ever, with a piercing, uninterrupted sense, *Nihil est quod hactenus feci*; ⁸ having evidently built without a foundation.

(3.) By such a recollection, that I may cry to thee every moment, but more especially when all is calm, (if it should so please thee,) “Give me faith, or I die! Give me a to lowly spirit, otherwise, *mihi non sit suave vivere.*” ⁹ Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! **Υιε Δαβιδ, ελεησον μοι** ¹⁰

Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation, or victory over sin, and which implies peace, and trust in God through Christ, I now enjoy by

his free mercy; though in very deed it is in me but as a grain of mustard seed: For the *πληροφορια πισεως*, — the seal of the Spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and producing joy in the Holy Ghost, “joy which no man taketh away, joy unspeakable and full of glory;” this witness of the Spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it. I know many who have already received it; more than one or two in the very hour we were praying for it. And having seen and spoken with a cloud of witnesses abroad, as well as in my own country, I cannot doubt but that believers who wait and pray for it will find these scriptures fulfilled in themselves. My hope is, that they will be fulfilled in me: I build on Christ, the Rock of Ages; on his sure mercies described in his word, and on his promises, all which I know are yea, and amen. Those who have not yet received joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the plerophory of faith, (any or all of which I take to be the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the sons of God,) I believe to be Christians in that imperfect sense wherein I may call myself such; and I exhort them to pray that God would give them also “to rejoice in hope of the glory of God,” and to feel “His love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.”

On men I build not, neither on Matilda Chipman’s: word, whom I have not talked with five minutes in my life; nor on anything peculiar in the weak, well meant relation of William Hervey, who yet is a serious, humble acting Christian. But have you been building on these? Yes; I find them, more or less in almost every letter you have written on the subject. Yet were all that has been said on “visions, dreams, and balls of fire,” to be fairly proposed in syllogisms, I believe it would not prove a jot more on one than on the other side of the question.

O brother, would to God you would leave disputing concerning the things which you know not, (if indeed you know them not,) and beg of God to fill up what is yet wanting in you! Why should not you also seek till you receive “that peace of God which passeth all understanding?” Who shall hinder you, notwithstanding the manifold temptations, from rejoicing “with joy unspeakable, by reason of glory?” Amen! Lord Jesus! May you, and all who near of kin to you, (if you have it not already,) feel his love shed abroad in your heart, by his Spirit which dwelleth in you; and be

sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance.

I am

Yours and my sister's most affectionate brother.

XXIII. — *To the Same.*

November 30, 1738.

I BELIEVE every Christian who has not yet received it, should pray for the witness of God's Spirit with his spirit that he is a child of God. In being a child of God, the pardon of his sins is included; therefore I believe the Spirit of God will witness this also. That this witness is from God, the very terms imply; and this witness I believe is necessary for my salvation. How far invincible ignorance may excuse others, I know not. But this, you say, is delusive and dangerous, because it encourages and abets idle visions and dreams. It encourages, — true; accidentally, but not essentially. And that it does this accidentally, or that weak minds may pervert it to an idle use, is no objection against it, for so they may pervert every truth in the oracles of God; more especially that dangerous doctrine of Joel, cited by St. Peter: "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." Such visions, indeed, as you mention are given up: Does it follow that visions and dreams in general "are bad branches of a bad root?" God forbid. This would prove more than you desire

XXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *May 10, 1739.*

THE having abundance of work upon my hands is only a cause of my not writing sooner. *The* cause was rather my unwillingness to continue an unprofitable dispute.

The Gospel promises to you and me, and our children, and all that are afar off, even as many of those whom the Lord our God shall call, as are not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, “the witness of God’s Spirit with their spirit, that they are the children of God;” that they are hour, at this hour, all accepted in the Beloved; but it witnesses not that they shall be. It is an assurance of present salvation only; therefore, not necessarily perpetual, neither irreversible.

I am one of many witnesses of this matter of fact, that God does now make good this his promise daily, very frequently during a representation (how made I know not, but not to the outward eye) of Christ either hanging on the cross, or standing on the right hand of God. And this I know to be of God, because from that hour the person so affected is a new creature, both as to his inward tempers and outward life. “Old things are passed away; and all things become new.”

A very late instance of this I will give you: While we were praying at a society here, on Tuesday the 1st instant, the power of God (so I call it) came so mightily among us, that one, and another, and another, fell down as thunderstruck. In that hour many that were in deep anguish of spirit, were all filled with peace and joy. Ten persons, till then in sin, doubt, and fear, found such a change, that sin had no more dominion over them; and instead of the spirit of fear, they are now filled with that of love, and joy, and a sound mind. A Quaker who stood by was very angry at them, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he fell down as one dead. We prayed over him, and he soon lifted up his head with joy, and joined with us in thanksgiving.

A bystander, one John Haydon, was quite enraged at this, and, being unable to deny something supernatural in it, labored beyond measure to convince all his acquaintance, that it was a delusion of the devil. I was met in the street the next day by one who informed me that John Haydon was fallen raving mad. It seems he had sat down to dinner, but wanted first to make an end of a sermon he was reading. At the last page he suddenly changed color, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly, and beating himself against the ground. I found him on the floor, the room being full of people, whom his wife would have kept away; but he cried out, “No; let

them all come; let all the world see the just judgment of God.” Two or three were holding him as well as they could. He immediately fixed his eyes on me, and said, “Aye, this is he I said deceived the people; but God hath overtaken me. I said it was a delusion of the devil; but this is no delusion.” Then he roared aloud, “O thou devil! Thou cursed devil! Yea, thou legion of devils I Thou canst not stay in me. Christ will cast thee out. I know his work is begun. Tear me to pieces if thou wilt. But thou canst not hurt me.” He then beat himself again, and groaned again, with violent sweats, and heaving of the breast. We prayed with him, and God put a new song in his mouth. The words were, which he pronounced with a clear, strong voice, “This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made: We will rejoice and be glad in it. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from this time forth for evermore.” I called again an hour after. We found his body quite worn-out, and his voice lost. But his soul was full of joy and love, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

I am now in as good health (thanks be to God!) as I ever was since I remember, and I believe shall be so as long as I live; for I do not expect to have a lingering death. The reasons that induce me to think I shall not live long [enough to be] old are such as you would not apprehend to be of any weight. I am under no concern on this head. Let my Master see to it.

O may the God of love be with you and my sister more and more I

I am, dear brother,

Your ever affectionate brother.

XXV. — *To a Friend.*

DEAR SIR,

October 10, 1735.

I HAVE been hitherto unwilling to mention the grounds of my design of embarking for Georgia, for two reasons; — one, because they were such as

I know few men would judge to be of any weight; — the other, because I was afraid of making favorable judges think of me above what they ought to think: And what a snare this must be to my own soul, I know by dear bought experience.

But, on farther reflection, I am convinced that I ought to speak the truth with all boldness, even though it should appear foolishness to the world, as it has done from the beginning; and that, whatever danger there is in doing the will of God, he will support me under it. In his name, therefore, and trusting in his defense. I shall plainly declare the thing as it is.

My chief motive, to which all the rest are subordinate, is the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel of Christ by preaching it to the Heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths, to reconcile earthly mindedness and faith, the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the Gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God, and, consequently, they shall know of every doctrine I preach, whether it be of God. By these, therefore, I hope to learn the purity of that faith which was once delivered to the saints; the genuine sense and full extent of those laws which none can understand who mind earthly things.

A right faith will, I trust, by the mercy of God, open the way for a right practice; especially when most of those temptations are removed which here so easily beset me. Toward mortifying “the desire of the flesh,” the desire of sensual pleasures, it will be no small thing to be able, without fear of giving offense, to live on water and the fruits of the earth. This simplicity of food will, I trust, be a blessed means, both of preventing my seeking that happiness in meats and drinks, which God designed should be found only in faith, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and will assist me to attain such purity of thought, as suits al candidate for the state wherein they are as the angels of God in heaven.

Neither is it a small thing to be delivered from so many occasions, as now surround me, of indulging “the desire of the eye.” They here compass me in on every side; but an Indian hut affords no food for curiosity, no gratification of the desire of grand, or new, or pretty things: — Though, indeed, the cedars which God has planted round it may so gratify the eye as to better the heart, by lifting it to Him whose name alone is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth.

If by “the pride of life” we understand the pomp and show of the world, that has no place in the wilds of America. If it mean pride in general, this, alas! has a place everywhere: Yet there are very uncommon helps against it, not only by the deep humility of the poor Heathens, fully sensible of their want of an instructor; but by that happy contempt which cannot fail to attend all who sincerely endeavor to instruct them, and which, continually increasing, will surely make them, in the end, as the filth and off scouring of the world. Add to this, that nothing so convinces us of our own impotence, as a zealous attempt to convert our neighbor: Nor, indeed, till he does all he can for God, will any man feel that he can do nothing.

Further: A sin which easily besets me is, unfaithfulness to God in the use of speech. I know that this is a talent intrusted to me by my Lord, to be used as all others, only for his glory. I know that all conversation which is not seasoned with salt, and designed at least to administer grace to the hearers, is expressly forbid by the Apostle, as “corrupt communication,” and as “grieving the Holy Spirit of God;” yet I am almost continually betrayed into it, by the example of others striking in with my own bad heart. But, I hope, from the moment I leave the English shore, under the acknowledged character of a Teacher sent from God, there shall be no word heard from my lips but what properly flows from that character: As my tongue is a devoted thing, I hope from the first hour of this new era to use it only as such, that all who hear me may know of a truth, the words I speak are not mine, but His that sent me.

The same faithfulness I hope to show, through His grace, in dispensing the rest of my Master’s goods, if it please him to send me to those who, like his first followers, have all things common. What a guard is here against that root of evil, the love of money, and all the vile attractions that spring

from it! One in this glorious state, and perhaps none but he, may see the height and depth of the privilege of the first Christians, “as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.”

I then hope to know what it is to love my neighbor as myself, and to feel the powers of that second motive to visit the Heathens, even the desire to impart to them what I have received, — a saving knowledge of the Gospel of Christ; but this I dare not think on yet. It is not for me, who have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, and am yet laden with foolish and hurtful desires, to expect God should work so great things by my hands; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, he will then employ me both to strengthen my brethren, and to preach his name to the Gentiles, that the very ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God.

But you will perhaps ask, “Cannot you save your own soul in England, as well as in Georgia? “I answer, No; neither can I hope to attain the same degree of holiness here, which I may there; neither, if I stay here, knowing this, can I reasonably hope to attain any degree of holiness at all: For whoever, when two ways of life are proposed, prefers that which he is convinced in his own mind is less pleasing to God, and less conducive to the perfection of his soul, has no reason from the Gospel of Christ to hope that he shall ever please God at all, or receive from his that grace whereby alone he can attain any degree of Christian perfection.

To the other motive, — the hope of doing more good in America, it is commonly objected, that “there are Heathens enough in practice, if not theory, at home: Why, then, should you go to those in America?” Why, for a very plain reason: Because these Heathens have Moses and the Prophets, and those have not; because these who have the Gospel trample upon it, and those who have it not earnestly call for it; “therefore seeing these judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, I turn to the Gentiles.”

If you object, further, the losses I must sustain in leaving my native country, I ask, Loss of what? of anything I desire to keep? No; I shall still have food to eat, and raiment to put on; — enough of such food as I choose to eat, and such raiment as I desire to put on; — and if any man have a desire of other things, or of more food than he can eat, or more

raiment than he can put on, let him know, that the greatest blessing that can possibly befall him, is, to be cut off from all occasions of gratifying those desires, which, unless speedily rooted out, will drown his soul in everlasting perdition.

“But what shall we say to the loss of parents, brethren, sisters, nay, of the friends which are as my own soul, of those who have so often lifted up my hands that hung down, and strengthened my feeble knees, by whom God hath often, enlightened my understanding, and warmed and enlarged my heart?” “What shall we say?” Why, that if you add the loss of life to the rest, so much the greater is the gain. For though “the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, the word of our God shall stand for ever;” saying, that when human instruments are removed, He, the Lord, will answer us by his own self. And the general answer which he hath already given us to all questions of this nature is, “Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left father, or mother, or lands, for my sake, but shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.”

XXVI. — *To Mr. Oglethorpe.*

SAVANNAH, April 20, 1736.

SAVANNAH never was so dear to me as now. I believe, knowing by whom I send, I may write as well as speak freely. I found so little either of the form or power of religion at Frederica, that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it. Surely, never was any place, no, not London itself, freer from one vice, I mean hypocrisy.

*O curvae in terris animae et coelestium inanes!*¹¹

“Jesus, Master, have mercy upon them!” There is none of those who did run well, whom I pity more than Mrs. Hawkins: Her treating me in such a manner would indeed have little affected me, had my own interests only been concerned. I have been used to be betrayed, scorned, and insulted, by those I had most labored to serve. But when I reflect on her condition, my heart bleeds for her. Yet with Thee nothing is impossible!

With regard to one who ought to be dearer to me than her, I cannot but say, that the more I think of it, the more convinced I am that no one, without a virtual renouncing of the faith, can abstain from the public as well as the private worship of God. All the Prayers usually read morning and evening at Frederica and here, put together, do not last seven minutes. These cannot be termed long prayers: No Christian assembly ever used shorter: Neither have they any repetitions in them at all. If I did not speak thus plainly to you, which I fear no one else in England or America will do, I should by no means be worthy to call myself, Sir,

Yours, etc.

XXVII. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

February 24, 1737.

YOU apprehended strong opposition before you went hence; and, unless we are misinformed, you have found it. Yesterday morning I read a letter from London, wherein it was asserted that Sir Robert had turned against you; that the Parliament was resolved to make a severe scrutiny into all that has been transacted here; that the cry of the nation ran the same way; and that even the Trustees were so far from acknowledging the service you have done, that they had protested your bills, and charged you with misapplying the moneys you had received, and with gross mismanagement of the power wherewith you was intrusted. Whether these things are so, or no, I know not; for it is ill depending on a single evidence. But this I know, that if your sentence was drawn (which I shall not easily believe) from that firstborne of hell, Nicholas Machiavel, as sure as there is a God that governs the earth, he will confound both it and you. If, on the contrary, (as I shall hope, till strong proof appear your heart was right before God, that it was your real design to promote the glory of God, by promoting peace and love among men; let not your heart be troubled; the God whom, you serve is able to deliver you. Perhaps in some things you have shown you are but a man; perhaps I myself may have a little to complain of: But O what a train of benefits have I received to lay in the balance against it! I bless God that ever you was born. I acknowledge his exceeding mercy in

casting me into your hands. I own your generous kindness all the time we were at sea: I am indebted to you for a thousand favors here. Why, then, the least I can say, is, Though all men should revile you, yet, if God shall strengthen me, will not I: Yea, were it not for the poor creatures whom you have as yet but half redeemed from their complicated misery, I could almost wish that you were forsaken of all; that you might clearly see the difference between men of honor, and those who are, in the very lowest rank, the followers of Christ Jesus.

O where is the God of Elijah? Stir up thy strength, and come and help him! If the desire of his heart be to thy name, let all his enemies flee before him! Art thou not He who hast made him a father to the fatherless, a mighty deliverer to the oppressed? Hast thou not given him to be feet to the lame, hands to the helpless, eyes to the blind? Hath he ever withholden his bread from the hungry, or hid his soul firm his own flesh? Then, whatever thou withholdest from him, O thou lover of men, satisfy his soul with thy likeness; renew his heart in the whole image of thy Christ; purge his spirit from self will, pride vanity, and fill it with faith and love, gentleness and long suffering. Let no guile ever be found in his mouth; no injustice in his hands! And, among all your labors of love, it becomes me earnestly to entreat him, that He will not forget those you have gone through for, Sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant.

XXVIII. — *To Mr. Hutcheson.*

July 23, 1736.

BY what I have seen during my short stay here, I am convinced that I have long been under a great mistake, in thinking no circumstances could make it the duty of a Christian Priest to do anything else but preach the Gospel. On the contrary, I am now satisfied, that there is a possible case wherein a part of his time ought to be employed in what less directly conduces to the glory of God, and peace and goodwill among men. And such a case, I

believe, is that which now occurs; there being several things which cannot so effectually be done without me; and which, though not directly belonging to my ministry, yet are, by consequence, of the highest concern to the success of it. It is from this conviction that I have taken some pains to inquire into the great controversy now subsisting between Carolina and Georgia; and in examining and weighing the letters wrote, and the arguments urged, on both sides of the question. And I cannot but think that the whole affair might be clearly stated in few words. A Charter was passed a few years since, establishing the bonds of this province, and empowering the Trustees therein named to prepare laws, which, when ratified by the King in Council, should be of force within those bounds. The Trustees hare prepared a law, which has been so ratified, for the regulation of the Indian trade, requiring that none should trade with the Indians who are within this province, till he is so licensed as therein specified. Notwithstanding this law, the governing part of Carolina have asserted, both in conversation, in a writing, and in the public newspapers, that it is lawful for any one not so licensed, to trade with the Creek, Cherokee, or, Chicasaw Indians: They have passed an ordinance, not only asserting the same, but enacting that men and money shall be raised to support such traders; and in fact they have themselves licensed and sent up such traders, both to the Creek and Chicasaw Indians.

This is the plain matter of fact. Now, as to matter of right, when twenty more reams of paper have been spent upon it, I cannot but think it must come to this short issue at last:

1. Are the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chicasaws within the bounds of Georgia or no?
2. Is an Act of the King in Council, in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, of any force within these bounds, or not?

That all other inquiries are absolutely foreign to the question, a very little consideration will show. As to the former of these, the Georgian Charter, scampered with any map of these parts which I have ever seen, determines it: The latter I never heard made a question of, but in the neighborhood of Carolina.

Mr. Johnson's brother has been with us some days. I have been twice in company with him at Mr. Oglethorpe's; and I hope there are in Carolina,

though the present proceeding would almost make one doubt it, many such gentlemen as he seems to be; men of good nature, good manners, and understudying. I hope God will repay you seven fold for the kindness you have shown to my poor mother, and in her to, Sir,

Your most obliged, most obedient servant.

XXIX. — *To Mr. Vernon.*

July, 1736.

As short a time as I have for writing, I could not pardon myself, if I did not spend some part of it in acknowledging the continuance of your goodness to my mother; which indeed neither she nor I can ever lose the sense of.

The behavior of the people of Carolina finds much conversation for this place. I dare not say, whether they want honesty or logic most: It is plain a very little of the latter, added to the former, would show how utterly foreign to the point in question all their voluminous defenses are. Here is an Act of the King in Council, passed in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, forbidding unlicensed persons to trade with the Indians in Georgia. Nothing therefore can justify them in, sending unlicensed traders to the Creek, Cherokee and Chicasaw Indians, but the proving either that this Act is of no force, or that those Indians are not in Georgia Why then are these questions so little considered by them and others so largely discussed? I fear, for a very plain, though not a very honest, reason; that is, to puzzle the cause. I sincerely wish you all happiness in time and in eternity, and am,

Sir, etc.

XXX. — *To Mr. ———, of Lincoln College.*

DEAR SIR,

SAVANNAH, AMERICA, *February* 16, 1736-7.

MR. INGHAM has left Savannah for some months, and lives at a house built for him a few miles hence, near the Indian town. I have now no fellow laborer but Mr. Delamotte, who has taken the charge of between thirty and forty children. There is therefore great need that God should put it into the hearts of some to come over to us, and Labor with us in his harvest. But I should not desire any to come, unless on the same views and conditions with us, — without any temporal wages, other than food and raiment, the plain conveniences of life. For one or more, in whom was this mind, there would be full employment in the province, either in assisting Mr. Delamotte or me, while we were present here, or in supplying our places when abroad, or in visiting the poor people in the smaller settlements, as well as at Frederica, all of whom are as sheep without a shepherd.

By these labors of love might any that desired it be trained up for the harder task of preaching the Gospel to the Heathen. The difficulties he must then encounter, God only knows; probably martyrdom would conclude them; but those we have hitherto met with have been small, and only terrible at a distance. Persecution, you know, is the portion of every follower of Christ, wherever his lot is cast; but it has hitherto extended no farther than words with regard to us; (unless in one or two inconsiderable instances;) yet it is sure, every man ought, if he would come hither, to be willing and ready to embrace (if God should see good) the severer kinds of it. He ought to be determined not only to leave parents, sisters, friends, houses, and land, for his Master's sake, but to take up his cross too, and cheerfully submit to the fatigue and danger of (it may be) a long voyage, and patiently to endure the continual contradiction of sinners, and all the inconveniences which it often occasions.

Would any one have a trial of himself, how he can bear this? If he has felt what reproach is, and can bear that for but a few weeks as he ought, I shall believe he need fear nothing. Other trials will afterwards be no heavier than that little one was at first; so that he may then have a well grounded hope, that he will be enabled to do all things through Christ strengthening him.

May the God of peace himself direct you to all things conducive to his glory, whether it be by fitter instruments, or even by Your friend and servant in Christ.

XXXI. — *To Mrs. Chapman.*

March 29, 1737.

TRUE friendship is doubtless stronger than death, else girls could never have subsisted still in spite of all opposition, and even after thousands of miles are interposed between us. In the last proof you gave of it, there are a few things which I think it lies on me to mention: As to the rest my brother is the proper person to clear them up, as I suppose he has done long ago.

You seem to apprehend, that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a sociable, friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion or holiness cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, cannot be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced, that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavor to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure but what is a hindrance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule; and I know no other by which a sincere reasonable Christian can be guided. In particular, I pursue this rule in eating, which I seldom do without much pleasure. And this I know is the will of God concerning me; that I should enjoy every pleasure that leads to my taking pleasure in him, and in such a measure as most leads to it. I know that; as to every action which is naturally pleasing, it is his will that it should be so; therefore, in taking that pleasure so far as it tends to this end, (of taking pleasure in God,) I do his

will. Though, therefore, that pleasure be in some sense distinct from the love of God, yet is the taking of it by no means distinct from his will. No; you say yourself, It is his will I should take it. And here, indeed, is the hinge of the question which I had once occasion to state in a letter to you; and more largely in a sermon, On the Love of God. If you will read over those, I believe you will find, you differ from Mr. Law and me in words only. You say, the pleasures you plead for are distinct from the love of God, as the cause from the effect. Why, then, they tend to it and those which are only thus distinct from it no one excepts against. The whole of what he affirms, and that not on the authority of men, but from the words and example of God incarnate, is, There is one thing needful, — to do the will of God; and his will is our sanctification: Our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness. On this we are to fix our single eye, at all times, and in all places; for so did our Lord. This one thing we are to do; for so did our fellow servant, Paul, after his example: “Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.” In other words, we are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness, which is his glory; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness; neither are any of those, either in England or here, who have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am and must be an example to my flock; not indeed, in my prudential rules, but, in some measure, (if, giving God the glory, I may dare to say so,) in my spirit, and life, and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding; and still, not one of them has been as yet entangled in any case of conscience which was not solved

And as to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, it is the wise, the learned, the disputers of this world, who are lost in them, and bewildered more and more, the more they strive to extricate themselves. We have no need of nice distinctions; for I exhort all, dispute with none. I feed my brethren in Christ, as He giveth me power, with the pure; unmixed milk of his word. And those who are as little children receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Some grow thereby, and advance apace in peace and holiness: They grieve, it is true, for those who did run

well, but are now turned back; and they fear for themselves, lest they also be tempted; yet, through the mercy of God, they despair not, but have still a good hope that they shall endure to the end. Not that this hope has any resemblance to enthusiasm, which is a hope to attain the end without the means: This they know is impossible, and therefore ground their hope on a constant, careful use of all the means. And, if they keep in this way, with lowliness patience, and meekness of resignation, they cannot carry the principle of pressing toward perfection too far. O may you and I carry it far enough! Be fervent in spirit. "Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks." Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Abound more and more in all holiness, and in zeal for every good word and work.

XXXII. — *To the Rev. William Law.*

REVEREND SIR,
1734.

Lincoln College, OXON., June 26,

I MUST earnestly beg your immediate advice, in a case of the greatest importance. Above two years since, I was intrusted with a young gentleman of good sense, and even generous temper; and pretty good learning. Religion he had heard little of; but Mr. Jackson's "Practice of Devotion," your two treatises, and Thomas a Kempis, by the blessing of God awakened him, by degrees, to a true notion and serious practice of it. In this he continued sensibly improving till last Lent; at the beginning of which, I advised him to do as he had done the year before, namely, to obey the order of the Church, by using such a sort and measure of abstinence as his health permitted, and his spiritual wants required. He said he did not think his health would permit to use that abstinence which he did the year before. And, notwithstanding my reply, that his athletic habit could be in no danger by only abstaining from flesh, and using moderately some less pleasing food, he persisted in his resolution of not altering his food at all. A little before Easter, perceiving he had much contracted the time he had till then set apart for religious reading, I asked him whether he was not himself convinced that he spent too much time in reading secular authors. He answered, he was convinced any time was too much; and that he should be a better Christian, if he never read them at all. I then pressed him

earnestly to pray for strength, according to that conviction; and he resolved to try for a week. When that was expired, he said his desire of classical reading was not inflamed, but a little abated: Upon which, I begged him to repeat his resolution for a week or two longer. He said, it signified nothing; for he could never part with the classics entirely. I desired him to read that which you say in the “Christian Perfection,” on reading vain authors. He readily agreed to every word of it, but still, in his practice, denied it; though appearing, in most other particulars, an humble, active, zealous Christian. On Tuesday, April 3, being one of the days the statutes require us to communicate at St. Mary’s, I called upon him just before church, being to set out for Lincolnshire as soon as the service was over. I asked whether he still halted between two opinions; and, after exhorting him as I could to renounce himself, and serve his Master with simplicity, I left him. He did not communicate that day. On my return, May 21, I immediately inquired what state he was in, and found he had never communicated since, which he used to do weekly; that he had left off rising early, visiting the poor, and almost all religious reading, and entirely given himself up to secular. When I asked him why he had left off the holy eucharist, he said fairly, because to partake of it implied a fresh promise to renounce himself entirely, and to please God alone; and he did not design to do so. I asked whether he was well convinced he ought to do so. He said, “Yes.” Whether he wished he could design it. He answered, No, he did not desire it.

From time to time, particularly a few days ago, I wished him to tell me upon what he grounded his hope of salvation. He replied, after some pause, that “Christ died for all men; but if none were saved by him without performing the conditions, his death would not avail one in a thousand, which was inconsistent with the goodness of God.” But this answer, and every part of it, he soon gave up; adding, with the utmost seriousness, that he cared not whether it was true or no; he was very happy at present, and he desired nothing further.

This morning I again asked him what he thought of his; own state. He said he thought nothing about it. I desired to know whether he could, if he considered it ever so little, expect to be saved by the terms of the Christian covenant He answered, he did not consider it at all: Nor did all I could say

in the least move him. He assented to all, but was affected with nothing. He grants, with all composure that he is not in a salvable state, and shows no degree of concern, while he owns he cannot find mercy.

I am now entirely at a loss what step to take: Pray he cannot, or will not. When I lent him several prayers, he returned them unused, saying, he does not desire to be otherwise than he is, and why should he pray for it? I do not seem so much as to understand his distemper. It appears to me quite incomprehensible. Much less can I tell what remedies are proper for it. I therefore beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, that you would not be slack, according to the ability He shall give, to advise and pray for him; and am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged servant.

XXXIII. — *To the Same.*

REVEREND SIR,

May 14, 1738.

IT is in obedience to what I think to be the call of God, that I, who have the sentence of death in my own soul, take upon me to write to you, of whom I have often desired to learn the first elements of the Gospel of Christ.

If you are born of God, you will approve of the design, though it may be but weakly executed. If not, I shall grieve for you, not for myself. For as I seek not the praise of men, so neither regard I the contempt either of you or of any other.

For two years (more especially) I have been preaching after the model of your two practical treatises; and all that heard have allowed, that the law is great, wonderful, and holy. But no sooner did they attempt to fulfill it, but they found that it is too high for man: And that by doing “the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified.”

To remedy this, I exhorted them, and stirred up myself, to pray earnestly for the grace of God, and to use all the other means of obtaining that grace,

which the all wise God hath appointed. But still, both they and I were more and more convinced, that this is a law by which a man cannot live; the law in our members continually warring against it, and bringing us into deeper captivity to the law of sin.

Under this heavy yoke I might have groaned till death, had not a holy man, to whom God lately directed me, upon my complaining thereof, answered at once, “Believe, and thou shalt be saved. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, and nothing shall be impossible to thee. This faith, indeed, as well as the salvation it brings, is the free gift of God. But seek, and thou shalt find. Strip thyself naked of thy own works, and thy own righteousness, and fly to him. For whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out.”

Now, Sir, suffer me to ask, How will you answer it to our common Lord, that you never gave me this advice? Did you never read the Acts of the Apostles, or the answer of Paul to him who said, “What must I do to be saved?” Or are you wiser than he? Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ? never, so as to ground anything upon “faith in his blood?” Who is this who is laying another foundation? If you say, you advised other things as preparatory to this; what is this, but laying a foundation below the foundation? Is not Christ then the first, as well as the last? If you say you advised them because you knew that I had faith already, verily you knew nothing of me; you discerned not my spirit at all. I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative, notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head, not in the heart. But what is this to the living, justifying faith in the blood of Jesus? the faith that cleanseth from sin; that gives us to have free access to the Father; to “rejoice in hope of the glory of God;” to have “the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by, the Holy Ghost” which dwelleth in us; and “the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God?”

I beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially, whether the true reason of your never pressing this upon me was not this, — that you had it not yourself? whether that man of God was not in the right, who gave this account of a late interview he had with

you? — “I began speaking to him of faith in Christ: He was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters. I spake to him of faith in Christ again: He was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters again. I saw his state at once.” And a very dangerous one, in his judgment, whom I know to have the Spirit of God.

Once more, Sir, let me beg you to consider, whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behavior, at least on many occasions, can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ? If not, may the God of peace and love fill up what is yet wanting in you!

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your humble servant.

XXXIV. — *To the Same.*

REVEREND SIR,

May 30, 1738.

I SINCERELY thank you for a favor I did not expect, and presume to trouble you once more.

How I have preached all my life, — how qualified or unqualified I was to correct a translation of Kempis, and to translate a preface to it, — whether I have now, or how long I have had, a living faith, — whether Peter Bohler spoke truth in what he said, when two others were present besides me, — are circumstances on which the main question does not turn, which is this and no other: “Whether you ever advised me, or directed me to books that did advise me, to seek first a living faith in the blood of Christ; and that thereby alone I could be justified.”

You appeal to three facts to prove that you did:

1. That you put into my hands “Theologia Germanica.”
2. That you published an answer to “The plain Account of the Sacrament.” And,
3. That you are governed through all that you have written and done by these two fundamental maxims of our Lord: “Without me ye

can do nothing;” and, “If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.”

The facts I allow, but not the consequence. In “Theologia Germanica,” I remember something of Christ our Pattern, but nothing express of Christ our Atonement. The answer to “The plain Account of the Sacrament” I believe to be an excellent book, but not so as to affect the main question. Those two maxims may imply, but do not express, the thing itself, (“He is our propitiation, through faith in his blood.”)

But how are you “chargeable with my not having had this faith!” If you intimate, that you discerned my spirit, then you are chargeable thus:

1. You did not tell me plainly I had it not.
2. You never once advised me to seek or to pray for it.
3. Your advice to me was only proper for such as had faith already; advises which led me further from it, the closer I adhered to them.
4. You recommended books to me which had no tendency to this faith, but a direct one to destroy good works.

However, “Let the fault be divided,” you say, “between me and Kempis.” No; if I understood Kempis wrong, it was your part, who discerned my spirit, and saw my mistake, to have explained him, and to have set me right.

I ask; pardon, Sir, if have said anything inconsistent with the obligations I owe you, and the respect I bear to your character.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

XXXV. — *To Count Zinzendorf, at Marienborne.*

MAY our gracious Lord, who counteth whatsoever is done to the least of his brethren as done to himself, return even fold to you and the Countess,

and to all the brethren, the kindnesses you did to us! It would have been a great satisfaction to me, if I could have spent more time with the Christians who love one another. But that could not be now; my Master having called me to work in another part of his vineyard. Nor did I return hither at all before the time; for though a great door and effectual had been opened, the adversaries had laid so many stumbling blocks before it, that the weak were daily turned out of the way. Numberless misunderstandings had arisen, by means of which the way of truth was much blasphemed: And thence had sprung anger, clamor, bitterness, evil speaking, envyings, strifes, railings, evil surmises; whereby the enemy had gained such an advantage over the little flock, that “of the rest durst no man join himself to them.”

But it has now pleased our blessed Master to remove, in great measure, these rocks of offense. The word of the Lord again runs and is glorified; and his work goes on and prospers. Great multitudes are everywhere awakened, and cry out, “What must we do to be saved?” Many of them see that there is only one name under heaven whereby they can be saved: And more and more of those who seek it, find salvation in his name: And these are of one heart and one soul. They all love one another, and are knit together in one body and one spirit as in one faith and one hope of their calling. The love and zeal of our brethren in Holland and Germany, particularly at Hernhuth, has stirred up many among us, who will not be comforted till they also partake of the great and precious promises. I hope, if God permit, to see them at least once more, were it only to give them the fruit of my love, the speaking freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them. May our merciful Lord give you a right judgment in all things, and make you to abound more and more in all lowliness and meekness in all simplicity and godly sincerity, in all watchfulness and seriousness; in a word, — in all faith and love, particularly to those that are without; till you are merciful, as your Father which is ill heaven is merciful! I desire your constant and earnest prayers, that he would vouchsafe me a portion of the same spirit.

XXXVI. — *To the Church of God which is in Hernhuth, JOHN WESLEY, an unworthy Presbyterian of the Church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

October 14. 1738.

GLORY be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift! for giving me to be an eyewitness of your faith, and love, and holy conversation in Christ Jesus! I have born testimony thereof with all plainness of speech, in many parts of Germany, and thanks have been given to God by many on your behalf.

We are endeavoring here also, by the grace which is given us, to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen were added to us, since our return, so that we have now eight bands of men, consisting of fifty-six persons; all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. As yet we have only two small bands of women; the one of three, the other of five persons. But here are many others who only wait till we have leisure to instruct them, how they may most effectually build up one another in the faith and love of Him who gave himself for them.

Though my brother and I are not permitted to preach in most of the churches in London, yet (thanks be to God!) there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Likewise every evening, and on set evenings in the week at two several places, we publish the word of reconciliation, sometimes to twenty or thirty, sometimes to fifty or sixty, sometimes to three or four hundred persons, met together to hear it. We begin and end all our meetings with singing and prayer; and we know that our Lord heareth our prayer, having more than once or twice (and this was not done in a corner) received our petitions in that very hour.

Nor hath he left himself without other witnesses of his grace and truth. Ten Ministers I know now in England, who lay the right foundation, "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Over and above whom I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two, of the Teachers among these Presbyterians here, who, I hope, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth.

O cease not, ye that are highly favored, to beseech our Lord that he would be with us even to the end; to remove that which is displeasing in his sight, to support that which is weak among us, to give us the whole mind that was in him,, and teach us to walk even as he walked! And may the very God of peace fill up what is wanting in your faith, and I build you up more and more in all lowliness of mind, in all plainness of speech, in all zeal and watchfulness; that He may present you to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or a wrinkle, or any such thing, but that ye may be holy and unblamable in the day of his appearing.

XXXVII. — *To the Bishop of Bristol.*

MY LORD,

October 13, 1741.

SEVERAL persons have applied to me for baptism. It has pleased God to make me instrumental in their conversion. This has given them such a prejudice for me, that they desire to be received into the Church by my ministry. They choose likewise to be baptized by immersion, and have engaged me to give your Lordship notice, as the Churches requires.

XXXVIII. — *To Mr. John Smith.* ¹²

SIR,

September 28, 1745.

1. I WAS determined, from the time I received yours, to answer it as soon as I should have opportunity. But it was the longer delayed, because I could not persuade myself to write at all, till I had leisure to write fully. And this I hope to do now, though I know you not, no, not so much as your name. But I take for granted you are a person that fears God, and that

speaks the real sentiments of his heart. And. On this supposition I shall speak, without any suspicion or reserve.

2. I am exceedingly obliged by the pains you have taken to point out to me what you think to be mistakes. It is a truly Christian attempt, an act of brotherly love, which I pray God to repay sevenfold into your bosom. Methinks I can scarce look upon such a person, on one who is “a contender for truth and not for victory,” whatever opinion he may entertain of me, as an adversary at all. For what is friendship, if I am to account him my enemy who endeavors to open my eyes, or to mend my heart?

I.

3. You will give me leave (writing as a friend rather than a disputant) to invert the order of your objections, and to begin with the third, because, I conceive, it may be answered in fewest words. The substance of it is this: “If in fact you can work such signs and wonders as were, wrought by the Apostles, then you are entitled (notwithstanding what I might otherwise object) to the implicit faith due to one of that order.” A few lines after you cite a case related in the Third Journal, page 88,¹³ and add: “If you prove this to be the fact, to the satisfaction of wise and good men, then I believe no wise and good men will oppose you any longer. Let me therefore rest it upon your conscience, either to prove this matter of fact, or to retract it. If upon; mature examination it shall appear that designing people imposed upon you, or that hysterical women were imposed upon themselves, acknowledge your zeal outran your wisdom.”

4. Surely I would. But what, if on such examination it shall appear that there was no imposition of either kind? — to be satisfied of which, I waited three years before I told the story. What, if it appear by the only method which I can conceive, the deposition of three or four eye and ear witnesses, that the matter of fact was just as it is there related, so far as men can judge from their eyes and ears; will it follow, that I am entitled to demand the implicit faith, which was due to an Apostle? By no means. Nay, I know not that implicit faith was due to any or all of the Apostles put together. They were to prove their assertions by the written word.

You and I are to do the same. Without such proof I ought no more to have believed St. Peter himself, than St. Peter's pretended successor.

5. I conceive, therefore, this whole demand, common as it is, of proving our doctrine by miracles, proceeds from a double mistake:

- (1.) A supposition, that what we preach is not provable from Scripture; — for if it be, what need we farther witnesses? “To the law and to the testimony!”
- (2.) An imagination, that a doctrine not provable by Scripture might nevertheless be proved by miracles. I believe not. I receive the written word as the whole and sole rule of my faith.

II.

6. Perhaps what you object to my phraseology may be likewise answered in few words. I thoroughly agree, that it is best to “use the most common words, and that in the most obvious sense;” and have been diligently laboring after this very thing for little less than twenty years. I am not conscious of using any uncommon word, or any word in an uncommon sense; but I cannot call those uncommon words which are the constant language of holy writ. These I purposely use; desiring always to express Scripture sense in Scripture phrase. And this I apprehend myself to do, when I speak of salvation as a present thing. How often does our Lord himself do thus! how often his Apostles, St. Paul particularly! Insomuch that I doubt whether we can find six texts in the New Testament, perhaps not three, where it is otherwise taken.

7. The term “faith” I likewise use in the scriptural sense, meaning thereby “the evidence of things not seen.” And, that it is scriptural, appears to me a sufficient defense of any way of speaking whatever. For however the propriety of those expressions may vary which occur in the writings of men, I cannot but think those which are found in the book of God will be equally proper in all ages. But let us look back, as you desire, to the age of the Apostles. And if it appear that the state of religion now is, according to your own representation of it, the same, in substance, as it was then, it will follow that the same expressions are just as proper now, as they were in the apostolic age.

8. “At the time of the first preaching of the Gospel,” (as you just observe,) “both Jews and Gentiles were very negligent of internal holiness, but laid great stress on external rites, and certain actions, which if they performed according to the due forms of their respective religions, they doubted not but those works would render them acceptable to God. The Apostles therefore thought they could not express themselves too warmly against so wicked a persuasion, and often declare that we cannot be made righteous by works; (that is, not by such outward works as were intended to commute for inward holiness;) but ‘by faith in Christ;’ that is, by becoming Christians both in principle and practice.”

9. I have often thought the same thing, namely, that the Apostles used the expression, “salvation by faith,” (importing inward holiness by the knowledge of God,) in direct opposition to the then common persuasion of salvation by works; that is, going to heaven by outward works, without any inward holiness at all.

10. And is not this persuasion as common now as it was in the time of the Apostles? We must needs go out of the world, or we cannot doubt it. Does not every one of our churches (to speak a sad truth) afford us abundant instances of those who are as negligent of internal holiness, as either the Jews or ancient Gentiles were? And do not these at this day lay so great a stress on certain external rights; that, if they perform them according to the due forms of their respective communities, they doubt not but those works will render them acceptable to God? You and I therefore cannot express ourselves too warmly against so wicked a persuasion; nor can we express ourselves against it in more proper terms than those the Apostles used to that very end.

It cannot be denied that this apostolical language is also the language of our own Church. But I waive this. What is scriptural in any Church, I hold fast: For the rest, I let it go.

III.

11. But the main point remains: You think the doctrines I hold are not founded on holy writ. Before we inquire into this, I would just touch on some parts of that abstract of them which you have given.

“Faith (instead of being a rational assent and moral virtue, for the attainment of which men ought to yield the utmost attention and industry) is altogether supernatural; and the immediate gift of God.” I believe,

- (1.) That a rational assent to the truth of the Bible is one ingredient of Christian faith.
- (2.) That Christian faith is a moral virtue in that sense wherein hope and charity are.
- (3.) That men ought to yield the utmost attention and industry for the attainment of it. And yet,
- (4.) That this, as every Christian grace, is properly supernatural, is an immediate gift of God, which he commonly gives in the use of such means as he hath ordained.

I believe it is generally given in an instant; but not arbitrarily, in your sense of the word; not without any regard to the fitness (I should say, the previous qualifications) of the recipient.

12. “When a man is pardoned, it is immediately notified to him by the Holy Ghost, and that (not by his imperceptibly working a godly assurance, but) by such attestation as is easily discernible from reason or fancy.”

I do not deny that God imperceptibly works in some as gradually increasing assurance of his love; but I am equally certain, he works in others a full assurance thereof in one moment. And I suppose, however this godly assurance be wrought, it is easily discernible from bare reason, or fancy.

“Upon this infallible notification he is saved, is become perfect, so that he cannot commit sin.”

I do not say, this notification is infallible in that sense that none believe they have it, who indeed have it not neither do I say that a man is perfect in love, the moment he is born of God by faith. But even then, I believe, if he keepeth himself, he doth not commit (outward) sin.

13. “This first sowing of the first seed of faith, you cannot conceive to be other than instantaneous, (ordinarily,) whether you consider experience, or the word of God, or the very nature of the thing. Whereas all these appear to me to be against you. To begin with experience: I believe myself to have as steady a faith in a pardoning God as you can have; and yet I do not remember the exact day when it was first given.”

Perhaps not. Yours may be another of those exempt cases, which were allowed before.

But “the experience,” you say, “of all the pious persons” you “are acquainted with, is the very same with” yours. You will not be displeased with my speaking freely. How many truly pious persons are you so intimately acquainted with, as to be able to interrogate them on the subject? with twenty? with ten? If so, you are far happier than I was for many years at Oxford. You will naturally ask, with how many truly pious persons am I acquainted, on the other hand. I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not: I am acquainted with more than twelve or thirteen hundred persons, whom I believe to be truly pious, and not on slight grounds, and who have severally testified to me with their own mouths that they do know the day when the love of God was first shed abroad in their hearts, and when his Spirit first witnessed with their spirits, that they were the children of God. Now, if you are determined to think all these liars or fools, this is no evidence to you; but to me it is strong evidence, who have for some years known the men and their communication.

14. As to the word of God, you well observe, “We are not to frame doctrines by the sound of particular texts, but the general tenor of Scripture, soberly studied and consistently interpreted.” Touching the instances you give, I would just remark,

- (1.) To have sin, is one thing; to commit sin, is another.
- (2.) In one particular text it is said, “Ye are saved by hope;” perhaps in one more, (though I remember it not,) “Ye are saved by repentance, or holiness.” But the general tenor of Scripture, consistently interpreted, declares, “We are saved by faith.”

- (3.) Will either the general tenor of Scripture, or your own conscience, allow you to say that faith is the gift of God in no other or higher sense than riches are?
- (4.) I entirely agree with you that the children of light walk by the joint light of reason, Scripture, and the Holy Ghost.

15. “But the word of God appears to” you “to be manifestly against such an instantaneous giving of faith; because it speaks of growth in grace and faith as owing to the slow methods of instruction.” So do I. But this is not the question. We are speaking, not of the progress, but of the first rise, of faith. “It directs the gentle instilling of faith, by long labor and pious industry.” Not the first instilling; and we speak not now of the continuance or increase of it. “It compares even God’s part of the work to the slow produce of vegetables, that, while one plants and another waters, it is God all the while who goes on giving the increase.” Very true. But the seed must first be sown, before it can increase at all. Therefore, all the texts who relate to the subsequent increase are quite wide of the present question.

Perhaps your thinking the nature of the thing to be so clearly against me may arise from your not clearly apprehending it. That you do not, I gather from your own words: “It is the nature of faith to be a full and practical assent to truth.” Surely no. This definition does in nowise express the nature of Christian faith. Christian saving faith is a divine conviction of invisible things; a supernatural conviction of the things of God, with a filial confidence in his love. Now, a man may have a full assent to the truth of the Bible, (probably attained by the slow steps you mention,) yea, an assent which has some influence on his practice, and yet not have one grain of this faith.

16. I should be glad to know to which writings in particular of the last age you would refer me, for a thorough discussion of the Calvinistical points. I want to have those points fully settled; having seen so little yet wrote on the most important of them, with such clearness and strength as one would desire.

17. I think your following objections do not properly come under any of the preceding heads: “Your doctrine of momentaneous illapse, etc., is represented by your adversaries as singular and unscriptural; and that these singularities are your most beloved opinions and favorite tenets, more insisted upon by you than the general and uncontroverted truths of Christianity: This is their charge.” And so, I doubt, it will be to the end of the world: For, in spite of all I can say, they will represent one circumstance of my doctrine (so called) as the main substance of it. It nothing avails, that I declare again and again, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” I believe this love is given in a moment. But about this I contend not. Have this love, and it is enough. For this I will contend till my spirit returns to God. Whether I am singular or no, in thinking his love is instantaneously given, this is not my “most beloved opinion.” You greatly wrong me when you advance that charge. Nay, I love, strictly speaking, no opinion at all. I trample upon opinion, be it right or wrong. I want, I value, I preach, the love of God and man. These are my “favorite tenets,” (if you will have the word,) “more insisted on” by me ten times over, both in preaching and writing, than any or all other subjects that ever were in the world.

18. You will observe, I do not say (and who is there that can?) that I have no singular opinion at all; but this I say, that, in my general tenor of preaching, I teach nothing, as the substance of religion, more singular than the love of God and man: And it was for preaching this very doctrine, (before I preached or knew salvation by faith,) that several of the Clergy forbade me their pulpits.

“But if it be notorious, that you are frequently insisting on controverted opinions.” If it be, even this will not prove the charge; namely, “that those are my most beloved opinions, and more insisted upon by me, than the uncontroverted truths of Christianity.”

“No singularities,” is not my answer; but that no singularities are my most beloved opinions; that no singularities are more, or near so much, insisted on by me, as the general uncontroverted truths of Christianity.

19. “Another objection,” you say, “I have to make to your manner of treating your antagonists. You seem to think you sufficiently answer your adversary; if you put together a number of naked scriptures that sound in your favor. But remember, the question between you and there is, not whether such words are Scripture, but whether they are to be so interpreted.”

You surprise me! I take your word, else I should never have imagined you have read over the latter Appeal; so great a part of which is employed in this very thing, in fighting my ground, inch by inch; in proving, not that such words are Scripture, but that they must be interpreted in the manner there set down.

20. One point more remains, which you express in these words: “When your adversaries tax you with differing from the Church, they cannot be supposed to charge you with differing from the Church as it was a little after the Reformation, but as it is at this day. And when you profess great deference and veneration for the Church of England, you cannot be supposed to profess it for the Church and its Pastors in the year 1545, and not rather in the year 1745. If, then, by ‘the Church of England’ be meant (as ought to be meant) the present Church, it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrines differ widely from the doctrines of the Church.”

Well, how blind was I! I always supposed, till the very hour I read these words, that when I was charged with differing from the Church, I was charged with differing from the Articles or Homilies. And for the compilers of these, I can sincerely profess great deference and veneration. But I cannot honestly profess any veneration at all for those Pastors of the present all, who solemnly subscribe to those Articles and Homilies which they do not believe in their hearts. Nay, I think, unless I differ from these men (be they Bishops, Priests, or Deacons) just as widely as they do from those Articles and Homilies, I am no true Church of England man.

Agreeably to those ancient records, by “Christian” or “justifying faith” I always meant, faith preceded by repentance, and accompanied or followed by obedience. So I always preached; so I spoke and wrote. But my warm

adversaries, from the very beginning, stopped their ears, cried out, “An heretic! An heretic!” and so ran upon me at once.

21. But I let them alone: You are the person I want, and whom I have been seeking for many years. You have understanding to discern, and mildness to repeat, (what would otherwise be,) unpleasing truths Smite me friendly and reprove me: It shall be a precious balm; it shall not break my head. I am deeply convinced that I know nothing yet as I ought to know. Fourteen years ago, I said, (with Mr. Norris,) “I want heat more than light;” but now I know not which I want most. Perhaps God will enlighten me by your words. O speak and spare not! At least, you will have the thanks and prayers of

Your obliged and affectionate servant.

XXXIX. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

December 30, 1745.

I AM obliged to you for your speedy and friendly answer; to which I will reply as clearly as I can.

1. If you have leisure to read the last Appeal, you will easily judge, how much I insist on any opinions.
2. In writing practically, I seldom argue concerning, the meaning of texts; in writing controversially, I do.
3. In saying, “I teach the doctrines of the Church of England,” I do, and always did, mean, (without concerning myself, whether others taught them or no, either this year, or before the Reformation,) I teach the doctrines which are comprised in those Articles and Homilies to which all the Clergy of the Church of England solemnly profess to assent, and that in their plain, unforced, grammatical meaning.

As to the Seventeenth Article, Mr. Whitefield really believes that it asserts absolute predestination: Therefore, I can also subscribe to it with sincerity. But the case is quite different with regard to those who subscribe to the Eleventh and following Articles; which are not ambiguously worded, as the Seventeenth (I suppose, on purpose) was.

4. When I say, “The Apostles themselves were to prove their assertions by the written word,” I mean the word written before their time, the Law and the Prophets; and so they did. I do not believe the case of Averel Spencer was natural; yet, when I kneeled down by her bedside, I had no thought at all of God’s then giving any “attestation to my ministry.” But I asked of God, to deliver an afflicted soul; and he did deliver her. Nevertheless, I desire none to receive my words, unless they are confirmed by Scripture and reason. And if they are, they ought to be received, though Averel Spencer had never been born.

5. That we ought not to relate a purely natural case in the Scripture terms that express our Lord’s miracles; that low and common things are generally improper to be told in Scripture phrase; that scriptural words which are obsolete, or which have changed their signification, are not to be used familiarly, as neither those technical terms which were peculiar to the controversies of those days; I can easily apprehend. But I cannot apprehend that “salvation” or “justification” is a term of this sort; and much less that “faith” and “works,” or “spirit” and “flesh,” are synonymous terms with “Christianity” and “Judaism.” I know this has frequently been affirmed; but I do not know that it has been proved.

6. However, you think there is no occasion now for the expressions used in ancient times; since the persuasions which were common then are now scarcely to be found. For “does any Church-of-England man,” you ask, “maintain anything like this, that men may commute external works, instead of internal holiness?” Most surely: I doubt whether every Church-of-England man in the nation, yea, every Protestant (as well as Papist) in Europe, who is not deeply sensible that he did so once, does not do so to this day.

I am one who, for twenty years, used outward works, not only as “acts of goodness;” but as commutations, (though I did not indeed profess this,) instead of inward holiness. I knew I was not holy. But I quieted my conscience by doing such and such outward works; and therefore I hoped I should go to heaven, even without inward holiness. Nor did I ever speak close to one who had the form of godliness without the power, but I found he had split on the same rock.

Abundance of people I have likewise known, and many I do know at this day, who “are so grossly superstitious as to think devotion may be put upon God instead of honesty;” as to fancy, going to church and sacrament will bring them to heaven, though they practice neither justice nor mercy. These are the men who make Christianity vile, who, above all others, “contribute to the growth of infidelity.” On the contrary, the speaking of faith working by love, of uniform, outward religion, springing from inward, has already been the means of converting several Deists, and one Atheist, (if not more,) into real Christians.

7. “Infallible testimony” was your word, not mine: I never use it; I do not like it. But I did not object to your using that phrase, because I would not fight about words. If, then, the question be repeated, “In what sense is that attestation of the Spirit infallible?” any one has my free leave to answer, In no sense at all. And yet, though I allow that some may fancy they have it, when in truth they have it not; I cannot allow that any fancy they have it not, at the time when they really have. I know no instance of this. When they have this faith, they cannot possibly doubt of their having it; although it is very possible, when they have it not, they may doubt whether ever they had it or no. This was Hannah Richardson’s case; and it is, more or less, the case with many of the children of God.

That logical evidence, that we are the children of God, I do not either exclude or despise. But it is far different from the direct witness of the Spirit; of which, I believe, St. Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Romans; and which, I doubt not, is given to many thousand souls who never saw my face. But I spoke only of those I personally knew, concerning whom, indeed, I find my transcriber has made a violent mistake, writing 13,000, instead of 1,300: I might add, those whom I also have known by their writings. But I cannot lay so much stress on their evidence. I cannot have so full and certain a knowledge of a writer, as of one I talk with face to face; and therefore I think the experiences of this kind are not to be compared with those of the other.

One, indeed, of this kind I was reading yesterday, which is exceeding clear and strong. You will easily pardon my transcribing part of his words.

They are in St. Austin's Confessions: *Intravi in intima mea, duce te: Et potui, quoniam; factus es adjutor meus. Intravi et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae, supra eundem oculum animae meae, supra mentem meam, lucem Domini incommutabilem: Non hanc vulgarem, conspicuam, omni carni; nec, quasi ex eodem genere grandior erat, — non hoc illa erat, sed aliud; aliud valde ab istis omnibus. Nec ita erat supra mentem meam, sicut coelum super terram. Sed superior quia ipsa fecit me. Qui novit veritatem, novit eam. Et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem. Charitas novit eam.*

O aeterna Veritas! Tu es Deus meus! Tibi suspiro die ac nocte. Et cum te primum cognovi, tu assumpsisti me, ut viderem esse quod viderem. — Et reverberâsti infirmitatem aspectus mei, radians in me vehementer; et contremui amore et, horrore: Et inveni, me longe esse a te. — Et dixi, Nunquid nihil est veritas? Et clamâsti de longinquo: Immo vero; Ego sum, qui sum. Et audivi, sicut auditur in corde, et non erat prorsus unde dubitarem. Faciliusque dubitarem vivere me, quam non esse veritatem. ¹⁴
(Lib. 7, cap. 10.)

9. From many such passages as these, which I have occasionally read, as well as from what I have myself seen and known, I am induced to believe that God's ordinary way of converting sinners to himself is, by "suddenly inspiring them with an immediate testimony of his love, easily distinguishable from fancy." I am assured that he hath wrought in all I have known, (except, perhaps, three or four persons,) of whom I have reasonable ground to believe that they are really turned from the power of Satan to God.

10. With regard to the definition of faith, if you allow, that it is such "an inward conviction of things invisible, as is the gift of God in the same sense wherein hope and charity are," I have little to object; or, that it is "such an assent to all Christian truths as is productive of all Christian practice." In terming either faith, or hope, or love supernatural, I only mean that they are not the effect of any or all of our natural faculties, but are wrought in us (be it swiftly or slowly) by the Spirit of God. But I would rather say, Faith is "productive of all Christian holiness," than "of all Christian practice;" because men are so exceeding, apt to rest in

practice, so called; I mean, in outside religion; whereas true religion is eminently seated in the heart, renewed in the image of Him that created us.

11. I have not found, in any of the writers you mention, a solution of many difficulties that occur on the head of predestination. And, to speak without reserve, when I compare the writings of their most celebrated successors, with those of Dr. Barrow and his contemporaries, I am amazed: The latter seem to be mere children compared with the former writers; and to throw out such frothy, unconnected trifles, such indigested crudities, as a man of learning, fourscore or a hundred years ago, would have been ashamed to set his name to.

12. Concerning the instantaneous and the gradual work, what I still affirm is this: That I know hundreds of persons, whose hearts were one moment filled with fear, and sorrow, and pain, and the next with peace and joy in believing, yea, joy unspeakable, full of glory; that the same moment they experienced such a love of God, and so fervent a goodwill to all mankind, (attended with power over all sin,) as till then they were wholly unacquainted with; that nevertheless the peace and love thus sown in their hearts, received afterward a gradual increase; and that to this subsequent increase the scriptures you mention do manifestly refer. Now, I cannot see that there is any quibbling at all in this. No; it is a plain, fair answer to the objection.

Neither can I apprehend that I have given an evasive answer to any adversary whatever. I am sure I do not desire to do it; for I want us to understand each other. The sooner the better: Therefore let us, as you propose, return to the main point.

“The charge is,” your words are, “that the Methodists preach sundry singular and erroneous doctrines; in particular three, — unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection. ‘They set up,’ say their adversaries, ‘their own schemes and notions as the great standard of Christianity, so as to perplex, unhinge, terrify, and distract the minds of multitudes, by persuading them that they cannot be true Christians but by adhering to their doctrines.’ This is the charge. Now you ask, ‘What do you mean by their own schemes, their own notions, their

own doctrines?’ It is plain, we mean their unconditional predestination, their perceptible inspiration, and their sinless perfection.”

The charge then is, that the Methodists preach unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection. But what a charge! Shall John Wesley be indicted for murder, because George Whitefield killed a man? Or shall George Whitefield be charged with felony, because John Wesley broke a house? How monstrous is this! How dissonant from all the rules of common sense and common honesty! Let every man bear his own burden. If George Whitefield killed a man, or taught predestination, John Wesley did not: What has this charge to do with him? And if John Wesley broke a house, or preached sinless perfection, let him answer for himself George Whitefield did neither: Why then is his name put into this indictment?

Hence appears the inexcusable injustice of what might otherwise appear a trifle. When I urge a man in this manner, he could have no plea at all, were he not to reply “Why, they are both Methodists.” So when he has linked them together by one nickname, he may hang either instead of the other.

But sure this will not be allowed by reasonable men. And if not, what have I to do with predestination? Absolutely nothing: Therefore set that aside. Yea, and sinless perfection too. “How so? Do not you believe it?” Yes, I do; and in what sense, I have shown in the sermon on Christian Perfection. And if any man calls it an error, till he has answered that, I must say, “Sir, you beg the question.” But I preach, perhaps, twenty times, and say no more of this, than even a Calvinist would allow. Neither will I enter into any dispute about it, any more than about the millennium.

Therefore the distinguishing doctrines on which I do insist in all my writings, and in all my preaching, will lie in a very narrow compass. You sum them all up in perceptible inspiration. For this I earnestly contend; and so do all who are called Methodist Preachers. But be pleased to observe what we mean thereby. We mean that inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit, whereby he fills us with righteousness, peace, and joy, with love to Him and to all mankind. And we believe it cannot be, in the nature of things, that a man should be filled with this peace, and joy, and love, by

the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, without perceiving it as clearly as he does the light of the sun.

This is (so far as I understand them) the main doctrine of the Methodists. This is the substance of what we all preach. And I will still believe, none is a true Christian till he experiences it; and, consequently, “that people, at all hazards, must be convinced of this; yea, though that conviction at first unhinge them ever so much, though it should in a manner distract them for a season. For it is better that they should be perplexed and terrified now, than that they should sleep on and awake in hell.”

I do not therefore, I will not, shift the question; though I know many who desire I should. I know the proposition I have to prove, and I will not move a hair’s breadth from it. It is this: “No man can be a true Christian without such an inspiration of the Holy Ghost as fills his heart with peace, and joy, and love; which he who perceives not, has it not.” This is the point for which alone I contend; and this I take to be the very foundation of Christianity.

14. The answer, therefore, which you think we ought to give, is that which we do give to the charge of our adversaries:” Our singularities (if you will style them so) are fundamental, and of the essence of Christianity;” therefore we must “preach them with such diligence and zeal as if the whole of Christianity depended upon them.”

15. It would doubtless be wrong to insist thus on these things if they were “not necessary to final salvation:” But we believe they are; unless in the case of invincible ignorance. In this case, undoubtedly many thousands are saved who never heard of these doctrines: And I am inclined to think, this was our own case, both at Oxford and for some time after. Yet I doubt not but had we been called hence, God would first, by this inspiration of his Spirit, have wrought; in our hearts that holy love without which none can enter into glory.

16. I was aware of the seeming contradiction you mention at the very time when I wrote the sentence. But it is only a seeming one: For it is true, that from May 24, 1738, “wherever I was desired to preach, salvation by faith

was my only theme;” — that is, such a love of God and man, as produces all inward and outward holiness, and springs from a conviction, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, of the pardoning love of God: And that when I was told, “You must preach no more in this church,” it was commonly added, “because you preach such doctrine!” And it is equally true, that “it was for preaching the love of God and man, that several of the Clergy forbade me their pulpits” before that times before May 24, before I either preached or knew salvation by faith.

17. We are at length come to the real state of the question, between the Methodists (so called) and their opponents. “Is there perceptible inspiration, or is there not? Is there such a thing (if we divide the question into its parts) as faith producing peace, and joy, and love, and inward (as well as outward) holiness? Is that faith which is productive of these fruits wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, or not? And is he in whom they are wrought necessarily conscious of them, or is he not?” These are the points on which I am ready to join issue with any serious and candid man. Such I believe you to be. If, therefore, I knew on which of those you desired my thoughts, I would give you them freely, such as they are; or (if you desire it) on any collateral question. The best light I have, I am ready to impart; and am ready to receive farther light from you. My time, indeed, is so short, that I cannot answer your letters so particularly, or so correctly, as I would. But I am persuaded you will excuse many defects where you believe the design is good. I want to know what, as yet, I know not. May God teach it me by you, or by whom he pleaseth! “Search me, O Lord, and prove me I Try out my reins and my heart! Look well if there be error or wickedness in me; and lead me in the way ever lasting!”

January 3, 1745-6.

XL. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

LONDON, *June 25, 1746.*

AT length I have the opportunity, which I have long desired, of answering the letter you favored me with some time since. O that God may still give

us to bear with each other, and to speak what we believe is the truth in love!

1. I detest all zeal which is any other than the flame of love. Yet I find it is not easy to avoid it. It is not easy (at least to me) to be “always zealously affected in a good thing,” without being sometimes so affected in things of an indifferent nature. Nor do I find it always easy to proportion my zeal to the importance of the occasion; and to temper it duly with prudence, according to the various and complicated circumstances that occur. I sincerely thank you for endeavoring to assist me herein, to guard me from running into excess. I am always in danger of this, and yet I daily experience a far greater danger of the other extreme. To this day, I have abundantly more temptation to lukewarmness than to impetuosity; to be a saunterer *inter sylvas Academicas*,¹⁵ a philosophical sluggard, than an itinerant Preacher. And, in fact, what I now do is so exceeding little, compared with what I am convinced I ought to do, that I am often ashamed before God, and know not how to lift up mine eyes to the height of heaven!

2. But may not love itself constrain us to lay before men “the terrors of the Lord?” And is it not better that sinners “should be terrified now, than that they should sleep on, and awake in hell?” I have known exceeding happy effects of this, even upon men of strong understanding; yet I agree with you, that there is little good to be done by “the profuse throwing about hell and damnation;” and the best way of deciding the points in question with us is, cool and friendly argumentation.

I agree, too, “That scheme of religion bids fairest for the true, which breathes the most extensive charity.” Touching the charity due to those who are in error, I suppose, we both likewise agree, that really invincible ignorance never did, nor ever shall, exclude any man from heaven. And hence, I doubt not, but God will receive thousands of those who differ from me, even where I hold the truth. But still, I cannot believe He will receive any man into glory (I speak of those under the Christian dispensation) “without such an inspiration of the Holy Ghost as fills his heart with peace, and joy, and love.”

3. In this Mr. Whitefield and I agree; but in other points we widely differ. And therefore I still apprehend it is inexcusably unjust to link us together, whether we will or no. For by this means each is constrained to bear, not only his own, but another's, burden. Accordingly, I have been accused a hundred times of holding unconditional predestination. And no wonder: For wherever this charge is advanced, — “The Methodists preach sundry erroneous doctrines; in particular three, unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection, “the bulk of mankind will naturally suppose, that the Methodists in general hold these three doctrines. It will follow, that if any of these afterwards hears, “Mr. Wesley is a Methodist,” he will conclude, “Then he preaches unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection.” And thus one man is made accountable (by others, if not by you) for all the errors and faults of another.

4. The case of many who subscribe to the eleventh and following Articles, I cannot yet think, is exactly the same with the case of Mr. Whitefield and me subscribing the Seventeenth. For each of us can truly say, “I subscribe this Article in that which I believe from my heart is its plain, grammatical meaning.” Twenty years ago, I subscribed the Fifteenth Article likewise, in its plain, unforced, grammatical meaning. And whatever I do not now believe in this sense, I will on no terms subscribe at all.

5. I speak variously, doubtless, on various occasions; but I hope not inconsistently. Concerning the seeming inconsistency which you mention, permit me to observe, briefly,

- (1.) That I have seen many things which I believe were miraculous; yet I desire none to believe my words, any further than they are confirmed by Scripture and reason. And thus far I disclaim miracles.
- (2.) That I believe, “he that marrieth doeth well; but he that doth not, (being a believer,) doeth better.” However, I have doubts concerning the tract on this head, which I have not yet leisure to weigh thoroughly.
- (3.) That a newly justified person has, at once, in that hour, power over all sin; and finds from that hour the work of God in his soul slowly and gradually increasing. And, lastly, that many, who,

while they have faith, cannot doubt, do afterwards doubt whether they ever had it or no. Yea, many receive from the Holy Ghost an attestation of their acceptance, as perceptible as the sun at noon day; and yet those same persons, at other times, doubt whether they ever had any such attestation; nay, perhaps more than; doubt, perhaps wholly deny, all that God has ever done for their souls; inasmuch as, in “this hour and power of darkness,” they cannot believe they ever saw light.

6. I think St. Austin’s description of his own case (whether it prove anything more or less) greatly illustrates that light, that assurance of faith, whereof we are now speaking. He does not appear in writing this confession to God, to have had any adversary in view, nor to use any rhetorical heightening at all; but to express the naked experience of his heart, and that in as plain and unmetaphorical words as the nature of the thing would bear.

7. I believe firmly, and that in the most literal sense, that “without God we can do nothing;” that we cannot think, or speak, or move a hand or an eye, without the concurrence of the divine energy; and that all our natural faculties are God’s gift, nor can the meanest be exerted without the assistance of his Spirit. What then do I mean by saying that faith, hope, and love are not the effect of any, or all, our natural faculties? I mean this: That supposing a man to be now void of faith, and hope, and love, he cannot effect my degree of them in himself by any possible exertion of his understanding, and of any or all his other natural faculties, though he should enjoy them in the utmost perfection. A distinct power from God, not implied in any of these, is indispensably necessary, before it is possible he should arrive at the very lowest degree of Christian faith, or hope, or love. In order to his having any of these, (which, on this very consideration, I suppose St. Paul terms the “fruits of the Spirit,”) he must be created anew, thoroughly and inwardly changed by the operation of the Spirit of God; by a power equivalent to that which raises the dead, and which calls the things which are not as though they were.

8. The “living soberly, righteously, and godly” in this present world, or the uniform practice of universal piety, presupposes some degree of these

“fruits of the Spirit,” nor can possibly subsist without them. I never said men were too apt to rest on this practice. But I still say, I know abundance of men, who quiet their conscience without either faith or love, by the practice of a few outward works; and this keeps them as easy and contented, though they are without hope and without God in the world, as either the doctrine of irresistible decrees could do, or any theory whatsoever.

Now, what is this but using, outward works as commutations for inward holiness? For,

- (1.) These men love not inward holiness; they love the world; they love money; they love pleasure or praise: Therefore, the love of God is not ill them; nor, consequently, the Christian love of their neighbor. Yet,
- (2.) They are in nowise convinced that they are in the broad way which leads to destruction. They sleep on, and take their rest. They say, “Peace, peace,” to their soul, though there is no peace. But on what pretense? Why, on this very ground, because,
- (3.) They do such and such outward works; they go to church, and perhaps to the Lord’s table; they use, in some sort, private prayer; they give alms; and therefore they imagine themselves to be in the high road to heaven. Though they have not “the mind that was in Christ,” yet they doubt not but all is safe, because they do thus and thus, because their lives are not as other men’s are. This is what I mean by using outward works as commutations for inward holiness. I find more and more instances everyday of this miserable self deceit. The thing is plain and clear. But if you dislike the phrase, we will drop it, and use another.

Nearly allied to this is the “gross superstition of those who think to put devotion upon God, instead of honesty.” I mean, who practice neither justice nor mercy, and yet hope to go to heaven because they go to church and sacrament. Can you find no such men in the Church of England? I find them in every street. Nine times in ten, when I have told a tradesman, “You have cheated me; sold me this for more than it is worth, which I think is a breach both of justice and mercy. Are you a Christian?” Do you hope to go to heaven?” his answer, if he deigned any answer at all, has

been to this effect: "As good a Christian as yourself! 'Go to heaven!' Yes, sure; for I keep my church as well as any man."

Now, what can be plainer, than that this man keeps his Church, not only as an act of goodness, but as a commutation instead of goodness; as something which he hopes will do as well, will bring him to heaven, without either justice or mercy? Perhaps, indeed, if he fell into adultery or murder, it might awaken him out of his dream, and convince him, as well as his neighbors, that this worship is not a mitigation, but an aggravation, of his wickedness: But nothing short of this will. In spite of all your reasoning and mine, he will persist in thinking himself a good Christian, and that if his "brother have aught against him," yet all will be well, so he do but constantly "bring his gift to the altar."

I entreat you, Sir, to make the experiment yourself; to talk freely with any that come in your way. And you will surely find it is the very thing which almost destroys the (so called) Christian world. Every nominal Christian has some bit or scrap of outward religion, either negative or positive: Either he does not do, in some respect, like other men, or he does something more than they. And by this, however freely he may condemn others, he takes care to excuse himself; and stifles whatever convictions he might otherwise have, "that the wrath of God abideth on him."

After a few impartial inquiries of this kind, I am persuaded you will not say, "As a commutation, surely no Protestant ever did [receive the sacrament] but yourself." Is there not something wrong in these words, on another account; as well as in those, "You should not treat others as the children of the devil, for taking the same liberty which you and Mr. Whitefield take, who continue, notwithstanding, to be the children of God?" "Is there not in both these expressions (and perhaps in some others which are scattered up and down in your letters) something too keen? something that borders too much upon sarcasm? upon tartness, if not bitterness? Does not anything of this sort, either make the mind sore, or harden it against conviction? Does it not make us less able to bear plainness of speech? or at least less ready to improve by it? Give me leave to add one word more, before I proceed. I cannot but be jealous over you. I fear you do not know, near so well as you suppose even what passes in your own

mind. I question not but you believe, that without inward holiness no man shall see the Lord; but are you sure you never once entertained a thought that something else might be put upon him in the stead? Perhaps not grossly, not if it appeared just in that shape: No, nor have I, for these twenty years. But I find the same thought to this day, stealing in continually, under a thousand different forms. I find a continual danger of stopping short of a full renewal in the image of God; a continual propensity to rest in whatever comes between; to put some work or other that I do, even for God's sake, or some gift that I receive, in the stead of that great work of God, "the renewal of my soul after his likeness in righteousness and true holiness."

9. One point of doctrine remains: "Is there any such thing as; perceptible inspiration or not?" I asserted, "There is;" but at the same time subjoined, "Be pleased to observe what we mean thereby: We mean, that inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, whereby he fills us [every true believer] with righteousness, and peace, and joy; with love to him and all mankind. And we believe it cannot be, in the nature of things, that a man should be filled with this peace, and joy, and love, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without perceiving it as clearly as he does the light of the sun."

You reply, "You have now entirely shifted the question." I think not. You objected, that I holden perceptible inspiration. I answered, "I do;" but observe in what sense; Otherwise I must recall my concession: I hold, God inspires every Christian with peace, joy, and love which are all perceptible. You reply, "The question is not, whether the fruits of Inspiration are perceptible, but whether the work of inspiration itself be so." This was not my question; nor did I till now understand that it was yours. If I had, I should have returned a different answer, as I have elsewhere done already.

When one warmly object, near two years ago, "All reasonable Christians believe that the Holy Spirit works his graces in us in an imperceptible manner;" my answer was, "You are here disproving, as you suppose, a proposition of mine. But are you sure you understand it? By the operations [inspirations or workings] of the Spirit, I do not mean the

manner in which he operates but the graces which he operates [inspires or works] in a Christian.”

If you ask, But do not you hold, “that Christian faith implies a direct, perceptible testimony of the Spirit, as distinguishable from the suggestion of fancy, as light it distinguishable from darkness; whereas we suppose he imperceptibly influences our minds?” I answer, I do hold this. I suppose that every Christian believer, over and above that imperceptible influence, hath a direct perceptible testimony of the Spirit, that he is a child of God.

As I have little time, I must beg you to read and consider what I have already spoken upon this subject, in the First Part of the “Farther Appeal,” at the thirty eighth and following pages; ¹⁶ and then to let me know what kind of proof it is which you expect in a question of this nature, over and above that of Scripture, as interpreted by the writers of the earliest Christian church.

I have not studied the writings of the Quakers enough, (having read few of them beside Robert Barclay,) to say precisely what they mean by perceptible inspiration, and whether their account of it be right or wrong. And I am not curious to know; since between me and them there is a great gulf fixed. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s supper keep us at a wide distance from each other; insomuch that, according to the view of things I have now, I should as soon commence Deist as Quaker.

I would just add, that I regard even faith itself, not as an end, but a means only. The end of the commandment is love, of every command, of the whole Christian dispensation. Let this love be attained, by whatever means, and I am content; I desire no more. All is well, if we love the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves.

10. I am aware of one inconvenience, in answering what you say touching the consequences of my, preaching. It will oblige me to speak what will try your temper beyond anything I have said yet. I could, indeed, avoid this by standing on my guard, and speaking with great reserve. But had you not rather that I should deal frankly with you, and tell you just what is in my heart?

I am the more inclined to do this, because the question before us is of so deep importance; insomuch that, were I convinced you had decided it right, there would be an end at once of my preaching. And it lies in a small compass, as you say, "I am not making conjectures of what may happen, but relating mischief's which actually have happened." These, then, "the mischief's which have actually happened," let us consider as calmly as possible.

But first we may set aside the "thousands whom (it is said) we should have had pretending a mission from God, to preach against the wickedness of the great, had not the rebels been driven back." The rebels, blessed be God, are driven back.¹⁷ So that mischief has not actually happened. We may wave, also, "the legion of monstrous errors and wickedness, the sedition, murder, and treason of the last century;" seeing, whatever may be hereafter, it is certain these mischief's also have not yet actually happened. Nor have I anything to do with that poor madman, (I never heard of any more than one such,) who came some time since, "preaching in London streets against Prelacy" and Methodism; and "denouncing curses against George Whitefield, John Wesley, and all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

I was more nearly concerned in what has actually happened at Wednesbury, Darlaston, and Walsal. And these were "shameful disorders" indeed. Publish them not in Gath or Askelon! Concerning the occasion of which I may speak; more freely to you than it was proper to do to the public.

When I preached at Wednesbury first, Mr. Egginton (the Vicar) invited me to his house, and told me, that the oftener I came, the welcomer I should be; for I had done much good there already, and he doubted not but I should; do much more. But the next year I found him another man. He had not only heard a vehement visitation charge, but had been informed that are had publicly preached against drunkards, which must have been designed for satire on him. From this time, we found more and more effects of his unwearied labors, public and private, in stirring up the people on every side, "to drive these fellows out of the country." One of his sermons I heard with my own ears. I pray God I may never hear such another! The

Minister of Darlaston, and the Curate of Walsal, trod in the same steps. And these were they who (not undesignedly) occasioned all the disorders which followed there.

You add: “In countries which you have not much frequented, there have appeared Antinomian Preachers, presenting your disciples.” These have appeared most in countries I never frequented at all, as in the West of Lancashire, in Dorsetshire, and in Ireland. When I came, they disappeared, and were seen do more there; at least, not presenting our disciples. And yet, by all I can learn, even these poor wretches have done as little harm as good. I cannot learn that they have destroyed one soul that has before truly seeking salvation.

But you think, I myself “do a great deal of harm, by breaking and setting aside order. For, order once ever so little set aside, confusion rushes in like a torrent.”

What do you mean by order? a plan of church discipline? What plan? the scriptural, the primitive, or our own? It is in the last sense of the word that I have been generally charged with breaking or setting aside order; that is, the rules of our own Church, both by preaching in the fields, and by using extemporary prayer.

I have often replied,

- (1.) It were better for me to die, than not to preach the Gospel of Christ; yea, and in the fields, either where I may not preach in the church, or where the church will not contain the congregation:
- (2.) That I use the Service of the Church every Lord’s day; and it has never yet appeared to me, that any rule of the Church forbids my using extemporary prayer on other occasions.

But methinks I would go deeper. I would inquire, What is the end of all ecclesiastical order? Is it not to bring souls from the power of Satan to God; and to build them up in his fear and love? Order, then, is so far valuable, as fit answers these ends; and if it answers them not, it is nothing worth. Now, I would fain know, where has order answered these ends? Not in any place where I have been; not among the tanners in Cornwall, the

keelmen at New castle, the colliers in Kingswood or Staffordshire; not among the drunkards, swearers, Sabbath breakers of Moorfields, or the harlots of Drury lane. They could not be built up in the fear and love of God, while they were open, barefaced servants of the devil; and such they continued, notwithstanding the most orderly preaching both in St. Luke's and St. Giles's church. One reason whereof was, they never came near the church; nor had any desire or design so to do, till, by what you term "breach of order," they were brought to fear God, to love him, and keep his commandments.

It was not, therefore, so much the want of order, as of the knowledge and love of God, which kept those poor souls for so many years in open bondage to a hard master. And, indeed, wherever the knowledge and love of God are, true border will not be wanting. But the most apostolical order, where these are not, is less than nothing and vanity.

But you say, "Strict order once set aside, confusion rushes in like a torrent." It has been so far from rushing in where we have preached most, that the very reverse is true. Surely, never was "confusion worse confounded," than [it] was a few years since in the forest of Kingswood. But how has it been since the word of God was preached there, even in this disorderly manner?

Confusion heard his voice; and wild uproar
 Stood ruled; and order from disorder sprung.

O Sir, be not carried away with the torrent; the clamor either of the great vulgar, or the small! Re-examine your very first; notions of these things; and then review that sentence, "The devil makes use of your honest zeal, to his dishonest and diabolical purposes. He well knows, you do him more service by breach of order, than dis-service by all your laborious industry." I hope not,

- (1.) Because I bring the very order you contend for into places where it never was before: And,
- (2.) Because I bring (yet not I, but the grace of God) that knowledge and love of God also, in conjunction wherewith order is of great price, but without them a worthless shadow.

I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, by faith that is in him.

XLI. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

NEWCASTLE, *March 25, 1747.*

1. IN your last, I do not find much reason to complain either of tartness or bitterness. But is it so serious as the cause requires? If it be asked, —

*Ridentem dicere verum
Quis vetat?*¹⁸

I think the nature of the things whereof we speak should forbid it. For surely, it is a very serious concern, whether we dwell in the eternal glory of God or in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

2. If those who subscribe the Eleventh and following Articles do subscribe in what they believe from, their hearts to be the plain, unforced, grammatical meaning of the words, then they are clear before God. I trust you can answer for yourself herein; but you cannot for all our brethren.

3. I am glad that our dispute concerning commutations in religion proves to be “entirely verbal:” As we both agree,

- (1.) That abundance of those who bear the name of Christians put a part of religion for the whole; generally some outward work or form of worship:
- (2.) That whatever is thus put for the whole of religion, (in particular, where it is used to supersede or commute for the religion of the heart,) it is no longer a part of it, it is gross irreligion, it is mere mockery of God.

4. When you warned me against “excess of zeal,” I did not say, this was not my weak side; that it was not one weakness to which I am exposed.

My words were: "I am always in danger of this; and yet I daily experience a far greater danger of the other extreme." I do. I am, to this day, ashamed before God, that I do so little to what I ought to do. But this you call "overdone humility," and suppose it to be inconsistent with what occurs in the ninety third and ninety fourth paragraphs of the "Earnest Appeal." I believe it is not at all inconsistent there with; only one expression there is too strong, — "all his time and strength;" — for this very cause, "I am ashamed before God." I do not spend all my time so profitably as I might, nor all my strength; at least, not all I might have, if it were not for my own lukewarmness and remissness; if I wrestled with God in constant and fervent prayer.

You mention four other instances of self contradiction. The first:

- (1.) "You claim and you disclaim miracles. You claim them, as having seen many miraculous attestations to your ministry. You disclaim them, desiring none to believe your words further than they are confirmed by Scripture and reason;" that is, you claim them in one sense, and disclaim them in another. Perhaps so; but this is no contradiction.
- (2.) "You are not at leisure yet, either to permit or forbids to marry." Indeed I am. Although I commend those who are as "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake;" yet I know "all men cannot receive this saying," and that "it is better to marry than to burn."
- (3.) "The newly justified has at once, in that hour, power over all sin, and finds, from that hour, the work of God in the soul slowly and gradually increasing. What, until he has power over more than all sin?" No; but until he has more power over all sin; the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit gradually decreasing; and till he has more peace, more joy in the Holy Ghost, more of the knowledge and love of God.
- (4.) "But surely, the tip top of all inconsistencies is what follows, even as explained in your own way: Many receive from the Holy Ghost an attestation of their acceptances as perceptible as the sun at noon day; and yet these same persons, at other times, doubt or deny that they ever had such attestation."

The fact stands thus:

- (1.) A man feels in himself the testimony of God's Spirit, that he is a child of God; and he can then no more deny or doubt thereof, than of the shining of the sun at noon day.
- (2.) After a time, this testimony is withdrawn.
- (3.) He begins to reason within himself concerning it; next, to doubt whether that testimony was from God; and, perhaps, in the end, to deny that it was. And yet he may be, all this times in every other respect, "of sound memory as well as understanding."

Now, whether these propositions are true or false, they are not contradictory to each other. They cannot, unless it were affirmed, that the same person has and has not the same testimony at the same time.

5. However, you think I assert a thing impossible. What is impossible? that the Spirit of God should bear a clear, perceptible witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God? Surely no! Whether this be the fact or not, no man of reason will say it is impossible. Or that the Spirit of God should cease to bear this witness? Neither can the possibility of this be denied. The thing, then, which is supposed impossible is this, that a man who once had it should ever doubt, whether he had it or no; that is, (as you subjoin,) "if he continue sound in mind" (or understanding) "and memory." Right! "If he continue:" But the very supposition is, that, in this respect, he does not continue so. While he did so continue, he could not doubt. But his understanding is now darkened, and the very traces of that divine work well-nigh erased out of his memory. Nor can I think, "it is vain to have recourse here to the **ενεργεια** of the power of darkness." I verily believe, as it was the God of heaven who once shone in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God; so it is the God of this world who hath now blinded his heart, so that the glorious light cannot shine upon it.

6. If the Quakers hold the same perceptible inspiration with me, I am glad; and it is neither better nor worse for their holding it: Although, if I "distinguish it away," I do not hold it at all. But do I distinguish it away? or any point which I believe to be the truth of God? I am not conscious of this. But when men tack absurdities to the truth of God with which it hath nothing to do, I distinguish away those absurdities, and let the truth remain in its native purity.

It was several months before my correspondence with you, that I thus distinguished away perceptible inspiration; declaring to all men, “by ‘perceiving’ or ‘feeling the operations of the Spirit,’ I mean, being inwardly conscious of them.” “By ‘the operations of the Spirit,’ I do not mean the ‘manner’ in which he operates in a Christian.”

This I mentioned in my last. But it is certain, over and above those other graces which the Holy Spirit inspires into, or operates in, a Christian, and over and above his imperceptible influences; I do intend all mankind should understand me to assert, (what I therefore express in the clearest language I am master of,) every Christian believer hath a perceptible testimony of the Spirit, that he is a child of God. I use the phrase, “testimony of the Spirit,” rather than “inspiration,” because it has a more determinate meaning. And I desire men to know what I mean, and what I do not; that I may not fight as one that beateth the air.

7. Is there “not one word said of this, either in the ‘Farther Appeal,’ or in any one place in the Bible?” I think there is in the Bible; in the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter to the Romans. And is not this very place proved to describe the ordinary privilege of every Christian believer in the “Farther Appeal,” from the forty fifth to the forty ninth, and from the fifty sixth to the fifty ninth page? ¹⁹

Give me leave to remind you of some of the words. In the forty ninth page the argument concludes thus: “It will follow, that this witness of the Spirit is the private testimony given to our own consciences, which, consequently, all sober Christians may claim, without any danger of enthusiasm.” In the fifty seventh page are these words: “Every one that is born of God, and doth not commit sin, by his very actions, saith, ‘Our Father which art in heaven;’ the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God. According to Origin, therefore, this testimony of the Spirit is not any public testimony by miracles, but an inward testimony belonging in common to all that are born of God” Once more: In the fifty eighth page are these words: “He brings yet another proof of the superiority of those who had this Spirit of adoption: ‘The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.’ ‘I prove this,’ says he, ‘not only from the voice itself, but also

from the cause whence that voice proceeds. For the Spirit suggests the words while we thus speak, which he hath elsewhere expressed more plainly, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!* But what is, *The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit?* He means the Paraclete by the gift given unto us.” (But that this was an extraordinary gift, we have no intimation at all neither before nor after.) “And when the Spirit beareth witness, what doubt is left? If a man or an angel spake, some might doubt; but when the Most High beareth witness to us, who can doubt any longer?”

I am mistaken if this does not come home to the point, to the question now before us; describing a perceptible testimony of the Holy Ghost, “directly felt to be worked by himself.”

8. But I will waive all authorities, that of Origin and Chrysostom, as well as of Hannah Richardson (though not a weak woman, but eminently the reverse) and Averel Spencer (though not a wicked one); only observing, that your argument proves too much. I am as fully assured today) as I am of the shining of the sun, that the Scriptures are of God. I cannot possibly deny or doubt of it now; yet I may doubt of it tomorrow; as I have done heretofore a thousand times, and that after the fullest assurance preceding. Now, if this be “a demonstration that my former assurance was a mere fancy,” then farewell all revelation at once!

But to come closer yet, and weigh the point in debate in the balance of plain reason: You must allow there is a testimony of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the children of God. “But,” you say, “it is not a perceptible one.” How is this? Let us examine it thoroughly. It is allowed,

- (1.) The Spirit of God,
- (2.) Bears testimony to my spirit,
- (3.) That I am a child of God.

But I am not to perceive it. Not to perceive what? the first, second, or third particular? Am I not to perceive what is testified, — that I am a child of God? Then it is not testified at all. This is saying and unsaying in the same breath. Or am I not to perceive, that it is testified to my spirit? Yea, but I must perceive what passes in my own soul. Or, lastly, am I to perceive that I am a child of God, and that this is testified to my spirit; but

not to perceive who it is that testifies, not to know it is the Spirit of God? O Sir, if there really be a man in the world who hath this testimony in himself, can it be supposed that he does not know who it is that testifies? who it is that speaks to his heart? that speaks in his inmost soul as never man spake? If he does not, he is ignorant of the whole affair. If you are in this state, I pray God you may say from the heart "Lord, what I know not, teach thou me." How much better were this, than to canonize your own ignorance, as the only knowledge and wisdom; and to condemn all the generation of God's children of "idiotism and madness!"

9. Under your last head, you do not confine yourself now within the bounds you at first proposed; when you said, "I am not making conjectures of what may happen, but relating, mischief's which actually have happened." Take care you do not grow warm when I reply to this: You will have need of all your patience to bear it.

You begin: "Will you ask what I mean by 'order?' Was it not manifest I meant to speak against lay preaching?" It was: But not against that alone. There fore, before I entered upon the question, I defined the term in a wider sense, so as to include both this and every irregularity you had objected. You go on: "How could you give so strange an answer, 'I bring this order you contend for into places where it never was before?'" I reply, This is not my whole answer; it is but one, and that the most inconsiderable, part of it: But it is strictly true. "Do you then bring in the ministry of regularly ordained Ministers, where, before, people were used to the preaching of lay brethren?" Yes; them who were before used to no preaching at all, or to that of those whom you would term lay brethren, I bring to attend on the ministry of those regular Preachers who have the charge of their several parishes

But very "ill consequences" of our irregular preaching, you say, have "actually happened: A number of unsent persons going about the kingdom, and preaching the worst of heresies." "A number!" Where? Within these nine years past, I have heard of two, and no more, (besides that lunatic Clergyman,) who have gone about thus, though I doubt sent neither of God nor man. But I have heard of no heresy which they preached; only a little smooth, undigested nonsense. Nor can the ill done by these balance the

thousandth part of the good already done by the preaching of other laymen; namely, the turning so many bold, barefaced servants of the devil, into humble, holy servants of God.

However, evil “will happen if any State faction shall join the irregulars.” If they shall! Yea, if they shall attempt; it, (which is far enough off,) the irregulars will not join them. We bless God that the Government is at present very fully convinced of this.

“But if unsent, well meaning laymen may preach, unsent: ill meaning laymen will, upon the first opportunity, spread sedition like wildfire.” Yea, and Clergymen as well as laymen, sent as well as unsent. Thus it ever was, and I presume ever will be.

10. That “the irregularities of Mr. Cartwright did more harm in the course of a century, than all the labors of his life did good,” is by no means plain to me: And the less so, because I cannot learn from Mr. Strype, or any other impartial writer, (whatever his mistakes in judgment were,) that he fell into any irregularities at all. I look upon him and the body of Puritans in that age, (to whom the German Anabaptists bore small resemblance,) to have been both the most learned and most pious men that were then in the English nation. Nor did they separate from the Church; but were driven out, whether they would or no. The vengeance of God which fell on the posterity of their persecutors, I think, is no imputation on Mr. Cartwright or them; but a wonderful scene of divine Providence, visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children, (when they also, had filled up the measure of their iniquities,) unto the third and fourth generation.

I am not careful for what may be a hundred years hence he who governed the world before I was born, shall take care of it likewise when I am dead. My part is to improve the present moment. And, whatever may be the fruits of lay preaching, when you and I are gone to our long home, every serious man has cause to bless God for those he may now see with his eyes; for the saving so many souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins. The instances glare in the face of the sun. Many indeed God hath taken to himself; but many more remain, both young and old, who would fear God and work righteousness.

11. Perhaps a parallel drawn from physic may hold more exactly than you was apprised of. For more than twenty years I have had numberless proofs that regular Physicians do exceeding little good. From a deep conviction of this, I have believed it my duty, within these four months last past, to prescribe such medicines to six or seven hundred of the poor as I knew were proper for their several disorders. Within six weeks, nine in ten of them who had taken these medicines were remarkably altered for the better; and many were cured of diseases under which they had labored for ten, twenty, forty years. Now, ought I to have let one of these poor wretches perish, because I was not a regular Physician? to have said, "I know what will cure you: But I am not; of the College: You must send for Dr. Mead?" Before Dr. Mead had come in his chariot, the man might have been in his coffin. And when the Doctor was come, where was his fee? What! he cannot live upon nothing So, instead of an orderly cure, the patient dies; and Gods requires his blood at my hands!

12. But you think "if one should look out of his grave in! the middle of the next century, he would find the orderly preaching at St. Luke's and St. Giles's church had done more good than the disorderly preaching at Kennington." I cannot learn by all the inquiries I have made, that at present it does any good at all; that either Dr. B. or Dr. G has, in all these years, converted one sinner to God. And if a man saves no souls while he is alive, I fear he will save few after he is dead.

But "it does abundance less harm." Perhaps not so, neither. "He that gathereth not with me scattereth;" more especially if he be a Preacher. He must scatter from Him, if he does not gather souls to God. Therefore, a lifeless, unconvertng Minister is the murderer general of his parish. He enters not into the kingdom of heaven himself and those that would enter in he suffers not. He stands in the gap between them and true religion. Because he has it not, they are easy without it. Dead form contents him, and why not them? "Sure, it is enough if we go as far as our guide!" And if he is not outwardly vicious, he the wore effectually secures them from all inward, solid virtue. How choice a factor for hell is this! destroying more souls than any Deist in the kingdom! I could not have blamed St.

Chrysostom, if he had only said, "Hell is paved with the skulls of such Christian Priests!"

13. I must be short on what remains. You suppose the impression made on men's minds by this irregular way of preaching is chiefly owing to "the force of novelty." I believe it was to obviate this very supposition, that my preaching has so rarely made any impression at all, till the novelty of it was over. When I had preached more than six score times at this town, I found scarce any effect; only that abundance of people heard, and gaped and stared, and went away much as they came. And it was one evening, while I was in doubt if I had not labored in vain, that such a blessing of God was given, as has continued ever since, and I trust will be remembered unto many generations.

You ascribe it likewise in part to "a natural knack of persuasion." If either by a natural or an acquired power of persuasion I can prevail upon sinners to turn to God, am I to bury even that talent in the earth? "No; but try if you cannot do more good in a College or in a parish." I have tried both, and I could not do any substantial good, either to my pupils or my parishioners. Among my parishioners in Lincolnshire, I tried for some years; but I am well assured I did far more good to them by preaching three days Son my father's tomb, than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit.

But you "know no call I have to preach up and down; to play the part of an itinerant Evangelist." Perhaps you do not. But I do: I know God hath required this at my hands. To me, his blessing my work is an abundant proof; although such a proof as often makes me tremble. But "is there not pride or vanity in my heart?" There is; yet this is not my motive to preaching. I know and feel that the spring of this is a deep conviction, that it is the will of God, and that were I to refrain, I should never hear that word, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" but, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

XLII. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

ST. IVES, *July 10, 1747.*

1. You put me in mind of an eminent man, who, preaching at St. James's, said, "If you do not repent, you will go to a place which I shall not name before this audience." I cannot promise so much, either in preaching or writing, before any audience, or to any person whatever. Yet I am not conscious of doing this very often, — of "profusely flinging about everlasting fire;" though it is true, I mentioned it in my last letter to you, as I have done now, a second time; and perhaps I may mention it yet again. For; to say the truth, I desire to have both heaven and hell ever in my eye, while I stand on this isthmus of life, between these two, boundless oceans; and I verily think the daily consideration of both highly becomes all men of reason and religion.

2. I think likewise, (or I would not spend five words upon the head,) that these are nearly concerned in our present question. To touch only on one branch of it: If I live in willful sin, in a sinful" deviation from established order," am I not in the way to hell? I cannot take it any otherwise. I cannot Help "blending these two inquiries together." I must therefore speak seriously, or not at all; and yet, I trust, "without losing my temper." Do you complain of this first, that I may not complain? It appears to me that you show more eagerness of spirit, more warmth and resentment, in your last than you ever have done from the beginning.

3. You spoke of "a number of unsent persons going about and preaching the worst of heresies." I answered "Within these nine years I have heard of two, and no more, who have gone about thus, though I doubt neither sent of God nor man." Their names were Jonathan Wildboar, and Thomas Smith, alias Moor, alias I know not what; for I fear he changed his name as often as his place. It is not unlikely that either of these might steal as well as lie, which they have done abundantly, particularly in claiming acquaintance with Mr. Whitefield or me, wherever they judged it would recommend them to their hearers. I should not be surprised to hear of two more such; but I have not yet, in all the counties I have gone through

between London and Berwick-upon-Tweed, or between Deal and the Land's End.

4. I would to God, all the Clergy throughout the land were "zealous for inward, solid virtue" But I dare not say one in ten of those I have known are so in any degree. The two Clergymen of this place, on a late public occasion, were led home at one or two in the morning in such a condition as I care not to describe. One of them is rector of Lelant also, (a parish east of St. Ives,) of Twidnack, to the South, and Zennor, to the West. At Zennor he keeps another assistant, and one who is just as sober as himself, and near as zealous, — not indeed for inward or outward virtue, but against these "scoundrels that pretend to preach in his parish."

5. I never "attempted to deny" that the novelty of our manner of preaching his induced thousands and ten thousands to hear us, who would otherwise never have heard us at all, nor perhaps any other Preacher. But I utterly deny that "the effects wrought on many of them that heard were owing to novelty, and that only." The particular effects wrought at Epworth were these: Many drunkards, many unjust and profane men, on whom both my father and I had for several years spent our strength in vain, from that time began to live, and continue so to do, a sober, righteous, and godly life. Now, I deny that this effect can be owing., to novelty, or to any principle but the power of God.

If it be asked, But were there not "the same hearers, the same Preachers, and the same God to influence, in the church, as on the tombstone?" I answer,

- (1.) There were not all the same hearers in the church; not above one third of them.
- (2.) There was the same Preacher in the church, but he did not then preach the same doctrine; and therefore,
- (3.) Though there was the same God, there was not the same influence, or blessing from him.

6. The sum of what I offered before, concerning perceptible inspiration, was this: "Every Christian believer has a perceptible testimony of God's Spirit, that he is a child of God." You objected, that there was not one

word said of this, either in the Bible, or in the “Appeal,” to which I referred. I replied, “I think there is in the Bible, in the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter to the Romans. And in the ‘Farther Appeal,’ this place is proved to describe the ordinary privilege of every Christian believer.”

This is there shown, both by Scripture; by reason, and by authority, particularly that of Origin and Chrysostom, whom his Lordship of Richfield had cited in his charge, as asserting just the contrary. But waving authorities, I reasoned thus. “You allow there is a testimony of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the children of God. But you say, it is not a perceptible one. How is this? Let us examine it thoroughly. It is allowed,

- (1.) The Spirit of God,
- (2.) Bears testimony to my spirit,
- (3.) That I am a child of God.

But I am not to perceive it. Not to perceive what? the first, second, or third particular? Am I not to perceive what is testified; that I am a child of God? Then it is not testified at all. This is saying and unsaying in the same breath. Or am I not to perceive, that it is testified to my spirit? Yea, but I must perceive what passes in my own son! Or, lastly, am I to perceive that I am a child of God, and that this is testified to my spirit, but not to perceive who it is that testifies? not to know it is the Spirit of God? O Sir, if there be really a man in the world who hath this testimony in himself, can it be supposed that he does not know who it is that testifies; who it is that speaks to his heart?”

7. Instead of giving a direct answer to this, you have recourse to the same supposition with his Lordship of Richfield and Coventry; namely, that there was once an inward, perceptible testimony of the Spirit, but that it was peculiar to the early ages of the church.

“There are three ways,” say you, “in which the Holy Spirit may be said to bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

- (1.) By external, miraculous attestations.
- (2.) By internal, plainly perceptible whispers.” (I must add, “not in words, at least not always, but by some kind of impressions equivalent thereto.”)

“(3.) By his standing testimony in the holy Scriptures.

The Apostles had all these three. Origen and Chrysostom, probably the two latter. But if St. Bernard, several hundred years after, pretended to any other than the third, his neighbors would naturally ask for proof, either that it should be so by Scripture, or that it was so by facts."

Well, then, let us suppose St. Bernard, and one of his neighbors, to be talking together on this subject. On St. Bernard's saying, "The Spirit of God bears witness with my spirit, that I am A child of God;" his neighbor replies, "I suppose he does, but not by an inward, plainly perceptible testimony." — "Yes, by an inward, plainly perceptible testimony. I now have this testimony ill myself; I plainly perceive that I am a child of God, and that it is his Spirit who testifies it to my spirit." — "I fear you are somewhat enthusiastically given. I allow God's standing testimony in the Scriptures; but I cannot allow that there is now any such thing as this inward testimony, unless you can either prove by Scripture that it should be so, or by facts that it is so." — "Are not these words Scripture: 'The Spirit itself beareth testimony with our spirit, that we are the children of God?'" — "Yes, but the question is how they are to be understood; for I deny that they speak of an inward testimony. They speak of the outward, standing testimony of God in the holy Scriptures." — "You put a manifest force upon the text. You cannot prove that it speaks of any outward testimony at all. But the words immediately preceding prove to a demonstration, that it speaks of an inward testimony: 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear;' (is not fear an inward thing?) 'but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father!' The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, even the same Spirit which 'God hath sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!'" — "I do not deny that the Spirit bears witness with our spirit. But I deny your peculiar interpretation of this text. I deny that this text at all favors an inward, perceptible testimony." — "The Spirit which God hath sent into my heart, and which now cries in my heart, 'Abba, Father,' now beareth testimony with my spirit, that I am a child of God. How can these words be interpreted at all but of an inward; perceptible: testimony?" — "I tell you, of God's standing testimony in Scripture." — "This is a palpable violence to the words. They no more speak of Scripture, than of miracles. They manifestly speak of what passes in the heart, the spirit, the inmost soul of a believer, and that only."

8. But you would say, “Suppose this scripture to prove that it should be so, can you show by facts that it is so?” Not if you take it for granted, that every one who speaks of having this witness in himself is an enthusiast. You are then in no danger of proof from this quarter. You have a short answer to every fact which can be alleged.

But you turn the tables. You say it is I who allow that “many of God’s children do not continue in sound mind and memory.” I allowed,

- (1.) A man feels the testimony of God’s Spirit, and cannot then deny or doubt his being a child of God.
- (2.) After a time this testimony is withdrawn: Not from every child of God; many retain the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.
- (3.) Then he may doubt whether that testimony was of God, and perhaps, at length, deny that it was; especially if his heart be hardened by the deceitfulness of his sin.

And yet he may be all this time, in every other respects of “sound memory as well as understanding.” In this respect I allowed he is not; that is, “his understanding is now darkened, and the very traces of that divine work well-nigh erased out of his memory.” So I expressly determined the sense wherein allowed “he does not; continue ill sound mind and memory.” But did I allow that even then he was *non compos mentis* — a madman, in the common sense? Nothing less: I allowed no more, than, the divine light being withdrawn, his mind was again dark as to the things of God; and that he had forgotten του καθαρισμου των παλαι αυτου αμαρτιων,²⁰ (2 Peter 1:9,) well-nigh, as if it had never been.

9. But you say, “If variable facts be produced, today asserted, tomorrow denied” — Nay, the facts, whether asserted or denied, are still invariable. “But if they be ever doubted or denied, they never were plainly perceptible.” I cannot discern any force in that consequence: However, if they are afterward “denied, they are not from Him ‘in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,’” Neither is this consequence good. Though God is ever the same, man may either assert or deny his works. “The spirit of man, and his fancies or opinions, may vary; but God and his facts cannot.” Thus far they can and do: God does not now bear

witness as he did before. And this variation of the fact makes way for a variation in the judgment of him who had that witness, but now hath it not. “You may be fully of opinion today, that the Scriptures are of God and doubt of this tomorrow. But what is this to the purpose?” Very much. I am as fully convinced today that the Scriptures are of God, as that the sun shines. And this conviction (as every good gift) cometh from the Father of lights. Yet I may doubt of it to morrow. I may throw away the good gift of God. “But we were speaking not of man’s opinions, but of God’s facts.” We were speaking of both; of man’s opinions, or judgment, concerning God’s facts. “But could he to whom Christ said, ‘Thy sins are forgiven thee’ ever doubt or deny that Christ said so?” I question not but in process of time he might; particularly if he drew back unto perdition. But however that be, it is no “blasphemous supposition,” but a plain, undeniable truth, that the God of this world can obliterate what the God of heaven has strongly imprinted upon the soul; yea, and that he surely will, unless we stir up the gift of God which is in us, by earnestly and continually watching unto prayer.

I presume, you do not deny that a believer, one who has the witness in himself, may make “shipwreck of the faith;” and, consequently, lose the witness (however it be explained) which he once had of his being a child of God. The darkness which then covers his soul again, I ascribe (in part) to the energy of Satan, who *ενεργει*, — “worketh,” according to the Apostle, in the children of unbelief, whether they did once believe or no. And has he not much power even on the children of God? to disturb, though not to destroy? to throw fiery darts without number; especially against those who, as yet, are but weak in the faith? to inject doubts and fears? sometimes unbelieving, sometimes even blasphemous thoughts? And how frequently will they be wounded thereby, if they have not put on the whole armor of God!

10. You add: “If we reply, There are enthusiasts in the world, you can keep your temper no longer; and the only answer is, If we perceive not that witness in ourselves, we are ignorant of the whole affair, and doomed to the ‘everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.’” I said not so. I can keep my temper (blessed be God) if you call me an hundred enthusiasts; if you affirm, I am ten times more of an enthusiast than that

poor Quaker probably was. The sharpest word I said, was, “If a man does not know who it is that testifies with his spirit he is a child of God, he is ignorant of the whole affair.” But I felt no anger when I said this. Nor do I now. Though I still think (because you say it yourself) that you are ignorant of this whole affair, of the inward testimony for which I contend. Yet am I far from dooming you to everlasting fire. What you know not, I trust God will reveal unto you. Least of all, was this my “only answer” to your supposition, “that this perceptible testimony is only an imagination, unless I am altogether in a dream.” I have given some other answer, and a pretty full one, to the objection; such an one, I think, as the nature of the thing admits, at least as my capacity would allow.

11. I have largely considered, both in the Third Part of the Appeal, and in the latter part of the Second Letter to Mr. Church, the unreasonableness of the common demand, to prove our doctrine by miracles. I cannot but refer you to those.: tracts, having neither time nor inclination *actum agere*.²¹ Only I would weigh what you have now advanced, in support of that demand. “If the enthusiast is as confident of his inspiration, as one really inspired is of his, a third person has a right to call for other proof than confident assertions;” that is, for miracles. So you explain yourself in the following sentence. Let us try how this consequence will hold in a particular instance: “The Spirit said unto Paul, Go not into Macedonia.” When he related this to his companions, ought they to have replied, “We call for other proof of this than your confident assertion; seeing enthusiasts are as confident of theirs, as you are of this revelation? “If you say, “They had seen his miracles at other times;” I know not that: Perhaps they had, perhaps they had not. But to step a little forward: “If, in the days of Origin and Chrysostom, external miraculous powers were ceased, while internal inspiration still remained,” what becomes of your demand here? It is totally excluded; although there were, in those days also, pretenders to what they had not.

And yet there might have been other sufficient reasons for believing the assertion of Origin, Chrysostom, and St. Bernard too, that they had this internal testimony. Such was, besides the holiness of their lives, that great and standing miracle, — their saving so many souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins.

12. There are at least as many pretenders to the love of God, as there are to the witness of his Spirit. But does this give me a right, if a man asserts, he loves God, to demand his proving that assertion by miracles? Not so; but by their fruits I shall know a real and a pretended love of God. And in the same manner may I know him that has the witness of God's love, from an enthusiastic pretender to it. But if all man disclaims it, he sets himself out of the question. It is beyond dispute that he has it not.

Neither do I want miracles in order to determine my judgment with regard to scriptures variously interpreted. I would not say, in this case, "Show me a sign;" but, "Bring forth your strong reasons;" and according to these, weighed in an even, impartial scale, would I incline to one side or the other.

13. From the beginning of our correspondence, I did not expect you to alter your judgment touching those points wherein we differed. But I was willing (and am so still) to hear and consider whatever you should advance concerning them; and so much the rather, because in the greatest points we do agree already; and in the smaller we can bear with each other, and speak what we apprehend to be the truth in love. Let us bless God for this, and press on to the mark. It cannot be long before we shall be quite of one mind; before the veil of flesh shall drop of, and we shall both see pure light, in the unclouded face of God.

XLIII. *To the Same.*

SIR,

DUBLIN, *March 22, 1747-8.*

I REJOICE to find that in some points we come nearer each other, and that we can bear with each other where we do not. I entirely agree that hell was designed only for stubborn, impenitent sinners, and, consequently, that it would be absurd to "threaten damnation to any, merely for differing from me in speculations." But it is an absurdity which I have nothing to do with; for it never yet entered into my thoughts.

2. I rejoice likewise in your allowing that my "speculations, though false, yea, and leading to a deviation from order, may yet possibly be neither

willful nor sinful;" and much more in that which follows: "I question not but God's mercy may both forgive and reward," even that zeal which is not according to knowledge.

3. Yet "such deviation," you think, "may open a door to much disorder and error." I grant it may; but I still insist,

- (1.) That accidental ill consequences may flow from a good thing.
- (2.) That the good consequences, in the present case, overbalance the evil beyond all possible degrees of comparison.

The same I believe of Mr. Whitefield's public preaching, (which was not the consequence, but the cause, of mine,) whose doctrine in general (though he is mistaken in some points) I believe to be the truth of the Gospel.

4. I never did censure the whole body of Clergy; and God forbid that I ever should. I do not willingly censure any, even the grossly immoral. But you advise to "complain of these to the Bishop of the diocese." In what way? "Be so public spirited as to present them." Much may be said on that question. I should ask,

- (1.) Have I a right to present them? I apprehend not. The Church wardens of each parish are to do this; which they will hardly do, at my instance.
- (2.) If I could do it myself, the presenting them to the Court is not presenting them to the Bishop: The Bishop, you cannot but know, has no more authority in what is called the Bishop's Court, than the Pope of Rome.
- (3.) I cannot present, suppose, thirty persons in as many counties, to the Lay Chancellors or Officials, (men whom I apprehend to have just as much authority from Scripture to administer the sacraments, as to try ecclesiastical causes,) without such an expense both of labor, and money, and time, as I am by no means able to sustain. And what would be the fruit, it I could sustain it? if I was the informer general against the immoral Clergy of England? O Sir, can you imagine, or dare you say, that I should "have the thanks of the Bishops, and of all good men, both Clergy and laity?" If you allow only those to be good men who would thank me for this, I fear you would not find seven thousand good men in all our Israel.

5. But you have been “assured there are proofs about to be produced of very shocking things among us also.” It is very possible you may. And, to say the truth, I expected such things long ago. In such a body of people, must there not be some hypocrites, and some who did for a time serve God in sincerity, and yet afterwards turn back from the holy commandment once delivered to them? I am amazed there have been so few instances of this, and look for more everyday. The melancholy case of that unhappy man, Mr. Hall, I do not rank among these; for he had renounced us long ago, and that over and over, both by word and writing. And though he called upon me once or twice a year, and lately made some little overtures of friendship, yet I have it under his own hand, he could have no fellowship with us, because we would not leave the Church. But *quia intellen minus, protrusit foras.*²² To make it quite plain and clear how close a connection there was between him and me, when I lately called on his poor wife at Salisbury, he fairly turned me out of doors, and my sister after me.

6. My father did not die unacquainted with the faith of the Gospel, of the primitive Christians, or of our first performers; the same which, by the grace of God, I preach, and which is just as new as Christianity. What he experienced before, I know not; but I know that during his last illness, which continued eight months, he enjoyed a clear sense: of his acceptance with God. I heard him express it more than once, although at that time I understood him not. “The inward witness, son, the inward witness,” said he to me, “that is the proof, the strongest proof, of Christianity.” And when I asked him, (the time of his change drawing nigh,) “Sir, are you in much pain?” he answered aloud with a smile, “God does chasten me with pain, yea, all my bones with strong pain; but I thank Him for all, I bless Him for all, I love Him for all!” I think the last words he spoke, when I had just commended his soul to God, were, “Now you have done all.” And with the same serene, cheerful countenance he fell asleep, without one struggle, or sigh, or groan. I cannot therefore doubt but the Spirit of God bore an inward witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God.

7. That “God blesses a doctrine preached (new or old) to the saving of souls from death, does not prove that every circumstance of it is true; for a

Predestination Preacher may save souls.” But it undoubtedly proves, that the main of what is preached is the truth as it is in Jesus; for it is only the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation. Human wisdom, as human laws, may restrain from outward sin; but they cannot avail to the saving of the soul. If God gives this blessing to what is preached, it is a sufficient “proof of His approbation.” But I will not contend about words, or, when his blessing is allowed dispute whether it has His approbation or not.

8. But to argue on your own supposition: You say, “It only shows, that novelty, which has a natural tendency to awakening, may, when God pleases, have an efficacious tendency to amending.” Well, then, if the novelty of an indifferent circumstance, such as place, has a natural tendency to awakening, surely we may use it according to its natural tendency, in order to awaken those that sleep in sin! And if God has, in fact, been pleased to use it beyond its natural tendency, to make it efficacious for amending as well as awakening, ought we not to acquiesce, yea, and rejoice therein?

9. But are sinners amended? Are they saved from their sins? Are they truly converted to God? Here is, what always must be, the main question. That many are in some sort converted, is owned. But to what are they converted “to the belief of such proofless, incredible stuff as transubstantiation? or to the Popish severities of flesh fasting, celibacies, and other monkeries?” Not so. If they are converted at all, they are converted from all manner of wickedness, “to a sober, righteous, and godly life.” Such an uniform practice is true outward holiness. And wherever this is undeniably found, we ought to believe there is holiness of heart; seeing the tree is known by its fruits.

10. That “the conversion of sinners to this holiness is no miracle at all,” is new doctrine indeed! So new to me, that I never heard it before, either among Protestants or Papists. I think a miracle is a work of omnipotence, wrought by the supernatural power of God. Now, if the conversion of sinners to holiness is not such a work, I cannot tell what is. I apprehend our Lord accounts it a greater work than giving sight to the blind, yea, or raising the dead; for it was after he had raised Lazarus from the dead, that

he told his Apostles, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also. And greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.” Greater outward works they could not do. It remains, therefore, that we understand those solemn words, of converting souls to God; which is indeed a greater work than any that can be wrought on the body.

11. I am glad you do “not demand miracles in proof of doctrines.” Thus far, then, we are agreed. But you demand them,

- (1.) “As things to which I lay claim;” and in order to show that claim cannot be supported.
- (2.) As necessary to give me “a right to be implicitly believed.” And,
- (3.) To justify my “assuming the Apostolate of England.”

If this be all, your demand must soon fall to the ground, since the whole foundation sinks beneath it. For,

- (1.) I lay no claim (in your sense) to miracles; for the clearing of which, suffer me to refer you once more (that I may not be surfeited with *crambe decies repetita* ²³) to the Second Letter to Mr. Church.
- (2.) I claim no implicit faith: I neither pay it to, nor expect it from, any man living.
- (3.) I no otherwise assume the Apostolate of England, (if you choose to use the phrase,) than I assume the Apostolate of all Europe, or, rather, of all the world; that is, in plain terms, wherever I see one or a thousand men running into hell, be it in England, Ireland, or France, yea, in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America, I will stop them if I can: As a Minister of Christ, I will beseech them, in His name, to turn back, and be reconciled to God. Were I to do otherwise, were I to let any soul drop into the pit, whom I might have saved from everlasting burnings, I am not satisfied God would accept my plea, “Lord, he was not of my parish.”

12. If a single parish takes up your whole time and care, and you spend and are spent upon it, well. And yet I will be bold to say, that no blessing from God will accompany your ministry, but the drunkard will be a drunkard still, (and so the covetous, the brawler, the adulterer,) unless you

both believe and teach, what you love to call, my “new notions of inspiration.” I mean as to the substance, not the particular manner of explication. You will all the day long stretch out your hands in vain, unless you teach them to pray, that the Spirit of God may inwardly witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God. I apprehend you are the person that “wriggle on this head,” because the argument pinches: You appear to me to twist and wind to and fro, because I “distinguish away,” not my doctrines, but your objections; — unraveling the fallacies, showing what part is false, and what part true, but nothing to the purpose. Since you move it again, I will resume the point once more. You will pardon me if I speak home, that it may be seen which of us two it is, that has hitherto given the “evasive answers.”

13. You say, “Notwithstanding all your pains to distort that text, for anything which has yet been said to the contrary, it may be understood of the Spirit’s witness by miracles, by prophecy, or by the imperceptibly brought assurances of the Holy Ghost.” This (unless it gives up the whole cause, as indeed it must, if it does not imply a contradiction; seeing imperceptible assurance is no assurance at all) is neither an evasive nor an unevasive answer. It is just no answer at all. Instead of refuting my arguments, you reply, “You distort the text. *Ipsa dixi.*”

“The Quakers maintain divine illapses, and sensible communications always; you only sometimes.” If you speak to the purpose, if you mean the inward witness of God’s Spirit, I maintain it always as well as they.

“The Methodist writings abound with intimations of divine communications, prophetic whispers, and special guidances.” Perhaps so; but that is another question. We are now speaking of the inward witness of the Spirit.

14. “They teach the notification of justification to be as perceptible as the sun at noon-day.” Now you come to the point, and I allow the charge. From the beginning of our correspondence to this day, I have, without any shifting or evasion at all, maintained flatly and plainly:

- (1.) A man feels the testimony of God’s Spirit, and cannot then deny or doubt his being a child of God.

- (2.) After a time this testimony is withdrawn. (Not from every child of God: Many retain the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.)
- (3.) Then he may doubt whether this testimony was of God; and perhaps at length deny that it was.

There is no shadow of contradiction between this and the case of H. R.

For,

- (1.) She felt the testimony of God's Spirit, and could not then deny or doubt her being a child of God.
- (2.) After a time this testimony was withdrawn.
- (3.) Then she doubted whether it was of God. Observe: She never forgot or denied that she had such a testimony; but she then doubted whether it was of God.

But you have still more to remark upon this head: So I attend you step by step.

15. "The instances produced" (it should be "instance," for you cite but one) "in support of these high claims, instead of supporting, utterly subvert them. Thus H. R. had her justification notified; and yet she denied that her sins were forgiven." You should say, She doubted of it, after a time, when the testimony of God's Spirit was withdrawn. "Now, either this notification was not so distinct as is pretended, or, if distinct, was notified by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe. Or if it was both distinct and credible, she was not of sound understanding if she disbelieved it, nor of sound memory if she" (afterwards, it should be) "doubted or denied that she had ever received such a message."

You say,

- (1.) "Either that notification was not so distinct." It was so distinct that she could not then doubt. "Or,
- (2.) Was notified to her by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe." Yes, she then believed, and knew it was the voice of God. "Or,
- (3.) She was not of sound understanding, if she disbelieved it." When she disbelieved it, she was not. For as the serpent deceived Eve, so he then

deceived her, **φθειρων το νοημα αυτης** ²⁴

“But could she possibly deny a plain matter of fact?” You add, as if I have said; so, “Yes, in process of time she might, particularly if she drew back to perdition;” and then subjoin, “But what is this evasive answer to the case of H. R.?” I think, nothing at all. I never applied it to her case. She never denied her having had such a testimony. But after a time she doubted (as I said before) whether that testimony was true.

16. I presume, Eve in paradise was at least equal in understanding with any of her posterity. Now, unto her God said, “In the day that thou eatest of the tree of knowledge thou shalt surely die.” And doubtless “this notification was as distinct and perceptible to her as the sun at noonday.” Yet after a time (perhaps only a few days) she utterly disbelieved it.

You exclaim, “Absurd! Impossible! There could be no such thing; as I shall prove immediately.”

“Either this notification was not so distinct as is pretended, or, if distinct, was notified by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe. Or else, if it was both distinct and credible, she was not of sound understanding if she disbelieved it, nor of sound memory if she doubted of it.” Therefore the whole story is absurd, and a self-inconsistent (not a cunningly devised) fable.

Is not the plain answer this? This notification was as distinct as [is] pretended; and it was not notified by one of suspected credit, whom she did then firmly believe. But afterwards Satan deceived her by his subtlety, **φθειρων το νοημα αυτης**, — “corrupting, spoiling, destroying, the soundness of her understanding,” and of her memory too; and then she disbelieved God, and believed him who said, “Ye shall not surely die.” How much more is he able, by the same subtlety, to deceive any of the fallen children of men!

17. What follows you did not design for argument, but wit. “I cannot help thinking that Paul, with all his infirmities, might more reasonably be looked upon as an inspired Prophet than Mr. Wesley, though arrived, in his own

imagination, to a sinless perfection." I never told you so, nor any one else. I no more imagine that I have already attained, that I already love God with all my heart, soul, and strength, than that I am in the third heavens.

But; you make me abundant amends for this by your charitable belief, that though I may now imagine things that are not, and be mistaken in many points, yet He who remembers I am but dust, will at last "forgive and reward me." It is enough: The time of error and sin is short; for eternity is at hand.

Strangers and pilgrims here below,
This earth, we know, is not our place
And hasten through the vale of woe,
And, restless to behold thy face,
Swift to our heavenly country move,
Our everlasting home above.

XLIV. — *To his Brother Charles.*

SAVANNAH, *April 20, 1736.*

I STILL extremely pity poor Mrs. Hawkins; but what can I do more, till God show me who it is that continually exasperates her against me? Then I may perhaps be of some service to her. There is surely some one who does not play us fair; but I marvel not at the matter. He that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there is that is mightier than they. Yet a little while, and God will declare who is sincere. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure and be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart.

XLV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *June 23, 1739.*

MY answer to them which trouble me is this: God commands me to do good unto all men; to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man commands me not to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all. If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge ye.

“But,” say they, “it is just that you submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.” True; to every ordinance of man which is not contrary to the command of God. But if any man, Bishop or other, ordain that I shall not do what God commands me to do, to submit to that ordinance would be to obey man rather than God.

And to do this, I have both an ordinary call and an extraordinary. My ordinary call is, my ordination by the Bishop: “Take thou authority to preach the word of God.” My extraordinary call is witnessed by the works God doeth by my ministry; which prove that He is with me of a truth in this exercise of my office.

Perhaps this might be better expressed in another way: God bears witness in an extraordinary manner, that my thus exercising my ordinary call is well pleasing in his sight.

But what if a Bishop forbids this? I do not say as St. Cyprian, *Populus a scelerato Antistite separare se debet.*²⁵ But I say, God being my helper, I will obey him still: And if I suffer for it, his will be done. Adieu!

XLVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

ISLINGTON, *September 21, 1739.*

A SCOTCH gentleman, who was present here, gave us a plain account of Mr. Erskine and his associates, the substance of which was this: —

Some years since, Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, preaching before the Assembly, reprov'd them for several faults with all simplicity. This was so resented by many, that in a following Assembly he was required to make an open recantation; and, persisting in the charge, the Assembly determined that he, with three other Ministers who spoke in his behalf, should be deprived, and their livings declared vacant. Four messengers were sent for this purpose; but they returned *re infecta*; ²⁶ fearing the people, lest they should stone them.

In another Assembly, directions were given to the neighboring Ministers to procure information concerning the doctrine of Mr. Erskines and their adherents. Out of these information an indictment was formed, to which they were summoned to answer in the next Assembly.

Here it was debated whether they should be suffered to come in; and carried by a small majority, that they should. The Moderator then spoke to this effect: "My Reverend brethren, you are summoned to answer an indictment, charging you with erroneous doctrine and irregular practices; but if ye will submit to the Kirk, and testify your amendment, we will receive you with open arms."

Mr. Erskine answered for himself and brethren (they were now increased to eight) to this purpose: "Moderator, both you, and those that are with you, have erred from the faith; and your practices are irregular too: And you have no discipline: Therefore you are no Kirk. We are the Kirk, and we alone, who continue in her faith and discipline; and if ye will submit to us, and testify your amendment, we will receive ye with open arms."

None answered a word; so, after a short time, they withdrew. The Moderator then asked, "My Reverend brethren, what shall we do?" One replied, 'Moderator, I must answer you in our proverb, —' You have put the cat into the kirk;'" (that is, the churn;) "'and ye must get her out again how ye can.'"

Again silence ensued: After which, the Moderator asked, "Shall these men be excommunicated, or only deposed?" Answer was made, "The question is not right. Let it be asked, 'Shall they be deposed or not?'" This was

accordingly done; and it was carried by five votes, that they should not be deposed. Having received help from God, they continue to this day; declaring to all, that their congregation is the Kirk of Scotland; that they, the Ministers, (now ten in all,) are the proper Presbytery; and there is no other: Those commonly so called having, “made shipwreck of the faith” and discipline once delivered to the saints.

Friday, Sept. 14, I expounded again at Islington; but the house being too small for the company, I stood in the garden, and showed them how vainly they trusted in baptism for salvation, unless they were holy of heart; without which their circumcision was actually become uncircumcision. Afterwards I went to Fetterlane, where I brought down the high looks of the proud, by an exposition of those words, “All things are lawful for me; but all things edify not.”

Saturday, 15, I expounded those words, on which the book opened at Lady H——’s, “The cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires of other things, choke the word; and it becometh unfruitful.” At Fetterlane I was directed to those words, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” Many were cut to the heart both here and at Mr. Exall’s, where I enforced those words of our Lord, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Sunday, 16, I preached at Moorfields to about ten thousand, and at Kennington-common to between twenty and thirty thousand, on those words: “We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.” At both places I described, in very plain terms, the difference between true old Christianity, commonly called by the new name of Methodism, and the Christianity now generally taught. Hence I went to Lambeth, where I found our congregation considerably increased; and exhorted them to cry mightily to our Lord, that he might say unto them, as unto the sick of the palsy, “Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.” From our lovefeast at Fetterlane I went to Islington house. Sufficient for this day was the labor thereof.

Pray give my love to brother Mitchell; and let the leaden cistern be gone about. On Monday se'nnight I intend, God willing, to set out. Tuesday I hope to spend at Oxford. On Wednesday night let James Ellis meet me at Gloucester. Then I will lay out the three or four following days, as we shall agree, if God permit. I heartily thank our brothers Westall, Oldfield, Cross, Haydon, and Wynne; and our sisters Deffel, Shafto, Oldfield, Thomas, Stephens, Mrs. Thomas, and Mrs. Deschamps. I wish any would write by the Wednesday post. Pray for us. Adieu.

Saturday night, Mrs. Exall's.

XLVII. — *To the Same.*

LONDON, *April 21, 1741.*

It is not possible for me to set out yet. I must go round and glean after Mr. Whitefield. I will take care of the books you mention. My Journal is not written yet. The Bands and Society are my first care. The Bands are purged; the Society is purging; and we continually feel whose hand is in the work.

Send the new printed Hymns immediately. We presented a thousand of Barclay to Mr. Whitefield's congregation on Sunday. On Sunday next I propose to distribute a thousand more at the Foundry.

I am settling a regular method of visiting the sick here. Eight or ten have offered themselves for the work, who are likely to have full employment; for more and more are taken ill everyday. Our Lord will thoroughly purge his floor.

I rejoice in your speaking your mind freely. O let our love be without dissimulation!

I am not clear that brother Maxfield should not expound at Grayhoundlane: Nor can I as yet do without him. Our Clergymen have miscarried full as much as the laymen; and that the Moravians are other than laymen I know not.

As yet I dare in nowise join with the Moravians:

1. Because their whole scheme is mystical, not scriptural, — refined in every point above what is written, immeasurably beyond the plain doctrines of the Gospel.
2. Because there is darkness and closeness in all their behavior, and guile in almost all their words.
3. Because they not only do not practice, but utterly despise and deny, self-denial and the daily cross.
4. Because they, upon principle, conform to the world, in wearing gold or costly apparel.
5. Because they extend Christian liberty, in this and many other respects, beyond what is warranted by holy writ.
6. Because they are by no means zealous of good works; or, at least, only to their own people.

And, lastly, because they make inward religion swallow up outward in general. For these reasons chiefly I will rather, God being my helper, stand quite alone, than join with them: I mean, till I have full assurance that they will spread none of the errors among the little flock committed to my charge.

O my brother, my soul is grieved for you: The poison is in you: Fair words have stolen away your heart. “No English man or woman is like the Moravians!” So the matter is come to a fair issue. Five of us did still stand together a few months since; but two are gone to the right hand, Hutchins and Cennick; and two more to the lefts Mr. Hall and you. Lord, if it be thy Gospel which I preach arise and maintain thine own cause! Adieu!

XLVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

May 17, 1742.

I AM in a great strait. I wrote to Lady Huntingdon, (just as I did to you,) “I am inclined to believe one of us must soon take a journey into Yorkshire.” It was then in my mind to desire you to go first; only I was afraid you

would think, I shifted off the laboring oar. But on the receipt of your last I altered my design, and determined to think of it no farther yet. I sent word this morning to Brentford and Windsor of my preaching there on Thursday, in my way to Bristol: But within two or three hours I received a letter from Lady Huntingdon; part of which is as follows: — “My dear friend, The very thought of seeing you here has filled us with great joy. Poor Miss Cowper is still living; and it is very remarkable, in the beginning of her illness she said she should be glad to see one of you, just before she died. Her eyes were even overflowing with the loving kindness of our Lord, who has a regard even to the desires of our hearts. I beg you will set out as soon as may be after you receive this; as everyday she has lived this last fortnight seems a fresh miracle, for some purpose which is not yet known.”

She then tells me she has ordered a horse for John Taylor to go down with me. It seems to me I ought to go, and that without delay. I think of going early in the morning to Bexley, and correcting Mr. Piers’s sermon; and of setting out for Donnington on Wednesday. If you write thither as soon as you receive this, your letter will be there nearly as soon as me; and I will either go on into Lincolnshire for a week, or go straight to Bristol, as you will. Let all the brethren pray for me. Adieu!

XLIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS, *April 23, 1745.*

IT was time for me to give them the ground at Newcastle, and to fly for my life. I grew more and more honorable everyday: The rich and great flocking to us together, so that many times the room would not hold them. Iniquity, for the present, hath stopped her mouth; and it is almost fashionable to speak well of us. In all appearance, if I had stayed a month longer, the Mayor and Aldermen would have been with us.

On Easter Monday we met at half hour after four; and the room was full from end to end, with high and low, rich and poor, plain and fine people. At nine I preached to almost as large a congregation in the street at Chester. All were quiet and still; for the hand of our Lord was in the midst

of them. About six I preached at Northallerton, in the house; but it should have been (as I afterwards found) at the cross: For the people there are, most of them, a noble people, and receive the word with all readiness of mind. A gentleman of Osmotherley, East from Northallerton, telling me he wished I could have come and preached there, I took him at his word, set out immediately, and about ten at night; preached at Osmotherley, in a large chapel which belonged, a few years since, to a convent of Franciscan Friars. I found I was got into the very center of all the Papists in the North of England. *Commessatorem haud satis commodum!*²⁷ This also hath God wrought.

The classes call me away. I must, for several reasons, see London before Bristol. One is, I shall go from Bristol to Cornwall; so that, if I come to Bristol now, I shall not be at London these three months. What I propose therefore, is, to go from Birmingham, through Oxford, (as I wrote before,) straight to London. You can send me word where you will meet me. All here salute you much. If you could come hither soon, (think of it,) Leeds would vie with Newcastle. I wish you could. O let us watch! Adieu.

L. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

NEWCASTLE, *September 22, 1745.*

I HAVE only just time to inform you, that since the account is confirmed by an express to the Mayor, that General Cope is fled, and his forces defeated, (all that did not run away,) the consternation of the poor people is redoubled. The townsmen are put under arms; the walls planted with cannon; and those who live without the gates are removing their goods with all speed. We stand our ground as yet, glory be to God, to the no small astonishment of our neighbors. Brethren, pray for us, that if need be, we may

True in the fiery trial prove,
And pay Him back his dying love.

Adieu!

LI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

YESTERDAY I was thinking on a *desideratum* among us, a *genesis problematica* on justifying faith. A skeleton of it, (which you may fill up, or any one that has leisure,) I have roughly set down: —

Is justifying faith a sense of pardon? *Negatur.* ²⁸

1. Every one is deeply concerned to understand this question well: But Preachers most of all; lest they either make them sad whom God hath not made sad, or encourage them to say, Peace, where there is no peace.

Some years ago we heard nothing of justifying faith, or a sense of pardon; so that when we did hear of them, the theme was quite new to us; and we might easily, especially in the heat and hurry of controversy, lean too much either to the one hand or to the other.

2. By “justifying faith,” I mean that faith which whosoever hath not is under the wrath and the curse of God. By “a sense of pardon,” I mean a distinct, explicit assurance that my sins are forgiven.

I allow,

- (1.) That there is such an explicit assurance.
- (2.) That it is the common privilege of real Christians.
- (3.) That it is the proper Christian faith, which “purifieth the heart,” and “overcometh the world.”

But I cannot allow, that justifying faith is such an assurance, or necessarily connected therewith.

3. Because, if justifying faith necessarily implies such an explicit assurance of pardon, then every one who has it not, and every one so long as he has it not, is under the wrath and under the curse of God. But this is a supposition contrary to Scripture, as well as to experience.

Contrary to Scripture; to Isaiah 1:10: “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.”

Contrary to Acts 10:34, 35: “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

Contrary to experience; for J. R., etc., etc., had peace with God, no fear, no doubt, before they had that sense of pardon. And so have I frequently had.

Again: The assertion, “that justifying faith is a sense of pardon,” is contrary to reason: It is flatly absurd. For how can a sense of our having received pardon be the condition of our receiving it?

4. If you object,

- (1.) “J. T., St. Paul, etc., had this sense:” I grant they had: But they were justified, or rather had justifying faith, before they had it.
- (2.) “We know fifteen hundred persons who have this assurance.” Perhaps so: But this does not prove, they had not justifying faith till they received it.
- (3.) “We have been exceedingly blessed in preaching this doctrine.” We have been blessed in preaching the great truths of the Gospel; although we tacked to them, in the simplicity of our hearts, a proposition which was not true.
- (4.) “But does not our Church give his account of justifying faith?” I am sure she does of saving or Christian faith: I think she does of justifying faith too. But to the law and to the testimony. All men may err. But the word of the Lord shall stand for ever.

LII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

ATHLONE, August 8, 1752.

I ALMOST wonder that I hear not one word from you since the trial at Gloucester. Either Mr. I’anson, or some one else, should have wrote by

the next post. Does every one forget me, as soon as we have the sea between us?

Some of our Preachers here have peremptorily affirmed that you are not so strict as me; that you neither practice, nor enforce, nor approve of, the rules of the Bands. I suppose they mean those which condemn needless self-indulgence, and recommend the means of grace, fasting in particular; which is well-nigh forgotten throughout this nation. I think it would be of use, if you wrote without delay, and explain yourself at large.

They have likewise openly affirmed that you agree with Mr. Whitefield, touching perseverance at least, if not predestination too. Is it not highly expedient that you should write explicitly and strongly on this head likewise?

Perhaps the occasion of this latter affirmation was, that both you and I have often granted an absolute unconditional election of some, together with a conditional election of all men. I did incline to this scheme for many years: But of late I have doubted of it more and more: First, because all the texts which I used to think supported it, I now think prove either more or less; either absolute reprobation and election, or neither. Secondly, because I find this opinion serves all the in purposes of absolute predestination; particularly that of supporting infallible perseverance. Talk with any that holds it, and so you will find.

On Friday and Saturday next is our little Conference at Limerick. I hope my sister feels herself in a good hand, and that you can trust Him with her, and all things. We join in love.

LIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 20, 1753.*

I FIRMLY believed that young woman would die in peace; though I did not apprehend it would be so soon. We have had several instances of music heard before or at the death of those that die in the Lord. May we conceive

that this is, literally, the music of angels? Can that be heard by ears of flesh and blood?

It was not possible for me to send Jane Bates's letter, before my return to London. I sent it last week to Ted Perronet. But whether he be now on earth or in paradise, I know not. He was believed to be dying some days since at Epworth, and vehemently rejoicing in God. William Briggs set out for Epworth last night, in order to see him, either alive or dead.

It is much easier for me to hope than to despair of any person or thing. I never did despair of John Hutchinson. For with God no word is impossible. And if he testifies a full and deep sense of his long revolt from God, I shall hope he will either live or die happy. But let me hear the particulars of your Journals, and I may have a stronger hope.

I came back from Bedford last night. I know not whether it was your will or no; (I believe not;) but I am sure it was God's will for you to call there. How do you judge whether a thing be God's will or no? I hope not by inward impressions. Let us walk warily. I have much constitutional enthusiasm; and you have much more.

Now I have neither more nor less faith in human testimony than I had ten or fifteen years ago. I could suspect every man that speaks to me, to be either a blunderer or a liar. But I will not. I dare not till I have proof.

I give you a dilemma. Take one side or the other. Either act really in connection with me, or never pretend to it. Rather disclaim it; and openly avow you do and will not.

By acting in connection with me, I mean, take counsel with me once or twice a year, as to the places where you will labor. Hear my advice before you fix; whether you take it or no.

At present you are so far from this, that I do not even know when and where you intend to go. So far are you from following any advice of mine; nay, even from asking it. And yet I may say, without vanity, that I am a

better judge of this matter than either Lady Huntingdon, Sally Jones, or any other: Nay, than your own heart; that is, will.

I wish you all peace, zeal, and love.

LIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 31, 1753.*

MY fever intermitted after twelve hours. After a second fit of about fourteen hours, I began taking the bark, and now recovering my strength. I cannot apprehend that such music has any analogy at all to the inward voice of God. I take it to differ from this *toto genere*,²⁹ and to be rather the effect of an angel affecting the auditory nerves, as an apparition does the optic nerve, or retina.

Ted Perronet is now thoroughly recovered. I had a letter from him a day or two ago.

You say, “that is not the will of God, which his providence makes impracticable. But his providence made my going to Bedford impracticable.” Prove the minor, and I shall be content.

In journeying, which of us lays his plan according to reason? Either you move (quite contrary to me) by those impressions which you account divine; or, which is worse, *pro ratione voluntas*.³⁰

You told William Briggs, that you never declined going to any place because my wife was there. I am glad of it. If so, I have hope we may sometime spend a little time together.

Why do you omit giving the sacrament in Kingswood? What is reading prayers at Bristol, in comparison with this? I am sure, in making this vehement alteration, you never consulted with me.

My love to my sister. Adieu!

LV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *June 20, 1755*

DO not you understand that they all promised by Thomas Walsh, not to administer, even among themselves? I think that an huge point given up; perhaps more than they could give up with a clear conscience.

They “showed an excellent spirit” in this very thing. Likewise, when I (not to say you) spoke once and again, spoke *satis pro imperio*,³¹ when I reflected on their answers, I admired their spirit, and was ashamed of my own.

The practical conclusion was, “Not to separate from the Church.” Did we not all agree in this? Surely either you or I must have been asleep, or we could not differ so widely in a matter of fact!

Here is Charles Perronet raving “because his friends have given up all;” and Charles Wesley, “because they have given up nothing;” and I in the midst staring and wondering both at one and the other.

I do not want to do anything more, unless I could bring them over to my opinion; and I am not in haste for that.

I have no time to write anything more till I have finished the Notes. Nor am I in haste. I stand open to the light.

Let it be worded anyway. I will give ten pounds between this and Christmas. This I think I can do, though I am just now saddled with Sukey Hare,³² to pay for her board, as well as learning her trade. Why do not you send for the boy to Bristol? I do not object.

If Mr. Lampe’s tunes are in print already, it is enough. I wish you had told me this six months ago, and the rest (which only we want) should have been printed before now. Pray send them by Michael Fenwick to me here. He will be in Bristol next week.

Cyprian is a terrible witness of the sense of the then church; for he speaks it not as his own private sense, but an incontestable, allowed rule. And by Antistes there, I really believe he means the Minister of a parish. That pinches me. Nevertheless, I think with you, till I see more light; though I should be hard set to defend myself against a skillful adversary. When I am convinced it is my duty, I will follow Cyprian's advice. The same say you, and no more. I do not fluctuate yet; but I cannot answer the arguments on that side the question. Joseph Cownley says, "For such and such reasons, I dare not hear a drunkard preach, or read prayers." I answer, I dare. But I cannot answer his reasons.

I can stay here four or five weeks. Then I purpose for Cornwall. Can you come hither when I go? My love to my sister. Adieu!

LVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *June 28, 1755.*

LET G. St—— write and welcome. When we are both together, I trust we may read safely.

Go to Ireland, if you think so, and save Ireland. Wherever I have been in England, the societies are far more firmly and rationally attached to the Church than ever they were before. I have no fear about this matter. I only fear the Preachers' or the people's leaving, not the Church, but the love of God, and inward or outward holiness. To this I press them forward continually. I dare not, in conscience, spend my time and strength on externals. If, as my Lady says, all outward establishments are Babel, so is this establishment. Let it stand for me. I neither set it up, nor pull it down. But let you and I build up the city of God.

I have often desired our Preachers to bury a corpse at Wapping; I mean, to give an exhortation closed with prayer. I do not know that this is any branch of the sacerdotal office.

None of our societies have received James Wheatley yet. I suppose none will. Yet we may give a caution wherever we write.

Thomas Walsh (I will declare it on the house-top) has given one all the satisfaction I desire, and all that an honest man could give. I love, admire, and honor him; and wish we had six Preachers in all England of his spirit. But enough of this. Let us draw the saw no longer, but use all our talents to promote the mind that was in Christ.

“Not yet” is totally out of the question. We have not one Preacher who either proposed, or desires, or designs (that I know) to separate from the Church at all. Their principles in this single point of ordination I do not approve: But I pray for more and more of their spirit (in general) and practice.

I have talked with Mr. Graves, and shall do again.

Driving me may make me fluctuate; though I do not yet.

“When the Preachers in Ireland set up for themselves, must you not disown them?” I answer, “When.”

If you can go to Cornwall in the end of July, it is soon enough. I wish you would see each of the country societies: And why not New Kingswood too? Adieu!

LVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

COOLYLOUGH, *June 23, 1760.*

WHERE you are, I know not; and how you are, I know not; but I hope the best. Neither you nor John Jones has ever sent me your remarks upon that tract in the late volume of Sermons. You are not kind. Why will you not do all you can to make me wiser than I am? Samuel Furly told me his objections at once: So we canvassed them without loss of time. Do you know what is done, anything or nothing, with regard to the small edition of the Notes?

Mr. I'anson writes me a long account of the Sussex affair. It is of more consequence than our people seem to apprehend. If we do not exert ourselves, it may drive us to that bad dilemma, Leave preaching, or leave the Church. We have reason to thank God, it is not come to this yet. Perhaps it never may.

In this kingdom nothing is wanting but a few more zealous and active laborers. James Morgan, John Johnson, and two or three more, do their best: The rest spare themselves.

I hope Sally and your little ones are well. Where and how is my wife? I wrote to her on Saturday last. Adieu!

Where must the Conference be? at Leeds, or Bristol? If we could but chain or gag the blatant beast, there would be no difficulty.

LVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

REDRUTH, *September 21, 1760.*

I DO not apprehend that letter to be any proof of S. A.'s understanding. I believe you had not time to consider it. Do you really think she was the inditer? That she was the transcriber of it, I allow: But is not the hand of Joab in this? Did you not take knowledge, not only of the sentiments, but the very language, of honest James R.?

Your message by John Jones seems to supersede the necessity of my writing: Yet I think of sending a few civil lines, without entering into the merits of the cause. Is it not an excellent copy of our friend's countenance, to "beg leave to live apart?" *Quis enim negat?*³³ If the unbeliever will depart, let her depart? But she will as soon leap into the sea.

I speak everywhere of bribery and run goods. I suppose John Jones has sent you the Minutes of the Conference. On Friday se'nnight I hope to preach at Shepton Mallet at noon, and at Bristol in the evening. *Vive hodie!*³⁴

I should think, if you was *solus cum solo*,³⁵ the point to be insisted on with John Gambold would be, "You went to the Moravians to find happiness. Have you found it? What have you gained by the exchange?" It is time enough, I suppose, for me to write: For you cannot go to London soon.

LIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

PLYMOUTH-DOCK, *September 28, 1760.*

I HAVE no objection to the bestowing another reading upon Mr. Law's Letters. But I think I have answered them *quantum sufficit*, by the letter in "Lloyd's Evening Post;"³⁶ only, if need be, it may be inserted in some of the monthly Magazines. Since I wrote that letter, I have procured (which I could not before) the "Address to the Clergy." It is amazing! Nothing is more plain, than that he has never read it. I doubt whether he ever saw it.

I care not a rush for ordinary means; only that it is our duty to try them. All our lives, and all God's dealings with us, have been extraordinary from the beginning. We have all reason, therefore, to expect, that what has been will be again. I have been preternaturally restored more than ten times. I suppose you will be thus restored for the journey; and that by the journey, as a natural means, your health will be re-established; provided you determine to spend all the strength which God shall give you in his work.

Cornwall has suffered miserably by my long absence, and the unfaithfulness of the Preachers. I left seventeen hundred in the societies, and I find twelve hundred. If possible, you should see Mr. Walker. He has been near a month at the Hot Wells. He is absolutely a Scot in his opinions, but of an excellent spirit. Mr. Stonehouse's horse performs to a miracle. He is considerably better than when I had him. On Friday evening

(if nothing extraordinary occur) I hope to be at Bristol between five and six. Probably shall leave Shepton Mallet at two. My love to Sally.

If John Fisher is at Bristol, pray desire him to send what Thomas Seccomb left (with an account) for his poor mother. Adieu!

LX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *September 8, 1761.*

OUR Conference ended, as it began, in peace and love. All found it a blessed time:

Excepto, quod non simul esses, ceatera laeti. ³⁷

The Minutes John Jones can help you to, who sets out hence in two or three days. The right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

Why should not Bath be supplied from Bristol? Order it so. I have no objection. They will by that means often have a more able Preacher than they would otherwise have. If he does not linger by the way, a Preacher may be at Bristol on Thursday night.

I do not at all think (to tell you a secret) that the work will ever be destroyed, Church or no Church. What has been done to prevent the Methodists leaving the Church, you will see in the Minutes of the Conference. I told you before, with regard to Norwich, *dixi*. I have done at the last Conference all I can or dare do. Allow me liberty of conscience, as I allow you.

My love to Sally. Adieu!

LXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1761.

LONDON, *December 26,*

SPEND as many hours in the congregation as you can: But exercise alone will strengthen your lungs; or electrifying, which I wonder you did not try long ago. Never start at its being a quack medicine. I desire no other; particularly since I was so nearly murdered by being cured of my ague *secundum artem*.³⁸ You should always (and I hope you do) write standing and sloping.

We are always in danger of enthusiasm: But I think no more now than any time these twenty years. The word of God runs indeed; and loving faith spreads on every side. Do not take my word, or any one's else; but come and see. It is good to be in London now.

It is impossible for me to correct my own books. I sometimes think it strange, that I have not one Preacher that will and can. I think every one of them owes me so much service.

Pray tell R. Sheen, I am hugely displeas'd at his reprinting the Nativity Hymns, and omitting the very best hymn in the collection, —

All glory to God in the sky, etc.

I beg they may never more be printed without it. Omit one or two, and I will thank you. They are namby-pambical. I wish you would give us two or three invitatory hymns. We want such exceedingly. My love to Sally. My wife gains ground. Adieu!

LXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 5, 1762.*

YOU take me right. I am far from pronouncing my remarks *ex cathedra*. I only desire they may be fairly considered.

I was a little surprised to find Bishop Warburton so entirely unacquainted with the New Testament: And, notwithstanding all his parade of learning, I believe he is no critic in Greek.

If Thomas Maxfield continues as he is, it is impossible he should long continue with us. But I live in hope of better things. Meantime, *festina lentè!*³⁹

I baptized two Turks two or three weeks ago. They seem to be strong in faith; and their story is very probable; but I am not sure it is true. I wait for farther evidence.

This week I have begun to speak my mind concerning five or six honest enthusiasts. But I move only a hair's breadth at a time; and by this means we come nearer and nearer to each other. No sharpness will profit. There is need of a lady's hand, as well as a lion's heart.

Mr. Whitefield has fallen upon me in public open-mouthed, and only not named my name. So has Mr. Madan. But let them look to it. I go on my way. I have a sufficient answer as to George Bell; but I will not give it before the time.

We join in love to you both. My wife gains ground. Adieu!

LXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1762.

LONDON, *December 11,*

FOR eighteen or twenty days I heard with both ears, but rarely opened my mouth. I think I now understand the affair, at least, as well as any person in England.

The sum is this:

1. The meeting in Beechlane, before I came to town, was like a bear garden; full of noise, brawling, cursing, swearing, blasphemy, and confusion.
2. Those who prayed were partly the occasion of this, by their horrid screaming and unscriptural, enthusiastic expressions.
3. Being determined either “to mend them or end them,” I removed the meeting to the Foundry.
4. Immediately the noise, brawling, cursing, swearing, blasphemy, and confusion ceased.
5. There was less and less screaming, and less unscriptural and enthusiastic language.
6. Examining the society, I found about threescore persons who had been convinced of sin, and near fourscore who were justified, at these meetings. So that, on the whole, they have done some hurt, and much good. I trust they will now do more good and no hurt at all. Seven persons had left the Society on this account; but four of them are come back already.

I bought the ground before Kingswood school of Margaret Ward, and paid for it with my own money. Certainly, therefore, I have a right to employ it as I please. What can any reasonable man say to the contrary?

I have answered the Bishop, and bad advice upon my answer. If the devil owes him a shame, he will reply. He is a man of sense; but I verily think he does not understand Greek!

I should be glad to see Mr. Nitchman. What is all beside loving faith? We join in love to Sally and you. Adieu!

LXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1762.

LONDON, *December 23,*

BUT how to come to the speech of the colliers is the question: as there are an hundred miles between us; and as this is too critical a time for me to be out of London.

I am satisfied with the learning of John Jones, (as there is no point of learning in debate between us,) and the judgment of John Matthews, Charles Perronet, and James Morgan. Yet, it is certain, his admirers will still think him unanswerable.

I believe several in London have imagined themselves saved from sin “upon the word of others:” And these are easily known. For that work does not stand. Such imaginations soon vanish away. Some of these, and two or three others, are still wild. But the matter does not stick here. I could play with all these, if Thomas Maxfield were right. He is *mali caput et fons*; ⁴⁰ so inimitably wrong-headed, and so absolutely unconvincible; and yet (what is exceeding strange) God continues to bless his labors.

My kind love to Sally.

I shall soon try your patience with a long letter. Adieu!

LXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 8,* 1763.

I THINK now the sooner you could be here the better; for the mask is thrown off. George Bell, John Dixon, Joseph Calvert, Benjamin Briggs, etc., etc., have quitted the Society and renounced all fellowship with us. I wrote to Thomas, but was not favored with an answer. This morning I wrote a second time, and received an answer indeed! The substance is, “You take too much upon you. We will not come up.”

I know all the history of the Turk. I must leave London on Friday to bury Mrs. Perronet. She died on Saturday morning.

The answer to the Bishop (who has broke his leg) is forthcoming. Mr. Madan wrote the Queries. I let him have the last word. I should not wonder if a *dying* saint were to prophesy. Listen to Sally Colston's last words!

Molly Westall died last week in huge triumph.

John Jones does good. James Morgan has lately been in a violent storm, and is scarce alive. I advise him to retire to Kingswood for a season. We need all your prayers. God is preparing thoroughly to purge his floor. O let us be instant in season, out of season!

We join in love to Sally. Adieu!

LXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 26, 1763.*

I PERCEIVE, *verba fiunt mortuo:*⁴¹ So I say no more about your coming to London. Here stand I: And I shall stand, with or without human help, if God is with us.

Yesterday Mr. Madan and I, with a few more, gave the full hearing to the famous Turk and his associate. He is an exquisite wretch; was originally a Spanish Jew; afterwards a Turk; then a Papist; then a Jew again; then a Protestant; and now at last (under Mr. Lombardi's wing) a zealous Papist! Concerning his companion we are still in doubt. We fear he is little better; though we cannot prove it.

Mr. Gausson tells us, the stroke will come tomorrow evening: The rest say, not till Monday. Let us live today! I labor for peace; but they still make themselves ready for battle.

Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

LXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *March 6, 1768.*

TOMORROW I set out for Norwich, which I have delayed as long as possible. I am likely to have rough work there: But the turbulent spirits must bend or break.

That story of T. M. is not true. But I doubt more is true than is good. He is a most incomprehensible creature. I cannot convince him that separation is any evil; or that speaking in the name of God, when God has not spoken, is any more than an innocent mistake. I know not what to say to him, or do with him. He is really *mali caput et fons*.⁴²

I have scarce one hearty helper but La. Coughlan.

We join in love to you both. Adieu!

LXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *March 1, 1764.*

I READ Rollin's Belles Letters several years ago. Some things I liked; some I did not. Mark in him what you admire, and I will give it a second reading, and a farther consideration.

You "have no thoughts of venturing to London before May!" Then I must indeed "do the best I can." So I must comply with the advice of the Stewards, as well as my own judgment, and insist upon John Jones's assisting me on Sunday. I have delayed all this time purely out of tenderness to you. Adieu!

LXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

HADDINGTON, *May 25, 1764.*

Is there any reason why you and I should have no further intercourse with each other? I know none; although possibly there are persons in the world, who would not be sorry for it. I hope you find peace and unity in the south, as vote do in the north: Only the Seceders and Mr. Sandeman's friends are ready to eat us up. And no wonder; for these, as well as Deists and Socinians, I oppose *ex professo*.⁴³ But how do Thomas Maxfield and his friends go on? quietly, or *gladiatorio animo*?⁴⁴ And how are John Jones, Downes, and Richardson? and my best friend, and yours?

The frightful stories wrote from London had made all our Preachers in the north afraid even to mutter about perfection; and, of course, the people on all sides were grown good Calvinists in that point. It is what I foresaw from the beginning; that the devil would strive by Thomas Maxfield and company to drive perfection out of the kingdom.

O let you and I hold fast whereunto we have attained; and let our yea be yea, and our nay nay! I feel the want of some about me that are all faith and love. No man was more profitable to me than George Bell, while he was simple of heart. O for heat and light united! My love to Sally. Adieu!

LXX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 7, 1764.*

BE so kind as to show this to T. Lewis and M. Davis: So I may answer theirs and yours together.

What need of a formal petition? Would it not be just as effectual for me to write a letter to the corporation, in the name of all the Bristol Methodists, urging, first, Mr. Witherspoon's argument against the English theater; secondly, the matter of fact, the actual mischief done thereby; and then gently and respectfully making the application? What think you? *Ecquid novisti rectius?*⁴⁵ Send me word without delay.

S. Sukey was in huge agonies for five days, and then died in the full assurance of faith. Some of her last words (after she had been speechless for some time) were, "Jesus is come! Heaven is here!"

I am like Simonides. The more I think, the less able I am to answer the King's question: To prove the necessity, expediency, or propriety of an atonement, to an unconvinced sinner.

Indeed you ought to have said something to T. M.'s letter, had it been only what you say now. He is T. M. still. *Cerebrum non habet.*⁴⁶ Mr. Richardson is better and better.

James Wheatley (the jewel!) has given me warning to quit the Tabernacle in spring: So I am preparing to build at Norwich; for no place already built can be procured for love or money.

I think verily there is no need that you and I should be such strangers to each other. Surely we are old enough to be wiser

Come, I will give you a little work. Translate for me, into good English, the Latin verses that occur in the Earnest Appeal: and why not those three Greek ones?

Η, και κυανησιν επ' οφρυσι νευσε Κρονιων, etc.⁴⁷

I have answered poor Mr. Hervey's last tract, so far as it is personal. My love to Sally. *Vivamus!* Adieu!

You should send Charles Perronet's book immediately: *The Tax of the Apostolic Chamber*.

LXXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1764.

LONDON, *December 20,*

I SUPPOSE it is of little consequence in whose hand this is transcribed. Let it be accompanied by prayer, and good must follow one way or the other. Let us work while the day is. Adieu!

To the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol.

GENTLEMEN,

BOTH my brother and I, and all who have any connection with us, are extremely sensible of our obligations to you for the civility which you have shown us on all occasions; and we cannot but feel ourselves deeply interested in whatever we apprehend in any degree to concern your honor, or the general good and prosperity of the city of Bristol. This occasions my giving you the present trouble, which (whether it has any farther effect or no) you will please to receive as a testimony of the high regard which we shall ever retain for you.

The endeavors lately used to procure subscriptions for building a new playhouse in Bristol have given us not a little concern; and that on various accounts: Not barely as most of the present stage entertainments sap the foundation of all religion, as they naturally tend to efface all traces of piety and seriousness out of the minds of men; but as they are peculiarly hurtful to a trading city; giving a wrong turn to youth especially, gays trifling, and directly opposite to the spirit of industry and close application to business; and as drinking and debauchery of every kind are constant

attendants on these entertainments, with indolence, effeminacy, and idleness, which afflict trade in a high degree.

It was on these very considerations that the Corporation of Nottingham lately withstood all solicitations, and absolutely forbade the building of a new theater there; being determined to encourage nothing of the kind. And I doubt not but thousands will reap the benefit of their wise and generous resolution.

It does not become me, gentlemen, to press anything upon you; but I could not avoid saying thus much, both in behalf,

I remain, gentlemen,
Your obliged and obedient servant,
JOHN WESLEY.

LXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1764.

LONDON, *December 31,*

PRAY tell T. Lewis, I believe one I spoke to yesterday will make us a good housekeeper. She is selling off her things, and can come in two or three weeks.

John Matthews sent for me between two and three on Friday morning. One had a little before asked him how he found himself. He answered,

“The Lord protects, for ever near.”

When I came, he was perfectly sensible. I began to pray at three; and before I had spoken many words, his soul was set at liberty without a groan. Here is a subject for your yen. He has had “the witness,” in my sense, for several months: That is, he knew he was in the favor of God; and had no doubt of going to heaven.

I hope Goodwin is about three quarters printed.

You know Doctors differ. I could trust Dr. Turner as well as any.

I do not find anything on the atonement fit for a Deist. Pray inquire of your learned friends. My love to Sally. Adieu!

I have sent you, by Miss Billo, the preface to Goodwin, and the Appeals. You will English the Latin verses, and produce the neatest and correctest edition of them which has ever appeared. Adieu!

LXXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LEWISHAM, *February 28, 1766.*

WE must, we must, you and I at least, be all devoted to God! Then wives, and sons, and daughters, and everything else, will be real, invaluable blessings. *Eia age, rumpe moras!*⁴⁸ Let us this day use all the power we have! If we have enough, well; if not, let us this day expect a fresh supply. How long shall we drag on thus heavily, though God has called us to be the chief conductors of such a work? Alas! what conductors! If I am (in some sense) the head, and you the heart, of the work; may it not be said, “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint;?” Come, in the name of God, let us arise, and shake ourselves from the dust. Let us strengthen each other’s hands in God, and that without delay. Have *senes sexagenarii*⁴⁹ (who would have thought we should live to be such!) time to lose? Let you and I, and our house, serve the Lord in good earnest. May his peace rest on you and yours!

I desire all the Society to meet me on Tuesday evening (March 11) after preaching. Adieu!

LXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

WHITEHAVEN, *June 27, 1766.*

I THINK you and I have abundantly too little intercourse with each other. Are we not old acquaintance? Have we not known each other for half a

century? and are we not jointly engaged in such a work as probably no two other men upon earth are? Why then do we keep at such a distance? It is a mere device of Satan. But surely we ought not, at this time of day, to be ignorant of his devices. Let us therefore make the full use of the little time that remains. We, at least, should think aloud, and use to the uttermost the light and grace on each bestowed. We should help each other,

Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake.

I hope you are with Billy Evans. If there is an Israelite indeed, I think he is one. O insist everywhere on full redemption, receivable now by faith alone! consequently to be looked for now. You are made, as it were, for this very thing. Just here you are in your element. In connection I beat you; but in strong, short, pointed sentences, you beat me. Go on, in your own way, what God has peculiarly called you to. Press the instantaneous blessings: Then I shall have more time for my peculiar calling, enforcing the gradual work.

We must have a thorough reform of the Preacher. I wish you could come to Leeds, with John Jones, in the machine. It comes in two days: And after staying two days you might return. I would willingly bear your expenses up and down. I believe it would help, not hurt, your health. My love to Sally.

LXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

STOCKTON, *July 9, 1766.*

I SHALL judge of the Bands at Kingswood when I am there. They have not met tolerably for these dozen years.

Miss Lewen gave me a chaise and a pair of horses. You are a long time in getting to London; therefore, I hope you will do much good there. Yes, says William; "Mr. Charles will stop their prating in the Bands at London, as he has done at Bristol." I believe not. I believe you will rather encourage them to speak, humbly and modestly, the words of truth and soberness.

Great good has flowed and will flow therefrom. Let your “knowledge direct, not quench, the fire.” That has been done too much already. I trust you will now raise, not depress, their hopes.

One word more: concerning setting perfection too high. That perfection which I believe, I can boldly preach; because I think I see five hundred witnesses of it. Of that perfection which you preach, you think you do not see any witness at all. Why, then, you must have far more courage than me, or you could not persist in preaching it. I wonder you do not, in this article, fall in plumb with Mr. Whitefield. For do not you, as well as he, ask, “Where are the perfect ones?” I verily believe there are none upon earth; none dwelling in the body. I cordially assent to his opinion, that there is no such perfection here as you describe: At least, I never met with an instance of it; and I doubt I never shall. Therefore I still think, to set perfection so high is effectually to renounce it.

Pray tell Mr. Franks, I have this moment received Mr. Pine’s letter, and agree with every article of it.

I believe, the sooner S. Smith goes to Bristol the better. I wish you should advise and encourage her a little. Adieu!

LXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 12, 1767.*

WHAT I mean is, Bishop Lowth is sometimes hyper-critical, and finds fault where there is none. Yet, doubtless, his is the best English Grammar that is extant. I never saw Hermes. The author of it is a rooted Deist.

I will not complain of your preaching too often at Bath. Pray take two things upon yourself: First, that punctual notice be given on Sunday, March 8, in the chapel, of my preaching there on Tuesday evening, March 10. Secondly, that notice be given at Bristol, on the same Sunday, of my preaching at the new room on Wednesday the 11th, at seven in the evening, and afterwards meeting the Society; at which I desire all who can

to be present. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, I purpose meeting the classes.

Pray take care that brother Henderson wants nothing. Sickness is an expensive thing.

You are not yet (nor probably I) aware of pickthanks. Such were those who told you I did not pray for you by name in public; and they are liars into the bargain, unless they are deaf.

The voice of one who truly loves God surely is, —

“‘Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone.”

Such an one is certainly “as much athirst for sanctification as he was once for justification.” You remember, this used to be one of your constant questions. It is not now; therefore you are altered in your sentiments: And unless we come to an explanation, we shall inevitably contradict each other. But this ought not to be in anywise, if it can possibly be avoided.

I still think, to disbelieve all the professors amounts to a denial of the thing. For if there be no living witness of what we have preached for twenty years, I cannot, dare not, preach it any longer. The whole comes to one point: Is there, or is there not, any instantaneous sanctification between justification and death? I say, Yes. You (often seem to) say, No. What arguments brought you to think so? Perhaps they may convince me too.

Nay; there is one question more, if you allot me there is such a thing: Can one who has attained it fall? Formerly I thought not; but you (with Thomas Walsh and John Jones) convinced me of my mistake.

Saturday morning. — The delay of sending this gives me occasion to add a few words. I have heard nothing of the lovefeast; but if I had, I could not go. On Monday I am to set out for Norwich. Divide the men and women

at once: So we do in London. I shall not be in town again till this day fortnight.

O for a heart to praise my God!

What is there beside? Παντα γελωσ και παντα κονις ⁵⁰ Adieu!

LXXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

ATHLONE, *June 21, 1767.*

FOR some time I have had many thoughts concerning the work of God in these kingdoms. I have been surprised that it has spread so far; and that it has spread no farther. And what hindered? Surely the design of God was, to “bow a nation to his sway:” Instead of which, there is still only a Christian here and there; and the rest are yet in the shadow of death: Although those who would profit by us have need to make haste, as we are not likely to serve them long.

What, indeed, has hindered? I want to consider this. And must we not first say, *Nos Consules?* ⁵¹ If we were more holy in heart and life, thoroughly devoted to God, would not all the Preachers catch our fire, and carry it with them throughout the land? Is not the next hindrance, the littleness of grace (rather than of gifts) in a considerable part of our Preachers? They have not the whole mind that was in Christ; they do not steadily walk as he walked. And therefore the hand of the Lord is stayed; though not altogether; though he does work still: But it is not in such a degree as he surely would, were they holy as He that hath sent them is holy.

Is not the third hindrance the littleness of grace in the generality of the people? Therefore, they pray little, and with little fervency, for a general blessing; and therefore their prayer has little power with God. It does not, as once, shut and open heaven. Add to this, that as there is much of the spirit of the world in their hearts, so there is much conformity to the world in their lives. They ought to be both burning, and shining lights; but they neither burn nor shine. They are not true to the rules they profess to observe; they are not holy in all manner of conversation. Nay, many of

them are salt that has lost its savor; the little savor they once had. Wherewith then shall the rest of the land be seasoned? What wonder that their neighbors are as unholy as ever?

But what can be done to remedy this? I wish you would give an attentive reading, to the Minutes of the last Conference, and see if it will not be worth our while to enforce them with all our might. We have weight enough, and can enforce them. I know not who can and will when we are gone. Let us now fix things on as firm a foundation as possible, and not depend upon seeing another Conference.

Richard Bourke, John Dillon, and one or two more in this kingdom, are truly devoted men; so are a few of the Preachers in England. *Si sic omnes!*
⁵² What would be able to stand before them?

How go you on in London? How is Mr. Whitefield, and my Lady, and Mr. Madan, and Romaine, and Berridge

Do you converse with those that are most alive, and sparingly and warily with them that are dead while they live?

I hope Sally and your young ones are well. O what a work is it to train up children for heaven!

Peace be with you and yours! Ερωσο ⁵³

LXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 15, 1768.*

SIX or seven hundred pounds is brought to a Conference; of which five hundred at least pays the debt. Then extraordinary demands are answered. How much remains for law? I am now near three hundred pounds out of pocket, which I borrowed to pay Mr. Pardon. When I receive some more from Newcastle, I will send it to Bristol; probably very soon.

It is highly probable, one of the three will stand before the Lord But, so far as I can learn, such a thing has scarce been for these thousand years before, as a son, father, grandfather, *atavus*, *tritavus*, preaching the Gospel, nay, and the genuine Gospel, in a line. You know, Mr. White, sometime Chairman of the Assembly of Divines, was my grandmother's father.

Look upon our little ones at Kingswood as often as you can. A word from you will be a quickening to them. O how many talents are we entrusted with!

“But what account can thy bad steward make?” Indeed, we have need to gird up the loins of our mind, and run faster the small remainder of our race. “One thing!” Let us mind one thing only; and nothing great or small, but as it ministers to it!

Peace be with you and yours! Adieu.

LXXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

EDINBURGH, *May* 14, 1768.

It is well Sally R. is in peace. I have been long persuaded that if she continued to hinder him, God would, in mercy to them both, take her away.

I am glad Mr. Fletcher has been with you. But if the Tutor fails, what will become of our College at Trevecka? Did you ever see anything more queer than their plan of institution? Pray who penned it, man or woman? I am afraid the Visiter too will fail.

The archers here have sorely wounded Lord B——. But if Isaac stays with you in London, what have the Stewards in Bristol to do with him? They may, then, easily find his equal; for, with regard to them, he is equal to nothing.

I am at my wit's end with regard to two things, — the Church, and Christian perfection. Unless both you and I stand in the gap in good

earnest, the Methodists will drop them both. Talking, will not avail. We must *do*, or be born away. Will you set shoulder to shoulder? If so, think deeply upon the matter, and tell me what can be done. *Age, vir esto! nervos intendas tuos.*⁵⁴ Peace be with you and yours! Adieu.

LXXX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

NORTON, *near* STOCKTON, *June* 14, 1768.

I REJOICE to hear, from various persons, so good an account of the work of God it London. You did not come thither without the Lord; and you find your labor is not in vain. I doubt not but you will see more and more fruit, while you converse chiefly with them that are athirst for God. I find a wonderful difference in myself when I am among these, and when I am among fashionable Methodists. On this account, the north of England suits me best, where so many are groaning after full redemption.

But what shall we do? I think it is high time that you and I, at least, should come to a point. Shall we go on in asserting perfection against all the world? Or shall we quietly let it drop? We really must do one or the other; and, I apprehend, the sooner the better. What shall we jointly and explicitly maintain, (and recommend to all our Preachers,) concerning the nature, the time, (now or by and by?) and the manner of it? instantaneous, or not? I am weary of intestine war; of Preachers quoting one of us against the other. At length, let us fix something for good and all; either the same as formerly, or different from it. Ερωσο.⁵⁵

LXXXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1768.

LONDON, *December* 17,

I THANK you for your reproof. There is reason in what you say. If there was not evil, there was the appearance of evil.

Matters have not been well carried on at Liverpool; but “what cannot be cured must be endured.”

Why, you simpleton, you are cutting me out a month's word;. Nay, but I have neither leisure nor inclination to write a book. I intend only,

1. To leave out what I most dislike:
2. To mark what I most approve of:
3. To prefix a short preface. And I shall run the hazard of printing it at Bristol. There you yourself can read the proof sheets.

You do well with regard to my sister Emily. What farther is wanting I will supply. I hear nothing from or of our friend at Newcastle. I have no time for Handel or Avison now.

Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

I am now a mere Fellow of a College again.

LXXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

KINGSWOOD, *August 3, 1771.*

I WILL not throw away Thomas Rankin on the people of London. He shall go where they know the value of him.

We cannot put out what we never put in. I do not use the word "merit." I never did, neither do now, contend for the use of it. But I ask you, or any other, a plain question: And do not cry, Murder; but give me an answer. What is the difference between *mereri*, and "to deserve?" or between "deserving" and *meritum*? I say still, I cannot tell. Can you? Can Mr. Shirley, or any man living? In asking this question, I neither plead for merit, nor against it. I have nothing to do with it. I have declared a thousand times, There is no goodness in man till he is justified; no merit, either before or after; that is, taking the word in its proper sense: For in a loose sense, "meritorious" means no more than "rewardable."

As to reprobation, seeing they have drawn the sword, I throw away the scabbard. I send you a specimen. Let fifteen hundred of them be printed as soon as you please.

Nothing was ever yet expended out of the yearly subscription, without being immediately set down by the secretary. I never took a shilling from that fund yet.

What you advise with regard to our behavior toward opposers exactly agrees with my sentiments. I am full of business, as you may suppose. So adieu.

LXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

BIRMINGHAM, *March 17, 1772.*

THE more you are at the Foundry the better. It is a good spirit which rules in that Society.

You have done exactly right with regard to T. M——d. For the present, my hope of him is lost.

I am today to meet Mr. Fletcher at Billbrook. Part of the Third Check is printing. The rest I have ready. In this he draws the sword, and throws away the scabbard.

Yet I doubt not, they will forgive him all, if he will but promise — to write no more.

J. Roquet helped me at Bristol. I neither saw or heard anything of G. Stonehouse. Jane Jenkins is in a right spirit. Affliction has done her good. Mrs. Reeves I had no time for.

I feared S. Marriott would not recover. Mr. B.'s heart is truly softened. But why is she afraid to receive the Lord's supper?

If Mr. F. does come, it will be for good. It does not follow, "You felt nothing; therefore, neither did your hearers." In haste. Adieu.

LXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,
1772.

CONGLETON, *March 25,*

GILES BALL (as Oliver said) was a good man once! I hope we have no more of the sort. There is still a famous one in Bristol. Now I see why he could not join us. Poor Mr. B.! I used to conceive better telling of him.

I find almost all our Preachers, in ever Circuit, have done with Christian perfection. They say, they believe it: But they never preach it; or not once in a quarter. What is to be done? Shall we let it drop, or make a point of it?

O what a thing it is to have *curam animarum!*⁵⁶ You and I are called to this; to save souls from death; to watch over them as those that must give account! If our office implied no more than preaching a few times in a week, I could play with it: So might you. But how small a part of our duty (yours as well as mine) is this! God says to you, as well as me, "Do all thou canst, be it more or less, to save the souls for whom my Son has died." Let this voice be ever sounding in our ears; then shall we give up our account with joy. *Eia age, rumpe moras!*⁵⁷ I am ashamed of my indolence and inactivity. The good Lord help us both! Adieu! **Ερωσθε.**⁵⁸

LXXXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

PERTH, *April 26, 1772.*

I MEANT Mr. Buller. I have not been at Leeds; so I can give you no account of the matter.

I find by long experience it comes exactly to the same point, to tell men they shall be saved from all sin when they die; or to tell them it may be a

year hence, or a week hence, or any time but now. Our word does not profit, either as to justification or sanctification, unless we can bring them to expect the blessing while we speak.

I hope Fox is in peace. But he had no business there. I am glad you have done justice to Mrs. B.'s memory.

I do not believe either brother Wildman or any other spoke those words. I cannot believe it, unless you or brother Mather heard them. Many tell you tales of that sort, which are not true at all.

Your business, as well as mine, is to save souls. When we took Priests' orders, we undertook to make it our one business. I think everyday lost, which is not (mainly at least) employed in this thing. *Sum totus in illo.*⁵⁹

I am glad you are to be at Bristol soon. To whom shall I leave my papers and letters? I am quite at a loss. I think Mr. Fletcher is the best that occurs now. Adieu!

LXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

DEWSBURY, *July 10, 1772.*

IF I can meet with Mr. Hill's book at Leeds tomorrow, perhaps I may write a little before the Conference. I am glad Mr. Davis has been with you; but he must not assist you for nothing. If he joins heart and hand, he should have seventy pounds a year.

I believe, if you had applied warm treacle to the bruised parts, you would have been well in eight and forty hours. Let us work today! The night cometh!

A little you will pick out of Dr. Boyce's fine music for the use of our plain people.

My sister Kezzy was born about March, 1710; therefore, you could not be born later than December, 1708; consequently, if you live till December, 1772, you will enter your sixty-fifth year. ⁶⁰

Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

LXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BOTHER,
1772.

COLCHESTER, *November 4,*

NAY, there was some ground for that report; for I did dream that I was robbed. True; it was twenty years ago; but you know that was all one.

The connection is well proved in the Fourth Check. Mr. Knox's Letter is ready for the press. But give your dear friends a little time to chew upon Mr. Fletcher; else you may overload their stomach. There is no danger of my writing anything yet. I have just made my tour through Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex; but Kent, Sussex, and Hertfordshire still remain to be visited. Only the visitation of the classes (a fortnight's work, which begins on Monday) must come between.

I have an exceeding loving letter from J. R., in answer to my plain one. So, if it did him no good, (but possibly it might,) at least, it did him no harm. If we duly join faith and works in all our preaching, we shall not fail of a blessing. But of all preaching, what is usually called Gospel preaching is the most useless, if not the most mischievous: A dull, yea, or lively, harangue on the sufferings of Christ, or salvation by faith, without strongly inculcating holiness. I see, more and more, that this naturally tends to drive holiness out of the world.

Peace be with your spirits! Adieu!

LXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

SHOREHAM, *December 15, 1772.*

I HAVE scarce had a day yet in London, except Sundays, and the time of visiting the classes. Dr. Ford has never come near me; nor hardly near Billy Ley. I am afraid *evasit, erupit*.⁶¹ I have wrote to Mr. Fletcher today. As Mr. Hill is to fall upon me next, Mr. Fletcher will have a little time to breathe; and probably a little more while Mr. Hill is digesting my reply: For whom I think we shall, between us, find work for some time.

Why, you will not set shoulder to shoulder, or you could say something about the Church: But two are better than one. If we live till August, stand by me, and we will put the matter home.

I believe we can depend on the Captain concerning America. He has been long enough with you: Send him to us.

I often cry out, *Vitae! me redde prior!*⁶² Let me be again an Oxford Methodist! I am often in doubt whether it would not be best for me to resume all my Oxford rules, great and small. I did then walk closely with God, and redeem the time. But what have I been doing these thirty years? My love to all. Adieu!

LXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

WHITEHAVEN, *May 6, 1774.*

WITH or without Mr. Southcote, which he has done in a hundred places.

I will give nothing, and spend nothing, out of it; not a shilling: And what is paid can but be repaid. Nothing is hereby embezzled.

Duty is all I consider. Trouble and reproach I value not. And I am by no means clear that I can with a good conscience throw away what I think the providence of God has put into my hands. Were it not for the Chancery suit, I should not hesitate a moment. My complaint increases by slow

degrees, much the same as before. It seems I am likely to need a Surgeon every nine or ten weeks. Mr. Hev, of Leeds, vehemently advises me, never to attempt what they call a radical cure.

You did tell me, Mr. D. had accepted your mare. But surely there are more mares in the kingdom.

I never said a word of “publishing it after my death.” I judged it my duty to publish it now: And I have as good a right to believe one way as any man has to believe another. I was glad of an opportunity of declaring myself on the head. I beg Hugh Bold to let me think as well as himself; and to believe my judgment will go as far as his. I have no doubt of the substance, both of Glanvil’s and Cotton Mather’s narratives. Therefore in this point, you that are otherwise minded, bear with me.

*Veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.*⁶³ Remember, I am, upon full consideration, and seventy years’ experience, just as obstinate in my opinion as you in yours. Do not you think the disturbances in my father’s house were a Cocklane story?

Peace be with you and yours!

XC. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDONDERRY, *June 2, 1775.*

I THOUGHT it strange that poor S. F. should leave me nine hundred pounds in debt. But it is stranger still, that John Atlay should have paid sixteen hundred out of nine; and that I am an hundred and sixty pounds in debt notwithstanding!

Mr. Walthen’s method of radical cure I shall hardly try. I am very easy, and that is enough.

I am persuaded Billy Baynes’s eye is single; therefore he will be useful. Our other friend should have known his own mind. We parted only for four pounds a year.

I am exceeding glad that T. Rankin does not print till his papers have passed through our correction. I was afraid he would not have been so patient. Just what I thought at first, I think still of American affairs. If a blow is struck, I give America for lost; and perhaps England too. Our part is, to continue instant in prayer.

Sammy will not only be better, but quite well, if you do not kill him with kindness.

Has my friend taken an house at Bristol? Is Noah with her? What are they doing? Mr. Madan has behaved well. *Res ipsa reduxit in gratiam.*⁶⁴

Preach as much as you can, and no more than you can You never will be much stronger till you add change of air to exercise; riding two or three hundred miles point blank forward. Now you have an opportunity. Meet me at Leeds, with honest John Murlin. When you are tired, you may change places with him. You would return a stout, healthy man.

I purpose writing to Mr. Fletcher shortly. I do not remember that he has touched the cornerstone of their hypothesis, — “the covenant of redemption.”

One would not wish to be easy without it. Just here we must stop reasoning, or turn Calvinists. This is the very strength of their cause.

Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

XCI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS, *July 31, 1775.*

I MUST not delay answering your important question, — “What can be done with William Pine?” If he still, after my earnest warning, “every week publishes barefaced treason,” I beg you would once more warn him in my name and in your own; and if he slights or forgets this warning, then give him his choice, either to leave us quietly, or to be publicly disowned. At

such a time as this, when our foreign enemies are hovering over us, and our own nation is all in a ferment, it is particularly improper to say one word which tends to inflame the minds of the people.

My strength is gradually increasing, Except the shaking of my hand, I am now nearly as I was before my illness; but I hope, more determined to sell all for the pearl.

Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

XCI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS, *August 4, 1775.*

THE CONFERENCE (a blessed one) was concluded this morning, and I am as strong as I was when it began. I do not advise you to accept of the invitation: I read a letter today which I do not like.

Nay, Mr. S. is “settled in Bristol;” that is, as a Local Preacher.

Such an Address to the Americans would be highly seasonable. Have you heard anything of the Africans?

I hope to be in London on Tuesday evening, and the Thursday in the following week at Brecon.

As matters are now, I let the Orphan-house alone, lest the remedy should be worse than the disease. I have likewise a good letter from T. Rankin. He and all our brethren expect sufferings. Hitherto they have behaved extremely well. I must write by post to S. Castleman and my other Bristol friends. Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

XCIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

RAMSBURY-PARK, *October 19, 1775.*

IT takes time to set people's heads right: But we must despair of nothing. I have cast my bread upon the waters, and should have been content though there had been no present fruit. Some hours this morning I devote to Americans. What is material I shall endeavor to answer. It is well if I can give as good an account of everything else as of my change of judgment.

I find a danger now of a new kind: A danger of losing my love for the Americans: I mean, for their miserable leaders; for the poor sheep are "more sinned against than sinning:" Especially since the amazing information which I have received from James Ireland. Yet it is certain, the bulk of the people, both in England and America, mean no harm: They only follow their leaders, and do as they are bid, without knowing why or wherefore.

On Friday I hope to be in London, and to talk with the committee about building a new Foundry. This is a lovely spot, and a lovely family. It is pity but you could call here. It is four miles from Marlborough, and only a mile north of the London road. Peace be with you and yours! Adieu!

XCIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

NEWBURY, *October 19, 1775.*

LAST night I received a curious anecdote from Mr. Merchant, the Independent Minister here. He told me, "Mr. Evans of Bristol (the elder) informed me that he dined with you (J. W.) at a merchant's in Bristol; that he asked you how you was affected when you read the answer to your late tract: And you answered, Not at all; for you had never read it, and never would: To which he replied, That was not fair."

Where lies the mistake? The answer to my late tract is dated October 2. But I left Bristol October 1. Consequently, no such conversation could exist. I fancy I have caught hold of the thread, and can unravel the whole:

Last year a gentleman I did not know (who I suppose was Mr. Evans) dined with me at Mr. Wraxall's; and probably he might speak to me (though I do not remember it) of some tract which I had then published. If so, there is only an harmless mistake of Mr. Merchant's, who misunderstood what Mr. Evans said.

But this makes it still more probable that his son is the author of the letter to me. It is pity! Some of our friends at Bristol should tell him that he has quite lost himself; that he has forgotten all decency and good manners; and writes like a pert, self-conceited young man. I think a man of sense, that could command his temper, would make him a little ashamed. Adieu!

XCV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 28, 1775.*

I AM just returned from Bedford. I have not seen the King these dozen years. I do not know what you mean by Dr. Smyth's book. It was best to take no notice of the angry ones.

At Ramsbury-park, about a mile to the left of the high road, lives James Nind, Local Preacher, and general Steward for the Circuit, on a farm of five hundred pounds a year. His wife, Sally Nind, is one of the most amiable women I know. They mightily desire that you would spend a few nights with them.

I am just putting into the press a new edition of the "Address," corrected; in which my change is accounted for, and two of the questions fully answered. To the third, "Why did not the Parliament tax them before?" Mr. Madan answers, "Because they were wiser; they knew the mischief that would ensue." Dr. Johnson is in France.

I have not heard lately from Shoreham. If the worst comes, you must make shift at the Foundry for a week or two.

I do not think you are wise in destroying those papers. Some of them might have been useful to many.

When I was in Bristol I ordered that Hugh Saunderson should preach on Thursday night. None but you should take his place. Joseph Pilmoor may preach on Friday or Monday. Some much like, others much dislike, H. Saunderson; but his audience generally is not small. However, I will refer him to you; but I wish you would fix Thursday.

Mr. Fletcher would not be safe without you or me. I should like a conference with Mr. Madan. I have a second friendly letter from him today. Peace be with you and yours!

Pray give my love to T. Lewis, and tell him I thank him for his letter. If the persons now taken up are hanged, it may be the saving of the nation. Adieu!

XCVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 3, 1775.*

THE proposals and preface will be sent on Monday. In the preface to the new edition of the "Address," (which I will send with the proposals,) there is, I think, a sufficient answer to Mr. Evans's letter. But Mr. Raikes is right: If it bears no name, it is not entitled to any answer.

No man is a good judge of his own cause. I believe I am tolerably impartial: But you are not (at least was not some time since) with regard to King Charles the First. Come and see what I say. If the worst comes, we can agree to disagree.

The History has been some time in the press. The first volume is nearly printed. The paper is good; so is the type; and, what is stranger, the execution too. So much for your first letter.

Still I know not whom you mean by Dr. Smyth; unless it be the young Clergyman in Ireland, who is a poet, but not of the first magnitude.

“Why were they not taxed for a hundred and fifty years?” How shockingly ignorant of the law are our Lawyers! yea, and the whole body of the Lords and Commons into the bargain! to let Lord Chatham, Mr. Burke, etc., etc., so long triumph in this *argumentum palmarium*! Why, it is a blunder from top to bottom. They have been taxed over and over since the Restoration, by King Charles, King William, Queen Anne, and George the Second. I can now point out chapter and verse.

I think Mr. Madan grows more and more loving. *Res ipsa jam reduxit in gratiam.*⁶⁵ I shall be right glad to see him. I hear nothing from Cornwall: And no news, you know is good news.

Pray tell brother Southcote, I like his treatise well. I am writing something nearly on the subject. I am desired to preach at Bethnal-green church on Sunday se’nnight, and purpose to print my sermon. You may guess a little of the tenor of it by the text: “Lo, I have sinned and done wickedly: But these sheep, what have they done?”

I hope Sally is better. Pence be with you all! Adieu!

XCVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

June 8, 1780.

READ Bishop Stillingfleet’s *Irenicon*, or any impartial history of the ancient church, and I believe you will think as I do. I verily believe I have as good a right to ordain, as to administer the Lord’s supper. But I see abundance of reasons why I should not use that right, unless I was turned out of the Church. At present, we are just in our place.

Mr. Galloway’s is an excellent tract. He is a clear writer. Shall I print it in the Magazine? or a separate pamphlet? Yet I can by no means agree with him, that taxation and representation are inseparable. I think I have fully proved the contrary. “But those who are taxed, without being represented, are under a despotic government.” No: The will of the King is not their law, any more than it is ours.

I would not read over Dr. Watts's tract for an hundred pounds. You may read it, and welcome. I will not, dare not, move those subtle, metaphysical controversies. Arianism is not in question: it is Eutychianism, or Nestorianism. But what are they? What neither I nor any one else understands. But they are what tore the Eastern and Western churches asunder.

I am fully persuaded the Bishop will never meddle with us. He is a wiser man.

By this time you might understand me better. I use people whom I do not trust. I meant, I will not trust him to correct the next edition of the Hymn book.

The Ecclesiastical History will be printed first. If I live a little longer, Hook may follow.

It is well I accepted none of Lord George's invitations. If the Government suffers this tamely, I know not what they will not suffer.

Mr. Collins is not under my direction; nor am I at all accountable for any steps he takes. He is not in connection with the Methodists. He only helps us now and then. I will suffer no disputing at the Conference.

Undoubtedly many of the patriots seriously intend to overturn the Government. But the hook is in their nose. Peace be with you all!

XCVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

THIRSK, *June 27, 1781.*

THIS is the last day of my seventy-eighth year: And (such is the power of God) I feel as if it were my twenty-eighth.

My Journal is ready for Joseph to transcribe. I wonder why it is, that we hear nothing from Madeley. Sure, prejudice has not stepped in, or Calvinism!

I find no fault with your answer to the gentlemen. But you must expect they will reply, (at least in their hearts,) *Hic nigrae succus loliginis!*⁶⁶ “You are inclined to Popery!”

Next Saturday I expect to be at Epworth; the second, at Boston; the third, at Sheffield. I take the opportunity of a broken year, to visit those parts of Lincolnshire, which I have not seen before, but once, these twenty years.

From several I have lately heard that God has blessed your preaching. See your calling!

Cease at once to work and live!

Peace be with all your spirits!

XCIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

ALNWICK, *May 28, 1782.*

THE history of the matter is this: When I was at Dawgreen, near Birstal, the Trustees for Birstal house brought me a Deed, which they read over, and desired me to sign. We disputed upon it about an hour. I then gave them a positive answer that I would not sign it; and, leaving them abruptly, went up into my room.

About noon I preached at Horbury. In the evening I preached and met the society at Wakefield. At night, a little before I went to bed, the Trustees came again, got round and worried me down. But I think they cannot worry you. May not you very properly write to Mr. Valton? — “If the Trustees will settle the Birstal house on the Methodist plan, I will sign their Deed with all my heart; but if they build a house for a Presbyterian meeting house, I will not, dare not, have anything to do with it.”⁶⁷

The beginning of Rodney’s account is utterly unfashionable. I wonder how it entered into his head. We “get God on our side” by the continual prayer of thousands. You may send me Cicero, and Fabricius, and the American

War, together with the next Magazines, to York. I expect to be ten or twelve days in and near Edinburgh, and about the 17th of June at Newcastle. Peace be with you all! Adieu!

C. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *May 2*, 1783.

IN three or four days we hope to embark: When we land, you may hear further: But at a venture you may direct to Chester: And do not forget the verses.

I marvel Miss F. does not answer my letter. Surely she is not affronted at anything. We parted in much friendship. I think verily you will keep out of debt while I live, if you will give me a hint now and then.

We must positively let Mr. Abraham drop. Let his relations win him and wear him. I am in hopes T. M. will satisfy Dr. Coke. I suppose she loses her annuity if she owns her marriage.

I have not seen Mr. Barnard. We had an exceeding happy Conference, which concluded this morning. I wish all our English Preachers were of the same spirit with the Irish, among whom is no jarring string. I never saw such simplicity and teachableness run through a body of Preachers before.

Tell me all you know of the good Congress, the Loyalists, and the Colonies. Peace be with you and yours. Adieu!

CI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *April 11*, 1785.

I JUST write a line to let you know that we came to Holyhead on Saturday afternoon, and went on board about ten at night: But we had a dead calm till between ten and eleven in the morning, at which time I began the public service. After sermon I prayed that God would give us a moderate wind, with a safe, easy, and speedy passage. While I was speaking the wind

sprung up, and carried us on at an average five miles an hour; so that we sailed from Holywell Bay to Dublin Bay in exactly twelve hours. The sea, meantime, was as smooth as a looking glass; so that no creature in the ship

was sick a moment. Does not God hear the prayer? All is quiet here. Love to all. Adieu!

CII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

CORK, *May 12, 1785.*

TWICE I have wrote to Dr. Coke concerning the Journal. I suppose one, if not two, of his letters have miscarried. I will not sentence him till he answers for himself.

All I can say, and all I will say, is, I do not intend ever to publish your picture in the Magazine.

At Dublin I was informed, Mr. Barnard, the present Bishop's son, is dead. In the north I may learn more.

I speak of myself, as of other men, with a single eye. I am glad you have been at Newgate. All we have heard in England, of danger from Ireland, is pure invention. We have been humbugged by the patriots. There is no more danger from Ireland than from the Isle of Man.

If Sally wants the sinews of war, give me a hint. John Atlay has not complained to me of poverty for above this month.

I am fully persuaded that the measure of peace which enables me to go on cheerfully in my work, and to employ all my time and strength therein, is not from Satan, nor from nature, but from God.

To save tenpence postage, I will write a few lines to Patty in your letter. Peace be with you all!

CIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

KILLEMAN, *near* ARMAGH, *June 2, 1785.*

So the good man will know pain no more! But I suppose he died without disclosing what his son Vincent charged him not to reveal till he came to die! If it had been of any consequence to the cause of God, he could not have died without disclosing it.

Pray talk with, as well as inquire concerning, the Clergyman you mention. Many times you see farther into men than I do.

I suppose you have before now received my Journal, as well as preceding letter. Probably the first ship that sails after the 6th of July will bring me to Holyhead. I hope to see Dr. Coke in London before the end of it.

About once a quarter I hear from Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. I grudge his sitting still: But who can help it? I love ease as well as he does; but I dare not take it while I believe there is another world.

The patriots here are nobody. They are quite scattered, and have no design, bad or good. All is still in Ireland; only the work of God flourishes, spreading and deepening on every side. Peace be with all your spirits! Adieu!

CIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *June 19, 1785.*

I CAME hither (as I proposed when I set out) yesterday. This week I am to meet the classes. Next week we have our little Conference. The week following I hope to cross the Channel. The work of God, almost in every part of the kingdom, is in a prosperous state. Here is a set of excellent young Preachers. Nine in ten of them are much devoted to God. I think, number for number, they exceed their fellow laborers in England. These in Dublin particularly are burning and shining lights.

I am glad you have paid them one more visit at Shoreham. What the poor people will do now, I know not: But the Great Shepherd knows, and will order all things well. But what becomes of Betsy Briggs?

The letter from Rome is curious enough. Fine words! And you know the Italians are famous for sincerity.

I should be sorry indeed if Sammy Tooth were a sufferer: But surely he knows his own business. Many here know and love you well. My love to all. Adieu!

CV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

ATHLONE, *June 23, 1785.*

CERTAINLY you have heard from me; for I sent you one, and intended to send you two, Journals: Only George Whitfield made a blunder, and directed the second to Henry Moore.

Several months since I wrote to Dr. Coke concerning the extract he had taken from your Journal. I will write to him again. But he must bring it, not send it by post. My letters today cost me eighteen shillings.

I promise you, not to publish your picture in the Magazine before midsummer, 1786. I think that is long, enough to look forward,

Mr. Barnard is dead. I know nothing of M. F. Ireland is full as quiet as England; and our societies were never so much alive as they are now.

If Sally is ill, why does she not go into the country? Peace be with all your spirits!

CVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

MANCHESTER, *April 6, 1786.*

I AM glad you are again able to officiate at the chapels. Let us “manage wisely the last stake!” It is enough that John Davis finished his course well; and we are sure Nancy Sharland did so.

Sammy Bradburn thought of going farther with me. But the frost and snow drove him back. I believe, the loss of his wife will be one of the greatest blessings which he has ever met with in his life.

Mrs. Fletcher will not be in haste to remove from Madeley, though her light is there almost hid under a bushel. Mr. Ireland will give me no help with regard to writing Mr. Fletcher’s life, “because he intends to publish it himself!” Let him do it, and I will follow him. Where is your Elegy? You may say, as my father in his verses on Mr. Nelson, —

“Let friendship’s sacred name excuse
The last effort of an expiring muse.”

Can you or I ever have such another subject! Melville Horne hopes to be ordained on Trinity-Sunday.

Indeed I love the Church as sincerely as ever I did; and I tell our societies everywhere, “The Methodists will not leave the Church, at least while I live.” I doubt I shall not half agree with our friends in Scotland: But I shall know more, and you will hear more, when I see them.

While I live, Dr. Coke and I shall go through Ireland by turns. He will have work enough this year with Edward Smyth. I doubt Edward “needs a bridle:” But who can put the bit into his mouth? I am not sorry your Concerts are come to an end. Remember your dream concerning Sammy! “The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth!”

Mr. Pennant's I know, and Dr. Johnson's I know; but I know nothing of Mr. Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides. I should imagine it was worth reading. Peace be with all your spirits! Adieu!

CVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

KEIGHLEY, *April 18, 1786.*

MY fever lasted hardly three days and then went away in a violent fit of cramp. So did a fever I had a year ago.

Eight or ten Preachers, it is probable, (but I have not met with one yet,) will say something about leaving the Church, before the Conference. It is not improbable many will be driven out of it where there are Calvinist Ministers. The last time I was at Scarborough I earnestly exhorted our people to go to church; and I went myself. But the wretched Minister preached such a sermon, that I could not in conscience advise them to hear him any more.

They will ordain no one without my full and free consent. It is not true, that they have done it already. As to the Scots, I have no hopes of winning them by fair means. If I see Scotland again, I shall fight with a flail. The work of God goes on gloriously in many places; and most of the Preachers are much devoted to God. Peace be with you and yours.

CVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS *May 3, 1786.*

If there be a man in England, who understands Mrs. Horton's case, it is Dr. Wilson. I advise John Horton to find him out, if he be above ground.

I do not know that any one opens your letters. They come to me with the seal unbroken.

As you observe, one may leave a church, (which I would advise in some cases,) without leaving *the* Church. Here we may remain in spite of all wicked or Calvinistical Ministers.

Commonly, when I am in London, I am so taken up, that I cannot often spare time to go three miles backward and forward. That was the *πρωτον ψευδος*; ⁶⁸ the getting you a house so far from me, as well as far from both the chapels.

I cannot help it if people have no *docity*. Seven guineas Patty has had from me within this month; besides ten or eleven which she has worried me to give Nancy Jervas this winter.

It is a bad dog that is not worth whistling for. In the times I have been at Bedford, Mr. Barham never owned me, much less invited me to his house. I do not know him, if I meet him. Perhaps he loves me — at a distance. Peace be with you and yours!

CIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR BROTHER,

Near EDINBURGH, *May* 18, 1786.

So sister Horton is in peace! This may be a blessed visitation for Mr. Horton. Perhaps it will prove in the event one of the greatest blessings which he ever received in his life. I hope you have wrote to Mr. Durbin. Alas, what do riches avail him!

Certainly Providence *permitted* injudicious men to thrust you three miles from me, who should rather have been always at my elbow.

I doubt whether there be not an anachronism in the case of John Price; whether they do not now impute to him what was done long ago.

My Journal should have been sent several days since; but Joseph Bradford trusted another person to transcribe it. This society flourishes much. I hope to be here again on the 30th instant. Peace be with you all!

CX. — To the Reverend George Whitefield.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

March 20, 1739.

WOULD you have me speak to you freely? without any softening or reserve at all? I know you would. And may Our loving Savior speak to your heart; so my labor shall not be in vain. I do not commend you with regard to our brothers Seward and Cennick. But let me speak tenderly; for I am but a little child. I know our Lord has brought good out of their going to you: God to you, and good to them: Very much good; and may he increase it a thousandfold, how much soever it be! But is everything good, my brother, out of which He brings good? I think that does not follow. O my brother, is it well for you or me to give the least hint of setting up our will or judgment against that of our whole society? Was it well for you once to mention a desire which they had all solemnly declared they thought unreasonable? Was not this abundant cause to drop any design which was not manifestly grounded on a clear command of our Lord? Indeed, my brother, in this I commend you not. If our brother R——, or P——, desired anything, and our other brethren disapproved of it, I cannot but think he ought immediately to let it drop. How much more ought you or I? They are upon a level with the rest of their brethren. But I trust you and I are not: We are the servants of all. Thus far have I spoken with fear and much trembling, and with many tears. O may our Lord speak the rest! For what shall such an one as I say to a beloved servant of my Lord? O pray that I may see myself a worm and no man! I wish to be

Your brother in Jesus Christ.

CXI. — *To the Same.**April, 1741.*

WOULD you have me deal plainly with you, my brother? I believe you would: Then, by the grace of God, I will.

Of many things I find you are not rightly informed; of others you speak what you have not well weighed.

The society room at Bristol, you say, is adorned. How? Why, with a piece of green cloth nailed to the desk; two sconces for eight candles each in the middle; and — nay I know no more. Now, which of these can be spared I know not; nor would I desire either more adorning or less.

But “lodgings are made for me or my brother.” That is, in plain English, there is a little room by the school, where I speak to the persons who come to me; and a garret, in which a bed is placed for me. And do you grudge me this? Is this the voice of my brother, my son, Whitefield?

You say further, “that the children at Bristol are clothed as well as taught.” I am sorry for it; for the cloth is not paid for yet, and was bought without my consent or knowledge. “But those of Kingswood have been neglected.” This is not so, notwithstanding the heavy debt which lay upon it. One master and one mistress have been in the house ever since it was capable of receiving them. A second master has been placed there some months since; and I have long been seeking for two proper mistresses; so that as much has been done, as matters stand, if not more, than I can answer to God or man.

Hitherto, then, there is no ground for the heavy charge of perverting your design for the poor colliers. Two years since, your design was to build them a school, that their children also might be taught to fear the Lord. To this end, you collected some money more than once; how much I cannot say, till I have my papers. But this I know, it was not near one half of what has been expended on the work. This design you then recommended to me, and I pursued it with all my might, through such a train of difficulties as, I will be bold to say, you have not yet met with in your life. For many months I collected money wherever I was, and began building, though I had not then a quarter of the money requisite to finish. However, taking all the debt upon myself, the creditors were willing to stay: And then it was that I took possession of it in my own name; that is, when the foundation was laid; and I immediately made my will, fixing my brother and you to succeed me therein.

But it is a poor case, that you and I should be talking thus. Indeed, these things ought not to be. It lay in your power to have prevented all, and yet to have born testimony to what you call “the truth.” If you had disliked my sermon, you might have printed another on the same text, and have answered my proofs, without mentioning my name: This had been fair and friendly.

You rank all the maintainers of universal redemption with Socinians themselves. Alas! my brother, do you not know even this, that the Socinians allow no redemption at all? that Socinus himself speaks thus: *Tota redemptio nostra per Christum metaphora?*⁶⁹ and says expressly, “Christ did not die as a ransom for any, but only as an example for all mankind?” How easy were it for me to hit many other palpable blots in that which you call an answer to my sermon! And how above measure contemptible would you then appear to all impartial men, either of sense or learning! But I spare you; mine hand shall not be upon you. The Lord be judge between me and thee! The general tenor both of my public and private exhortations, when I touch thereon at all, as even my enemies know if they would testify, is, “Spare the young man, even Absalom, for my sake.”

CXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEWISHAM, *February 21, 1770.*

MR. KEEN informed me some time since of your safe arrival in Carolina; of which indeed I could not doubt for a moment, notwithstanding the idle report of your being cast away, which was so current in London. I trust our Lord has more work for you to do in Europe, as well as in America. And who knows, but before your return to England, I may pay another visit to the New World? I have been strongly solicited by several of our friends in New York and Philadelphia. They urge many reasons, some of which appear to be of considerable weight: And my age is no objection at all; for I bless God, my health is not barely as good, but abundantly better in several respects, than when I was five-and-twenty. But there are so many reasons on the other side, that as yet I can determine nothing: So I must wait for farther light. Here I am: Let the Lord do with me as seemeth

him good. For the present I must beg of you to supply my lack of service by encouraging our Preachers as you judge best; who are as yet comparatively young and inexperienced; by giving them such advises as you think proper; and, above all, by exhorting them, not only to love one another, but, if it be possible, as much as lies in them, to live peaceably with all men.

Some time ago, since you went hence, I heard a circumstance which gave me a good deal of concern; namely, that the College or Academy in Georgia had swallowed up the Orphan-house. Shall I give my judgment without being asked? Methinks, friendship requires I should. Are there not then two points which come in view? a point of mercy, and a point of justice? With regard to the former, may it not be inquired, Can anything on earth be a greater charity, than to bring up orphans? What is a College or an Academy compared to this? unless you could have such a College as perhaps is not upon earth. I know the value of learning, and am more in danger of prizing it too much, than too little. But still, I cannot place the giving it to five hundred students, on a level with saving the bodies, if not the souls too, of five hundred orphans. But let us pass on from the point of mercy to that of justice: You had land given, and collected money, for an Orphan-house: Are you at liberty to apply this to any other purpose? at least, while there are any orphans in Georgia left? I just touch upon this, though it is an important point, and leave it to your own consideration, whether part of it, at least, might not properly be applied to carry on the original design? In speaking thus freely, on so tender a subject, I have given you a fresh proof of the sincerity with which I am

Your ever affectionate friend and brother.

CXIII. — *To the Reverend James Hervey.*

DEAR SIR,
1758.

LONDON, *November 29,*

A WEEK or two ago, in my return from Norwich, I met with Mr. Pierce of Bury, who informed me of a conversation which he had had a few days before. Mr. Cudworth, he said, then told him, that he had prevailed on Mr. Hervey to write against me, who likewise, in what he had written, referred to the book which he (Mr. Cudworth) had lately published.

Every one is welcome to write what he pleases concerning me. But would it not be well for you to remember, that, before I published anything concerning you, I sent it to you in a private letter; that I waited for an answer for several months, but was not favored with one line; that when at length I published part of what I had sent you, I did it in the most inoffensive manner possible, — in the latter end of a larger work, purely designed to preserve those in connection with me from being tossed to and fro by various doctrines? What, therefore, I may fairly expect from my friend, is, to mete to me with the same measure: To send to me first, in a private manner, any complaint he has against me; to wait as many months as I did; and, if I give you none or no satisfactory answer, then, to lay the matter before the world, if you judge it will be to the glory of God.

But whatever you do in this respect, one thing I request of you: Give no countenance to that insolent, scurrilous, virulent libel, which bears the name of William Cudworth. Indeed, how you can converse with a man of his spirit, I cannot comprehend. O leave not your old, well tried friends! The new is not comparable to them. I speak not this because I am afraid of what any one can say or do to me. But I am really concerned for you: An evil man has gained the ascendant over you, and has persuaded a dying man, who had shunned it all his life, to enter into controversy as he is stepping into eternity! Put off your armor, my brother! You and I have no moments to spare: Let us employ them all in promoting peace and goodwill among men. And may the peace of God keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus! So prays

Your affectionate brother and servant.

CXIV. — *To the Reverend John Fletcher.*

DEAR SIR,

BIRMINGHAM, *March 20, 1768.*

I WAS told yesterday, that you are sick of the conversation even of them who profess religion; that you find it quite unprofitable, if not hurtful, to converse with them three or four hours together; and are sometimes almost determined to shut yourself up, as the less evil of the two.

I do not wonder at it at all; especially considering with whom you have chiefly conversed for some time past; namely, the hearers of Mr. —— and Mr. ——. The conversing with them I have rarely found to be profitable to my soul. Rather, it has damped my desires, and has cooled my resolutions: And I have commonly left them with a dry, dissipated spirit.

And how can you expect it to be otherwise? For do we not naturally catch their spirit with whom we converse? And what spirit can we expect them to be of, considering the preaching they sit under? Some happy exceptions I allow; but, in general, do men gather grapes of thorns? Do they gather the necessity of inward and outward self-devotion, of constant, universal self-denial, or of the patience of hope, or the labor of love, from the doctrine they hear? Do they gather from that amorous way of praying to Christ, or that luscious way of preaching his righteousness, any real holiness? I never found it so. On the contrary, I have found that even the precious doctrine of salvation by faith has need to be guarded with the greatest care, or those who hear it will slight both inward and outward holiness.

I will go a step further. I seldom find it profitable to converse with any who are not athirst for full salvation; and who are not big with earnest expectation of receiving it every moment. Now, you find none of these among those we are speaking of; but many, on the contrary, who are in serious ways, directly or indirectly, opposing this blessed work of God;

the work, I mean, which God is carrying on throughout this kingdom, by unlearned and plain men.

You have for some time conversed a good deal with the genteel Methodists. Now, it matters not a straw what doctrine they hear, whether they frequent the Lock, or West-street, if they are as salt which has lost its savor; if they are conformed to the maxims, the spirit, the fashions, and customs of the world. Certainly, then, if you converse much with such persons, you will return less a man than you were before.

But were either the one or the other of ever so excellent a spirit, you conversed with them too long. One had need to be an angel, not a man, to converse three or four hours at once to any good purpose. In the latter part of such a conversation, we shall be in great danger of losing all the profit we had gained before.

But have you not a remedy for all this in your hands? In order to converse profitably, may you not select a few persons who stand in awe of Him they love; persons who are vigorously working out their salvation; who are athirst for full redemption, and every moment expecting it, if not already enjoying it?

Though it is true, these will generally be poor and mean, seldom possessed of either riches or learning, unless there be now and then one of higher rank; if you converse with such as these, humbly and simply, an hour at a time, with earnest prayer for a blessing; you will not complain of the unprofitableness of conversation, or find any need of turning hermit.

Do you not observe that all the lay Preachers who are connected with me are maintainers of general redemption? And it is undeniable, that they are instrumental of saving souls. God is with them, and he works by them, and has done so for near these thirty years: Therefore, the opposing them is neither better nor worse than fighting against God.

I am

Your ever affectionate brother.

CXV.— *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

January, 1773.

WHAT an amazing work has God thought in these kingdoms, in less than forty years! And it not only continues, but increases throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland; nay, it has lately spread into New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina. But the wise men of the world say, “When Mr. Wesley drops, then all this is at an end!” And so it surely will, unless, before God calls him hence, one is found to stand in his place. For, *ουκ αγαθον πολυκοιρανιη. Εις κοιρανος εσω.*⁷⁰ I see more and more, unless there be one *προεσως*,⁷¹ the work can never be carried on. The body of the Preachers are not united: Nor will any part of them submit to the rest; so that either there must be one to preside over all, or the work will indeed come to an end.

But who is sufficient for these things? qualified to preside both over the Preachers and people? He must be a man of faith and love, and one that has a single eye to the advancement of the kingdom of God. He must have a clear understanding; a knowledge of men and things, particularly of the Methodist doctrine and discipline; a ready utterance; diligence and activity, with a tolerable share of health There must be added to these, favor with the people, with the Methodists in general. For unless God turn their eyes and their hearts towards him, he will be quite incapable of the work. He must likewise have some degree of learning; because there are many adversaries, learned as well as unlearned, whose mouths must be stopped. But this cannot be done, unless he be able to meet them on their own ground.

But has God provided one so qualified? Who is he? Thou art the man! God has given you a measure of loving faith; and a single eye to his glory. He has given you some knowledge of men and things; particularly of the old plan of Methodism. You are blessed with some health, activity, and diligence; together with a degree of learning. And to all these he has lately added, by a way none could have foreseen, favor both with the Preachers and the whole people. Come out in the name of God! Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty! Come while I am alive and capable of labor!

*Dum superest Luchesi quod torqueat, et pedibus me
Porto meis, nulle dextram subeunte bacillo.*⁷²

Come while I am able, God assisting, to build you up in faith, to ripen your gifts, and to introduce you to the people. *Nil tanti.*⁷³ What possible employment can you have, which is of so great importance?

But you will naturally say, "I am not equal to the task; I have neither grace nor gifts for such an employment." You say true; it is certain you have not. And who has? But do you not know Him who is able to give them? perhaps not at once, but rather day by day: As each is, so shall your strength be. "But this implies," you may say, "a thousand crosses, such as I feel I am not able to bear." You are not able to bear them now; and they are not now come. Whenever they do come, will He not send them in due number, weight, and measure? And will they not all be for your profit, that you may be a partaker of his holiness?

Without conferring, therefore, with flesh and blood, come and strengthen the hands, comfort the heart, and share the labor, of

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,
1783.

LONDON, *November 24,*

THERE is not a person to whom I would have wished Miss Bosanquet joined besides you. But this union, I and thoroughly persuaded, is of God; and so are all the children of God with whom I have spoken. Mr. Bosanquet's being so agreeable to it, I look upon as a token for good; and so was the ready disposing of the house and the stock, which otherwise would have been a great encumbrance. From the first day which you spend together in Madeley, I hope you will lay down an exactly regular plan of living; something like that of the happy family at Leytonstone. Let your light shine to all that are round about you. And let sister Fletcher do as

much as she can for God, and no more. To his care I commit you both, and am, my dear friends,

Your very affectionate brother.

CXVII. — *To Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell.* ⁷⁴

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *August 23, 1739.*

I HAVE not had half an hour's leisure to write since I received yours of the fourteenth instant, in which the note for L15. 11s. was enclosed.

The Captain's journey to London, as he owns it was the happiest, so I believe it was the most useful, one he ever had. His resolution was a little shaken here; but he now appears more settled than before. Satan hath indeed desired to have us, that he may sift us as wheat; but our Lord hath prayed for us; so that the faith of few has failed. Far the greater part of those who have been tempted has come as gold out of the fire.

It seems to be a plain proof that the power of God is greatly with this people, because they are tempted in a manner scarce common to men. No sooner do any of them begin to taste of true liberty, but they are buffeted both within and without. The messengers of Satan close them in on every side. Many are already turned out of doors by their parents or masters; many more expect it everyday: But they count all these things dung and dross, that they may win Christ. O let us, if His name be called upon us, be thus minded!

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant in Christ.

CXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *January 26, 1746-7.*

OUR number of patients increases here daily. We have our upwards of two hundred. Many have already desired to return thanks, having found a

considerable change for the better already. But we are at a great loss for medicines; several of those we should choose being not to be had at any price in Bristol.

I have been sometimes afraid you have suffered loss for want of a frank acknowledgment of the truth: I mean with regard to the gay world. If we openly avow what we approve, the fear or shame generally lights on them; but if we are ashamed or afraid, then they pursue, and will be apt to rally us both out of our reason and religion.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

My best respects attend Mrs. Blackwell, and Mrs. Dewal; I hope you strengthen each other's hands.

CXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

SHEFFIELD, *May* 14, 1747.

ARE you not yet weary and faint in your mind? Do you continue to strive for the mastery? It is a good though painful fight. I am sometimes afraid of your turning back before you conquer. Your enemies are many, and your strength is small. What an amazing thing it will be, if you endure to the end!

I doubt you will sometimes be in danger by a snare you are not aware of: You will often meet with persons who labor till they are delivered of all they know, and who (perhaps, "with very good intent, but little wit") will tell you abundance of things, good or bad, of the Society, or any member of it. Now, all this is poison to your soul. You have only to give an account of yourself to God. O may you do it with joy, and not with grief!

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

CXX.— *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

ST. IVES, *July 18, 1747.*

ARE you not yet weary and faint in your mind? weary of striving to enter in at the strait gate? I trust you are not; and that you never will, till you enter into the kingdom. Many thoughts of that kind will probably rise in your heart; but you will have power to trample them under your feet. You have nothing to do with the things that are behind: The prize and the crown are before you. So run, that you may obtain; desiring only to apprehend that for which you are apprehended of Christ Jesus.

A great door and effectual is opened now, almost in every corner of this country. Here is such a change within these two years as has hardly been seen in any other part of England. Wherever we went, we used to carry our lives in our hands; and now there is not a dog to wag his tongue. Several Ministers are clearly convinced of the truth; few are bitter; most seem to stand neuter. Some of the gentlemen (so called) are almost the only opposers now; drinking, reveling, cursing, swearing gentlemen who neither will enter into the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer any others, if they can prevent it. The most violent Jacobites among these are continually crying out, that we are bringing the Pretender; and some of these worthy men bear His Majesty's commission, as Justices of the Peace.

My best wishes attend Mrs. Blackwell, who, I hope, measures step for step with you in the way to the kingdom.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

I set out for Bristol on Thursday.

CXXI. — *To The Same.*

DEAR SIR, DUBLIN, *August* 13, 1747.

I HAVE found a home in this strange land. I am at Mr. Lunell's just as at the Foundry; only that I have not such attendance here; for I meet the people at another part of the town. For natural sweetness of temper, for courtesy and hospitality, I have never seen any people like the Irish. Indeed, all I converse with are only English transplanted into another soil; and they are much mended by the removal, having left all their roughness and surliness behind them.

They receive the word of God with all gladness and readiness of mind. The danger is, that it should not take deep root; that it should be as seed falling on stony ground. But is there not the same danger in England also? Do not you find it in London? You have received the word with joy; and it begins to spring up; but how soon may it wither away! It does not properly take root till we are convinced of inward sin; till we begin to feel the entire corruption of our nature. I believe, sometimes you have found a little of this. But you are in the hands of a good Physician; who, if you give yourself up to his guidance, will not only wound, but also make whole.

Mr. Lunell and his family desire their best respects to Mrs. Blackwell and you. His daughter can rejoice in God her Savior. They propose to spend the winter in England.

I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate servant.

I cannot forget Mrs. Deaval, whether I see her or not.

CXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *February 2, 1747-8.*

I HAVE received the second bill of exchange which you was so kind as to send by Saturday's post. As we do not intend to build immediately, the money will be payable before we want it.

I do not question but Mrs. Dewal and you will be serviceable to each other. God has given her an advisable spirit; and where that is, there will be every good and perfect gift.

Poor Mr. Hall, when I was at Salisbury, furnished me with a sufficient answer to those who speak of the connection between him and us. He could not have set the matter in a clearer light, than by turning both me and my sister out of doors.

Both in Ireland, and in many parts of England, the work of our Lord increases daily. At Leeds only, the Society, from an hundred and fourscore, is increased to above five hundred persons. And shall you have no part in the general blessing? I believe better things. You will fight and conquer; take up the cross till you receive the crown. You have both been enabled to set your faces heavenward; and you shall never look back. You are to strengthen each other's hands in God till you come to Mount Zion, and to the general church of the first-born.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate friend and servant.

CXXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

DUBLIN, *March 15, 1747-8.*

I HAVE inquired of several, but cannot yet hear of any such merchant as Mr. John Warr in Dublin. A gentleman informed me this morning that there was one of that name, but he has been dead for many years. I

suppose this cannot be the same person to whom Mr. Belchier's letter is directed.

We have not found a place yet that will suit us for building. Several we have heard of, and seen some; but they are all leasehold land, and I am determined to have freehold, if it is to be had in Dublin; otherwise we must lie at the mercy of our landlord whenever the lease is to be renewed.

I find the engaging, though but a little, in these temporal affairs, is apt to damp and deaden the soul; and there is no remedy, but continual prayer. What, then, but the mighty power of God can keep your soul alive, who are engaged all the day long with such a multiplicity of them? It is well that his grace is sufficient for you. But do you not find need to pray always? And if you cannot always say, —

“My hands are but employ'd below,
My heart is still with thee;”

is there not the more occasion for some season of solemn retirement, (if it were possible, everyday,) wherein you may withdraw your mind from earth, and even the accounts between God and your own soul? I commend you and yours to His continual protection; and am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

I suppose my brother will be with you almost as soon as this.

CXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

DUBLIN, *April 20, 1748.*

I AM persuaded, God has taught both Mrs. Blackwell and you to say, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” Shall not all these things work together for good? Perhaps God was jealous over you, lest your heart should lean to any of the things of earth. He will have you to be all his own; to desire nothing but Him; to seek Him and love Him with your whole heart. And He knows what are the hindrances, and what means will be most effectual toward it. Then let him

work according to the counsel of his own will. It is the Lord! let Him do what seemeth him good.

O what a pearl, of how great price, is the very lowest degree of the peace of God! A little measure of it, I doubt not, you will find in the most trying circumstances. May God increase it a thousand-fold in both your hearts!

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant.

CXXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,
1748.

NEWCASTLE, *August 14,*

I TRUST you do not grow weary or faint in your mind; although you cannot but find a thousand temptations. Business itself, when it comes in such a flood upon you, must needs be one of the greatest temptations; since it naturally tends to hinder your waiting upon God (as you should desire always to do) without distraction. And when our mind is hurried, it is hardly possible to retain either the spirit of prayer or of thankfulness. But still, with God no word shall be impossible. He has called you by his providence to this way of life; and he is able to preserve you in the midst of the world as well as in a desert. And I cannot doubt but He will, because you appear to be sensible of your danger. Walk then through the fire; you shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon you. Come unto Jesus, upon the waves of the sea: The floods shall not run over you.

I have had some thoughts of printing, on a finer paper, and with a larger letter, not only all that we have published already, but, it may be, all that is most valuable in the English tongue, in threescore or fourscore volumes, in order to provide a complete library for those that fear God. I should print only a hundred copies of each. Brother Downes would give himself up to the work; so that whenever I can procure a printing press, types, and some quantity of paper, I can begin immediately. I am inclined to think several would be glad to forward such a design; and, if so, the sooner the

better; because my life is far spent, and I know not how soon the night cometh wherein no man can work.

I commend you, and dear Mrs. Blackwell, and Mrs. Dewal, to the grace of God; and am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant.

I leave this place on Tuesday, and propose to spend ten or twelve days about Leeds.

CXXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,
1749.

KINGSWOOD, *March 28,*

LAST week I received a letter from my brother, which lays me under some difficulty. He gives me a short account of what had passed between Mr. Meriton and you, and then desires that I would write concerning him. But what can I say? Not much of what is good; because I can say no more than I think; and I scarce know what to think. I am greatly at a loss what judgment to form concerning him. What I hope is this: That he is an honest, though weak, man; one that has the fear of God, but with a small measure of understanding. His behavior with us has, in general, been good: What was otherwise, I impute to folly, not malicious wickedness.

I trust Mrs. Blackwell and you are still panting after God, if not walking in the light of his countenance. May he enable you to turn your faces against the world, being ashamed of nothing but sin; and to preserve a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards man.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CXXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

WHITEHAVEN, *October 2, 1749.*

MRS. BLACKWELL and you have been much upon my mind today; and I trust you do not wholly forget me. Are we not running the same race? pressing on to the same prize of our high calling? Abundance of hindrances indeed lie in the way; yet He that calls us shall make straight paths for our feet. In the mean time, we have need of patience, that, when we have done and suffered the will of God, we may attain the promises.

My coming hither was utterly unexpected. I thought of nothing less, till I received some letters from hence, giving an account of such a work as we have not seen before in England for several years; and it increases daily. Open wickedness is not seen; nor have I heard one oath since I came to Whitehaven. I preach in the market-place morning and evening. Most of the grown persons in the town attend; and none makes any noise, none laughs, or behaves indecently.

One evening, when Mr. Perronet preached in my absence, a crew of sailors procured a fiddle, and made an attempt to interrupt; but they met with small encouragement. A company of colliers turned upon them, broke their fiddle in pieces, and used those of them they could overtake so roughly that they have not made their appearance since. Sir James Lowther, likewise, sent and took down the names of the chief rioters.

Tomorrow we are to leave this place. But we have a long round to go; so that I am afraid we shall not move much southward till toward the end of this month. I commend you, and those that are with you, to Him who has hitherto helped you; and am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,
1749.

LONDON, *December 18,*

I HAVE known Eliz. Miller for many years. She has been always remarkably honest and industrious. I do not know in all London a more proper object of charity; for she now, through age and weakness, is very ill able to procure for herself the necessaries of life. I am

Your affectionate servant.

CXXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

February 4, 1750-1.

THE money you left in my hands was disposed of as follows: —

	£.	s.	d.
To the Lending Stock	02	02	00
To Eliz. Brooks, expecting daily to have her goods seized for rent	01	01	00
To Eliz. Room (a poor widow) for rent	00	05	00
Toward clothing Mary Middleton and another poor woman, almost naked	00	10	00
To John Edger, a poor weaver, out of work	00	05	00
To Lucy Jones, a poor orphan	00	02	00
To a poor family, for food and fuel	00	05	00
To Christopher Brown, out of business	00	02	06

To an ancient woman in great distress	00	02	06
Distributed among several sick families	00	10	00
	<hr/>		
	05	05	00

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CXXX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *March 5, 1751.*

AFTER an extremely troublesome day, I reached Chippenham last night, twenty miles short of Bristol; and came hither between ten and eleven this morning, at least as well as when I left London.

The note delivered to me on Sunday night, which ran in these words, "I am not determined when I shall leave London," convinces me that I must not expect to see the writer of it at our approaching Conference. This is indeed deserting me at my utmost need, just when the Philistines are upon me. But I am content; for I am well assured the Lord is not departed from me. Is it not best to let all these things sleep? to let him do just what he will do; and to say nothing myself, good or bad, concerning it, till his mind is more cool and able to bear it?

I persuade myself, neither Mrs. Blackwell, nor Mr. Lloyd, or you will be wanting in your good offices. And will you not likewise advise and comfort her who is now likely to stand in need of every help? You see how bold a beggar I am. I cannot be satisfied yet, without asking you to do more for,

Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant.

CXXXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

MANCHESTER, *April 7, 1751.*

YOU must blame yourself, if your never denying me anything makes me ask more and more. But I am not assured whether it is proper to comply with what I am going to mention now. If it is, I know you will do it, although it will not be a pleasing task.

Mr. Lloyd thinks it absolutely needful, that a friend or two of my wife should meet Mr. Blisson and a friend or two of his, in order to persuade him, if it can be done, to come to an account as to what remains in his hands. If Mr. Lloyd and you would take this trouble on yourselves, I do not doubt but the affair would end well.

We have hitherto had a very rough, but a very prosperous, journey. I only want more time; there being so many calls to various parts, that I cannot possibly answer them all between this and Whitsuntide. O what reason have we to put forth all our strength! For, what a Master do we serve! I trust we shall never be weary of his service. And why should we ever be ashamed of it?

I am persuaded Mrs. Blackwell and you do not forget me, nor her that is as my own soul.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CXXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

LEEDS, *May 14, 1751.*

I AM inclined to think Mr. Lloyd has hit upon the expedient which, if anything can, will induce Mr. Blisson to come to an amicable conclusion. I

have wrote such a state of the case as he advised, and hope God will give a blessing to it.

I am much obliged both to Mrs. Blackwell and you, on my own and on my wife's account. She has many trials; but not one more than God knows, and knows to be profitable to her. I believe you have been, and will be, a means of removing some. If these outward encumbrances were removed, it might be a means of her spending more time with me; which would probably be useful as well as agreeable to her.

As the providence of God has called you to be continually engaged in outward things, I trust you will find Him continually present with you, that you may look through all, and

Serve with careful Martha's hands,
And loving Mary's heart.

I am glad Mrs. Dewal has not forgotten me. I hope you all remember, at the throne of grace,

Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant.

CXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *July 3, 1751.*

BEFORE I left London I wrote to Mr. Butterfield, informing him of two families which are in great distress. As I have heard nothing since, I suppose the letter miscarried; unless my ominous name prevented its meeting with success. However, I have done my part, and it is only a little labor lost. Nay, in one sense it is not lost; for if we only desire to help one another, the willing mind cannot lose its reward.

My brother left us on Saturday. He designed to be at Worcester today, and then to proceed slowly towards Scotland. His mind seemed to be altogether changed before he went. He was quite free and open to us, and

pressed us much to make use of his house in his absence, just as if it were our own. There is a fair prospect on every side. The people of Bristol, in general, are much alive to God; and they are so united together, that the men of false tongues can make no impression upon them.

Do you know what is the matter with John Jones? I suppose he will speak freely to you. He seems to be much troubled at something, and, I doubt, offended. I know if you can remove that trouble, it will be a pleasure to you to do it. We join in good wishes both to Mrs. Blackwell and you.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

CXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

EPWORTH, *April 16, 1752.*

AFTER taking a round of between three and four hundred miles, we came hither yesterday in the afternoon. My wife is at least as well as when we left London: The more she travels, the better she bears it. It gives us yet another proof, that whatever God calls us to, he will fit us for; so that we have no need to take thought for the morrow. Let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. I was at first a little afraid she would not so well understand the behavior of a Yorkshire mob; but there has been no trial: Even the Methodists are now at peace throughout the kingdom. It is well if they bear this so well as they did war. I have seen more make shipwreck of the faith in a calm than in a storm. We are apt in sunshiny weather to lie down and sleep; and who can tell what may be done before we awake?

You was so kind as to say (if I did not misunderstand you) that you had placed the name of Richard Ellison among those who were to have a share of the money disposed of by Mr. Butterfield. Last night he called upon me. I find, all his cows are dead, and all his horses but one; and all his meadow-land has been under water these two years; (which is occasioned by the neglect of the Commissioners of the Sewers, who ought to keep the drains open;) so that he has very little left to subsist on. Therefore the smallest relief could never be more seasonable than at this time.

I hope my brother puts forth all his strength among you, and that you have many happy opportunities together. Our best service attends both Mrs. Blackwell and you. We are now going round Lincolnshire, and hope to be at York in less than ten days. Have we any time to lose in this span of life?

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

CXXXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

NEWCASTLE, *May 23, 1752.*

I WANT your advice. T. Butts sends me word, that after our printers' bills are paid, the money remaining, received by the sale of books, does not amount to a hundred pounds a year. It seems therefore absolutely necessary to determine one of these three things: — Either to lessen the expense of printing; (which I see no way of doing, unless by printing myself;) to increase the income arising from the books; (and how this can be done, I know not;) or to give up those eighty-six copies which are specified in my brother's deed, to himself, to manage them as he pleases. Now which of these ways, all things considered, should you judge most proper to be taken?

I receive several agreeable accounts of the manner wherein God is carrying on his work in London; and am in hopes both Mrs. Blackwell and you partake of the common blessing. My wife set out for Bristol last week. I hope her fears will prove groundless, and that all her children will live to glorify God. Anthony, I hear, is recovered already.

The people in all these parts are much alive to God, being generally plain, artless, and simple of heart. Here I should spend the greatest part of my life, if I were to follow my own inclinations. But I am not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me. I trust it is your continual desire and care, to know, and love, and serve Him. May He strengthen you both therein more and more!

I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

DUBLIN, *July 20, 1752.*

FINDING no ship ready to sail, either at Bristol or Chester, we at length came back to Whitehaven, and embarked on Monday last. It is generally a passage of four-and-twenty hours; but the wind continuing contrary all the way, we did not reach this place till Friday evening. My wife and Jenny were extremely sick, particularly when we had a rolling sea; but a few days, I trust, will restore their strength. They are already much better than when they landed.

Last month a large mob assaulted the new house here, and did considerable damage. Several of the rioters were committed to Newgate. The bills were found against them all, and they were tried ten days since; but, in spite of the clearest evidence, a packed jury brought them in, Not guilty. I believe, however, the very apprehension and trial of them has struck a terror into their companions. We now enjoy great quietness, and can even walk unmolested through the principal streets in Dublin.

I apprehend my brother is not at all desirous of having those copies transferred to him. I cannot easily determine till I have full information concerning the several particulars you touch upon, whether it be expedient to make such an alteration, (though it would ease me much,) or to let all things remain just as they are. Therefore, I believe it will be best to take no farther step till I return to London.

I am fully persuaded, if you had always one or two faithful friends near you, who would speak the very truth from their heart, and watch over you in love, you would swiftly advance in running the race which is set before you. I am afraid you was not forwarded by one who was in town lately;

neither was that journey of any service to his own soul. He has not brought back less indolence and gentle inactivity than he carried to London. O how far from the spirit of a good soldier of Jesus Christ, who desires only “to be flead alive, and to conquer!” Our best wishes attend both Mrs. Blackwell, Mrs. Dewal, and yourself.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant.

CXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

YORK, *May* 16, 1753.

FOR some time I have had a desire to send you a few lines. I have often observed, with a sensible pleasure, your strong desires to be, not almost only, but altogether, a Christian. And what should hinder it? What is it that prevents those good desires from being brought to good effect? Is it the carrying a right principle too far? I mean, a desire to please all men for their good. Or is it a kind of shame? the being ashamed, not of sin but of holiness, or of what conduces thereto? I have often been afraid lest this should hurt you. I have been afraid that you do not gain ground in this respect; nay, that you rather go backward, by yielding to this, than forward by conquering it. I have feared that you are not so bold for God now, as you was four or five years ago. If so, you are certainly in great danger. For in this case, who knows where he shall stop? The giving way in one point naturally leads us to give way in another and another, till we give up all. O Sir, let us beware of this! Whereunto we have attained, let us hold fast! But this can only be, by pressing on. Otherwise, we must go back. You have need of courage and steady resolution; for you have a thousand enemies: The flattering, frowning world; the rulers of the darkness of this world; and the grand enemy within. What need have you to put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day! I often tremble for you. And how few will honestly and plainly tell you of your danger! O may God warn you continually by his inward voice, and with every temptation make a way for you to escape!

My wife joins me in wishing all blessing both to Mrs. Blackwell and you.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

If you favor me with a line; you will please to direct to Leeds.

CXXXVIII — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

BIRSTAL, *May 28, 1753.*

YOUR speaking so freely encourages me to write once more. Ever since I had the pleasure of knowing you, I have observed in you a real desire to please God, and to have a conscience void of offense. But, at the same time, I have observed you had many enemies. Perhaps one was, a natural cheerfulness of temper, which, though in itself it be highly desirable, yet may easily slide into an extreme. And in this case, we know too well it may hurt us extremely. It may be, another hindrance in your way has sometimes been a kind of shame, which prevented your executing good and commendable designs. Was it not owing to this, that you who had received such blessings by means of field preaching, grew unwilling to attend it? But is there any end of giving way to this enemy? Will it not encroach upon us more and more? I have sometimes been afraid that you have not gained ground in this respect for these two or three years. But the comfort is, that in a moment God can repair whatever is decayed in our souls, and supply whatever is wanting. What is too hard for him? Nothing, but our own will. Let us give up this, and He will not withhold from us any manner of thing that is good.

I believe the harvest has not been so plenteous for many years as it is now in all the north of England; but the laborers are few. I wish you could persuade our friend to share the labor with me. One of us should in anywise visit both the north and Ireland every year. But I cannot do both; the time will not suffice, otherwise I should not spare myself. I hope my life, rather than my tongue, says, I desire only to spend and to be spent in the work. Our love and service always attend Mrs. Blackwell and you.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

CXXXIX. — To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *January 5, 1754.*

IF I write to my best friends first, I must not delay writing to you, who have been the greatest instruments, in God's hands, of my recovery thus far. The journey hither did not weary me at all: But I now find the want of Lewisham air. We are (quite contrary to my judgment, but our friends here would have it so) in a cold, bleak place, and in a very cold house. If the Hotwell water make amends for this, it is well. Nor have I any place to ride, but either by the river-side, or over the downs, where the wind is ready to carry me away. However, one thing we know, — that whatsoever is, is best! O let us look to Him that orders all things well! What have we to do, but to employ all the time he allots us, be it more or less, in doing and suffering his will? My wife joins in tender love both to Mrs. Blackwell, Mrs. Dewal, and yourself, with,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant.

CXL. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *September 24, 1754.*

ALTHOUGH I hope to see you in about a fortnight, yet I could not be satisfied without sending you a few lines first. Since I left London, I have had many thoughts concerning you; and sometimes uneasy ones. I have been jealous over you, lest you should not duly improve the numerous talents with which God has interested you; nay, I have been afraid lest your very desire of improving them should grow weaker, rather than stronger. If so, by what means is it to be accounted for? What has occasioned this feebleness of mind? May it not partly be occasioned by your conversing more than is necessary (for so far as it is necessary it does not hurt us) with men that are without God in the world; that love, think, talk of earthly things only? partly by your giving way to a false shame,

(and that in several instances,) which the more you indulge, it increases the more? and partly by allowing too large a place in your thoughts and affections even to so innocent an enjoyment as that of a garden? If this leaves you fewer opportunities of hearing the word which is able to save your soul, may not you even hereby grieve the Holy Spirit, and be more a loser than you are sensible of? I know both Mrs. Blackwell and you desire to please God in all things. You will therefore, I hope, receive these hints as they are intended; not as a mark of disesteem, but rather of the sincerity with which

I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CXLI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

MANCHESTER, *April 9, 1755.*

I HAVE another favor to beg of you, — to procure Mr. Belchier's leave for me to inclose my proof-sheets to him. Mr. Perronet sends them down to me in franks; then I correct and send them back to him. The next week I am to spend at Liverpool. Toward the end of the week following I hope to be at Haworth, near Keighley, in Yorkshire.

God has blessed me with a prosperous journey hither, though the roads and the weather were rough. I hope both Mrs. Blackwell and you are making the best use of all things both rough and smooth. That is the part of a good soldier of Jesus Christ, —

To trace his example, the world to disdain,
And constantly trample on pleasure and pain.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

CXLII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

KEIGHLEY, *near* LEEDS, *April 29, 1755.*

WHAT a blessing it is to have these little crosses, that we may try what spirit we are of! We could not live in continual sunshine. It would dry up all the grace of God that is in us. I doubt not but Mrs. Blackwell and Mrs. Dewal find advantage both from bodily weakness, and every other trial. Let us fight the good fight of faith together, and more resolutely lay hold on eternal life!

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CXLIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

REDRUTH, *August 31, 1755.*

EXPERIENCE confirms your advice both ways. In my last journey into the north, all my patience was put to the proof again and again; and all my endeavor to please, yet without success. In my present journey I leap, as broke from chains. I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with, and my companions are always in good humour, “because they are with me.” This must be the spirit of all who take journeys with me. If a dinner ill dressed, a hard bed, a poor room, a shower of rain, or a dirty road, will put them out of humor, it lays a burden upon me, greater than all the rest put together. By the grace of God, I never fret. I repine at nothing: I am discontented with nothing. And to have persons at my ear, fretting and murmuring at everything, is like tearing the flesh off my bones. I see God sitting upon his throne, and ruling all things well. Although, therefore, I can bear this, also, — to hear his government of the world continually found fault with; (for in blaming the things which He alone can alter, we, in effect, blame Him;) yet it is such a burden to me as I cannot bear without pain; and I bless God when it is removed.

The doctrine of a particular providence is what exceeding few persons understand: At least, not practically; so as to apply it to every

circumstance of life. This I want, to see God acting in everything, and disposing all, for his own glory, and his creature's good. I hope it is your continual prayer, that you may see him, and love him, and glorify him with all you are and all you have! Peace be with you all!

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

I shall be in or near St. Ives till the 13th of September.

CXLIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

ST. IVES, *September 12, 1755.*

IT seems there was a remarkable providence in this, that Michael Fenwick was so often hindered from settling in business, because God had other work for him to do. He is just made to travel with me, being an excellent groom, *valet de chambre*, nurse, and upon occasion a tolerable Preacher. We have hitherto had an extremely prosperous journey: Almost everything has been just as we desired; and I have no care upon my mind, but what properly belongs to me, — to feed and guide the flock of Christ.

Charles Perronet being out of town last Saturday, my packet, directed to him, fell into other hands. This has raised a violent storm; for it contained a few lines which I writ to Mrs. Lefevre, in answer to a letter she sent me the week before concerning Mr. Furly. It is pity! I should be glad if I had to do with reasonable people. But this likewise is for good.

A wonderful odd circumstance has fallen out here: A young gentleman, nephew to the present Mayor, began some time since to attend our preaching, and last week fell raving mad. This incident (so deep is the wisdom of God!) has opened me a way into the Mayor's family, brought me much acquainted with his wife, who is not easy if I do not call once or twice a day, and alarmed the whole town with such a concern for their souls as was never known here before. The particulars I hope to send to Mr. Perronet in my next Journal. Who is so wise a God as our God? I trust you will have him more and more in your thoughts and in your affections.

I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate servant.

In about ten days I hope to be at Bristol.

CXLV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

DUBLIN, *April 19, 1756.*

WHILE you in England are under I know not what apprehensions, all here are as safe as if they were already in paradise. We have no fortifying of seaports; no military preparations; but all is in absolute peace and safety. Both high and low seem fully persuaded that the whole talk of an invasion is only a trick to get money.

I dined at Mrs. Moreland's last week, and promised to drink tea with her this evening. She has been at the preaching several times, and desires much to be remembered to Mrs. Blackwell and you. She seems to have a liking to the Gospel. It may sink deeper. There is nothing too hard for God.

I hope Mrs. Blackwell and you are improving to the utmost these days of tranquillity. I purpose going to Cork directly; and after two or three weeks turning back toward the north of Ireland. If it please God that troublous times come between the design and the execution, I shall go as far as I can go, and no farther. But I take no thought for the morrow. Today I am determined, by His grace, to do the work of Him that sent me. I find encouragement so to do; for all the people here are athirst for the word of life.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

Do you at London believe that the danger of an invasion is over?

CXLVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

WHITEHAVEN, *May 28, 1757.*

DOES the rule still hold, “Out of sight, out of mind?” I am afraid it does with poor Miss Freeman; as she does not give me one line in answer to the long letter I wrote from Liverpool. I was in hopes we might have interchanged several letters in less than six weeks’ time. As for you, I presume you are full of business; and yet not so full of temporal business as to exclude the thoughts of higher concerns; business that will endure when earth and the works of it are burned up. Were anything temporal even to damp or lessen (though not destroy) our care and zeal for things eternal, what could countervail the loss? What could make us amends for the damage thereby sustained? Sometimes, indeed, we may go through abundance of business, and yet have God in all our thoughts. But is this the case always? Are not even lawful, nay, necessary, things, at other times a grievous hindrance; especially when we undertake them without any suspicion of danger, and, consequently, without any prayer against that danger? In this respect, as in many others, I have lately had peculiar reason to be thankful. In every place people flock about me for direction in secular as well as spiritual affairs; and I dare not throw even this burden off my shoulders, though I have employment enough without it. But it is a burden, and no burden; it is no encumbrance, no weight upon my mind. If we see God in all things, and do all for him, then all things are easy.

I think it is fourteen or fifteen days since my wife wrote to me. I am afraid she is not well. If any letters for me come inclosed to Mr. Belchier, I will be obliged to you if you will direct them to me at Newcastle, where I hope to be in a few days. Wishing all grace and peace to you and yours!

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant.

I breakfasted at Keswick last Tuesday.

CXLVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

CASTLEBAR, *June 5, 1758.*

I HAVE learned, by the grace of God, in every state to be content. What a peace do we find in all circumstances, when we can say, “Not as I will, but as thou wilt!”

I have now gone through the greatest part of this kingdom: Leinster, Ulster, and the greater half of Connaught. Time only is wanting. If my brother could take care of England, and give me but one year for Ireland, I think every corner of this nation would receive the truth as it is in Jesus. They want only to hear it; and they will hear me, high and low, rich and poor. What a mystery of Providence is this! In England they may hear, but will not. In Ireland they fain would hear, but cannot. So in both, thousands perish for lack of knowledge. So much the more blessed are your ears, for they hear; if you not only hear the word of God, but keep it.

I hope you find public affairs changing for the better. In this corner of the world we know little about them; only we are told that the great little King in Moravia is not swallowed up yet.

Till near the middle of next month I expect to be at Mr. Beauchamp’s in Limerick. I hope you have a fruitful season in every respect. My best wishes attend you all.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CXLVIII. — *To the Same.*BANDON, *July 12, 1758.*

IN a week or two I shall be looking out for a ship. You people in England are bad correspondents. Both Mr. Downing, Mr. Venn, and Mr. Madan are a letter in my debt; and yet I think they have not more business than I have. How unequally are things distributed here! Some want time, and

some want work. But all will be set right hereafter. There is no disorder on that shore!

Wishing all happiness to you, and all that are with you,

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours most affectionately.

CXLIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR, NORWICH, *March 12, 1759.*

YOU have entirely satisfied me, as to what I was afraid of. We are at present upon pretty good terms; and I am not without hope that this good understanding will continue for some time longer. I am sure it will, if He who has the hearts of all men in his hand sees it to be expedient to me.

You have never spoken to me with more freedom than was agreeable to me. Your freedom is the best proof of your friendship. There are not many that will deal freely with me; nor indeed are there many from whom I would desire it, lest it should hurt themselves without profiting me. But I do desire it of you; and do not doubt but it will profit me, as it has done in time past.

I know not, if, in all my life, I have had so critical a work on my hands, as that wherein I am now engaged. I am endeavoring to gather up those who were once gathered together, and afterwards scattered, by James Wheatley. I have reunited about seventy of them, and hope this evening to make up an hundred. But many of them have wonderful spirits; having been always accustomed to teach their Teachers; so that how they will bear any kind of discipline, I cannot well tell.

At Colchester the case is far otherwise. About an hundred and sixty simple, upright people are there united together, who are as little children, minding nothing but the salvation of their souls; only they are greatly distressed for a larger house. What we could have done last Sunday, I know not, but that, the day being mild, I took the field, and preached on St. John's Green. I see but one way, — to build a commodious house; and

I desired them to look out for a piece of ground. It is true, they are poor enough; but if it be God's work, He will provide the means.

Wishing an increase in all grace, both to Mrs. Blackwell, Mrs. Dewal, and you,

I remain, dear Sir,
Your very affectionate servant.

CL. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

MANCHESTER, *March 17, 1760.*

THE humanity which you showed, during the short time I had the pleasure of conversing with you at Lewisham, emboldens me to trouble you with a line, in behalf of a worthy man.

I apprehend, the Collector at Northwich, in Cheshire, has informed the Honorable Board, that "Mr. James Vine is a Preacher at Northwich, and makes disturbances in the town." That he attends the preaching of the Methodists, is true; but it is not true that he is a Preacher. It is likewise true, that the rabble of Northwich have sometimes disturbed our congregations; but herein Mr. Vine was only concerned as a sufferer, not an actor. I know him to be a careful, diligent officer, and a zealous lover of King George. Wishing you all temporal and spiritual blessings,

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant.

CLI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

NEWRY, *April 26, 1760.*

I HOPE your lameness is now at an end, but not the benefit you have reaped from it. May we not, in every trial, great and small, observe the hand of God? And does He send any sooner than we want it, or longer than we want it? I found the inflammation which I had in my eyes last

month came just in the right time. The danger is, that anything of this kind should pass over before the design of it is answered.

Whether Miss Freeman should make use of Lough-Neagh; or Lough-Leighs, (forty miles nearer Dublin,) I suppose she is not yet able to determine, till I can send her some farther information; and that I cannot do to my own satisfaction till I am upon the spot. For though Lough-Neagh is scarce fifteen miles from hence, yet I can hardly find any one here who knows any more of the circumstances of it than if it lay in the East Indies.

Hitherto I have had an extremely prosperous journey; and all the fields are white to the harvest. But that the laborers are few, is not the only hindrance to the gathering it in effectually. Of those few, some are careless, some heavy and dull; scarce one of the spirit of Thomas Walsh. The nearest to it is Mr. Morgan: But his body too sinks under him, and probably will not last long.

In a few days I expect to be at Carrickfergus, and to hear, from those on whose word I can depend, a full account of that celebrated campaign. I believe it will be of use to the whole kingdom. Probably the Government will at last awake, and be a little better prepared against the next encounter.

When you have half an hour to spare, I hope you will give it me under your own hand, that Mrs. Blackwell and you are not only in good health, but laboring more than ever after an healthful mind, and trampling the world and the devil under your feet.

I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate servant.

The week after next I shall spend mostly at Sligo.

CLII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR, BRADFORD, *July 16, 1761.*

METHINKS it is a long time since I saw or heard anything of you. I hope, however, that Mrs. Blackwell and you are not only alive, but more alive than ever; seeking and enjoying something more than King George is likely to find either at his wedding or his coronation. And can you likewise give me a comfortable account of Miss Freeman, both as to her health and her spirit? I often think of her, and sometimes have a mind to send her another letter; though she is one in my debt already.

Mr. Venn was so kind as to come over hither yesterday, and spend the evening with us. I am a little embarrassed on his account, and hardly know how to act. Several years before he came to Huddersfield, some of our Preachers went thither, carrying their lives in their hands, and with great difficulty established a little, earnest society. These eagerly desire them to preach there still; not in opposition to Mr. Venn, (whom they love, esteem, and constantly attend,) but to supply what they do not find in his preaching. It is a tender point. Where there is a Gospel ministry already, we do not desire to preach; but whether we can leave off preaching because such an one comes after, is another question; especially when those who were awakened and convinced by us beg and require the continuance of our assistance. I love peace, and follow it; but whether I am at liberty to purchase it at such price, I really cannot tell.

I hear poor Mr. Walker is near death. It seems strange, that when there is so great a want of faithful laborers, such as him should be removed: But the will of God is always best; and what He does, we shall know hereafter! I have been for some days with Mr. Grimshaw, an Israelite indeed. A few such as him would make a nation tremble. He carries fire wherever he goes. Mr. Venn informs me, that Mr. Whitefield continues very weak. I was in hope, when he wrote to me lately, that he was swiftly recovering strength. Perhaps, Sir, you can send me better news concerning him. What need have we, while we do live, to live in earnest!

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

If you have not a mind for me to write again, you must not write yourself. For about a fortnight I shall be at or near Leeds.

CLIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

NORWICH, *August 15, 1761.*

As you are encompassed with a thousand temptations, and some of them of the most dangerous kind, it is an unspeakable blessing that you still continue with your face heavenward. And if you have resolution to break through a thousand hindrances, and allow some time everyday for private prayer, I doubt not but you will receive every Gospel blessing in this world and in the world to come.

Mr. Venn and I have had some hours' conversation together, and have explained upon every article. I believe there is no bone of contention remaining; no matter of offense, great or small. Indeed, fresh matter will arise, if it be sought; but it shall not be sought by me. We have amicably compromised the affair of preaching. He is well pleased that the Preachers should come once a month.

That story was one of those which we cleared up. But Mr. Oddie (the person of whom it was told) will be in town next week, and can himself give you full satisfaction concerning it. On this day se'night I hope to be in town, and to morrow se'night at West-street chapel. With sincere love to Mrs. Blackwell and Mrs. Dewal,

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

I thank you for sending me the letters.

CLIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

LIVERPOOL, *July 14, 1764.*

MY brother informs me that you have been so extremely ill, that your life was hardly expected. I really am under apprehensions lest that chariot should cost you your life. If, after having been accustomed to ride on

horseback for many years, you should now exchange a horse for a carriage, it cannot be that you should have good health. It is a vain thing to expect it. I judge of your case by my own. I must be on horseback for life, if I would be healthy. Now and then, indeed, if I could afford it, I should rest myself for fifty miles in a chaise; but without riding near as much as I do now, I must never look for health.

In the mean time, I trust both Mrs. Blaekwell and you are looking for health of a nobler kind. You look to be filled with the spirit of love, and of a healthful mind. What avails everything else? everything that passes away as an arrow through the air?

The arrow is flown! The moment is gone!
The millennial year
Rushes on to the view, and eternity's here!

You want nothing more of this world. You have enough, and, by the peculiar blessing of God, know you have. But you want a thousand times more faith. You want love; you want holiness. The Lord God supply all your wants from the riches of his mercy in Christ Jesus!

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate servant.

Next week I shall set my face toward Bristol.

CLV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

SUNDERLAND, *May 6, 1766.*

WILLIAM MATTHEWS writes me word, that he has quitted the school at the Foundry, and begs me to speak to you in his behalf. I should be glad to serve him in anything that was in my power, either for his late brother's sake or his own. I judge him to be a right honest man; one that may be trusted in every respect; and one that would perform, with all diligence, whatever he undertook, not so much for gain as for conscience' sake.

I am not yet quite free from the effects of the fall which I had at Christmas, and perhaps never shall in this world. Sometimes my ankle, sometimes my knee, and frequently my shoulder, complains. But, blessed be God, I have strength sufficient for the work to which I am called. When I cannot walk any farther, I can take a horse, and now and then a chaise; so that hitherto I have not been hindered from visiting any place which I purposed to see before I left London.

The fields in every part of England are indeed white for the harvest. There is everywhere an amazing willingness in the people to receive either instruction or exhortation. We find this temper now even in many of the higher rank, several of whom cared for none of these things. But surely the time is coming for these also; for the scripture must be fulfilled, "They shall all know me, from the least even to the greatest."

We who have lived more years have need of more earnestness and vigor in running the race which is set before us, or some of those that come after us will get before us in the way. Many of those who have lately set out run well. Gray heads stand upon green shoulders.

They make their morning bear the heat of day.

Let us mend our pace! What is there here that is worth lingering for? A little while, and this world of shadows will vanish; and all will be boundless, bottomless eternity!

My wife, who has been very ill, but is much better, joins with me in wishing Mrs. Blackwell and you every blessing which is purchased for you with the blood of the covenant.

I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CLVI. — *To certain Proprietors of East-India Stock.*

To all who have had East-India Stock lately transferred to them in order to qualify them for voting at the Election for Directors on Wednesday next.

GENTLEMEN AND LADIES,

[*Without date.*]

Do you know what the oath is which you are to take before you will be admitted to vote? It is as follows: — “I, A. B., do swear that the sum of five hundred pounds, or more, of the capital stock of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies doth at this time belong to me in my own right, and not in trust for any other person or persons whatsoever. So help me God”

Do not you hereby call upon God, either to help you, or to send down his curse upon you, as your oath is true or false?

If you consider this, can you take a false oath? can you call God to witness to a lie?

Are you not doing this, if the stock standing in your name is not your real and true property?

Have you not given a note of your hand for it, which is to be returned upon your retransferring the stock?

Are you either benefited or hurt by the rise or fall of the stock? If not, can you say you are proprietor at all?

Does it alter the case, though a third person lend you the money to pay for that stock which you are so to retransfer? Still you neither gain nor lose by the rise or fall of the stock: A plain proof that you have no property therein.

Weigh this in time; and do not, to oblige a friend, bring the guilt of perjury on your own soul.

CLVII. — *To Mr. John Downes.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 7, 1751.*

YOUR first hindrance is easily removed. Most of the Preachers have now all they want. So might you have had, if you had spoken to the Stewards, or, in ease of their neglect, to me.

As to your second, bodily weakness is a good reason for a temporary retirement.

Your third observation, that the people in general do not practice what they hear, is a melancholy truth. But what then? Is this a sufficient cause why either you or I should leave them? why we should give them up to their own hearts' lusts, and let them follow their own imaginations? In nowise. Especially while there are some among them whose conversation is worthy of the Gospel of Christ.

I grant, also, some of the Preachers themselves do not adorn the Gospel. Therefore we have been constrained to lay some of them aside, and some others are departed of themselves. Let us that remain be doubly in earnest.

You should make an excursion (as to Alnwick) now and then. Is not John Fenwick a proper person to relieve James Tucker at Whitehaven? If you think he is, pray send him thither forthwith. My love to your father and mother.

I entreat you, tell me without reserve, what you think of C. Skelton? Is his heart with us, or is it not? Peace be with you. Adieu!

CLVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,
1751.

LONDON, *November 28,*

I THINK you write to me, as if you did not care to write. I am glad you went to Alnwick. The method you took of talking with each person in the Society apart, I hear, has been greatly blessed to them. I do not see how you could have dealt more favorably with T — G — than you did. If he will leave the Society, he must leave it. But if he does, you are clear.

I know not what to do more for poor Jenny Keith. Alas, from what a height is she fallen! What a burning and shining light was she six or seven years ago! But thus it ever was. Many of the first shall be last, and many of the last first.

How are you employed? from five in the morning till nine at night? For I suppose you want eight hours' sleep. What becomes of logic and Latin? Is your soul alive and more athirst for God?

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CLIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,
1751.

LONDON, *December 10,*

I THANK C. Herrington for his letter. He should not fail to write, whenever he sees occasion. If you are straitened for Preachers, could not you make use of George Atchinson, from Stockton, for a time? I suppose James Tucker also is now with you. He is, I verily believe, honest of heart; but a little too wise in his own eyes. Speak plainly to him, if you should ever hear that anything is amiss in his preaching or conversation.

Brother Reeves will be here in a day or two. But he cannot return into the north yet. I wish you would regulate a little at a time, as you find your health will permit. But you must carefully guard against any irregularity, either as to food, sleep, or labor. Your water should be neither quite warm (for fear of relaxing the tone of your stomach) nor quite cold. Of all flesh, mutton is the best for you; of all vegetables, turnips, potatoes, and apples, (roasted, boiled, or baked,) if you can bear them.

Take care you do not lose anything you have learned already, whether you learn more or not. You must needs be here (if alive) the first of March, at our Conference. None will be present but those we invite.

How apt is the corruptible body to press down the soul! But all shall work together for good.

Now you can sympathize a little with me. We must expect no thanks from man. Evil for goodwill be our constant portion here. But it is well. The Lord is at hand.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CLX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,
1751.

LONDON, *December 28,*

YOUR letter is the picture of your heart. It is honest and upright. I believe a journey to London will do you good. If you could borrow a horse to Leeds, you may take my mare from thence, which is in C. Shent's keeping. As you ride slow, and not many miles a day, I suppose she would bring you hither very well; and when you are here, we can easily find means to supply your other wants.

I think it is ill husbandry for you to work with your hands, in order to get money; because you may be better employed. But, if you will work, come and superintend my printing. I will give you forty pounds for the first

year and it will cost me nothing so to do. Afterwards, if need be, I will increase your salary; and still you may preach as often as you can preach.

However, come, whether you print, or preach, or not. Peace be with your spirit.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CLXI. — *To Miss Furly, afterwards Mrs. Downes.*

December 22, 1756.

IT is a happy thing, if we can learn obedience by the things which we suffer. Weakness of body, and heaviness of mind, will, I trust, have this good effect upon you. The particular lesson which you have now to learn, is, to be faithful in comparatively little things; particularly in conversation. God hath given you a tongue: Why? That you may praise him therewith; that all your conversation may be, for the time to come, “meet to minister grace to the hearers.” Such conversation, and private prayer, exceedingly assist each other. By resolutely persisting, according to your little strength, in all works of piety and mercy, you are waiting on God in the old scriptural way. And therein he will come and save you. Do not think he is afar off: He is nigh that justifieth, that sanctifieth. Beware you do not thrust him away from you. Rather say,

“My heart would now receive thee, Lord:
Come in, my Lord, come in!”

Write as often, and as freely and fully, as you please to

Your affectionate brother and servant.

CLXII. — *To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *May 18, 1757.*

THE great point is, to pick out in Bristol, as in all places, such acquaintance as have a deep fear of God, a continual consciousness of his presence, and a strong thirst after his whole image. Such I take most of the Leaders of bands to be; and such are many of the poor in the Society: But extremely few of the rich or honorable Methodists are of that number. My dear sister, I have been in pain for you on their account. When I talked with you last, you could relish the simplicity of the Gospel: You were athirst for all the mind that was in Christ, and wanted to walk just as he walked. O let none persuade you, either by example or advice, to make any, the least, deviation from that good way. Make no abatement: Do not soften the plain, rough Gospel: Do not

Measure back your steps to earth again.

Be not, either inwardly, or outwardly, conformed to this world; but be a Christian altogether.

Health, you shall have, if health be best. And He that gives it, will give a blessing with it; an increase of spiritual as well as of bodily strength: But it is strength to labor, not to sit still. And this strength will either increase or decrease, in the same proportion with your sense of His love. You may lose this sense either,

1. By committing sin. Or,
2. By omitting duty. Or,
3. By giving way to pride, anger, or any other inward sin. Or,
4. By not watching unto prayer; by yielding to indolence, or spiritual sloth.

But it is no more necessary that we should ever lose it, than it is necessary we should omit duty or commit sin. Mr. Law, therefore, speaking on this head, betrays deep ignorance both of the Scripture and the inward work of God. You are more liable to receive hurt from his late writings, than from

any others which I know. I shall write to Sammy this morning: It would not have been amiss if you had spoken freely to me concerning him. Why should not you, now you have, in some measure, broke that natural shyness, speak all that is in your heart to,

Dear Miss Furly,

Your truly affectionate friend and brother.

CLXIII. — *To the Same.*

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *June* 14, 1757.

YOU have reason to praise God for what he has done, and to expect all that he has promised. Indeed, if it were required that you should work this in yourself, your impotence might be a bar to your expectations; and so might your unworthiness, if God required any merit of yours, in order to his working in you. But what impotence in you can be a bar to the almighty power of God. And what unworthiness can hinder the free love of God? his love in and through Christ Jesus? So that all the promises lie fair before you. The land flowing with milk and honey, the Canaan of his perfect love, is open. Believe, and enter in!

It is an observation of one of the ancients, that it is far easier not to desire praise, than not to be pleased with it. A bare conviction that it is, generally speaking, deadly poison, may prevent our desiring it; but nothing less than humble love filling the heart, will prevent our being pleased with it: For the sense of honor is as natural to man as the sense of tasting or feeling. But when that which is spiritual is fully come, this which is corruptly natural shall be done away.

Whatever enemies you have, it is enough that you have a Friend who is mightier than them all. O let Him reign in your heart alone! Do not spare to speak with all freedom to,

Dear Miss Furly,

Your affectionate brother and servant.

CLXIV. — *To the Same.*

June 18, 1757.

I AM the more jealous over you, because I know you are liable to be much influenced by fair words; especially when they are spoken by persons of sense, and in an agreeable manner. And flesh and blood are powerful advocates for conformity to the world, particularly in little things. But, blessed be God, we have an unction from the Holy One ready to teach us of all things. O let us attend to this inward teaching, which indeed is always consonant with the word. Then the word, applied by the Spirit, shall be a light in all our ways, and a lamp in all our paths.

Fight on, and conquer! Change of place, as you observe, is but a little thing. But God has, in some measure, changed your heart, wherein you have great reason to rejoice. And, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, patiently and earnestly wait for the great change, whereby every root of bitterness may be torn up.

You may profitably converse with even those honorable Christians, if you watch and pray that they do not infect you,

1. With Mystical notions, which stand in full opposition to plain old Bible divinity. Or,
2. With their odd, senseless jargon of a catholic spirit, whereby they have themselves suffered great loss.

The spirit of the world, I think you are aware of already; and indeed there is danger in every approach to it.

I have heard from both Mrs. Gausson and Miss Bosanquet. There is a poor, queer old woman in Bristol (if she is not gone to paradise) with whom it might do you good to talk. John Jones knows her. Her name is Elizabeth Edgecomb. Peace be with your spirit.

I am, dear Miss Furly,
Your affectionate brother and servant.

CLXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR MISS FURLY,

YORK, *July 1, 1757.*

I CANNOT write to you now so fully as I would; but I must send a few lines. Mere temptation certainly does not weaken without yielding to temptation. Yet a heaviness and soreness may remain upon the spirit till there is a fresh discovery of the love of God.

A jealous fear of offending God is good. But what have you to do with any other fear? Let love cast it all out, and at the same time, make you tenfold more afraid of doing anything, small or great, which you cannot offer up as an holy sacrifice, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

All who are without this fear (and much more all whom call it legal; who revile the precious gift of God, and think it an hindrance to “the growing up in Christ”) are Antinomians in the inmost soul. Come not into their secret, my dear Miss Furly; but pray for more and more of that “legal spirit,” and you will more and more rejoice

Your affectionate servant.

CLXVI. — *To the Same.*TREMENEARE, *September 6, 1757.*

WHY you should be afraid, on account of anything you said to me, I do not know. Certainly if you had said whatever was in your heart, it might have been a means of lessening your burden, and not of increasing it. I believe you have often a desire, and almost a resolution, of saying a great deal to me; but when you come to write or speak, your heart fails. Why should it? Why should you repress yourself? I should not despise but love you for your openness. It is the fruit and the proof of an honest heart. I know you are weak; I know a little of your particular weaknesses. But so much the more am I concerned for you, as a tender, sickly flower. Away then with this reserve: It answers no end, but to trouble and embarrass you. Tell me,

freely and plainly, any difficulty you meet with; any enemy against whom you want help. Use me as a friend; as I hope you will use sister Crosby; and you will find it a blessing to your soul. It will again bring the promise of holiness near; which indeed always seems to be far off, when we give way to any known sin; when we anyway grieve the Spirit of God. There may be some rare cases wherein God has determined not to bestow his perfect love till a little before death; but this I believe is uncommon: He does not usually put off the fulfilling of his promises. Seek, and you shall find; seek earnestly, and you shall find speedily. Lift up the hands that hang down; deny yourself; take up your cross, whether that of meeting your class, or any other. Fight on, and victory is at hand!

I am, dear Miss Furly,
Your affectionate servant.

CLXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, ST. AUSTLE, CORNWALL, *September 25, 1757.*

It is a rule with me, to take nothing ill that is well meant: Therefore you have no need ever to be afraid of my putting an ill construction on anything you say; for I know you mean only to save your soul. In most genteel religious people there is so strange a mixture, that I have seldom much confidence in them. I love the poor; in many of them I find pure, genuine grace, unmixed with paint, folly, and affectation. But I think Mrs. Gausson is upright of heart; and perhaps you may find one or two gentlewomen like her.

It is plain God sees it best for you frequently to walk in a thorny path. By this means He aims at destroying your pride of heart, and breaking your stubborn will. You have had large experience that there is no substantial or lasting happiness but in Him. O be true to yourself, and to your own experience! Do not seek it where it cannot be found. Hew out to yourself no more broken cisterns; but let all the springs of your happiness be in Him.

You cannot be too careful to keep out of the way of anything that has been the occasion of sin. And it is very possible to show civility and moderate respect to any person, without coming in the way of danger. All private conversation may be avoided, and ought to be, at all hazards. Do not run yourself into temptation; and God will deliver you from evil.

Nature and the devil will always oppose private prayer; but it is, worth while to break through. That it is a cross, will not hinder its being a blessing: Nay, often the more reluctance, the greater blessing.

I think it was not you who advised poor Sam to be a mere regular Clergyman, unconnected with the Methodists. Certainly this is the best way to preferment: But it is not the best way to heaven, or to do good upon earth. When it is too late, the awakened Clergy will probably see this.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CLXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *October 21, 1757.*

GOD will do his own work in his own manner; and exceeding variously in different persons. It matters not, whether it be wrought in a more pleasing or painful manner, so it is wrought; so nature is subdued, pride and self-will determined, and the will of God done in us and by us. Therefore, trouble not yourself about the experience of others: God knows you, and let him do with you as he sees best.

I judge your late distress to be partly the effect of disease, but chiefly preternatural. In the Third Journal, there is a case nearly parallel; only the symptoms were more severe. For, in a moment, Lucretia Smith felt such a cloud spread over hell, that she could not believe there was a God, or an after state. You did right to pray, as you could pray; and this is the best method which can be taken, in heaviness or darkness of any kind. Then, if sin be the cause, it will be discovered. But take care that you do not refuse any help: Even rough speakers may be of service. Only spread what they say before the Lord, and he will turn it to good.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CLXIX. — *To the Same.*LEWISHAM, *February 9,*
1758.

UNDOUBTEDLY you may arise now, and receive power from on high. You are hindered chiefly by not understanding the freeness of the gift of God. You are perpetually seeking for something in yourself, to move him to love and bless you. But it is not to be found there; it is in Himself and in the Son of his love. He did then give you a proof of this, in that fresh evidence of pardon: And he is ready to give it you again today; for he is not weary of well-doing. But, even after this, you may or you may not use the power which attends that peace. And if you ask for more power, it shall be given you; for you have an Advocate with the Father. O cast yourself upon him; learn more of that lesson, —

Thy salvation to obtain,
Out of myself I go:
Freely thou must heal my pain
Thy unbought mercy show.

How much of it may you find in this hour! Look up, and see redemption near!

I am

Your affectionate brother and servant.

CLXX. — *To the Same.*DUBLIN, *April 13,* 1758.

BUT if you find such a surprising alteration at Bonner's Hall, what need have you of removing to Bristol? Perhaps a lodging there might answer the purpose of health full as well as one at Clifton; and the purpose of religion considerably better. There are few in that neighborhood from whom I

should hope you would receive much profit, except Sarah Ryan. If she abides in her integrity, she is a jewel indeed: One whose equal I have not yet found in England.

You ought not to drink much tea; and none without pretty much cream (not milk) and sugar. But I believe, were you to drink nettle tea for a few mornings, it would do you more good than any other. It seems best for you to have frequent returns of weakness: It may be needful to fix seriousness upon your spirit, by a lasting impression, that there is but one step between you and eternity. But sickness alone will not do this; no, nor even the near approach of death. Unless the Spirit of God sanctify both, a man may laugh and trifle with his last breath.

You will overcome trifling conversation, and the fear of man, not by yielding, but by fighting. This is a cross which you cannot be excused from taking up: Bear it, and it will bear you. By prayer you will receive power so to do, to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. But it is more difficult to resist hurtful desire: I am most afraid you should give way to this. Herein you have need of all the power of God. O stand fast! Look up, and receive strength! I shall be glad to hear that you are more than conqueror, and that you daily grow in the vital knowledge of Christ. Peace be with your spirit.

I am

Your affectionate servant.

CLXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

December 28, 1758.

I THOUGHT it long since I heard from you; but I imputed it to your illness. And I did not desire you should do anything which would put you to pain, or increase your bodily weakness.

When you seemed confident of receiving the promise in a few days, I did not judge it needful to say anything to the contrary; both because I was persuaded that expectation would be a quickening to your soul, and because I knew you had one near you, who was able to advise you in any

emergency. See that your desires do not cool, and you shall not be ashamed of this confident expectation. So long as it is tempered with resignation, it can do you no disservice. And what else is there worthy of a desire? Health you shall have, if health be best, even bodily health, But what is that in comparison of a healthful mind? And this you are sure to have.

I scruple S. R.'s drinking tar-water, because it is so extremely nauseous. Neither will it profit, if it occasion costiveness, unless stewed prunes be taken every second or third night instead of it. I rather wish she would resume the medicine I formerly prescribed; only taking care not to catch cold with it. Perhaps in a few days you may see

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *March 6, 1759.*

I SHALL always be glad to hear from you, when you can write without hurting yourself. But I am almost afraid to write, for fear of tempting you to answer whether you can or not.

Since you left Kingswood, I hope you use the water at the Hot-Wells as often as possible. If anything medicinal profit you, probably it will be this. But perhaps God will not suffer you to be healed by outward medicines. It may be, he is determined to have all the glory of his own work. Meantime, he designs, by this weakness of body, to keep your soul low, as a weaned child. There is a wonderful mystery in the manner and circumstances of that mighty working, whereby he subdues all things to himself, and leaves nothing in the heart but his pure love alone.

I have no doubt but God will give you the answer to that prayer,

“Let me thy witness live,
When sin is all destroy'd!
And then my spotless soul receive,
And take me home to God!”

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 19, 1759.*

THE observing that rule might prevent abundance of mischief: I wish others would observe it as well as you. Thomas Walsh was a good and a wise man; yet there were some circumstances, not commonly known, which easily account for the darkness he went through before he went to paradise.

I hope you have talked with Cornelius Bastable, as well as heard him preach. He is an uncommon monument of the power of grace; strengthening the understanding, as well as renewing the heart. For, so weak a head, and so bad a temper, as he once had, I do not know among all our Preachers.

Probably the difference between you and others lies in words chiefly. All who expect to be sanctified at all, expect to be sanctified by faith. But, meantime, they know, that faith will not be given but to them that obey. Remotely, therefore, the blessing depends on our works; although, immediately, on simple faith.

Enjoy, while you may, the advantage which I had once; and shall have again, when God sees best.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

Certainly you may say to me whatever you have a mind, either by writing or speaking.

CLXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

ATHLONE, *June 1, 1760.*

I AM persuaded, it is not a little thing which will make me angrier at you. I hope your thinking evil of me would not; for you may have many reasons so to do.

Try: Perhaps by prayer and a little resolution, you may avoid hearing those disputes about holiness. It implies no more than this: If John Jones, or any other, begins a discourse concerning the errors or sins of absent persons, tell him, "I beg you would say no more on this head: I dare not, and I will not, hear, unless those persons were present." If one begins any caution of that kind, stop him, only with mildness and good humour; say, "I believe you speak out of kindness: But I must not hear; it both distresses and hurts my soul. Therefore, if you really wish my welfare, be silent; or let us call another cause." Where you see good, you may add, "I consulted Mr. Wesley on this head; and this was the advice he gave me."

No one ever "walked in the light as God is in the light," (I mean, in the full sense of the expression,) till "the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed him from all sin." "If we are perfectly saved, it is through his blood." This is the plain meaning of the text: And it may be fulfilled in you, before you sleep. God is Sovereign, in sanctifying as well as justifying. He will act when as well as how he pleases; and none can say unto him, What doest thou?

When the lungs are ulcerated, cold bathing not only does no hurt, but is the most probable cure. Sammy is a letter in my debt. I do not know but he is providentially called to this kingdom. I have now finished more than half my progress, having gone through two of the four provinces. Who knows whether I shall live to go through the other two? It matters not how long we live, but how well.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *January 18, 1761.*

I HAVE sometimes wondered that not one of all the Clergymen we have known should ever cleave to me, for God's sake; nor one man of learning, which would ease me exceedingly. Tommy Walsh designed it;

But death had quicker Wings than love.

Perhaps it was not best; because I am so immeasurably apt to pour out all my soul into any that loves me.

It is well for sister Clarke, that she is landed safe. And it is well for us, who are still amidst the waves, that He is with us, whom the winds and the seas obey. He is steering you to the haven, where you would be. You may well trust your soul with him, and let him do with you as seemeth him good.

Certainly nothing can be of greater importance than the behavior both of those who are renewed, and of those who are known to be pressing after it. You have need to weigh every step you take. When and where do you meet now? And who are they that meet? Pray send the inclosed to your neighbor, and let all of you love and pray for

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

ST. IVES, *September 15, 1762.*

WHEREUNTO you have attained, hold fast. But expect that greater things are at hand; although our friend talks as if you were not to expect them till the article of death.

Certainly sanctification (in the proper sense) is “an instantaneous deliverance from all sin;” and includes “an instantaneous power then given, always to cleave to God.” Yet this sanctification (at least, in the lower degrees) does not include a power never to think an useless thought, nor ever speak an useless word. I myself believe that such a perfection is inconsistent with living in a corruptible body: For this makes it impossible “always to think right.” While we breathe, we shall, more or less, mistake. If, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, we must not expect it till after death.

I want you to be all love. This is the perfection I believe and teach. And this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that highstrained perfection is not. Indeed, my judgment is, that (in this case particularly) to overdo, is to undo; and that to set perfection too high, (so high as no man that we ever heard or read of attained,) is the most effectual (because unsuspected) way of driving it out of the world.

Take care you are not hurt by anything in the “Short Hymns,” contrary to the doctrines you have long received. Peace be with your spirit!

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CLXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *July 16, 1763.*

1. So far as I know what will make me most holy and most useful, I know what is the will of God.
2. Certainly it is possible for persons to be as devoted to God in a married as in a single state.
3. I believe John Downes is thoroughly desirous of being wholly devoted to God; and that, if you alter your condition at all, you cannot choose a more proper person.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CLXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEWISHAM, *December 15, 1763.*

It has seemed to me, for some time, that God will not suffer Cornelius Bastable to live at Cork. He may starve there, but he cannot live. The people are not worthy of him.

Salvation from sin is a deeper and higher work than either you or S. Ryan can conceive. But do not imagine (as we are continually prone to do) that it lies in an indivisible point. You experienced a taste of it when you were justified: You since experienced the thing itself, only in low degree; and God gave you his Spirit, that you might know the things which he had freely given you. Hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end. You are continually apt to throw away what you have, for what you want. However, you are right in looking for a farther instantaneous change, as well as a constant gradual one. But it is not good for you to be quite alone: You should converse frequently, as well as freely, with Miss Johnson, and any other that is much alive. You have great need of this.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CLXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

EDINBURGH, *May 28, 1764.*

CERTAINLY it would be right to spend some time in setting down both the outward providences of God, and the inward leadings and workings of his Spirit, as far as you can remember them. But observe withal, you are called to be a good steward of the mammon of unrighteousness. You must therefore think of this too in its place; only without anxiety. Otherwise, that neglect of your calling will hinder the work of God in your heart. You are not serving mammon by this, but serving Christ: It is part of the test

which he has assigned you. Yet it is true your heart is to be free all the time; and see that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

I thought your name had been altered before now. In a new station you will have need of new watchfulness. Still redeem the time; be steadily serious; and follow your own conscience in all things.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

In my return from the Highlands, I expect to spend a day at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the 18th or 19th of June.

CLXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 2, 1776.*

I KNOW not that you differ from me at all. You are certainly in your place at present; and it seems one providential reason of your ill health was, to drive you thither. Now, use all the ability which God giveth, and he will give more: Unto him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; it is the hand of the diligent that maketh rich. If you can persuade honest Alice Brammah to be cleanly as well as gentle, she will be tenfold more useful; and so will Billy Brammah, if he will be teachable and advisable; otherwise there is a fly in the pot of ointment. You are sent to Leeds chiefly for the sake of those that enjoy, or thirst after, perfect love. Redeem the time! Go on in His name! And let the world and the devil fall under your feet!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

October, 1776.

YOU have abundant reason to praise God, who has dealt so mercifully with you, and to encourage all about you never to rest till they attain full salvation.

As to the question you propose, if the Leader himself desires it, and the class be not unwilling, in that case there can be no objection to your meeting a class even of men. This is not properly assuming or exercising any authority over them. You do not act as a superior, but an equal; and it is an act of friendship and brotherly love.

I am glad you had a little conversation with Miss Ritchie. She is a precious soul. Do her all the good you can, and incite her to exert all the talents which God has given her.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 1, 1781.*

NEVER be afraid that I should think your letters trouble me: I am never so busy as to forget my friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher made an excellent beginning, and I trust they will increase with all the increase of God. Now, let all of you that remain in the neighborhood arise up and supply her lack of service. Be instant in season, out of season; that all may know you have caught her mantle!

But pray do not suffer my poor Miss Ritchie to work herself to death. Let her do all she can, and not more than she can.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

Near LONDON, *November 21, 1783.*

THROUGH the blessing of God, I find no difference at all between the health and strength which are none given me, and that which I had forty years ago. Only I had then many pains which I have not now.

You are enabled to give a very clear and standing proof that weakness of nerves cannot prevent joy in the Lord. Your nerves have been remarkably weak, and that for many years: But still your soul can magnify the Lord, and your spirit rejoice in God your Savior!

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXIV. — *To Dr. Robertson.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *September 24 1753.*

I HAVE lately had the pleasure of reading Mr. Ramsay's "Principles of Religion," with the notes you have annexed to them. Doubtless he was a person of a bright and strong understanding, but I think not of a very clear apprehension. Perhaps it might be owing to this, that, not distinctly perceiving the strength of some of the objections to his hypothesis, he is very peremptory in his assertions, and apt to treat his opponent with an air of contempt and disdain.

This seems to have been a blemish even in his moral character. I am afraid the using guile is another: For surely it is a mere artifice to impute to the Schoolmen the rise of almost every opinion which he censures; seeing he

must have known that most, if not all, of those opinions, preceded the Schoolmen several hundred years.

The treatise itself gave me a stronger conviction than ever I had before, both of the fallaciousness and unsatisfactoriness of the mathematical method of reasoning on religious subjects. Extremely fallacious it is; for if we slip but in one line, a whole train of errors may follow: And utterly unsatisfactory; at least to me, because I can never be sufficiently assured that this is not the case.

The two first books, although doubtless they are a fine chain of reasoning, yet gave me the less satisfaction, because I am clearly of Mr. H's judgment, that all this is beginning at the wrong end; that we can have no idea of God, nor any sufficient proof of his very being, but from the creatures; and that the meanest plant is a far stronger proof hereof, than all Dr. Clarke's or the Chevalier's demonstrations.

Among the latter, I was surprised to find a demonstration of the manner how God is present to all beings; (page 57;) how he begat the Son from all eternity; (page 77;) and how the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. (Page 86.) *Quanto satius est fateri nescire quae nescias, quam ista effutientem nauseare et ipsum tibi displicere?*⁷⁵ How much better to keep to his own conclusion, (page 95,) "Reason proves that this mystery is possible!" Revelation assures us that it is true; Heaven alone can show us how it is.

There are several propositions in his second book which I cannot assent to; particularly with regard to the divine foreknowledge. I can by no means acquiesce in the twenty-second proposition, "That it is a matter of free choice in God, to think of finite ideas." I cannot reconcile this with the assertion of the Apostle, "Known unto God are all his works $\alpha\pi\ \alpha\iota\omega\nu\omicron\varsigma$, from eternity." And if any one ask, "How is God's foreknowledge consistent with our freedom;" I plainly answer, I cannot tell.

In the third book, (page 209,) I read, "The desire of God, purely as beatifying, as the source of infinite pleasure, is a necessary consequence of the natural love we have for happiness." I deny it absolutely. My natural

love for happiness was as strong thirty years ago as at this instant. Yet I had then no more desire of God, as the source of any pleasure at all, than I had of the devil or of hell. So totally false is that, “That the soul inevitably loves what it judges to be the best.”

Equally false is his next corollary; that “if ever fallen spirits see and feel that moral evil is a source of eternal misery, they cannot continue to will it deliberately.” (*Ibid.*) I can now show living proofs of the contrary. But I take knowledge, both from this and many other of his assertions, that Mr. R. never rightly understood the height and depth of that corruption which is in man, as well as diabolical nature.

The doctrine of pure love, as it is stated in the fourth book and elsewhere, (the loving God chiefly if not solely for his inherent perfections,) I once firmly espoused. But I was at length unwillingly convinced that I must give it up or give up the Bible. And for near twenty years I have thought, as I do now, that it is at least unscriptural, if not antisciptural: For the Scripture gives not the least intimation, that I can find, of any higher, or indeed any other, love of God, than that mentioned by St. John: “We love him, because he first loved us.” And I desire no higher love of God, till my spirit returns to Him.

Page 313: “There can be but two possible ways of curing moral evil; the sensation of pleasure in the discovery of truth, or the sensation of pain in the love of error.”

So here is one who has searched out the Almighty to perfection! who knows every way wherein He can exert his omnipotence!

I am not clear in this. I believe it is very possible for God to act in some third way. I believe he can make me as holy as an archangel, without any sensation at all preceding.

Page 324: “Hence it is that the chaos mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis cannot be understood of the primitive state of nature.”

Why not, if God created the world gradually, as we are assured he did?

In this fifth book, (page 334,) I read a more extraordinary assertion than any of the preceding: “The infusion of such supernatural habits, by one instantaneous act, is impossible. We cannot be confirmed in immutable habits of good, but by a long continued repetition of free acts.” I dare not say so. I am persuaded God can this moment confirm me immutably good.

Page 335: “Such is the nature of finite spirits, that, after a certain degree of good habits contracted, they become unpervertible and immutable in the love of order.” If so, “after a certain degree of evil habits contracted, must they not become unconvertible and immutable in the hatred of order?” And if Omnipotence cannot prevent the one, neither can it prevent the other.

Page 343: “No creature can suffer, but what has merited punishment.” This is not true; for the man Christ Jesus was a creature. But he suffered; yet he had not merited punishment, unless our sins were imputed to him. But if so, Adam’s sin might be imputed to us; and on that account even an infant may suffer.

Now, if these things are so, if a creature may suffer for the sin of another imputed to him, then the whole frame of reasoning for the pre-existence of souls, raised from the contrary supposition, falls to the ground.

Page 347: “There are but three opinions concerning the transmission of original sin.” That is, there are but three ways of accounting how it is transmitted. I care not if there were none. The fact I know, both by Scripture and by experience. I know it is transmitted; but how it is transmitted, I neither know nor desire to know.

Page 353: “By this insensibility and spiritual lethargy in which all souls remain, ere they awake into mortal bodies, the habits of evil in some are totally extinguished.”

Then it seems there is a third possible way of curing moral evil. And why may not all souls be cured this way without any pain or suffering at all?

“If any impurity remains in them, it is destroyed in a middle state after death.” (*Ibid.*)

I read nothing of either of these purgations in the Bible. But it appears to me, from the whole tenor of his writings, that the Chevalier’s notions are about one quarter scriptural, one quarter Popish, and two quarters Mystic.

Page 360: “God dissipated the chaos, introduced into the solar system by the fall of angels.” Does sacred writ affirm this? Where is it written, except in Jacob Behmen?

Page 366: “Physical evil is the only means of curing moral evil.” This is absolutely contrary both to Scripture, experience, and his own words, page 353. And “this great principle,” as he terms it, is one of those fundamental mistakes which run through the whole Mystic divinity.

Almost all that is asserted in the following pages may likewise be confuted by simply denying it.

Page 373: “Hence we see the necessity of sufferings and expiatory pains in order to purify lapsed beings; the intrinsic efficacy of physical, to cure moral, evil.”

“Expiatory pains” is pure, unmixed Popery; but they can have no place in the Mystic scheme. This only asserts, “the intrinsic efficacy of physical, to cure moral, evil, and the absolute necessity of sufferings, to purify lapsed beings:” Neither of which I can find in the Bible; though I really believe there is as much of the efficacy in sufferings, as in spiritual lethargy.

Page 374. “If beasts have any souls, they are either material or immaterial, to be annihilated after death; or degraded intelligences.” No; they may be immaterial, and yet not to be annihilated.

If you ask, “But how are they to subsist after death?” I answer, He that made them knows.

The sixth book, I fear, is more dangerously wrong than any of the preceding, as it effectual undermines the whole scriptural account of God's reconciling the world unto himself, and turns the whole redemption of man by the blood of Christ into a mere metaphor. I doubt whether Jacob Behmen does not do the same. I am sure he does, if Mr. Law understands him right.

I have not time to specify all the exceptionable passages: If I did, I must transcribe part of almost every page.

Page 393: "The Divinity is unsusceptible of anger." I take this to be the *πρωτον ψευδος*⁷⁶ of all the Mystics. But I demand the proof. I take anger to have the same relation to justice, as love has to mercy.

But if we grant them this, then they will prove their point. For if God was never angry, his anger could never be appeased; and then we may safely adopt the very words of Socinus, *Tota redemptionis nostrae per Christum metaphora*; ⁷⁷ seeing Christ died only to "show to all the celestial choirs God's infinite aversion to disorder."

Page 394: "He suffered, because of the sin of men, infinite agonies, as a tender father suffers to see the vices of his children. He felt all that lapsed angels and men should have suffered to all eternity. Without this sacrifice, celestial spirits could never have known the horrible deformity of vice. In this sense, he substituted himself as a victim to take away the sins of the world; not to appease vindictive justice, but to show God's infinite love of justice."

This is as broad Socinianism as can be imagined. Nay, it is more. It is not only denying the satisfaction of Christ, but supposing that he died for devils as much, and for the angels in heaven much more, than he did for man.

Indeed he calls Him an expiatory sacrifice, a propitiatory victim; but remember, it was only in this sense: For you are told again, (page 399,) "See the deplorable ignorance of those who represent the expiatory sacrifice of Christ as destined to appease vindictive justice, and avert

divine vengeance. It is by such frivolous and blasphemous notions that the Schoolmen have exposed this divine mystery.”

These “frivolous and blasphemous notions” do I receive as the precious truths of God. And so deplorable is my ignorance, that I verily believe all who deny them deny the Lord that bought them.

Page 400: “The immediate, essential, necessary means of reuniting men to God are prayer, mortification, and self denial.” No; the immediate, essential, necessary mean of reuniting me to God, is living faith; and that alone: Without this, I cannot be re-united to God; with this, I cannot but be re-united.

Prayer, mortification, and self-denial, are the fruits of faith, and the grand means of continuing and increasing it.

But I object to the account Mr. R. and all the Mystics give of those. It is far too lax and general. And hence those who receive all he says will live just as they did before in all the ease, pleasure, and state they can afford.

Page 403: “Prayer, mortification, and self-denial, produce necessarily in the son faith, hope, and charity.”

On the contrary, faith must necessarily precede both prayer, mortification, and self denial, if we mean thereby, “adoring God in spirit and in truth, a continual death to all that is visible, and a constant, universal suppression and sacrifice of all the motions of false love.” And the Chevalier talks of all these like a mere parrot, if he did not know and feel in his inmost soul, that it is absolutely false that any of these should subsist in our heart till we truly believe in the Son of God.

“True faith is a divine light in the soul that discovers the laws of eternal order, the all of God, and the nothingness of the creatures.” It does; but it discovers first of all, that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me, and washes me from my sins in his own blood.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXV. — To Mrs. *Sarah Ryan*.⁷⁸

MY DEAR SISTER,

NEWBURY, *November 8 1757.*

IN the hurry of business I had not time to write down what you desired, — the rules of our family. So I snatch a few minutes to do it now; and the more cheerfully, because I know you will observe them.

1. The family rises, part at four, part at half an hour after.
2. They breakfast at seven, dine at twelve, and sup at six.
3. They spend the hour from five to six in the evening (after a little joint prayer) in private.
4. They pray together at nine, and then retire to their chambers; so that all are in bed before ten.
5. They observe all Fridays in the year as days of fasting, or abstinence.

You, in particular, I advise, — Suffer no impertinent visitant, no unprofitable conversation, in the house. It is a city set upon an hill; and all that is in it should be “holiness to the Lord.”

On what a pinnacle do you stand! You are placed in the eye of all the world, friends and enemies. You have no experience of these things; no knowledge of the people; no advantages of education; not large natural abilities; and are but a novice, as it were, in the ways of God! It requires all the omnipotent love of God to preserve you in your present station. Stand fast in the Lord, and in the power of his might! Show that nothing is too hard for Him. Take to thee the whole armor of God; and do and suffer all things through Christ strengthening thee. If you continue teachable and advisable, I know nothing that shall be able to hurt you.

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *November 22, 1757.*

MAY the peace and love of God spring up in your heart, as in time past, and more abundantly! You have refreshed my bowels in the Lord: I feel your words, and praise God on your behalf. I not only excuse but love your simplicity; and whatever freedom you use, it will be welcome.

Surely God will never suffer me to be ashamed of my confidence in you. I have been censured for it by some of your nearest friends; but I cannot repent of it. Will not you put forth all your strength, (which indeed is not yours; it is the Spirit of the Father which now worketh in you,)

1. In managing all things pertaining to the house, so as to adorn the Gospel of God our Savior?
2. In feeding the sheep he has committed to your immediate care, and carrying the weak and sickly in your bosom?
3. In assisting, quickening, and directing the family at Kingswood, whom I trust you will always bear upon your heart?
4. In reproving, stirring up, or confirming all whom the providence of God shall put into your hands? And, lastly, in watching over, and helping forward in the ways of God, one who has more need of help than all the rest; and who is always willing to receive it from you, because you always speak the truth in love?

Do you find no interruption or abatement at any time of your joy in the Lord? Do you continually see God; and that without any cloud, or darkness, or mist between? Do you pray without ceasing, without ever being diverted from it by anything inward or outward? Are you never hindered by my person or thing? by the power or subtlety of Satan, or by the weakness or disorders of the body, pressing down the soul? Can you be thankful for everything without exception? And do you feel all working together for good? Do you do nothing, great or small, merely to please yourself? Do you feel no touch of any desire or affection but what springs from the pure love of God? Do you speak no words but from a principle

of love, and under the guidance of his Spirit? O how I long to find you unblamable in all things, and holy as He that hath called you is holy!

I am yours, etc.

CLXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 30, 1757.*

YOUR letter came in a seasonable time, as rain in a time of drought. How fain would we excuse those we love! I would gladly acquit those who severely condemn each other. The wrong to myself is not worth a thought; it gives me not a moment's uneasiness. But I am pained for others, who if they do not sin against God, yet give great occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.

You may learn an excellent lesson herefrom. Suppose you are saved from sin, it is certain that you are not saved from a possibility of mistake. On this side, therefore, Satan may assault you; you may be deceived either as to persons or things. You may think better, or (which is far more strange) you may think worse, of them, than they deserve. And hence words or actions may spring, which, if not sinful in you, are certainly wrong in themselves; and which will and must appear sinful to those who cannot read your heart. What grievous inconvenience would ensue! How would the good that is in you be evil spoken of! How would the great gift of God be doubted of, if not disbelieved and denied, for your cause! Therefore, in the name of God I exhort you, keep close every moment to the unction of the Holy One! Attend to the still small voice! Beware of hearkening to the voice of a stranger! My eyes ache, my head aches, my heart aches. And yet I know not when to have done. O speak nothing, act nothing, think nothing, but as you are taught of God!

Still may He with your weakness stay,
Nor for a moment's space depart;
Evil and danger turn away,
And keep your hand, your tongue, your heart.

So shall you always comfort, not grieve,

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

December 14, 1757.

I FIND by Mr. P—n's last letter, that he is deeply offended; that his former affection (so he speaks) is degenerated into a cold esteem, and that he no longer regards me as a dear friend, but as an austere master. Has he not a little affected you? He does not speak with passion; but his words distill as the dew. The God whom you serve send forth his light and his truth, and direct you in every thought!

Do you never find any wandering thoughts in prayer, or useless thoughts at other seasons? Does the corruptible body never press down the soul, and make it muse about useless things? Have you so great a command over your imagination, as to keep out all unprofitable images? at least to punish them the moment they appear, so that they neither trouble nor sully your soul? Do you find every reasoning brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ? Is there no vanity or folly in your dreams? no temptation that almost overcomes you? And are you then as sensible of the presence of God, and as full of prayer, as when you are waking?

I can hardly avoid trembling for you still: Upon what a pinnacle do you stand! Perhaps few persons in England have been in so dangerous a situation as you are now. I know not whether any other was ever so regarded both by my brother and me at the same time. What can I do to help you? The Father of mercies help you, and with his favorable kindness surround you on every side! May the eternal Spirit help you in every thought, word, and work, to serve the living God!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CLXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

January 20, 1758.

How did you feel yourself under your late trial? Did you find no stirring of resentment; no remains of your own will; no desire or wish that things should be otherwise? In one sense, you do desire it; because you desire that God should be glorified in all things. But did not the falling short of that desire lessen your happiness? Had you still the same degree of communion with God, the same joy in the Holy Ghost? I never saw you so much moved as you appeared to be that evening. Your soul was then greatly troubled; and a variety of conflicting passions, love, sorrow, desire, with a kind of despair, were easy to be read in your countenance. And was not your heart unhinged at all? Was it not ruffled or discomposed? Was your soul all the time calmly stayed on God? waiting upon him without distraction? Perhaps one end of this close trial was, to give you a deeper knowledge of yourself and of God; of His power to save, and of the salvation he hath wrought in you.

Most of the trials you have lately met with have been of another kind; but it is expedient for you to go through both evil and good report. The conversing with you, either by speaking or writing, is an unspeakable blessing to me. I cannot think of you without thinking of God. Others often lead me to him; but it is, as it were, going round about; you bring me straight into His presence. Therefore, whoever warns me against trusting you, I cannot refrain; as I am clearly convinced He calls me to it.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CXC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER

January 27, 1758.

LAST Friday, after many severe words, my —— left me, vowing she would see me no more. As I had wrote to you the same morning, I began to reason with myself, till I almost doubted whether I had done well in

writing, or whether I ought to write to you at all. After prayer that doubt was taken away. Yet I was almost sorry that I had written that morning. In the evening, while I was preaching at the chapel, she came into the chamber where I had left my clothes, searched my pockets, and found the letter there, which I had finished, but had not sealed. While she read it, God broke her heart; and I afterwards found her in such a temper as I have not seen her in for several years. She has continued in the same ever since. So I think God has given a sufficient answer, with regard to our writing to each other.

I still feel some fear concerning you. How have you found yourself since we parted? Have you suffered no loss by anything? Has nothing damped the vigour of your spirit? Is honor a blessing, and dishonor too? the frowns and smiles of men? Are you one and the same in ease or pain; always attentive to the voice of God? What kind of humility do you feel? What have you to humble you, if you have no sin? Are you wise in the manner of spending your time? Do you employ it all, not only well, but as well as it is possible? What time have you for reading? I want you to live like an angel here below; or rather, like the Son of God. Woman, walk thou as Christ walked; then you cannot but love and pray for

Your affectionate brother.

CXCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER

February 10, 1758.

YOUR last letter was seasonable indeed. I was growing faint in my mind. The being continually watched over for evil, the having every word I spoke, every action I did, small and great, watched over with no friendly eye; the hearing a thousand little, tart, unkind reflections, in return for the kindest words I could devise, —

Like drops of eating water on the marble,
At length have worn my sinking spirits down.

Yet I could not say, "Take thy plague away from me;" but only, "Let me be purified, not consumed."

What kind of humility do you feel? Is it a sense of sinfulness? Is it not a sense of helplessness, of dependence, of emptiness, and, as it were, nothingness? How do you look back on your past sins, either of heart or life? What tempers or passions do you feel, while you are employed in these reflections? Do you feel nothing like pride while you are comparing your present with your past state; or while persons are showing their approbation of, or esteem for, you? How is it that you are so frequently charged with pride? Are you careful to abstain from the appearance of it? O how important are all your steps! The Lord God guide and support you every moment!

I am yours, etc.

CXCII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

MALDON, *February 20, 1758.*

Is your eye altogether single? Is your heart entirely pure? I know you gave up the whole to God once; but do you stand to the gift? Once your will was swallowed up in God's. But is it now, and will it be so always? The whole Spirit and power of God be upon you; stablish, strengthen, settle you; and preserve your spirit, soul, and body, spotless and unblamable, unto the coming of Jesus Christ!

I am yours, etc.

CXCIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *April 4, 1758.*

O THAT I could be of some use to you! I long to help you forward in your way. I want to have your understanding a mere lamp of light, always shining with light from above! I want you to be full of divine knowledge and wisdom, as Jordan in the time of harvest! I want your words to be full

of grace, poured out as precious ointment. I want your every work to bear the stamp of God, to be a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor: Without any part weak, earthly, or human; all holy, all divine. The great God, your Father and your Love, bring you to this self-same thing! Begin, soldier of Christ, child of God. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith thou art called! Remember the faith! Remember the Captain of thy salvation! Fight! conquer! Die, — and live for ever!

I am yours, etc.

CXCIV. — *To Mr. Joseph Cownley.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN,⁷⁹

BRISTOL, *September 20, 1746.*

AS many of you as have set your hands to the plough, see that you go on, and look not back. The prize and the crown are before you; and in due time you shall reap, if you faint not. Meantime, fight the good fight of faith, enduring the cross, and despising the shame. Beware that none of you return evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing. Show forth out of a loving heart, your good conversation, with meekness and wisdom. Avoid all disputes as you would avoid fire: So shall ye continue kindly affectionate one toward another. The God of peace be with you.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CXCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *April 12, 1750.*

I DOUBT you are in a great deal more danger from honor than from dishonor. So it is with me. I always find there is most hazard in sailing upon smooth water. When the winds blow, and the seas rage, even the sleepers will rise and call upon God.

From Newcastle to London, and from London to Bristol, God is everywhere reviving his work. I find it is so now in Dublin; although there has been great imprudence in some, whereby grievous wolves have lately crept in amongst us, not sparing the flock; by whom some souls have been utterly destroyed, and others wounded, who are not yet recovered. Those who ought to have stood in the gap did not; but I trust they will be wiser for the time to come. After a season, I think it will be highly expedient for you to labor in Ireland again. Mr. Lunell has been on the brink of the grave by a fever. Yesterday we had hopes of his recovery. I see a danger you are in, which perhaps you do not see yourself. Is it not most pleasing to me, as well as you, to be always preaching of the love of God? And is there not a time when we are peculiarly led thereto, and find a peculiar blessing therein? Without doubt, so it is. But yet it would be utterly worn., and unscriptural to preach of nothing else. Let the Law always prepare for the Gospel. I scarce ever spoke more earnestly here of the love of God in Christ than last night: But it was after I had been tearing the unawakened in pieces. Go thou and do like wise. It is true, the love of God in Christ alone feeds his children; but even they are to be guided as well as fed; yea, and often physicked too: And the bulk of our hearers must be purged before they are fed; else we only feed the disease. Beware of all honey. It is the best extreme; but it is an extreme.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CXCVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 10, 1756.*

I HAVE no objection to anything but the blister. If it does good, well. But if I had been at Cork, all the Physicians in Ireland should not have put it upon your head. Remember poor Bishop Pearson. An Apothecary, to cure a pain in his head, covered it with a large blister. In an hour, he cried out, "O my head, my head!" and was a fool ever after, to the day of his death. I believe cooling things (if anything under heaven) would remove that violent irritation of your nerves, which probably occasions the pain. Moderate

riding, may be of use; I believe of more than the blister: Only do not take more labor upon you than you can bear. Do as much as you can, and no more. Let us make use of the present time. Everyday is of importance. We know not how few days of peace remain. We join in love to you and yours.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CXCVII. — *To Miss* —

February 21, 1759.

PROBABLY, Miss ——, this may be the last trouble of the kind which you will receive from me. Therefore you may forgive me this; and the rather, when you consider my motives to it. You know I can have no temporal view; I can have none but a faint, distant hope (because with God all things are possible) of doing some service to one whom I love. And this may answer the question which you might naturally ask, “What would you have? What do you want with me?” I want you, not to be a convert to my opinions, but to be a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of his kingdom. Be anything as to outward profession, so you are lowly in heart; so you resist and conquer every motion of pride, and have that mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Be what you please besides; only be meek and gentle, and in patience possess your soul; so that one may truly say to you,

“Calm thou ever art within,
An unruffled, all serene.”

Hear what Preacher you will; but hear the voice of God, and beware of prejudice and every unkind temper: Beware of foolish and hurtful desires, or they will pierce you through with many sorrows. In one word, be

anything but a trifler, a trifler with God and your own soul. It was not for this, that God gave you

A mind superior to the vulgar herd.

No, Miss ——, no! but that you might employ all your talents to the glory of Him that gave them. O do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God! Is He not still striving with you? striving to make you, not almost, but altogether, a Christian? Indeed you must be all or nothing; a saint or a devil; eminent in sin, or holiness! The good Lord deliver you from every snare, and guide your feet in the way of peace! How great a pleasure would this give to all your real friends, and in particular to

Your affectionate servant for Christ's sake.

CXCVIII. — *To the Same.*

COLCHESTER, *March 20,*

1759

MY wife, Miss ——, surprised me last night by informing me you are left mistress of a large fortune. Shall I say, agreeably surprised me? I cannot tell; because I believe there is another world; and I do not know what influence this change may have on your condition. Therefore I am in fear and in hope. You may be hereby far more happy, or far more miserable, in eternity! O make a stand! Consider the situation you are in: Perhaps never before were you in so great danger. You know a little of your natural tempers: Now you have means of indulging, and thereby inflaming, them to the uttermost. And how many will incite you so to do! How few will dare to warn you against it! Now what food will you have for pride! what infinite temptations to think more highly than you ought to think! You do so already. But O, where will you stop? The good Lord arrest the storm in mid career! How impetuously now, unless God interpose, must self-will whirl you along! How deeply, unless He help, will you shortly be immersed in practical atheism! as ten thousand things will concur to drive God out of your thoughts, as much as if he were not in the world. But,

above all, how will you escape from being swallowed up in idolatry? love of the world, such as you never knew before?

Hitherto you have been greatly superior to every delicacy in food: But even this may assault you now; and perhaps raise in you other desires which you are now a stranger to. At present, you are above the follies of dress; but will you be so a twelvemonth hence? May you not easily slide into the pride of life, in this as well as other instances? especially considering how your vanity will be gratified thereby? For who will not admire and applaud your admirable taste? It will only remain for you to marry some agreeable person, that has much wit and sense, with little or no religion; then it is finished! Either you will be thoroughly miserable in this world, or miserable to eternity.

“But what business is this of yours? Cannot you let me alone? What have I to do with you?” Believe me, I could very easily let you alone, if I had not a real and tender goodwill toward you; and if I did not know (what perhaps you do not) that you have need even of me. You want friends who understand you well, and who dare tell you the whole, plain truth; and yet not in a surly, imperious manner; for then you could not receive it. I have endeavored to do this once more. Will not you forgive me? I cannot but think, if you do not thank, you will at least excuse,

Your affectionate servant.

CXCIX. — *To Miss H* —

DUBLIN, *April 5*, 1758.

It is with great reluctance that I at length begin to write: First, because I abhor disputing, and never enter upon it but when I am, as it were, dragged into it by the hair of the head; and, next, because I have so little hope that any goodwill arise from the present dispute. I fear your passions are too deeply interested in the question to admit the force of the strongest reason.

So that, were it not for the tender regard I have for you, which makes your desire a motive I cannot resist, I should not spend half an hour in so thankless a labor, and one wherein I have so little prospect of success.

“The doctrine of perfection,” you say, “has perplexed you much, since some of our Preachers have placed it in so dreadful a light; one of them affirming, A believer, till perfect, is under the curse of God, and in a state of damnation: Another, If you die before you have attained it, you will surely perish.”

By “perfection,” I mean “perfect love,” or the loving God with all our heart, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. I am convinced every believer may attain this; yet I do not say, he is in a state of damnation, or under the curse of God, till he does attain. No, he is in a state of grace, and in favor with God, as long as he believes. Neither would I say, “If you die without it, you will perish;” but rather, Till you are saved from unholy tempers, you are not ripe for glory. There will therefore more promises be fulfilled in your soul, before God takes you to himself.

“But none can attain perfection unless they first believe it attainable.” Neither do I affirm this. I know a Calvinist in London, who never believed it attainable, till the moment she did attain it; and then lay declaring it aloud for many days, till her spirit returned to God.

“But you yourself believed, twenty years ago, that we should not put off the infection of nature, but with our bodies.” I did so. But I believe otherwise now, for many reasons, some of which you afterwards mention. How far Mr. Roquet or Mr. Walsh may have mistaken these, I know not: I can only answer for myself.

“The nature and fitness of things” is so ambiguous an expression, that I never make use of it. Yet if you ask me, “Is it fit or necessary in the nature of things, that a soul should be saved from all sin before it enters into glory?” I answer, It is. And so it is written, “No unclean thing shall enter into it.” Therefore, whatever degrees of holiness they did, or did not, attain, in the preceding parts of life, neither Jews nor Heathens, any more

than Christians, ever did, or ever will, enter into the New Jerusalem, unless they are cleansed from all sin before they enter into eternity.

I do by no means exclude the Old Testament from bearing witness to any truths of God. Nothing less: But I say, the experience of the Jews is not the standard of Christian experience; and that therefore, were it true, "The Jews did not love God with all their heart and soul," it would not follow, "Therefore, no Christian can;" because he may attain what they did not.

"But," you say, "either their words do not contain a promise of such perfection, or God did not fulfill this promise to them to whom he made it." I answer, He surely will fulfill it to them to whom He made it; namely, to the Jews, after their dispersion into all lands: And to these is the promise made; as will be clear to any who impartially considers the thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy, wherein it stands.

I doubt whether this perfection can be proved by Luke 6:40. From 1 John 3:9, (which belongs to all the children of God) I never attempted to prove it; but I still think it is clearly described in those words, "As he is, so are we in this world." And yet it doth not now appear "what we shall be," when this vile body is "fashioned like unto his glorious body;" when we shall see Him, not in a glass, but face to face, and be transformed into his likeness.

Those expressions, (John 13:10,) "Ye are clean, clean every whit," are allowed to refer to justification only. But that expression, "If we walk in the light as He is in the light," cannot refer to justification only. It does not relate to justification at all, whatever the other clause may do. Therefore, those texts are by no means parallel, neither can the latter be limited by the former; although it is sure, the privileges described in both belong to every adult believer.

But not only abundance of particular texts, but the whole tenor of Scripture declares, Christ came to "destroy the works of the devil, to save us from our sins?" all the works of the devil, all our sins, without any exception or limitation. Indeed should we say, we have no sin to be saved

or cleansed from, we should make Him come in vain. But it is at least as much for his glory to cleanse us from them all before our death as after it.

“But St. James says, ‘In many things we offend all;’ and whatever ‘we’ might mean, if alone, the expression ‘we all’ was never before understood to exclude the person speaking.” Indeed it was. It is unquestionably to be understood so as to exclude Isaiah, the person speaking, “We are all as an unclean thing; we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” (64:6.) For this was not the case with Isaiah himself. Of himself he says, “My soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” (61:10.) Here the Prophet, like the Apostle, uses the word “we” instead of “you,” to soften the harshness of an unpleasing truth.

In this chapter the Apostle is not cautioning them against censuring others, but entering upon a new argument; wherein the second verse has an immediate reference to the first; but none at all to the thirteenth of the preceding chapter.

I added, “‘We offend all,’ cannot be spoken of all Christians; for immediately there follows the mention of one who offends not, as the ‘we’ before-mentioned did.” You answer, “His not offending in word, will not prove that he does not offend ‘in many things.’” I think St. James himself proves it, in saying, “He is able to bridle also the whole body;” to direct all his actions as well as words, according to the holy, perfect will of God; which those, and those only, are able to do, who love God with all their hearts. And yet these very persons can sincerely say, “Forgive us our trespasses.” For as long as they are in the body, they are liable to mistake, and to speak or act according to that mistaken judgment. Therefore they cannot abide the rigor of justice, but still need mercy and forgiveness.

Were you to ask, “What, if I should die this moment?” I should answer, I believe you would be saved; because I am persuaded, none that has faith can die before he is made ripe for glory. This is the doctrine which I continually teach, which has nothing to do with justification by words. Nor can it discourage any who have faith, neither weaken their peace, nor

damp their joy in the Lord. True believers are not distressed hereby, either in life or in death; unless in some rare instance, wherein the temptation of the devil is joined with a melancholy temper.

Upon the whole, I observe your great argument turns all along on a mistake of the doctrine. Whatever warm expressions may drop from young men, we do not teach that any believer is under condemnation. So that all the inferences drawn from this supposition fall to the ground at once.

Your other letter I hope to consider hereafter; though I have great reason to apprehend your prejudice will still be too strong for my arguments. However, whether you expect it or not, I must wish for your perfection. You of all people have most need of perfect love; because this alone casts out fear.

I am, with great sincerity,
Your affectionate brother and servant.

CC. — *To* —

DEAR SIR,

July 1, 1759.

CONSIDERING the variety of business which must lie upon you, I am not willing to trouble you too often; yet cannot any longer delay to return thanks for your favor of May 21. How happy is it that there is a higher wisdom than our own to guide us through the mazes of life! that we have an unction from the Holy One, to teach us of all things where human teaching fails! And it certainly must fail in a thousand instances. General rules cannot reach all particular cases; in some of which there is such a complication of circumstances, that God alone can show what steps we should take. There is one circumstance in your case which claims your peculiar attention, and makes it necessary often to check that boldness and simplicity, which otherwise would be both your duty and pleasure. But O, how easily may you comply too far, and hurt yourself in hopes of gaining

another! nay, perhaps hurt the other too, by that very compliance which was designed to help! And who is able to lay the line? to determine how far you should comply, and where fix your foot? May the God of wisdom direct you in all your steps! And I conceive He will rather do this, by giving you light directly from himself, in meditation and private prayer, than by the advice of others, who can hardly be impartial in so tender a point. Is it not then advisable, that you should much commune with God and your own heart? You may then lay aside all the trappings that naturally tend to hide you from yourself, and appear naked, as a poor sinful worm, before the great God, the Creator of heaven and of earth! the great God, who is your Father and your Friend! who hath prepared for you a kingdom! who calls you to forget the little things of earth, and to sit down with him on his throne! O may you dwell on these things, till they possess your whole soul, and cause you to love the honor which cometh of God only!

I am, dear Sir,

Your obedient servant.

CCI. — *To* —

DEAR SIR,

May 16, 1759.

SINCE I received your favor I have had many thoughts on worldly and Christian prudence. What is the nature of each? How do they differ? How may we distinguish one from the other?

It seems worldly prudence either pursues worldly ends, — riches, honor, ease, or pleasure; or pursues Christian ends on worldly maxims, or by worldly means. The grand maxims which obtain in the world are, The more power, the more money, the more learning, and the more reputation a man has, the more good he will do. And whenever a Christian, pursuing the noblest ends, forms his behavior by these maxims, he will infallibly

(though perhaps by insensible degrees) decline into worldly prudence. He will use more or less of conformity to the world, if not in sin, yet in doing some things that are good in themselves, yet (all things considered) are not good to him; and perhaps at length using guile, or disguise, simulation or dissimulation; either seeming to be what he is not, or not seeming to be what he is. By any of these marks may worldly prudence be discerned from the wisdom which is from above.

This Christian prudence pursues Christian maxims, and by Christian means. The ends it pursues are holiness in every kind, and in the highest degree; and usefulness in every kind and degree. And herein it proceeds on the following maxims: — The help that is done upon earth, God doeth it himself; it is he that worketh all in all; and that, not by human power; generally he uses weak things to confound the strong; — not by men of wealth; most of his choicest instruments may say, “Silver and gold have I none;” — not by learned or wise men after the flesh; no, the foolish things hath God chosen; — not by men of reputation, but by the men that were as the filth and offscouring of the world: All which is for this plain reason, — “that no flesh may glory in his sight.”

Christian prudence pursues these ends upon these principles, by only Christian means. A truly prudent Christian, while, in things purely indifferent, he becomes all things to all men, yet wherever duty is concerned, matters the example of all mankind no more than a grain of sand. His word is then,

*Non me, qui caetera, vincit
Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.* ⁸⁰

He will not, to gain the favor or shun the hate of all, omit the least point of duty. He cannot prevail upon himself on any account or pretense, to use either simulation or dissimulation. There is no guile in his mouth; no evasion or ambiguity. Having one desire, one design, to glorify God with his body and with his spirit; having only one fear,

Lest a motion, or a word,
Or thought arise, to grieve his Lord;

having one rule, the word of God; one guide, even his Spirit, he goes on in child-like simplicity. Continually seeing Him that is invisible, he walks in open day. Looking unto Jesus, and deriving strength from him, he goes on in his steps, in the work of faith, the labor of love, the patience of hope, till he is called up to be ever with the Lord.

O that this were in all points your own character! Surely you desire it above all things. But how shall you attain? Difficulties and hindrances surround you on every side! Can you bear with my plainness? I believe you can. Therefore, I will speak without any reserve. I fear you have scarce one friend who has not more or less of the prudence which is not from above. And I doubt you have (in or near your own rank) hardly one example of true Christian prudence! Yet I am persuaded your own heart advises you right; or rather, God in your heart. O that you may hearken to his voice alone, and let all creatures keep silence before Him! Why should they encumber you with Saul's armor? If you essay to go forth thus, it will be in vain. You have no need of this, neither of his sword or spear; for you trust in the Lord of hosts. O go forth in his strength! and with the stones of the brook you shall overthrow all your enemies.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obedient servant for Christ's sake.

CCII. — *To* —.

DEAR SIR,

DUBLIN, *April* 18, 1760.

DISCE, *docendus adhuc quae censet amicus*; ⁸¹ and take in good part my mentioning some particulars which have been long on my mind; and yet I knew not how to speak them. I was afraid it might look like taking too much upon me, or assuming some superiority over you. But love casts out, or at least overrules, that fear. So I will speak simply, and leave you to judge.

It seems to me, that, of all the persons I ever knew, save one, you are the hardest to be convinced. I have occasionally spoken to you on many heads; some of a speculative, others of a practical nature; but I do not know that you was ever convinced of one, whether of great importance or small. I believe you retained your own opinion in every one, and did not vary a hair's breadth. I have likewise doubted whether you was not full as hard to be persuaded, as to be convinced; whether your will do not adhere to its first bias, right or wrong, as strongly as your understanding. I mean, with regard to any impression which another may make upon them. For perhaps you readily, too readily, change of your own mere motion; as I have frequently observed great fickleness and great stubbornness meet in the same mind. So that it is not easy to please you long; but exceeding easy to offend you. Does not this imply the thinking very highly of yourself? particularly of your own understanding? Does it not imply, what is always connected therewith, something of self-sufficiency? "You can stand alone; you care for no man; you need no help from man." It was not so with my brother and me, when we were first employed in this great work. We were deeply conscious of our own insufficiency; and though, in one sense, we trusted in God alone, yet we sought his help from all his children, and were glad to be taught by any man. And this, although we were really alone in the work; for there were none that had gone before us therein; there were none then in England who had trod that path wherein God was leading us. Whereas you have the advantage which we had not; you tread in a beaten path; others have gone before you, and are going now in the same way, to the same point. Yet it seems you choose to stand alone; what was necessity with us, is choice with you; you like to be unconnected with any, thereby tacitly condemning all. But possibly you go farther yet: Do not you explicitly condemn all your fellow laborers, blaming one in one instance, one in another, so as to be thoroughly pleased with the conduct of none? Does not this argue a vehement proneness to condemn? a very high degree of censoriousness? Do you not censure even *peritos in sud arte*?⁸² Permit me to relate a little circumstance to illustrate this: After we had been once singing a hymn at Everton, I was just going to say, "I wish Mr. Whitefield would not try to mend my brother's hymns. He cannot do it. How vilely he has murdered that hymn; weakening the sense, as well as marring the poetry!" But how was I afterwards surprised to hear it was not Mr. Whitefield, but Mr. B! In very deed, it is not easy

to mend his hymns, any more than to imitate them. Has not this aptness to find fault frequently shown itself, in abundance of other instances? sometimes with regard to Mr. Parker, or Mr. Hicks; sometimes with regard to me? And this may be one reason why you take one step which was scarce ever before taken in Christendom: I mean, the discouraging the new converts from reading; at least, from reading anything but the Bible. Nay, but get off the consequence who can: If they ought to read nothing but the Bible, they ought to hear nothing but the Bible; so away with sermons, whether spoken or written! I can hardly imagine that you discourage reading even our little tracts, out of jealousy lest we should undermine you, or steal away the affections of the people. I think you cannot easily suspect this. I myself did not desire to come among them; but you desired me to come. I should not have obtruded myself either upon them or you; for I have really work enough; full as much as either my body or mind is able to go through: And I have, blessed be God, friends enough; I mean, as many as I have time to converse with: Nevertheless, I never repented of that I spent at Everton; and I trust it was not spent in vain.⁸³ I have not time to throw these thoughts into a smoother form; so I give you them just as they occur. May the God whom you serve give you to form a right judgment concerning them, and give a blessing to the rough sincerity of,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

CCIII. — *To Miss Elizabeth Hardy.*

DEAR SISTER,

December 26, 1761.

THE path of controversy is a rough path. But it seems smoother while I am walking with you: So that I could follow you through all its windings; only my time will not permit.

The plain fact is this: I know many who love God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they

are continually happy in him. They love their neighbor 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 plain, sound, scriptural experience: And of this we have more and more living witnesses.

But these souls dwell in a shattered, corruptible body, and are so pressed down thereby, that they cannot exert their love as they would, by always thinking, speaking, and acting precisely right. For want of better bodily organs, they sometimes inevitably think, speak, or act wrong. Yet I think they need the advocacy of Christ, even for these involuntary defects; although they do not imply a defect of love, but of understanding. However that be, I cannot doubt the fact. They are all love; yet they cannot walk as they desire. “But are they all love while they grieve the Holy Spirit?” No, surely; they are then fallen from their steadfastness; and this they may do even after they are sealed. So that, even to such, strong cautions are needful. After the heart is cleansed from pride, anger, and desire, it may suffer them to re-enter: Therefore I have long thought some expressions in the Hymns are abundantly too strong; as I cannot perceive any state mentioned in Scripture from which we may not (in a measure, at least) fall.

Persons who talked of being emptied before they were filled, were, for some time, a great stumbling-block to me too; but I have since considered it thus: The great point in question is, Can we be saved from all sin, or not? Now, it may please God to act in that uncommon manner, purposely to clear this point: To satisfy those persons that they are saved from all sin, before he goes on in his work.

Forgive me, dear Miss Hardy, that I do but just touch upon the heads of your letter. Indeed, this defect does not spring from the want of love, but only from want of time. I should not wonder if your soul was one of the next that was filled with pure love. Receive it freely, thou poor bruised reed! It is able to make thee stand.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCIV. — *To Lady* —

MY LADY,

March 18, 1760.

It was impossible to see the distress into which your Ladyship was thrown by the late unhappy affair, without bearing a part of it, without sympathizing with you. But may we not see God therein? May we not both hear and understand his voice? We must allow, it is generally “small and still;” yet he speaks sometimes in the whirlwind. Permit me to speak to your Ladyship with all freedom; not as to a person of quality, but as to a creature whom the Almighty made for himself, and one that is in a few days to appear before Him.

You were not only a nominal, but a real, Christian. You tasted of the powers of the world to come. You knew God the Father had accepted you, through his eternal Son; and God the Spirit bore witness with your spirit, that you were a child of God.

But you fell among thieves, and such as were peculiarly qualified to rob you of your God. Two of these in particular were sensible, learned, well-bred, well-natured, moral men. These did not assault you in a rough, abrupt, offensive manner. No; you would then have armed yourself against them, and have repelled all their attacks. But by soft, delicate, unobserved touches, by pleasing strokes of raillery, by insinuations, rather than surly arguments, they, by little and little, sapped the foundation of your faith; perhaps not only of your living faith, your “evidence of things not seen;” but even of your notional. It is well if they left you so much as an assent to the Bible, or a belief that Christ is God over all! And what was the consequence of this? Did not your love of God grow cold? Did not you

Measure back your steps to earth again?

Did not your love of the world revive? even of those poor, low trifles, which, in your very childhood, you utterly despised?

Where are you now? full of faith? looking into the holiest, and seeing Him that is invisible? Does your heart now glow with love to Him, who is daily pouring his benefits upon you? Do you now even desire it? Do you now say, (as you did almost twenty years ago,) —

“Keep me dead to all below,
Only Christ resolved to know;
Firm, and disengaged, and free,
Seeking all my bliss in thee?”

Is your taste now for heavenly things? Are not you a lover of pleasure, more than a lover of God? And O what pleasure? What is the pleasure of visiting? of modern conversation? Is there any more reason than religion in it? I wonder, what rational appetite does it gratify? Setting religion quite out of the question, I cannot conceive how a woman of sense can — relish, should I say? no, but suffer, so insipid an entertainment.

O that the time past may suffice! Is it not now high time that you should awake out of sleep? Now God calls aloud! My dear Lady, now hear the voice of the Son of God, and live! The trouble in which your tender parent is now involved may restore all that reverence for her which could not but be a little impaired while you supposed she was “righteous over much.” O how admirably does God lay hold of and “strengthen the things that remain” in you! your gratitude, your humane temper, your generosity, your filial tenderness! And why is this, but to improve every right temper; to free you from all that is irrational or unholy; to make you all that you were, yea, all that you should be; to restore you to the whole image of God?

I am, my Lady,
Yours, etc.

CCV. — *To Mr. Hosmer.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *June 7, 1761.*

I APPREHEND if you will give another careful reading To those four pages, 244-247, you will find all your objections anticipated or answered.

However, I do not think much of answering them over again. Your words are,

“You say, ‘A mistake is not a sin, if love is the sole principle of action; yet it is a transgression of the perfect law:’ Therefore, perfect love is not the perfect law,” Most sure: For, by “the perfect law,” I mean that given to Adam at his creation. But the loving God with all his heart was not the whole of that law: It implied abundantly more; even thinking, speaking, and acting right in every instance, which he was then able, and therefore obliged, to do. But none of his descendants are able to do this; therefore love is the fulfilling of their law.

Perhaps you had not adverted to this. The law of love, which is the whole law given to us, is only one branch of that perfect law which was given to Adam in the beginning. His law was far wider than ours, as his faculties were more extensive. Consequently, many things might be transgressions of the latter, which were not of the former.

“But if ignorance be a transgression of the perfect law” — Whoever said or thought so? Ignorance is not; but mistake is. And this Adam was able to avoid; that kind of ignorance which was in him not constraining him to mistake, as ours frequently does.

“But is ‘a voluntary transgression of a known law’ a proper definition of sin?” I think it is of all such sin as is imputed to our condemnation. And it is a definition which has passed uncensored in the church for at least fifteen hundred years.

To propose any objections that naturally arise, is right; but beware you do not seek objections. If you once begin this, you will never have done. Indeed, this whole affair is a strife of words. The thing is plain. All in the body are liable to mistakes, practical as well as speculative. Shall we call them sins or no? I answer again and again, Call them just what you please.

CCVI. — *To Mr. Alexander Coates.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

OTLEY, *JULY 7*, 1761.

THE perfection I teach is perfect love; loving God with all the heart; receiving Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King, to reign alone over all our thoughts, words, and actions. The Papists neither teach nor believe this: Give even the devil his due. They teach, there is no perfection here which is not consistent with venial sins; and among venial sins they commonly reckon simple fornication. Now, I think this is so far from the perfection I teach, that it does not come up to any but Mr. Relly's perfection. To say, Christ will not reign alone in our hearts in this life; will not enable us to give him all our hearts; this, in my judgment, is making him a half-Savior: He can be no more, if he does not quite save us from our sins. I pray, then, be not quite so peremptory. Who exalts Christ most? those who call on him to be the sole Monarch of the heart; or those who allow him only to share the power, and to govern most of the thoughts and tempers? Who honor him most? those who believe He heals all our sickness, takes away all our ungodliness; or those who say, He heals only the greater part of it, till death does what He cannot do? I know no creature (of us) who says, "Part of our salvation belongs to Christ, and part to us." No; we all say, Christ alone saves us from all sin; and your question is not about the Author, but the measure, of salvation. Both agree, it is all Christ; but is it all salvation, or only half salvation, he will give? Who was Pelagius? By all I can pick up from ancient authors, I guess he was both a wise and a holy man. But we know nothing but his name; for his writings are all destroyed; not one line of them left. But, brother Coates, this way of talking is highly offensive. I advise you,

1. If you are willing to labor with us, preach no doctrine contrary to ours. I have preached twenty years in some of Mr. Whitefield's societies; yet, to this day, I never contradicted him among his own people. I did not think it honest, neither necessary at all. I could preach salvation by faith, and leave all controversy untouched. I advise you,
2. Avoid all those strong, rhetorical exclamations, "O horrid! O dreadful!" and the like; unless when you are strongly exhorting sinners to renounce the devil and all his works.
3. Acquaint yourself better with the doctrine we preach, and you will find it not dreadful, but altogether lovely.
4. Observe, that if forty persons think and speak wrong, either about justification or sanctification, (and perhaps fancy they have attained both,) this is no objection to the doctrines themselves. They must bear their own burden. But this does not at all affect the point in question.
5. Remember, as sure as you are that "believers cannot fall from grace," others (wise and holy men too) are equally sure they can; and you are as much obliged to bear with them as they are to bear with you.
6. Abstain from all controversy in public. Indeed, you have not a talent for it. You have an honest heart, but not a clear head. Practical religion is your point; therefore,
7. Keep to this: Repentance toward God, faith in Christ, holiness of heart and life, a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, the continual need of his atoning blood, a constant confidence in him, and all these every moment to our life's end. In none of these will any of our Preachers contradict you, or you them.

When you leave this plain path, and get into controversy, then they think you "invade the glories of our adorable King, and the unspeakable rights, and privileges, and comforts of his children;" and can they then "tamely hold their peace?"

O Sander, know the value of peace and love!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCVII. — *To Mr. S. F.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *October 13, 1762.*

IN general, when I apprehend, “Certainly this is a contradiction;” if I find other persons of equal sagacity with myself, of equal natural and acquired abilities, apprehend it is not; Immediately suspect my own judgment; and the more so, because I remember I have been many times full as sure as I am now, and yet afterwards I found myself mistaken.

As to this particular question, I believe I am able to answer every objection which can be made. But I am not able to do it without expending much time, which may be better employed. For this reason I am persuaded, it is so far from being my duty to enter into a formal controversy about it, that it would be a willful sin; it would be employing my short residue of life in a less profitable way than it may be employed.

The proposition which I will hold is this: “A person may be cleansed from all sinful tempers, and yet need the atoning blood.” For what? For “negligences and ignorances;” for both words and actions, (as well as omissions,) which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law. And I believe no one is clear of these till he lays down this corruptible body.

Now, Sammy, dropping the point of contradiction, tell me simply what you would have more. Do you believe evil tempers remain till death? all, or some? if some only, which?

I love truth wherever I find it: So, if you can help me to a little more of it, you will oblige,

Dear Sammy,
Yours, etc.

CCVIII. — *To Lord* —

MY LORD,

July 26, 1764.

UPON an attentive consideration, it will appear to every impartial person that the uniting of the serious Clergy in the manner I proposed in a former letter is not a matter of indifferency; but what none can reject, unless at the peril of his own soul. For every article therein mentioned is undeniably contained in the royal law, the law of love; and, consequently, the observance thereof is bound upon every man, as indispensably necessary to salvation. It will appear farther, that every single person may observe it, whether the other will or no. For many years, I, for instance, have observed this rule in every article. I labor to do so now; and will, by God's help, whatever others do, observe it to the end.

I rejoice that your Lordship so heartily concurs in doing what is in your power to promote a general observance of it. Certainly this is not possible to be effected by merely human means; but, it seems, your Lordship has taken one good step towards it, by communicating it to several. I am persuaded, at the same time, your Lordship's wish is, that it might take place everywhere. The same step I purpose to take, by sending to each of those gentlemen the substance of what I wrote to your Lordship, and desiring them to tell me freely, whatever objections they have against such an union. As many of those as are grounded on reason, I doubt not will be easily answered. Those only which spring from some wrong temper must remain till that temper is subdued. For instance: First, "We cannot unite," says one, "because we cannot trust one another." I answer to your reason or understanding, No matter whether we can or no. Thus far we must unite, trust or not; otherwise we sin against God. Secondly, I can trust you; why cannot you trust me? I can have no private end herein. I have neither personal hopes nor fears from you. I want nothing which you can give me; and I am not afraid of your doing me any hurt; though you may hurt yourself and the cause of God. But I cannot answer your envy, jealousy, pride, or credulity. As long as those remain, objections, however cut off, will spring up again like Hydra's heads.

If your Lordship has heard any objections, I should be glad to know them. May I be permitted to ask, Have not the objections you have heard made some impression upon your Lordship? Have they not occasioned (if I may speak freely) your Lordship's standing aloof from me? Have they not set your Lordship farther and farther off, ever since I waited upon you at — —? Why do I ask? Indeed, not upon my own account. *Quid mea? Ego in portu navigo.*⁸⁴ I can truly say, I neither fear nor desire anything from your Lordship. To speak a rough truth, I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. I mean, for my own sake. They do me no good; and I fear, I can do none to them. If it be desired, I will readily leave all those to the care of my fellow laborers. I will article with them so to do, rather than this shall be any bone of contention.

Were I not afraid of giving your Lordship pain, I would speak yet still further. Methinks you desire I should; that is, to tell you, once for all, every thought that rises in my heart. I will then. At present, I do not want you; but I really think you want me. For, have you a person in all England who speaks to your Lordship so plain and down right as I do? who considers not the Peer, but the man? not the Earl, but the immortal spirit? who rarely commends, but often blames, and perhaps would do it oftener if you desired it? who is jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest you should be less a Christian by being a nobleman? lest, after having made a fair advance towards heaven, you should

Measure back your steps to earth again.

O my Lord, is not such a person as this needful for you in the highest degree? If you have any such, I have no more to say, but that I pray God to bless him to your soul. If you have not, despise not even the assistance which it may please God to give you by,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's ready servant.

CCIX. — *To the Reverend Mr. H.*

DEAR SIR,

March 27, 1764.

YOUR book on the Millennium and the Mystic writers was lately put into my hands. I cannot but thank you for your strong and seasonable confirmation of that comfortable doctrine; of which I cannot entertain the least doubt as long as I believe the Bible. I thank you, likewise, for your remarks on that bad performance of the Bishop of G——, which undoubtedly tears up by the roots all real internal religion. Yet, at the same time, I cannot but bewail your vehement attachment to the Mystic writers; with whom I conversed much for several years, and whom I then admired, perhaps more than you do now. But I found at length, an absolute necessity of giving up either them or the Bible. So, after some time, I fixed my choice, to which I hope to adhere to my life's end. It is only the extreme attachment to these which can account for the following words: — “Mr. W. does, in several parts of his Journals, lay down some marks of the new birth, not only doubtful, but exceptionable; as, particularly, where persons appeared agitated or convulsed under the ministry; which might be owing to other causes, rather than any regenerating work of God's Spirit.” (Page 385.)

Is this true? In what one part of my Journals do I lay down any doubtful, much less exceptionable, marks of the new birth? In no part do I lay down those agitations or convulsions as any marks of it at all. Nay, I expressly declare the contrary in those very words which the Bishop himself cites from my Journal. I declare, “These are of a disputable nature: They may be from God; they may be from nature; they may be from the devil.” How is it, then, that you tell all the world, Mr. W. lays them down in his Journals as marks of the new birth?

Is it kind? Would it not have been far more kind, suppose I had spoken wrong, to tell me of it in a private manner? How much more unkind was it to accuse me to all the world of a fault which I never committed!

Is it wise thus to put a sword into the hands of our common enemy? Are we not both fighting the battle of our Lord, against the world, as well as the flesh and the devil? And shall I furnish them with weapons against you, or you against me? Fine diversion for the children of the devil! And how much more would they be diverted, if I would furnish my quota of the entertainment, by falling upon you in return! But I bewail the change in your spirit: You have not gained more lowliness or meekness since I knew you. O beware! You did not use to despise any one. This you have gained from the authors you admire. They do not express anger toward their opponents, but contempt in the highest degree. And this, I am afraid, is far more antichristian, more diabolical, than the other. The God of love deliver you and me from this spirit, and all us with the mind that was in Christ. So prays,

Dear Sir,

Your still affectionate brother.

CCX. — *To the Reverend Mr. Plenderlieth.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

May 23, 1768.

SOME years ago, it was reported that I recommended the use of a crucifix to a man under sentence of death. I traced this up to its author, Dr. Stennett, an Anabaptist Teacher. He was charged with it. He answered, "Why, I saw a crucifix in his cell;" (a picture of Christ on the cross;) "and I knew Mr. Wesley used to visit him; so I supposed he had brought it." This is the whole of the matter. Dr. Stennett himself I never yet saw; nor did I ever see such a picture in the cell; and I believe the whole tale is pure invention.

I had for some time given up the thought of an interview with Mr. Erskine, when I fell into the company of Dr. Oswald. He said, "Sir, you do not know Mr. Erskine. I know him perfectly well. Send and desire an hour's

conversation with him, and I am sure he will understand you better." I am glad I did send. I have done my part, and am now entirely satisfied.

I am likewise glad that Mr. E. has spoke his mind. I will answer with all simplicity, in full confidence of satisfying you, and all impartial men.

He objects, first, that I attack predestination, as subversive of all religion, and yet suffer my followers in Scotland to remain in that opinion. Much of this is true. I did attack predestination eight-and-twenty years ago; and I do not believe now any predestination which implies irrespective reprobation. But I do not believe it is necessarily subversive of all religion. I think hot disputes are much more so; therefore, I never willingly dispute with any one about it. And I advise all my friends, not in Scotland only, but all over England and Ireland, to avoid all contention on the head, and let every man remain in his own opinion. Can any man of candor blame me for this? Is there anything unfair or disingenuous in it?

He objects, secondly, that I "assert the attainment of sinless perfection by all born of God." I am sorry Mr. E. should affirm this again. I need give no other answer than I gave before, in the seventh page of the little tract I sent him two years ago.

I do not maintain this. I do not believe it. I believe Christian perfection is not attained by any of the children of God till they are what the Apostle John terms fathers. And this I expressly declare in that sermon which Mr. E. so largely quotes.

He objects, thirdly, that I "deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience." Since I believed justification by faith, which I have done upwards of thirty years, I have constantly maintained that we are pardoned and accepted wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath both done and suffered for us.

Two or three years ago, Mr. Madan's sister showed him what she had wrote down of a sermon which I had preached on this subject. He entreated me to write down the whole, and print it; saying, it would satisfy all my opponents. I was not so sanguine as to expect this: I

understood mankind too well. However, I complied with his request: A few were satisfied; the rest continued just as they were before.

As long as Mr. E. continues of the mind expressed in his “Theological Essays,” there is no danger that he and I should agree, any more than light and darkness. I love and reverence him, but not his doctrine. I dread every approach to Antinomianism. I have seen the fruit of it over the three kingdoms. I never said that Mr. E. and I were agreed. I will make our disagreement as public as ever he pleases; only I must, withal, specify the particulars. If he will fight with me, it must be on this ground; and then let him do what he will, and what he can.

Retaining a due sense of your friendly offices, and praying for a blessing on all your labors,

I remain, Reverend and dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother and servant.

CCXI. — *To Mr. S., at Armagh.*

DEAR BROTHER,

April 24, 1769.

I SHALL now tell you the things which have been more or less upon my mind ever since I have been in the north of Ireland. If you forget them, you will be a sufferer, and so will the people: If you observe them, it will be good for both.

1. To begin with little things. If you regard your health, touch no supper, but a little milk, or water gruel. This will entirely, by the blessing of God, secure you from nervous disorders; especially if you rise early every morning, whether you preach or no.

2. Be steadily serious. There is no country upon earth where this is more necessary than Ireland; as you are generally encompassed with those who, with a little encouragement, would laugh or trifle from morning to night.

3. In every town, visit all you can from house to house I say, “all you can;” for there will be some whom you cannot visit: And if you examine, instruct, reprove, exhort, as need requires, you will have no time hanging on you hands. It is by this means that the societies are increased wherever T. R. goes: He is preaching from morning to night; warning every one, that he may present every one perfect in Christ Jesus.

4. But on this and every other occasion, avoid all familiarity with women. This is deadly poison both to them and you. You cannot be too wary in this respect; therefore, begin from this hour.

5. The chief matter of your conversation, as well as your preaching, should doubtless be, the weightier matters of the law. Yet there are several (comparatively) little things which you should earnestly inculcate from time to time; for “he that despiseth small things, shall fall by little and little.” Such are, —

(1.) Be active, be diligent; avoid all laziness, sloth, indolence. Fly from every degree, every appearance of it; else you will never be more than half a Christian.

(2.) Be cleanly. In this let the Methodists take pattern by the Quakers. Avoid all nastiness, dirt, slovenliness, both in your person, clothes, house, and all about you. Do not stink above ground. This is a bad fruit of laziness; use all diligence to be clean, as one says, —

“Let thy mind’s sweetness have its operation
Upon thy person, clothes, and habitation.”

(3.) Whatever clothes you have, let them be whole; no rents, no tatters, no rags. These are a scandal to either man or woman; being another fruit of vile laziness. Mend your clothes, or I shall never

expect you to mend your lives. Let none ever see a ragged Methodist.

- (4) Clean yourselves of lice. These are a proof both of uncleanness and laziness: Take pains in this. Do not cut off your hair; but clean it, and keep it clean.
- (5) Cure yourself and your family of the itch: A spoonful of brimstone will cure you. To let this run from year to year, proves both sloth and uncleanness. Away with it at once. Let not the north be any longer a proverb of reproach to all the nation.
- (6.) Use no tobacco, unless prescribed by a Physician. It is an uncleanly and unwholesome self indulgence; and the more customary it is, the more resolutely should you break off from every degree of that evil custom.
- (7.) Use no snuff, unless prescribed by a Physician. I suppose no other nation in Europe is in such vile bondage to this silly, nasty, dirty custom as the Irish are. But let Christians be in this bondage no longer. Assert your liberty, and that all at once: Nothing will be done by degrees. But just now you may break loose, through Christ strengthening you.
- (8.) Touch no dram. It is liquid fire. It is a sure, though slow, poison. It saps the very springs of life. In Ireland, above all countries in the world, I would sacredly abstain from this, because the evil is so general; and to this, and snuff, and smoky cabins, I impute the blindness which is so exceeding common throughout the nation.

I might have inserted under the second article, what I particularly desire wherever you have preaching; namely, that there may be a little-house. Let this be got without delay. Wherever it is not, let none expect to see me.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

 CCXII. — *To* —

DEAR SIR,

——, 1770.

I BLESS God that you are not disgusted at the great plainness with which I wrote. Indeed I know not but it might be termed roughness; which was owing partly to the pressure of mind I then felt, and partly to my being straitened for time; otherwise I might have found softer expressions. I am thankful likewise for your openness; which obliges me to be open and unreserved, and to say all I mean, and that in the most simple manner, on each of the articles that lie before us.

I must do this, even with regard to my fellow laborers, lest I should seem to mean more than I do. But I am sensible this is a tender point, and one so extremely difficult to treat upon, that I should not venture to say one word, did I not know to whom I speak. What I mean is this: From many little circumstances which have occurred, I have been afraid (just so far it went) that those Clergymen with whom you are most acquainted, were jealous of your being acquainted with me. I was the more afraid, when I heard the sudden exclamation of one whom you well know: “Good God! Mr. Wesley is always speaking well of these gentlemen, and they can never speak well of him.” But I am entirely satisfied by that full declaration which you make: “I do not know of any impression that has been made upon me to your disadvantage.”

I had once the opportunity of speaking a few minutes to you on the head of Christian perfection; and I believe you had not much objection to anything which was then spoken. When I spoke nearly to the same effect to one of the late Bishops of London, Bishop Gibson, he said earnestly, “Why, Mr. Wesley, if this is what you mean by perfection, who can be against it?” I believe, verily, there would need no more than a single hour, spent in free and open conversation, to convince you that none can rationally or scripturally say anything against the perfection I have preached for thirty years.

The union which I desire among the persons I mentioned is an entire union of heart, constraining them to labor together as one man, in spreading vital religion through the nation. But this I do not hope for, though I know a few who would cordially rejoice therein. The union which I proposed is of a lower kind: I proposed that they should love as brethren, and behave as such. And I particularized what I think is implied in this; I imagined, in so plain a manner, as was hardly possible, without great skill, to be either misunderstood or misrepresented. I really do not conceive what ambiguity there can be in any part of this proposal; or what objection can lie against our going thus far, whether we go farther or no.

With regard to you, I have frequently observed that there are two very different ranks of Christians, both of whom may be in the favor of God, — a higher and a lower rank. The latter avoid all known sin, do much good, use all the means of grace, but have little of the life of God in their souls, and are much conformed to the world. The former make the Bible their whole rule, and their sole aim is the will and image of God. This they steadily and uniformly pursue, through honor and dishonor, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; considering one point only, “How may I attain most of the mind that was in Christ, and how may I please him most?” Now I verily believe, never was a person of rank more prepared for this state than you were the first time I had the pleasure of seeing you. Nay; I doubt not but you pant after it now; your soul is athirst to be all devoted to God. But who will press you forward to this? Rather, who will not draw you back? It is in this respect that I think one that uses plain dealing is needful for you in the highest degree; so needful, that without this help you will inevitably stop short: I do not mean, stop short of heaven; but of that degree of holiness, and, consequently, of happiness both in time and eternity, which is now offered to your acceptance.

It is herein that I am jealous over you. I am afraid of your sinking beneath your calling, degenerating into a common Christian, who shall indeed be saved, but saved as by fire. I long to see both you and your lady a little more than common Christians; Christians of the first rank in the kingdom of God, full of all goodness and truth. I want you to be living witnesses of all Gospel holiness! And what shall hinder, if you seek it by faith? Are not

all things ready? The Lord God give you to experience that all things are possible to them that believe!

O God, let all their life declare,
 How happy these thy servants are;
 How far above these earthly things;
 How pure when wash'd in Jesus' blood;
 How intimately one with God,
 A heaven-born race of Priests and Kings!

I am, honored Sir,
 Your friend and servant.

CCXIII. — *To Mr. John Trembath.*

TIVERTON, *September 21, 1755.*

THE plain reason why I did not design to speak with you at Launceston was, because I had no hope of doing you good. I observed long ago, that you are not patient of reproof; and I fear you are less so now than ever. But since you desire it, I will tell you once more what I think, fear, or hear concerning you.

I think you tasted of the powers of the world to come thirteen or fourteen years ago, and was then simple of heart, and willing to spend and be spent for Christ. But not long after, not being sufficiently on your guard, you suffered loss by being applauded. This revived and increased your natural vanity; which was the harder to be checked, because of your constitutional stubbornness; — two deadly enemies which have lain in wait for you many years, and have given you many deep, if not mortal, wounds.

I fear, it is near ten years since you was so weakened by these, that you no longer set a watch over your mouth, but began frequently to speak what was not strictly true, to excuse yourself, divert others, or gain applause. I am afraid this has prevailed over you more and more, as there was less and

less of the life of God in the soul; so that I should almost wonder if you do not judge a diverting lie to be a very innocent thing.

After your first marriage, being not used to nor fond of reading, and not spending many hours in private prayer, time grew heavy on your hands; especially as you could not bear the cross of being a regular Travelling Preacher: So you betook yourself to farming, and other country employments, and grew more and more dead to God. Especially when you began to keep company (whether by necessity or choice) with the men “whose talk is of bullocks;” who have little to do either with religion or reason; and have but just wit enough to smoke, drink, and flatter you.

By these dull wretches you have been an unspeakable loser. Perhaps it was in company with some of these, that you first thought of taking a little sport, and catching a few fish, or killing a partridge or a hare. Miserable employment for a Preacher of the Gospel! for a Methodist Preacher, above all others! Though I do not at all wonder, if, after practicing it for some time, you should be so infatuated as even to defend it. I am afraid these same poor creatures afterwards taught you (if that report be true) even to countenance that wickedness for which Cornwall stinks in the nostrils of all who fear God, or love King George; I mean that of smuggling: Though surely they could not persuade you to receive stolen goods! That is an iniquity to be punished by the Judges. Is there any truth in that other charge, (you must not ask who tells me so; if so, I have done,) that you imposed on Mrs. H, in the writings; and fraudulently procured L100 a year to be engaged for, instead of fourscore? I hope this was a mistake; as well as that assertion, that you encouraged drunkenness, by suffering it in your company, if not in your own house.

O remember from whence you are fallen? Repent, and do the first works! First recover the life of God in your own soul, and walk as Christ walked. Walk with God as you did twelve years ago. Then you might again be useful to his children. Supposing you was truly alive to God yourself, how profitably then (leaving the dead to bury their dead) might you spend three months in a year at Bristol, or London, three in Cornwall, and six in spreading the Gospel wherever it might be needful. I have now told you all

that is in my heart: I hope you will receive it, not only with patience, but profit.

You must be much in the way, or much out of the way; a good soldier for God, or for the devil. O choose the better part! — now! — today!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

CORK, *August 17, 1760.*

THE conversation I had with you yesterday in the afternoon, gave me a good deal of satisfaction. As to some things which I had heard, (with regard to your wasting your substance, drinking intemperately, and wronging the poor people at Silberton,) I am persuaded they were mistakes; as I suppose it was, that you converse much with careless, unawakened people. And I trust you will be more and more cautious in all these respects, abstaining from the very appearance of evil.

That you had not always attended the preaching when you might have done it, you allowed; but seemed determined to remove that objection; as well as the other, of using such exercises or diversions as give offense to your brethren. I believe you will likewise endeavor to avoid light and trifling conversation, and to talk and behave in all company with that seriousness and usefulness which become a Preacher of the Gospel.

Certainly some years ago you was alive to God. You experienced the life and power of religion. And does not God intend that the trials you meet with should bring you back to this? You cannot stand still; you know this is impossible. You must go forward or backward. Either you must recover that power, and be a Christian altogether; or in awhile you will have neither power nor form, inside nor outside.

Extremely opposite both to one and the other, is that aptness to ridicule others, to make them contemptible, by exposing their real or supposed

foibles. This I would earnestly advise you to avoid. It hurts yourself; it hurts the hearers; and it greatly hurts those who are so exposed, and tends to make them your irreconcilable enemies. It has also sometimes betrayed you into speaking what was not strictly true. O beware of this above all things! Never amplify, never exaggerate anything. Be rigorous in adhering to truth. Be exemplary therein. Whatever has been in time past, let all men now know, that John Trembath abhors lying; that he never promises anything which he does not perform; that his word is equal to his bond. I pray, be exact in this. Be a pattern of truth, sincerity, and godly simplicity.

What has exceedingly hurt you in time past, nay, and I fear, to this day, is want of reading. I scarce ever knew a Preacher read so little. And perhaps, by neglecting it, you have lost the taste for it. Hence your talent in preaching does not increase. It is just the same as it was seven years ago. It is lively, but not deep; there is little variety; there is no compass of thought. Reading only can supply this, with meditation and daily prayer. You wrong yourself greatly by omitting this. You can never be a deep Preacher without it, any more than a thorough Christian. O begin! Fix some part of everyday for private exercises. You may acquire the taste which you have not: What is tedious at first, will afterwards be pleasant. Whether you like it or no, read and pray daily. It is for your life; there is no other way; else you will be a trifler all your days, and a pretty superficial Preacher. Do justice to your own soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer. Take up your cross, and be a Christian altogether. Then will all the children of God rejoice (not grieve) over you; and, in particular,

Yours, etc.

CCXV. — *To Mr. Jonathan Maskew.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 22, 1753.*

I CANNOT blame you at all for writing to me before you determined anything. I believe your staying so long in the Newcastle Circuit has been for good, both for you, and for others; and you are still wanted there. But you are wanted more elsewhere. I do not mean you should go to Mr. Grimshaw's Circuit, (although you might stay a fortnight there, not more,) but to Manchester. I promised you should set out to help brother Haughton, as soon as brother Hopper could go to Newcastle. So that you are sadly beyond your time; the blame of which is probably (as usual) laid upon me. Therefore the sooner you are at Manchester, the better. Peace be with your spirit.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXVI. — *To Mr. Knox.*

DEAR SIR,

SLIGO, *May 30, 1765.*

PROBABLY this will be the last trouble of the kind which you will receive from me. If you receive it in the same spirit wherein it is wrote, I shall be glad. If not, my regard is with the Most High. I did not choose it should be delivered till I was gone, lest you should think I wanted something from you. By the blessing of God, I want nothing, only that you should be happy in time and in eternity.

Still I cannot but remember the clear light you had with regard to the nature of real, scriptural Christianity. You saw what heart-religion meant, and the gate of it, justification. You had earnest desires to be a partaker of the

whole Gospel blessing: And you discovered the sincerity of those desires, by the steps you took in your family. So that in everything you was hastening to be, not almost, but altogether, a Christian.

Where is that light now? Do you now see that true religion is not a negative or an external thing; but the life of God in the soul of man; the image of God stamped upon the heart? Do you now see, that in order to this, we are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus? Where are the desires after this, which you once felt? the hungering and thirsting after righteousness? And where are the outward marks of a soul groaning after God, and refusing to be comforted with anything less than his love?

Will you say, “But if I had gone on in that way, I should have lost my friends and my reputation?” This is partly true. You would have lost most of those friends who neither love nor fear God. Happy loss! These are the men who do you more hurt than all the world besides. These are the men whom, if ever you would be a real Christian, you must avoid as you would avoid hell fire. “But then they will censure me.” So they will. They will say you are a fool, a madman, and what not. But what are you the worse for this? Why, the Spirit of glory and of Christ shall rest upon you. “But it will hurt me in my business.” Suppose it should, the favor of God would make large amends. But very probably it would not. For the winds and the seas are in God’s hands, as well as the hearts of men. “But it is inconsistent with my duty to the Church.” Can a man of understanding talk so, and talk so in earnest? Is it not rather a copy of his countenance? Indeed, if you mean, “inconsistent with my pleasing this or that Clergyman,” I allow it. But let them be pleased, or displeased, please thou God. But are these Clergymen the Church? Unless they are holy men, earnestly loving and serving God, they are not even members of the Church; they are no part of it. And unless they preach the doctrines of the Church, contained in her Articles and Liturgy, they are no true Ministers of the Church, but are eating her bread and tearing out her bowels!

“But you will not leave the Church.” You never will by my advice: I advise just the contrary: I advise you to lose no opportunity of attending the service of the Church, and receiving the Lord’s supper, and of showing

your regard for all her appointments. I advise, steadily to adhere to her doctrine in every branch of it; particularly with regard to the two fundamental points, — justification by faith, and holiness. But above all, I cannot but earnestly entreat you, not to rest till you experience what she teaches; till (to sum up all in one word) God cleanses the thoughts of your heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that you may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name. Unless this be done, what will it profit you to increase your fortune, to preserve the fairest reputation, and to gain the favor of the most learned, the most ingenious, and the most honorable Clergymen in the kingdom? What will it profit a man to gain all these? and to lose his own soul?

I know that to God all things are possible: Therefore it is possible you may take this kindly. If so, I shall hope to receive a line from you. If not, let it be forgotten till we meet at the judgment seat of Christ.

I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate servant.

CCXVII. — *To Mrs. Maitland.*

DEAR MADAM,

May 12, 1763.

BOTH in the former and in the “Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection,” I have said all I have to say on that subject. Nevertheless, as you seem to desire I should, I will add a few words more.

As to the word “perfection,” it is scriptural: Therefore neither you nor I can in conscience object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and teach Him to speak who made the tongue.

By Christian perfection, I mean (as I have said again and again) the so loving God and our neighbor, as to “rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.” He that experiences this, is

scripturally perfect. And if you do not, yet you may experience it: You surely will, if you follow hard after it; for the Scripture cannot be broken.

What then does their arguing reprove, who object against Christian perfection? Absolute or infallible perfection I never contended for. Sinless perfection I do not contend for, seeing it is not scriptural. A perfection, such as enables a person to fulfill the whole law, and so needs not the merits of Christ, — I acknowledge no such perfection; I do now, and always did, protest against it.

“But is there no sin in those who are perfect in love?” I believe not: But be that as it may, they feel none; no temper contrary to pure love, while they rejoice, pray, and give thanks continually. And whether sin is suspended, or extinguished, I will not dispute: It is enough that they feel nothing but love. This you allow we should daily press after. And this is all I contend for. O May the Lord give you to taste of it today!

I am, dear Madam,
Your very affectionate servant.

CCXVIII. — *To Mr. Hart.*

DEAR SIR,

July 11, 1763.

ABUNDANCE of business has prevented my writing so soon as I desired and intended; nor have I time now to write so largely as I could wish, and as your openness and frankness would otherwise constrain me to do. But I cannot delay any longer to write a little, lest I should seem to slight your correspondence.

What you before observed is of great importance; namely, “If it be the professed aim of the Gospel to convince us that Jesus is the Christ: If I, a sinner, am convinced of the reality of this fact, am not I, who believe, authorized to expect life, not through any condition, or any act, inward or

outward, performed by me, but singly through the name which Jesus assumed, which stands for his whole character or merit?"

Here is the hinge on which Mr. Sandiman's whole system turns. This is the strength of his cause, and you have proposed it with all the strength and clearness which he himself could devise.

Yet suffer me to offer to your consideration a few queries concerning it: —

Is every one who is convinced of the reality of this fact, "Jesus is the Christ," a Gospel believer? Is not the devil convinced of the reality of this fact? Is then the devil a Gospel believer?

I was convinced of the reality of this fact when I was twelve years old, when I was without God in the world. Was I then a Gospel believer? Was I then a child of God? Was I then in a state of salvation?

Again, you say, "I who believe am authorized to expect life, not through any condition or act, inward or outward, performed by me."

"I who believe." But cannot you as well expect it without believing? If not, what is believing but a condition?

For it is something *sine qua non*. And what else do you, or I, or any one living, mean by a condition? And is not believing an inward act? What is it else? But you say, "Not performed by me." By whom then? God gives me the power to believe. But does he believe for me? He works faith in me. But still is it not I that believe? And if so, is not believing an inward act performed by me?

Is not then this hypothesis (to wave all other difficulties) contradictory to itself?

I have just set down a few hints as they occurred. Wishing you an increase of every blessing,

I am, dear Sir,
Your very affectionate brother.

CCXIX. — *To Miss T* —.

DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 29, 1764.*

IN the “Thoughts upon Christian Perfection,” you have a clear and consistent account of it. I have been grieved at the danger I saw you in, of stopping short of it. Certainly you may attain that blessing soon. And I am thoroughly persuaded, you did taste of it; though how you lost it, I know not.

It will be eternally true, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Have this faith, and you have salvation. And this is the very thing you want. When this is joined with a strong understanding, it is well; but it may exist with a very weak one. This is the case with Mrs. W——, whose understanding is extremely weak; and yet she has strong faith, and such as exceedingly profits me; though I take knowledge, that the treasure is in an earthen vessel. I see all that is of nature; but this does not hinder my rejoicing in that which is of grace. This is one branch of Christian simplicity. While reason, assisted from above, enables me to discern the precious from the vile, I make my full use of the former, without losing one moment in thinking upon the latter. Perhaps reason enlightened makes me simple. If I knew less of human nature, (forgive me for talking so much of myself,) I should be more apt to stumble at the weaknesses of it: And if I have (by nature or by grace) some clearness of apprehension, it is owing to this (under God) that I never staggered at all the reveries of George Bell. I saw instantly at the beginning, and from the beginning, what was right, and what was wrong. But I saw withal, “I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.” Hence many imagined I was imposed upon, and applauded themselves for their greater perspicuity, as they do at this day. “But if you knew it,” says his friend to Gregory Lopez, “why did you not tell me?” I answer with him, “I do not speak all I know, but all I judge needful.” Still I am persuaded, there is no state under heaven from which it is not possible to fall. But I wish you was all love, and then you would not need to take any thought for the morrow.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXX. — *To Miss L* —.

1. You want to know God, in order to enjoy him in time and in eternity.
2. All that you want to know of him is contained in one book, the Bible. Therefore your one point is, to understand this. And all you learn is to be referred to this, as either directly or remotely conducive to it.
3. Might it not be well then to spend at least two hours everyday, in reading and meditating upon the Bible? reading every morning (if not every evening too) a portion of the Old and then of the New Testament? If you would save yourself the trouble of thinking, add Mr. Henry's comment: If you would only be assisted in thinking, add the "Explanatory Notes."
4. But I find a difficulty already. Can you help me over it? Have you more candor than almost any one in the world? Will you not blame me for recommending, as they come in the way, tracts published by myself? I think you will not. So I will set down these (in their place) as freely as other books.
5. Your studying hours (if your constitution will bear it) might be five or six hours a day. Perhaps from nine to twelve in the morning, and from two to four or five in the afternoon. And whenever you begin to be tired with books, that require a strong and deep attention, relax your mind by interposing history or poetry, or something of a lighter nature.
6. The first thing you should understand a little of is Grammar; in order to which it will suffice to read first the Kingswood "English Grammar," (which is exceeding short,) and then Bishop Lowth's "Introduction."

7. Next, it would be worth your while to acquire a little knowledge in Arithmetic; and Dilworth's Arithmetic would give you full as much as you want.

8. You might proceed to Geography. But in this I would not advise you to encumber yourself with many books. You need only master one, Randal's "Geographical Grammar;" and then betake yourself to the Globes. I believe those of Mr. Adams are the best; to which you May add his little book of Instructions.

9. Logic naturally follows; and I really think it is worth all the rest put together. But here I am at a full stop; for I know no good treatise on the subject in English, except Aldrich's Logic, and that, I am afraid, you cannot understand without an instructor. I shall be glad to give you a little assistance in the short time we have together.

10. As to Ethics (or Moral Philosophy) there is full as much of it as you want in Langbain's "Compendium."

11. In Natural Philosophy you have a larger field. You May begin with a "Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation." This contains the substance of Ray, Derham, Niewentyt, "Nature Displayed," and all the other celebrated books on the subject. You may add that fine book, Mr. Jones's "Principles of Natural Philosophy." Thence you will easily pass to the Glasgow abridgment of Mr. Hutchinson's Works. The abridgers give not only all his sense, but all his spirit. You may add to these, the beautiful tracts of Lord Forbes; and if you would go a little farther, Mr. Baker's ingenious "Treatise on the Microscope."

12. With any or all of the foregoing studies, you may intermix that of History. Geography and Chronology are termed the two eyes of History. Geography has been mentioned before; and I think all you want of Chronology may be learned from Marshal's "Chronological Tables."

13. You may begin with Rollin's "Ancient History;" and afterwards read in order, Puffendorf's "Introduction to the History of Europe," the "Concise Church History," Burnet's "History of the Reformation," the

“Concise History of England,” Clarendon’s “History of the Great Rebellion,” Neal’s “History of the Puritans,” his “History of New England,” and Solis’s “History of the Conquest of Mexico.”

14. Whitby’s “Compendium of Metaphysics” will introduce you to that science. You may go on with Locke’s “Essay on Human Understanding;” Bishop Browne on the “Nature, Procedure, and Limits of Human Understanding;” and Malebranche’s “Search after Truth.”

15. For Poetry, you may read Spencer’s “Fairy Queen;” Fairfax’s or Hoole’s “Godfrey of Bulloign;” select parts of Shakespeare; “Paradise Lost;” the “Night Thoughts;” and “Moral and Sacred Poems.”

16. You are glad to begin and end with Divinity. But I must not expatiate here. I will only recommend to your careful perusal, Bishop Pearson upon the Creed, Mr. Nalson’s “Sermons,” and the “Christian Library.”

This course of study, if you have the resolution to go through it, will, I apprehend, take you up three, four, or five years, according to the degree of your health and of your application. And you will then have knowledge enough for any reasonable Christian. But remember, before all, in all, and above all, your great point is, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

I am, dear Miss L——,
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXI. — *To the Reverend. Mr. G——.*

REVEREND SIR,

April 2, 1761.

I HAVE no desire to dispute; least of all with one whom I believe to fear God and work righteousness. And I have no time to spare. Yet I think it my duty to write a few lines, with regard to those you sent to Mr. Bennet.

You therein say, “If you sent me the books to inform me of an error which I had publicly advanced, pardon me if I say, I know numbers who call themselves Methodists assert their assurance of salvation at the very time they wallow in sins of the deepest dye.” Permit me, Sir, to speak freely. I do not doubt the fact. But,

1. Those who are connected with me do not call themselves Methodists. Others call them by that nickname, and they cannot help it; but I continually warn them not to pin it upon themselves.
2. We rarely use that ambiguous expression of “Christ’s righteousness imputed to us.”
3. We believe a man may be a real Christian without being “assured of his salvation.”
4. We know no man can be assured of salvation while he lives in any sin whatever.
5. The wretches who talk in that manner are neither Methodists nor Moravians, but followers of William Cudworth, James Relly, and their associates, who abhor us as much as they do the Pope; and ten times more than they do the devil. If you oppose these, so do I; and have done privately and publicly for these twenty years.

But you say, “Such as do not profess this doctrine will not be affected by my sermon.” Indeed they will; for the world (as you yourself did) lump all that are called Methodists together. Consequently, whatever you then said of Methodists in general, falls on us as well as them; and so we are condemned for those very principles which we totally detest and abhor: A small part of the “Preservative” (had you taken the pains to read it) would have convinced you of this. “Did you send them to convince me of some important truth? I have the New Testament.” So have I; and I have read it for above these fifty years; and for near forty, with some attention. Yet I will not say, that Mr. G — may not convince me of some truth, which I never yet learned from it. I want every help; especially from those who strive both to preach and to live the Gospel. Yet certainly I must dissent from you, or you from me, wherever either conceives the other to vary from it. Some of my writings you “have read.” But allow me to ask, Did not you read them with much prejudice, or little attention? Otherwise surely you would not have termed them “perplexing.” Very few lay

obscurity or intricacy to my charge. Those who do not allow them to be true, do not deny them to be plain. And if they believe me to have done any good at all by writing, they suppose it is by this very thing; by speaking on practical and experimental religion more plainly than others have done.

I quite agree, we “neither can be better men, nor better Christians, than by continuing members of the Church of England.” And not only her doctrines, but many parts of her discipline, I have adhered to at the hazard of my life. If in any point I have since varied therefrom, it was not by choice, but necessity. Judge, therefore, if they do well who throw me into the ditch, and then beat me because my clothes are dirty?

Wishing you much of the love of God in your heart, and much of his presence in your labors,

I remain, Reverend Sir,
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXII. — *To the Reverend Mr. D* —.

DEAR SIR,

LIVERPOOL, *April 6, 1761.*

LET who will speak, if what is spoken be true, I am ready to subscribe it. If it be not, I accept no man’s person. *Magis amica veritas.*⁸⁵ I had an agreeable conversation with Mr. Venn, who, I suppose, is now near you. I think, he is exactly as regular as he ought to be. I would observe every punctilio of order, except where the salvation of souls is at stake. There I prefer the end before the means.

I think it great pity, that the few Clergymen in England who preach the three grand scriptural doctrines, — original sin, justification by faith, and holiness consequent thereon, — should have any jealousies or misunderstandings between them. What advantage must this give to the

common enemy! What a hindrance is it to the great work wherein they are all engaged! How desirable is it, that there should be the most open, avowed intercourse between them! So far, indeed, as they judge it would be for the glory of God, they may openly declare wherein they disagree.

But surely if they are ashamed to own one another in the faces of all mankind, they are ashamed of Christ; they are ashamed of Him that sends, if they dare not avow whom he has sent. Excuses indeed will never be wanting. But will these avail before God? For many years I have been laboring after this; laboring to unite, not scatter, the messengers of God. Not that I want anything from them. As God has enabled me to stand almost alone for these twenty years, I doubt not but he will enable me to stand, either with them or without them. But I want all to be helpful to each other; and all the world to know we are so. Let them know who is on the Lord's side. You, I trust, will always be of that number. O let us preach and live the whole Gospel! The grace of our Lord be with your spirit!

I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate brother and servant.

CCXXIII. — *To Mrs. R* —.

MY DEAR SISTER,

WHITEHAVEN, *June 28, 1766.*

FOR some time I have been convinced it was my duty to tell you what was on my mind. I will do it with all plainness. You may answer or not, as you judge best.

Many things I have observed in you which gave me pleasures; some which gave me concern: The former I need not mention; the latter I must, or I should not myself be clear before God.

The first of these is something which looks like pride. You sometimes seem to think too highly of yourself, and (comparatively) to despise others. I will instance in two or three particulars:

1. You appear to be above instruction, I mean instruction from man. I do not doubt but you are taught of God. But that does not supersede your being taught by man also. I believe there is no saint upon earth whom God does not teach by man.

2. You appear to think, (I will not affirm you do,) that none understands the doctrine of sanctification like you. Nay, you sometimes speak as if none understood it besides you: Whereas (whether you experience more or less of it than some) I know several, both men and women, who both think and speak full as scripturally of it as you do; and perhaps more clearly; for there is often something dark and confused in your manner of speaking concerning it.

3. You appear to undervalue the experience of almost every one in comparison of your own. To this it seems to be owing, that you, some way or other, beat down almost all who believe they are saved from sin. And so some of them were, in the only sense wherein I either teach or believe it, unless they tell flat and willful lies in giving an account of their experience.

A second thing which has given me concern is, I am afraid you are in danger of enthusiasm. We know there are divine dreams and impressions. But how easily may you be deceived herein! How easily, where something is from God, may we mix something which is from nature! especially if we have a lively imagination, and are not aware of any danger.

I will mention one thing more. It has frequently been said, and with some appearance of truth, that you endeavor to monopolize the affections of all that fall into your hands; that you destroy the nearest and dearest connection they had before, and make them quite cool and indifferent to their most intimate friends. I do not at all speak on my own account; I set myself out of the question. But if there be anything of the kind with regard to other people, I should be sorry, both for them and you.

I commend you all to God, and to the word of his grace.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXIV. — *To Mr.——.*

SIR,

BRISTOL, *October 20, 1759.*

SINCE I came to Bristol I heard many terrible accounts concerning the French prisoners at Knowle; as, that “they were so wedged together, that they had no room to breathe;” that “the stench of the rooms where they lodged was intolerable;” that “their food was only fit for dogs;” that “their meat was carrion, their bread rotten and unwholesome;” and that, “in consequence of this inhuman treatment, they died in whole shoals.”

Desiring to know the truth, I went to Knowle on Monday, and was showed all the apartments there. But how was I disappointed!

1. I found they had large and convenient space to walk in, if they chose it all the days.
- 2 There was no stench in any apartment which I was in, either below or above. They were all sweeter and cleaner than any prison I have seen either in England or elsewhere.
3. Being permitted to go into the larder, I observed the meat hanging up, two large quarters of beef. It was fresh and fat, and I verily think as good as I ever desire to eat.
4. A large quantity of bread lay on one side. A gentleman took up and cut one of the loaves. It was made of good flour, was well baked, and perfectly well tasted.
5. Going thence to the hospital, I found that, even in this sickly season, there are not thirty persons dangerously ill, out of twelve or thirteen hundred.

6. The hospital was sweeter and cleaner throughout than any hospital I ever saw in London. I think it my duty to declare these things, for clearing the innocent, and the honor of the English nation.

Yet one thing I observed with concern. A great part of these men are almost naked; and winter is now coming upon them in a cold prison, and a colder climate than most of there have been accustomed to. But will not the humanity and generosity of the gentlemen of Bristol prevent or relieve this distress? Did they not make a notable precedent during the late war? And surely they are not weary of well doing. Tuesday night we did a little according to our power; but I shall rejoice if this be forgotten through the abundance administered by their liberality, in a manner which they judge most proper. Will it not be both for the honor of their city and country? for the credit of our religion, and for the glory of God, who knows how to return it sevenfold into their bosom?

I am

Your humble servant.

CCXXV. — *To the Society at Monyash, Derbyshire.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

POOLE, *March 25, 1752.*

I SHOULD very willingly have spent a little time among you; but at present my time will not permit, I have so many places to visit, between Manchester, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and so on, to Berwick-upon-Tweed. Blessed be God, that you are not yet moved from the hope of the Gospel.

He has permitted a fiery trial to fall upon you; ⁸⁶ but I trust the sharpest part of it is past. May God enable you to stand fast together, in one mind and in one judgment! Watch over one another in love; and let not that which is lame be turned out of the way. Do all things without murmurings and disputings, following peace with all men; and the God of peace be with you!

I am, my dear brethren,

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXVI. — *To the Reverend Mr. Wanley, Dean of Ripon.*

REVEREND SIR,

YARM, *July 9, 1766.*

THE regard which I owe to a fellow Christian, and much more to a Clergyman and a Magistrate, constrains me to trouble you with a few lines, though I have no personal acquaintance with you. Ralph Bell has just been giving me an account of the late affair at Ripon. What he desires is:

1. To have the loss he has sustained repaired: And,
2. Liberty of conscience; that liberty which every man may claim as his right, by the law of God and nature; and to which every Englishman, in particular, has a right by the laws of his country. I well know the advantage these laws give us in the present case: I say us, because I make the case, my own; as I think it my bounden duty to do. I have had many suits in the King's Bench; and, blessed be God, I never lost one yet. But I would far rather put an amicable end to any dispute, where it can be done. Not that I am afraid of being overborn by the expense: If I am not, I know them that are, able to hear it. But I love peace. I love my neighbor as myself; and would not willingly bring loss or trouble upon any man. Be so good as to impute to this motive my interfering in this matter.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake.

CCXXVII. — *To Mary Yeoman of Mousehole, Cornwall.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

ST. IVES, *September 2, 1769.*

YOUR case is not peculiar. I have known many who were just as you are now: And the same God who delivered them is as ready to deliver you. I advise you to continue in the way, whether you find any benefit or not.

Pray, as you can, though you are ever so cold or dead. Hear the preaching; keep to your class. The Lord is at hand: He will abundantly pardon.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXVIII. — *To Mr. Merryweather, of Yarm.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 16, 1758.*

IF the work of God does so increase at Yarm, we must not let the opportunity slip. Therefore let the Travelling Preacher be there either every Sunday evening, or at least every other Sunday.

No person must be allowed to preach or exhort among our people, whose life is not holy and unblamable; nor any who asserts anything contrary to the Gospel which we have received. And if he does not own his fault, and amend it, he cannot be a Leader any longer.

Peace be with you all.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRENTFORD, *January 24, 1760.*

I RECEIVED yours, with the bill, a day or two ago. I wish you would everywhere recommend two books in particular "The Christian Pattern," and the "Primitive Physic." It is a great pity that any Methodist should be without them

I wonder brother Mather does not write to me. He should not forget his friends. I hope the gentleman with whom I breakfasted at Yarm has not forsaken you. Even the rich *may* enter into the kingdom: For with God all things are possible.

See that you stir up the gift of God that is in you. What is our Lord's word to *you*? — "Let the dead bury their dead: But follow thou me!"

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 5, 1763.*

YOUR letter was sent from hence to Bristol. But I had left Bristol before it came. I have no objection to Mr. Jaco's coming to Yarm to open the house: But I suppose he cannot stay long. He will soon be wanted again in his own Circuit.

It is strange that the number of hearers should decrease, if you have regular preaching. I hope the morning preaching is never omitted. If it be, everything will droop.

What relates to the account I will give to Mr. Franks. Probably he will find where the mistake lies. O be in earnest.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *May 7, 1764.*

I THANK you for the receipts. There is nothing more sure, than that God is able and willing to give always what he gives once. And it is most certainly

his design, that whatever he has given you should abide with you for ever. But this can only be by simple faith. In this, reasoning is good for nothing. See that both of you be as little children. Your help is all laid up above, in the hand of Him that loves you. Look unto Him, and receive what you want! Believe yourselves to heaven!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

February 8, 1766.

WHERE Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God; and, consequently, little addition to the Society, and little life in the members of it. Therefore, if Jacob Rowell is grown faint, and says but little about it, do you supply his lack of service. Speak and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press the believers to expect full salvation now, you must not look for any revival.

It is certain, God does at some times, without any cause, known to us, shower down his grace in an extraordinary manner. And he does, in some instances, delay to give either justifying or sanctifying grace, for reasons which are not discovered to us. These are some of those secrets of his government, which it hath pleased him to reserve in his own breast. I hope you and your wife keep all you have, and gasp for more.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEWISHAM, *December 10, 1768.*

THE matter is short: All things in divine worship must “be done decently and in order.” Two must never pray at the same time, nor one interrupt

another. Either Alice Brammah must take advice, or the Society must be warned to keep away from her. These are the very things which were the beginning of poor George Bell's fall.

I am, with love to sister Merryweather,
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR GEORGE,
1786.

LONDON, *October 9,*

DO not wish to have a grain less of sensibility than you have. I love you the better for it: And so does He that is greater than all. That family I know and love well: We will help them all we can. I have no access to Mr. Thornton: The Calvinists take care to keep him to themselves. But if you will give them five pounds from me, John Atlay will answer your draft here.

I am, with best wishes to all the family, dear George,
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXV. — *To Mrs. Emma Moon, Yarm.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *December 6, 1767.*

I CAN easily believe that nothing would be wanting to me, which it was in your power to supply: For I am persuaded your heart is as my heart, as is the case with all the "souls whom Himself vouchsafes to unite in fellowship divine." What is always in your power is, to bear me before the throne of grace. One thing in particular which I frequently desire is, "a calm evening of a various day;" that I may have no conflicts at the last, but rather, if God sees good, before "my flesh and my heart faileth."

In every place where Mr. Whitefield has been, he has labored in the same friendly, Christian manner. God has indeed effectually broken down the wall of partition which was between us. Thirty years ago we were one: Then the sower of tares rent us asunder: But now a stronger than him has made us one again.

There is no weakness either in our body or mind, but Satan endeavors to avail himself of it. That kind of dullness or listlessness I take to be originally a pure effect of bodily constitution. As such, it is not imputable to us in any degree, unless we give way to it. So long as we diligently resist, it is no more blamable than sleepiness, or weariness of body.

Do many of those who were saved from sin in your neighborhood stand fast in their liberty? or have one half, if not the greater part, been moved from their steadfastness? How is it that so many are moved? that in many places so few, comparatively, stand? Have you lately conversed with sister Heslop? Does she retain all the life she had? Does John Eland? and some others at Hutton?

Peace be multiplied upon you!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 24, 1768.*

FORMERLY, when persons reproached me for doing thus and thus, I have very frequently said, "In truth, I have not done it yet; but, by the grace of God, I will." This seems to be the very case with you. You are accused for what you did not, but ought to have done. You ought to have informed me from time to time, not indeed of trifles, or idle reports, but of things which you judged to be a real hindrance to the work of God. And God permitted you to be reminded of this omission by those who intended nothing less.

Opposition from their brethren has been one cause why so many who were set free have not retained their liberty. But perhaps there was another more general cause: They had not proper help. One just saved from sin is like a newborne child, and needs as careful nursing. But these had it not. How few were as nursing fathers! How few cherished them as a nurse her own children! So that the greater part were weakened, if not destroyed, before their sinews were knit, for want of that prudent and tender care which their state necessarily required. Do all that you can to cherish them that are left; and never forget

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXVII. — *To a Member of the Society.*

March 4, 1760.

CERTAINLY the more freedom you use, the more advantage you will find. But at the same time it will be needful continually to remember from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. If He blesses our intercourse with each other, then we shall never repent of the labor.

It is a blessing indeed, when God uncovers our hearts, and clearly shows us what spirit we are of. But there is no manner of necessity that this self knowledge should make us miserable. Certainly the highest degree of it is well consistent both with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Therefore how deeply soever you may be convinced of pride, self-will, peevishness, or any other inbred sin, see that you do not let go that confidence, whereby you may still rejoice in God your Savior. Some, indeed, have been quite unhappy, though they retained their faith, through desire on the one hand, and conviction on the other. But that is nothing to you; you need never give up anything which you have already received: You will not, if you keep close to that, —

“For this my vehement soul stands still;
Restless, resign’d, for this I wait.”

We have a fuller, clearer knowledge of our own members, than of those belonging to other societies; and may therefore, without any culpable partiality, have a better opinion of them.

It is a great thing to spend all our time to the glory of God. But you need not be scrupulous as to the precise time of reading and praying; I mean, as to the dividing it between one and the other. A few minutes, one way or the other, are of no great importance.

May He who loves you fill you with his pure love!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

March 29, 1760.

HAVING a little longer reprieve, I snatch the opportunity of writing a few lines before we embark. Prayer is certainly the grand means of drawing near to God; and all others are helpful to us only so far as they are mixed with, or prepare us for, this. The comfort of it may be taken away by wandering thoughts, but not the benefit: Violently to fight against these, is not the best and speediest way to conquer them; but, rather, humbly and calmly to ask and wait for His help, who will bruise Satan under your feet. You may undoubtedly remain in peace and joy until you are perfected in love. You need neither enter into a dispute, when persons speak wrong, nor yet betray the truth: There is a middle way. You may simply say, “I believe otherwise; but I think, and let think; I am not fond of contending on this or any other head, lest I receive more hurt than I can do good.” Remember your calling; be

A simple follower of the Lamb,
And harmless as a little child.

CCXXXIX. — *To the Same.**April 16, 1760.*

ELTHAM is a barren soil indeed. I fear scarce any are to be found there who know anything of the power of religion; and not many that have so much as the form. But God is there; and He can supply every want. Nothing contributes to seriousness more than humility, because it is a preparation for every fruit of the Holy Spirit; and the knowledge of our desperate state by sin has a particular tendency to keep us earnest after deliverance; and that earnestness can hardly consist with levity, either of temper or behavior.

Those who have tasted of the goodness of God are frequently wanting in declaring it. They do not, as they ought, stir up the gift of God which is in every believer, by exciting one another to continual thankfulness, and provoking each other to love and good works. We should never be content to make a drawn battle, to part neither better nor worse than we met. Christian conversation is too precious a talent to be thus squandered away.

It does not require a large share of natural wisdom to see God in all things; in all his works of creation, as well as of providence. This is rather a branch of spiritual wisdom, and is given to believers more and more, as they advance in purity of heart.

Probably it would be of use to you to be as regular as you can: I mean, to allot such hours to such employments; only not to be troubled when Providence calls you from them. For the best rule of all is, to follow the will of God.

CCXL. — *To the Same.**June 27, 1760.*

A DAY or two ago I was quite surprised to find among my papers a letter of yours, which I apprehend I have not answered.

Everyone, though born of God in an instant, yea, and sanctified in an instant, yet undoubtedly grows by slow degrees, both after the former and the latter change. But it does not follow from thence that there must be a considerable tract of time between the one and the other. A year or a month is the same with God as a thousand. If He wills, to do is present with him. Much less is there any necessity for much suffering: God can do his work by pleasure as well as by pain. It is therefore undoubtedly our duty to pray and look for full salvation everyday, every hour, every moment, without waiting till we have either done or suffered more. Why should not this be the accepted time?

Certainly your friend will suffer loss, if he does not allow himself time everyday for private prayer. Nothing will supply the want of this. Praying with others is quite another thing. Besides, it may expose us to great danger; it may turn prayer into an abomination to God; for

Guilty we speak, if subtle from within
Blows on our words the self-admiring sin!

O make the best of every hour!

CCXLI. — *To the Same.*

November 11, 1760.

CONVICTION is not condemnation. You may be convinced, yet not condemned; convinced of useless thoughts or words, and yet not condemned for them. You are condemned for nothing, if you love God, and continue to give him your whole heart.

Certainly spiritual temptations will pass through your spirit; else you could not feel them. I believe I understand your state better than you do yourself. Do not perplex yourself at all about what you shall call it. You are a child of God, a member of Christ, an heir of the kingdom. What you have, hold fast, (whatever name is given to it,) and you shall have all that God has prepared for them that love him. Certainly you do need more faith; for you are a tender, sickly plant. But see, —

Faith while yet you ask is given:
 God comes down, the God and Lord.
 That made both earth and heaven!

You cannot live on what He did yesterday. Therefore He comes today! He comes to destroy that tendency to levity, to severe judging, to anything that is not of God.

Peace be with your spirit!

CCXLII. — *To the Same.*

December 12, 1760.

YOU may blame yourself, but I will not blame you, for seeking to have your every temper, and thought, and word, and work, suitable to the will of God. But I doubt not you seek this by faith, not without it; and you seek it in and through Christ, not without him. Go on. You shall have all you seek; because God is love. He is showing you the littleness of your understanding, and the foolishness of all natural wisdom. Certainly peace and joy in believing are the grand means of holiness; therefore, love and value them as such.

“Why is the law of works superseded by the law of love?” Because Christ died. “Why are we not condemned for coming short even of this?” Because he lives and intercedes for us. I believe it is impossible not to come short of it, through the unavoidable littleness of our understanding. Yet the blood of the covenant is upon us, and therefore there is no condemnation.

I think the extent of the law of love is exactly marked out in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. Let faith fill your heart with love to Him and all mankind; then follow this loving faith to the best of your understanding; meantime crying out continually, “Jesus is all in all to me.”

CCXLIII. — *To the Same.**June 17, 1761.*

I APPREHEND your great danger now is this, to think you never shall receive that blessing, because you have not received it yet. Nay, perhaps, you may be tempted to believe that there is no such thing, and that those who thought they had received it were mistaken as well as you. This danger will be increased, if some who professed to be sanctified long ago, and yet have not received this blessing, affirm there is no such thing, and begin to warn others against falling into this delusion. But keep close to your rule, the word of God, and to your guide, the Spirit of God, and never be afraid of expecting too much: As yet you are but a babe. O what heights of holiness are to come! I hope you do not forget to pray for me. Adieu!

CCXLIV. — *To the Same.**May 13, 1762.*

YOU did well to write. "It is good to hide the secrets of a King; but to declare the loving kindness of the Lord." Have you never found any wandering since? Is your mind always stayed on God? Do you find every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ? Do no vain thoughts (useless, trifling, unedifying) lodge within you? Does not the corruptible body at some times, more or less, press down the soul? Has God made your very dreams devout? I have known Satan assault in their sleep (endeavoring to terrify or affright) those whom he could not touch when they were awake.

As to your Band, there are two sorts of persons with whom you may have to do, — the earnest and the slack: The way you are to take with the one is quite different from that one would take with the other. The latter you must search, and find out why they are slack; exhort them to repent, be zealous, do the first works. The former you have only to encourage, to exhort to push forward to the mark, to bid them grasp the prize so nigh! And do so yourself. Receive a thousand more blessings, believe more, love

more: You cannot love enough. Beware of sins of omission. So shall you fulfill the joy of

Your affectionate brother.

CCXLV. — *To the Same.*

October 9, 1762.

THOUGH I have very little time, I must write a few lines. I thank you for your comfortable letter. Some have more of heat, and some of light. The danger is, that one should say to the other, "I have no need of thee;" or that any should mistake his place, and imagine himself to be what he is not. Be not backward to speak to any whom you think are mistaken, either in this or other things. A loving word, spoken in faith, shall not fall to the ground; and the more freely you speak to me at any time, or on any head, the more you will oblige

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCXLVI. — *To the Same.*

April 7, 1763.

THE true Gospel touches the very edge both of Calvinism and Antinomianism; so that nothing but the mighty power of God can prevent our sliding either into the one or the other.

The nicest point of all which relates to Christian perfection, is that which you inquire of. Thus much is certain: They that love God with all their heart, and all men as themselves, are scripturally perfect. And surely such there are; otherwise the promise of God would be a mere mockery of human weakness. Hold fast this. But then remember, on the other hand, you have this treasure in an earthen vessel; you dwell in a poor, shattered house of clay, which presses down the immortal spirit. Hence all your thoughts, words, and actions are so imperfect; so far from coming up to the standard, (that law of love, which, but for the corruptible body, your

soul would answer in all instances,) that you may well say, till you go to Him you love, —

“Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death.”

CCXLVII. — *To the Same.*

October 13, 1764.

I Do not see that you can speak otherwise than you do in your Band. If you sought their approbation, that would be wrong: But you may suffer it without blame. Indeed in these circumstances you must; since it is undeniably plain that the doing otherwise would hurt rather than help their souls. I believe Miss F—— thought she felt evil before she did, and by that very thought gave occasion to its re-entrance. You ought not to speak explicitly to many: Very few would understand or know how to advise you. For some time I thought M—— did, and was therefore glad of your acquaintance with him, hoping he would lead you by the hand in a more profitable manner than I was able to do. But I afterwards doubted. The Lord send you help by whom he will send!

From what not only you but many others likewise have experienced, we find there is very frequently a kind of wilderness state, not only after justification, but even after deliverance from sin; and I doubt whether the sermon upon that state might not give you light in this case also. But the most frequent cause of this second darkness or distress, I believe, is evil reasoning: By this, three in four of those who cast away their confidence are gradually induced so to do. And if this be the cause, is there any way to regain that deliverance but by resuming your confidence? And can you receive it, unless you receive it freely; not of works, but by mere grace? This is the way: Walk thou in it. Dare to believe! Look up, and see thy Savior near! When? tomorrow, or today? Nay, today hear his voice! At this time; at this place! Lord, speak; thy servant heareth!

CCXLVIII. — *To the Same.**August 9, 1765.*

I HAVE many fears concerning you, lest you should sink beneath the dignity of your calling, or be moved, to the right hand or the left, from the simplicity of the Gospel. Is your heart still whole with God? Do you still desire and seek no happiness but in Him? Are you always, or generally, sensible of his presence? Do you generally, at least, find communion with Him? And do you expect all that you enjoyed once, and more; to be sanctified throughout before you go hence?

I hope no inward or outward reasonings are able to move you from walking exactly according to the Gospel. O beware of voluntary humility; of thinking, "Such an one is better than me, and why should I pretend to be more strict than her?" "What is that to thee? follow thou me!" You have but one pattern: Follow Him inwardly and outwardly. If other believers will go step for step with you, well; but if not, follow Him!

Peace be with your spirit.

CCXLIX. — *To the Same.**August 31, 1765.*

YOU may be assured it is not a small degree of satisfaction to me to hear that your soul prospers. I cannot be indifferent to anything which concerns either your present or future welfare. As you covet, so I want you to enjoy, the most excellent gifts. To your outward walking I have no objection. But I want you to walk inwardly in the fullness of love, and in the broad light of God's countenance. What is requisite to this, but to believe always? now to believe with your whole heart, and to hold fast the beginning of this confidence steadfast unto the end? And yet a self-complaisant thought, yea, or a blasphemous one, may steal across your spirit; but I will not say that is your own thought. Perhaps an enemy hath done this. Neither will I blame you for "feeling deeply the perverseness of others;" or for "feeling your spirit tried with it." I do not

wish that you should not feel it, (while it remains,) or that you should feel it otherwise than as a trial. But this does not prove that there is sin in your heart, or that you are not a sacrifice to love. O my friend, do justice to the grace of God! Hold fast whereunto you have attained; and if you have not yet uninterrupted communion with Him, why not this moment, and from this moment? If you have not, I incline to think it is occasioned by reasoning, or by some inward or outward omission.

CCL. — *To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *October 13, 1765.*

A YEAR or two ago you was pretty clear of enthusiasm hope you are so still. But nothing under heaven is more catching, especially when it is found in those we love; and, above all, when it is in those whom we cannot but believe to be sound of understanding in most instances, and to have received larger measures of the grace of God than we have ourselves.

There are now about twenty persons here who believe they are saved from sin:

1. Because they always love, pray, rejoice, and give thanks; and,
2. Because they have the witness of it in themselves.

But if these lose what they have received, nothing will be more easy than to think they never had it. There were four hundred (to speak at the lowest) in London, who (unless they told me lies) had the same experience. If near half of these have lost what they had received, I do not wonder if they think they never had it: It is so ready a way of excusing themselves for throwing away the blessed gift of God.

I no more doubt of Miss —— having this once, than I doubt of her sister's having it now. Whether God will restore her suddenly, as well as freely, I know not; whether by many steps, or in one moment. But here again you halt, as S. C—— did, and S. R—— does. You seem to think pain, yea, much pain, must go before an entire cure. In S. R—— it did, and in a very few others. But it need not: Pain is no more salutary than pleasure. Saving grace is essentially such; saving pain but accidentally. When God saves us by pain rather than pleasure, I can resolve it only into his justice, or

sovereign will. To use the grace we have, and now to expect all we want, is the grand secret. He whom you love will teach you this continually.

CCLI. — *To the Same.*

June 29, 1767.

FOR some days you have been much on my mind. Are you still making the best of life? employing a few days exactly in such a manner as you judge is most to the glory of God? And do you still hold fast what you have received, and expect the fullness of the promise? Surely you may retain all that earnestness of expectation to which Mr. M—— used to incite you, without any prejudice either to humility or sobriety of spirit. Doubtless it is possible, with Mr. Dryden's leave, "to be wise and love" at the same time; and neither of these need interfere with the other, seeing the Spirit of Love is also the Spirit of Wisdom. Are all your family breathing this spirit, and strengthening each other's hands in God? I hope you have the satisfaction of observing the same thing in most of those that are round about you, and of seeing the work of God prosper, wherever you have occasion to be. When you are with the genteel part of your acquaintance, you have more immediate need of watching unto prayer, or you will insensibly drink into the lightness of their spirit, and abate a little of the accuracy of your walking. Nay, stand fast, walking in every point as Christ also walked. Fashion and custom are nothing to you: You have a more excellent rule. You are resolved to be a Bible Christian; and that, by the grace of God, not in some, but in all points. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might. Still let your eye be single; aim at one point; retain and increase your communion with God! You have nothing else to do.

Happy and wise, the time redeem,
And live, my friend, and die to Him.

At some times we must look at outward things: Such is the present condition of humanity. But we have need quickly to return home; for what avails all, but Christ reigning in the heart?

Daily in his grace to grow!

What else have we to care for? Only now to use all the grace we have received, and now to expect all we want! The Lord Jesus swallow you up in his love!

CCLII. — *To the Same.*

March 14, 1768.

THERE are innumerable degrees both in a justified and a sanctified state, more than it is possible for us exactly to define. I have always thought the lowest degree of the latter implies the having but one desire and one design. I have no doubt but in that general outpouring of the Spirit, God did give — this degree of salvation, neither did it ever appear to me that — had lost it; — rather seemed to stand just on the threshold of Christian perfection, and I apprehend nothing would be more likely to hurt the soul than undervaluing the grace already received. Without any sin, we may be, in a sense, pleased with the approbation of those we esteem and love. But here we have need of much prayer, lest this should degenerate into pride or vanity. I still say to you, as to an almost newborne babe, “Dare to believe; on Christ lay hold!” Without being solicitous about the name of what you have, ask and expect all you want! Is it not nigh, even at the door?

The knowledge of ourselves is true humility: And without this we cannot be free from vanity; a desire of praise being inseparably connected with every degree of pride. Continual watchfulness is absolutely necessary to hide this from stealing in upon us. But as long as we steadily watch and pray, we shall not enter into temptation. It may and will assault us on every side; but it cannot prevail.

CCLIII. — *To the Same.*

July 5, 1768.

I AM more inclined to congratulate you than to condole with you upon your present situation. Many circumstances concurred to expose you to the greatest of all dangers, — that of being generally commended. It is

therefore a peculiarly gracious providence whereby this danger is turned aside; and that without any particular fault or even imprudence on your part. You may now experience the truth of that fine reflection: “Nothing is more profitable for us than to suffer reproach for a good action, done with n single eye.” Nevertheless you cannot be excused from speaking plain to S—— C—— and A——; and the sooner this is done the better, lest their want of judgment should produce more ill effects. Certainly you should labor to convince them that they were altogether in a fault. In anywise they should have spoke to you first: Then, if you had not satisfied them, they might have gone further. But what can be done for the poor young woman? I am afraid lest she should be turned out of the way.

You will hardly need that tract for a time, as you have Mr. Brainerd’s Life. There is a pattern of self-devotion and deadness to the world! But how much of his sorrow and pain had been prevented, if he had understood the doctrine of Christian perfection! How many tears did he shed, because it was impossible to be freed from sin!

As you have not the same outward trials which many have, it is highly needful you should have some inward ones; although they need not be either many or long. If you walk closely with God, he is able to give any degree of holiness either by pleasure or pain. S—— continues with you a little longer, to quicken you in the way. Why should not a living Christian be exactly of the same spirit with a dying Christian; seeing the difference between her life and ours is nothing when compared to eternity?

The last scene of life in dying believers is of great use to those who are about them. Here we see the reality of religion and of things eternal; and nothing has a greater tendency to solemnize the soul, and make and keep it dead to all below. We are reasonable creatures, and undoubtedly reason is the candle of the Lord. By enlightening our reason to see the meaning of the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit makes our way plain before us.

CCLIV. — *To the Same.**May, 1769.*

BY comparing your own outward state with Mrs. —, you now see clearly the advantages you enjoy: You have nothing external to hinder your waiting upon God, without carefulness and without distraction. None has a right to interrupt you, while you are exercised in things divine, and laboring to be holy in body and spirit. You may have just so much and no more connection with any one, as experience shows is profitable for you. O stand fast in this liberty, glorifying God with all you have and all you are!

It is remarkable that St. Paul places this the last of all, that “love endureth all things;” and this is the sum of his wish, with regard to the Colossians, “that they might be strengthened unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness.” They who have attained this are ripe for the inheritance, and ready to salute their friends in light. There is a time when we grow up towards this, even without any sensible increase; as in the parable, the seed groweth and springs up, he knoweth not how. At many times, indeed, we do know how the power of the Highest suddenly overshadows us; while either the first or the pure love is shed abroad in our hearts. But at other times He confirms and increases that love in a gradual and almost insensible manner.

Death has had a large commission this year, with regard to our societies in Ireland as well as England. Just as I left Dublin, four or five of our members there were taken away in four or five days: Three elder, and two in the bloom of youth; one of whom had been filled with love for some years. They all witnessed a good confession at the last, and died in full assurance of hope. Nancy Rogers, whom I saw just before I left the town, breathed the very spirit of Jane Cooper. I think their kindred spirits are now acquainted with each other, better than you and I are; but not better than we shall be, when we meet together in the paradise of God.

CCLV. — *To the Same.**August 12, 1769.*

AT some times it is needful to say, "I will pray with the spirit and with the understanding also." At other times the understanding has little to do, while the soul is poured forth in passive prayer. I believe we found the answer to many prayers at the Conference, particularly on the two last days. At the conclusion, all the Preachers were melted down, while they were singing those lines for me, —

"Thou who so long hast saved me here,
A little longer save;
Till, freed from sin and freed from fear,
I sink into a grave.

"Till glad I lay my body down,
Thy servant's steps attend;
And, O, my life of mercies crown
With a triumphant end!"

Various scriptures show that we may pray with resignation for the life or ease of a friend: It is enough that every petition be closed with, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt.;" It is true that a believer knows the devices of Satan to be many and various. But the Apostle means more than this; namely, that those who have the unction of the Holy One are thereby enabled to discern his devices whenever they occur, and to distinguish them from the influences of the good Spirit, how finely so ever they are disguised. To answer for ourselves is often a cross; and we had much rather let people think and talk as they please: But it is a cross we must often take up; otherwise we "walk not charitably," if we do not "reprove our brother;" if we "suffer sin upon him," we "hate our brother in our heart."

If Mrs. — be arrived at London, I wish you would take the first opportunity of conversing with her. She will have more need of a faithful friend now than ever she had in her life. I expect she will hear reasons upon reasons, why she ought, as a point of duty, to conform a little to the world, to have a few trifling acquaintance, and not to be so particular in her dress. Now, as you have heard all these things before, and have been

enabled, by the grace of God, to discover Satan, even with his angel's face, and to stand firm against all his assaults, you will be better able to assist and confirm her, if you seek her before she is much shaken.

It has a little surprised me, that several who are, I believe, filled with love, yet do not desire to die. It seems as if God generally does not give this desire till the time of death approaches. Perhaps in many it would be of little use. First let them learn to live.

Doubtless that rest was given "to support you under your sickness." Yet that is no reason why it should be ever taken away: It was certainly a degree of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. But it may be called by this or any other name; names are of little consequence: The thing you need never let go. You may live in and to Jesus; yea, and that continually, by simple faith, and holy, humble love.

Let M—— T—— be as sensible as ever she will or can be, of her own helplessness and poverty. But let her not cast away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward. She did experience the pure love of God: Let none take advantage from her being tried by fire (if it should be so) to reason her out of it. That general promise, "In blessing I will bless thee," certainly contains all the promises, whether relating to this life or the next; and all are yours! Peace be multiplied upon you!

CCLVI. — *To the Same.*

July 6, 1770.

WHEN things are viewed at a distance, one would be apt to imagine that no degree of sorrow could be found in a heart that rejoices evermore; that no right temper could be wanting, much less any degree of a wrong temper subsist, in a soul that is filled with love: And yet I am in doubt whether there be any soul clothed with flesh and blood which enjoys every right temper, and in which is no degree of any wrong one; suppose of ill-judged zeal, or more or less affection for some person than that person really deserves. When we say, "This is a natural, necessary consequence of the soul's union with a corruptible body," the assertion is by no means clear,

till we add, “because of the weakness of understanding which results from this union.” Admitting this, the case is plain. There is so close a connection between right judgment and right tempers, as well as right practice, that the latter cannot easily subsist without the former. Some wrong temper, at least in a small degree, almost necessarily follows from wrong judgment: I apprehend when many say: “Sin must remain, while the body remains,” this is what they mean, though they cannot make it out.

You say, “My silence usually proceeds from my views and thoughts of myself as a Christian.” Bishop Fenelon says, “Simplicity is that grace which frees the soul from all unnecessary reflections upon itself.” See here one sort of simplicity which you want! When I speak or write to you, I have you before my eyes, but, generally speaking, I do not think of myself at all. I do not think whether I am wise or foolish, knowing or ignorant: But I see you aiming at glory and immortality, and say just what I hope may direct your goings in the way, and prevent your being weary or faint in your mind. Our Lord will order all things well for sister T——. What can hurt those that trust in Him?

CCLVII. — *To the Same.*

September 15, 1770.

To use the grace given is the certain way to obtain more grace. To use all the faith you have will bring an increase of faith. But this word is of very wide extent: It takes in the full exercise of every talent wherewith we are entrusted. This comprises the whole compass both of inward and outward religion. That you may be able steadily and effectually to attend to this, you have need of that prayer, “Give me understanding, that I may keep thy law; yea, that I may keep it with my whole heart.” This is to “make the best of life,” which cannot be done without growing in grace. I believe it would help you, to read and consider the Sermon on Self-Denial, in the fourth volume;⁸⁷ and that on Universal Conscientiousness, in the “Christian Library.”

A sense of wants and weaknesses, with various trials and temptations, will do you no real hurt, though they occasion heaviness for a time, and abate

your joy in the Lord. It is wrong so to attend to this as to weaken your faith; and yet, in the general, it is not wrong “to form your estimate of the state of your soul from your sensations:” Not indeed from these alone; but from these in conjunction with your words and actions. It is true we cannot judge of ourselves by the measure of our joy; the most variable of all our sensations, and frequently depending, in a great degree, on the state of our blood and spirits. But if you take love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, and resignation together, I know no surer rule whereby to judge of your state to God ward.

What is the difference between “the frame of my mind, and the state of my soul?” Is there the difference of a hair’s breadth? I will not affirm it. If there be any at all, perhaps it is this: The frame may mean a single, transient sensation; the state, a more complicated and lasting sensation, — something which we habitually feel. By frame, some may mean fleeting passions; by state, rooted tempers. But I do not know that we have any authority to use the terms thus, or to distinguish one from the other. He whose mind is in a good frame, is certainly a good man as long as it so continues. I would therefore no more require you to cease from judging of your state by your frame of mind, than I would require you to cease from breathing.

Unless you deal very closely with those committed to your care, you will not give an account of them with joy. Advices and admonitions at a distance will do little harm or good. To those who give in to dress you might read or recommend the “Advice to the Methodists” on that head. It would be proper to go to the root of the matter once or twice; then to let it sleep; and after a few weeks try again. A Methodist using fine or gay apparel must suffer loss in her soul, although she may retain a little life; but she never will attain a high degree either of holiness or happiness.

CCLVIII. — *To the Same.*

April 14, 1771.

WHATEVER comes from you is agreeable to me; your letters always give me pleasure: But none more than the last, which brings the welcome news of

the revival of the work of God among you. You will encourage I—— T—— to send me a circumstantial account of God's dealings with her soul. Mr. Norris observes, that no part of history is so profitable as that which relates to the great changes in states and kingdoms; and it is certain, no part of Christian history is so profitable, as that which relates to great changes wrought in our souls: These therefore should be carefully noticed, and treasured up for the encouragement of our brethren.

I am glad you have at length broke through those evil reasonings which so long holden you down, and prevented you from acknowledging the things which were freely given to you of God. Always remember, the essence of Christian holiness is simplicity and purity; one design, one desire; entire devotion to God. But this admits of a thousand degrees and variations, and certainly it will be proved by a thousand temptations; but in all these things you shall be more than conqueror.

It takes God (so to speak) abundance of pains to hide pride from man; and you are in more danger of it than many, were it only on account of outward advantages. Happy are you, if you use those for that single end, to be outwardly and inwardly devoted to God; and that more entirely than you could be in different circumstances. I have just been conversing with that excellent woman, M—— P——: What a mystery, that one of such gifts and such grace should be fixed in a place where she is almost useless! So much the more thankful you may be, who have opportunity of employing every talent which God hath given you. If you would retain the talent of health, sleep early, and rise early.

I am, etc.

CCLIX. — *To the Same.*

May 31, 1771.

THE dealings of God with man are infinitely varied, and cannot be confined to any general rule: Both in justification and sanctification He often acts in a manner we cannot account for.

There cannot be a more proper phrase than that you used, and I well understand your meaning; yet it is sure you are a transgressor still namely, of the perfect, Adamic law. But though it be true, all sin is a transgression of this law, yet it is by no means true, on the other hand, (though we have so often taken it for granted,) that all transgressions of this law are sin: No, not at all; only all voluntary transgressions of it; none else are sins against the Gospel law.

Although we have “faith’s abiding impression, realizing things to come;” yet as long as we are in the body we have but an imperfect, shadowy knowledge of the things of eternity. For now we only see them in a glass, a mirror, which gives us no more than a shadow of them; therefore, we see them darkly, or in a riddle, as St. Paul speaks. The whole invisible world is as yet a riddle to us; and it seems to be in this sense that some writers speak so much of the night or darkness of faith, namely, when opposed to sight; that is, to the view of things which we shall have when the veil of flesh and blood is removed.

Those reasoning concerning the measure of holiness (a curious, not useful, question) are not inconsistent with pure love, but they tend to damp it; and were you to pursue them far, they would lead you into unbelief.

What you feel is certainly a degree of anger, but not of sinful anger: There ought to be in us (as there was in our Lord) not barely a perception in the understanding that this or that is evil; but also an emotion of mind, a sensation or passion suitable thereto. This anger at sin, accompanied with love and compassion to the sinner, is so far from being itself a sin, that it is rather a duty. St. Paul’s word is, “not easily provoked” to any paroxysm of anger; neither are you: Nevertheless, I suppose there is in you, when you feel a proper anger at sin, a hurrying motion of the blood and spirits, which is an imperfection, and will be done away.

CCLX. — *To the Same.**June 25, 1771.*

UNDOUBTEDLY the reward which is purchased for us by the blood of the covenant will be proportioned to what we are, (through grace,) what we do, and what we suffer. Whatever, therefore, prevents our doing good, prevents our receiving so full a reward; and what can countervail that loss? It is certainly right that we should bear one another's burdens; that we should weep with them that weep, and for them that weep not for themselves. "When Jesus saw them weeping, he troubled himself;" he willingly sustained that emotion; he voluntarily suffered that sorrow; and it is good for us to tread in his steps. "But how far?" Just so far as does not disqualify us for any other part of our duty; so far as softens, not unnerves, the mind; as makes us more, not less, zealous of good works.

Undoubtedly there are various kinds, and various degrees, of communion with God: We cannot confine it to one only; it may take in the exercise of every affection, either single, or variously mixed together; and may run through all our outward employments. The most desirable prayer is that where we can quite pour out our soul, and freely talk with God. But it is not this alone which is acceptable to Him. "I love one," said a holy man, "that perseveres in dry duty." Beware of thinking even this is labor lost. God does much work in the heart even at those seasons.

And when the soul, sighing to be approved,
Says, "Could I love," and stops, God writeth, "Loved!"

And yet the comfort is, that you need not rest here: You may go on until all your heart is love; till you 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' You know this is the will of God concerning you, in Christ Jesus.

I think M—— P—— enjoys this, and grows in grace continually. So do two or three more members in this society. But they sadly want more searching Preachers; and those that would help them forward, by explaining the deep things of God.

Peace be with your spirit.

CCLXI. — *To the Same.*

July 13, 1771.

As long as we dwell in a house of clay, it is liable to affect the mind; sometimes by dulling or darkening the understanding, and sometimes more directly by damping and depressing the soul, and sinking it into distress and heaviness. In this state, doubt or fear, of one kind or another, will naturally arise. And the prince of this world, who well knows whereof we are made, will not fail to improve the occasion, in order to disturb, though he cannot pollute, the heart which God hath cleansed from all unrighteousness.

I rejoice with you concerning poor M—— M——. Persons who are eminently dutiful to their parents hardly ever fail of receiving a reward, even in the present world.

My call to America is not yet clear. I have no business there, as long as they can do without me. At present I am a debtor to the people of England and Ireland, and especially to them that believe.

You have a delicate part to act with regard to P——. There are so many great defects in her natural temper, that a deal of grace will be required to make her altogether a Christian; neither will grace shine in her as it would in others. You have need carefully to encourage what is of God in her, and tenderly to reprove what is of nature. I am afraid for P—— D——, lest she should be less zealous of good works than she was formerly. I doubt she has at present little encouragement thereto.

In the thirteenth of Corinthians you have the height and depth of genuine perfection; and it is observable, St. Paul speaks all along of the love of our neighbor; flowing indeed from the love of God. Mr. De Renty is an excellent pattern of this. But many things in his fellowship with God will not be explained till the Holy Spirit explains them by writing them on your heart. That darkness which often clouds your understanding, I take to be quite preternatural. I believe the spirit of darkness spreads a mist over

your mind, so far as he is permitted; and that the best remedy is simply to look up to God, and the cloud will flee away at His presence.

I am, etc.

CCLXII. — *To the Same.*

August 3, 1771.

How wise are all the ways of God! And although in many instances they are past finding out, yet we may even now discern the designs of his providence.

The “Appendix to the Philosophy,” and the “Trinity Hymns,” I hope, will settle you on that important point. It is a striking remark of Bishop Browne’s, that we are not required to “believe any mystery” in the matter. The mystery does not lie in the fact, “These Three are One;” but in the manner, the accounting how they are one. But with this I have nothing to do. I believe the fact. As to the manner, (wherein the whole mystery lies,) I believe nothing about it. The quaint device of styling them three offices rather than persons, gives up the whole doctrine.

There is scarcely any word of so extensive a sense as wisdom. It frequently means the whole of religion. And indeed no one can be termed thoroughly wise until he is altogether a Christian. To devote all our thoughts and actions to God, this is our highest wisdom; and so far as we inwardly or outwardly swerve from this, we walk as fools, not as wise. In order to be all devoted to the Lord, even those who are renewed in love still need the unction of the Holy One, to teach them in all circumstances the most excellent way, and to enable them so to watch and pray, that they may continually walk therein. It seems, my time for writing, either on this or other subjects, is pretty well over; only I am ready to add a word now and then, if Providence so require.

Persons are, in one sense, delivered from unbelief, when they are enabled to believe always; when they have “faith’s abiding impression, realizing things to come.” For they can then no longer be termed unbelievers. When

this is given in a very glorious manner, so that they are filled with faith, and are not able to doubt even for a moment, it is natural for them to say, "they are saved from all unbelief." The soul that is all light, (as Lopez, when he said, "All is midday now,") may affirm, "I am saved from all darkness." And is not this the will of the Lord concerning you?

Undoubtedly it is. Fear not then; reason not; only look up. Is He not nigh, even at the door? — He is nigh that justifieth; He is nigh that sanctifieth; He is nigh that supplies all your wants! Take more out of his fulness, that you may love him more, praise him more, and serve him better. It is desirable to glorify God, like Mr. De Renty or Halyburton, in death, as well as in life: I am sorry for poor Miss H——. It is a mysterious providence.

CCLXIII. — *To the Same.*

July 1, 1772.

It is lost time to consider, whether you write well or ill: You speak from the heart, and that is enough. Unbelief is either total, the absence of faith; or partial, the want of more faith. In the latter sense every believer may complain of unbelief, unless when he is filled with faith and the Holy Ghost. Then it is all midday. Yet even then we may pray, "Lord, increase our faith."

We learn to think, by reading and meditating on what we read; by conversing with sensible people; and by everything that improves the heart. Since purity of heart (as Mr. Norris observes) both clears the medium through which we see, and strengthens the faculty, mechanical rules avail little unless one had opportunity of learning the elements of logic; but it is a miserable task to learn them without an instructor.

Entire resignation implies entire love. Give Him your will, and you give Him your heart.

You need not be at all careful in that matter, whether you apply directly to one Person, or the other, seeing He and the Father are One. Pray just as

you are led, without reasoning, in all simplicity. Be a little child hanging on Him that loves you.

I am, etc.

CCLXIV. — *To the Same.*

June 17, 1774.

I AM glad you think of me, when you do not see me: I was almost afraid it was otherwise. Air and exercise you must have; and if you use constant exercise, with an exact regimen, it is not improbable that you will have vigorous health, if you live to four or five and thirty. About that time the constitution both of men and women frequently takes an entire turn. At present, you are certainly in your place; and you need take no thought for the morrow.

The praying much for those we love much is doubtless the fruit of affection; but such an affection as is well pleasing to God, and is wrought in us by his own Spirit. Therefore it is certain the intercession that flows from that affection is according to the will of God.

That is an exceedingly nice question, "How far may we desire the approbation of good men?" I think it cannot be proved that such a desire is anywhere forbidden in Scripture. But it requires a very strong influence of the Holy Spirit, to prevent its running into excess.

Friendship is one species of love; and is, in its proper sense, a disinterested reciprocal love between two persons. Wicked persons are, it seems, incapable of friendship. For "he who fears no God, can love no friend." Nor indeed is every one that fears God capable of friendship. It requires a peculiar turn of mind, without which it can have no being. The properties of Christian friendship are the same as the properties of love; with those which St. Paul so beautifully describes in the thirteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. And it produces, as occasions offer, every good word and work. Many have laid down the rules whereby it should be regulated; but they are not to be comprised in a few lines. One

is, "Give up everything to your friend, except a good conscience toward God."

There have undoubtedly been instances of real friendship among Jews, yea, and among Heathens, who were susceptible of it: But they were by no means wicked men; they were men fearing God, and working righteousness, according to the dispensation they were under. I apprehend wicked men, under whatever dispensation, to be absolutely incapable of true friendship. By wicked men, I mean, either men openly profane, or men void of justice, mercy, and truth. There may be a shadow of friendship between those, whether of the same, or of different sexes. But surely the substance is wanting: In all my experience, I have found no exception to this rule.

After an acquaintance of four-and-thirty years, I myself cannot have freedom with Miss——. Yet I know not but you may. In most respects, she judges truly, although her natural understanding is not strong. Miss N——'s is: The more you know her, the more you will taste her spirit. The others you mention want a little more age and experience; then they might make companions for you.

CCLXV. — *To the Same.*

September 16, 1774.

I BELIEVE my displeasure at you is not likely to rise to any great height: It will hardly have time; for I should tell you very soon of anything which I did not like.

You want more simplicity. I will give you the first instance that occurs of that simplicity which I mean. Some years since, a woman sitting by me fell into strong convulsions; and presently began to speak as in the name of God. Both her look, motions, and tone of voice, were peculiarly shocking. Yet I found my mind as ready to receive what she said, as if she had spoken with the look, motion, and accent of Cicero.

“Unprofitable; far from edifying.” Nay; but this does not go to the bottom of the matter. Why is that unprofitable to me, which is edifying to others? Remember that remark in the “Thoughts on Christian Perfection:” If one grain of prejudice be in my mind, I can receive no profit from the Preacher. Neither in this case can I form a right judgment of anything a person says or does. And yet it is possible this prejudice may be innocent, as springing from the unavoidable weakness of human understanding.

I doubt not Mr. M—— will be of use to many: He has much sense and much grace, together with uncommon activity and patience. And, wherever he goes, the work of God prospers in his hand.

Bishop Browne thought Arianism and Socinianism were the flood which the dragon is in this age pouring out of his mouth to swallow up the woman: Perhaps it may; especially with Dr. Taylor’s emendation. But still the main flood in England seems to be Antinomianism. This has been a greater hindrance to the work of God than any, or all others put together. But God has already lifted up his standard, and He will maintain his own cause. In the present dispensation, He is undoubtedly aiming at that point, to spread holiness over the land. It is our wisdom to have this always in view, inward and outward holiness. A thousand things will be presented by men and devils to divert us from our point. These we are to watch against continually; as they will be continually changing their shape. But let your eye be single; aim still at one thing; — holy, loving faith; giving God the whole heart. And incite all to this; one love; one present and eternal heaven.

CCLXVI. — *To the Same.*

November 30, 1774.

YOU are in the safer extreme. When I formerly removed from one College to another, I fixed my resolution, not to be hastily acquainted with any one; indeed, not to return any visit, unless I had a reasonable hope of receiving or doing good therein. This my new neighbors generally imputed to pride; and I was willing to suffer the imputation.

I “sum up the experience” of persons too, in order to form their general character. But, in doing this, we take a different way of making our estimate. It may be, you chiefly regard (as my brother does) the length of their experience. Now, this I make little account of: I measure the depth and breadth of it. Does it sink deep in humble, gentle love? Does it extend wide in all inward and outward holiness? If so, I do not care whether they are of five or five-and-thirty years’ standing. Nay, when I look at Miss——, or Miss——, I am ready to hide my face: I am ashamed of having set out before they were born.

Undoubtedly Miss J—— is deep in grace, and lives like an angel here below. Yet some things in her character I do not admire: I impute them to human frailty. Many years ago I might have said, but I do not now,

“Give me a woman made of stone,
A widow of Pygmalion.”

And just such a Christian, one of the Fathers, Clemens Alexandrinus, describes: But I do not admire that description now as I did formerly. I now see a Stoic and a Christian are different characters; and at some times I have been a good deal disgusted at Miss J——’s apathy. When God restores our friends to us, we ought to rejoice: It is a defect, if we do not. In that and several other instances, I take knowledge of S—— R——’s littleness of understanding: And this, as well as our temper, we ought to improve to the utmost of our power; which can no otherwise be done, than by reading authors of various kinds, as well as by thinking and conversation. If we read nothing but the Bible, we should hear nothing but the Bible; and then what becomes of preaching?

Many people have clear conceptions of a few things, concerning which they judge and reason. But they have no clear ideas of other things. So, if they reason about them, they stumble at every step. None can have general good sense, unless they have clear and determinate ideas of all things.

CCLXVII. — *To the Same.**December 27, 1774.*

A FEW minutes I spent with Miss M—— when she was in town two or three years ago. She seemed to be of a soft, flexible temper, and a good deal awakened. From her letters, I should judge that she had still many convictions, and strong desires to be a real Christian. At the same time, it is plain she is surrounded with hindrances, and is sometimes persuaded to act contrary to her conscience. It is extremely difficult to advise a person in such circumstances what to do. Methinks the first thing I would advise her to, at all events, is,

1. “Do nothing against your conscience.
2. At a proper opportunity, after praying for courage, tell your lady, you scruple such and such things. And I doubt not, but she will take effectual care that no one shall press you on those heads.” Leaving her place is the last step to be taken, if she finds she cannot save her soul therein.

You know it is very natural for me to estimate wisdom and goodness by years, and to suppose the longest experience must be the best. But, although there is much advantage in long experience, and we may trust an old soldier more than a novice, yet God is tied down to no rules: He frequently works a great work in a little time. He makes young men and women wiser than the aged; and gives to many, in a very short time, a closer and deeper communion with Himself, than others attain in a long course of years. B—— and P—— B—— are witnesses. They have born huge contradiction; and P—— has stood such shocks as might have overset some of the most established sons we have in London.

There is a great calmness and meekness in B—— J——; but I want more softness and tenderness; I want more of human mingled with the divine. Nay, sometimes I want it in Miss M—— too. But I do not call that warmth anger; at least, not sinful anger: Perhaps it would be culpable to be without it. I desire no apathy in religion: A Christian is very far from a Stoic.

In every case, the last appeal must be made to our own conscience. Yet our conscience is far from being an infallible guide, as every wrong temper tends to bribe and blind the judge.

CCLXVIII. — *To the Same.*

February 11, 1775.

THERE seems to be in our excellent friend something too near akin to apathy. "A clergyman," said one, (but I do not agree with him in this,) "ought to be all intellect; no passion." She appears to be (I will not affirm she is) at no great distance from this. It is true, by this means we might avoid much pain: But we should also lose much happiness. Therefore this is a state which I cannot desire. Rather give me the pleasure and pain too: Rather let

Plain life, with heightening passions rise,
The boast or burden of an hour.

But who has attained this? Who treads the middle path, equally remote from both extremes? I will tell you one that did, (although the remembrance of her still brings tears into my eyes,) that lovely saint, Jane Cooper! There was the due mixture of intellect and passion! I remember one of the last times I saw her, before her last illness, her look, her attitude, her words! My dear friend, be you a follower of her, as she was of Christ.

CCLXIX. — *To the Same.*

June 9, 1775.

VERY possibly, if I should live seven years longer, we should be acquainted with each other. I verily think your reserve wears off; though only by an hair's breadth at a time. Quicken your pace. What you do, do quickly. "Scarce anything important enough to write upon!" Why, could you not say something about yourself? And is there anything relating to your welfare which is not important to me? Am not I concerned in everything which concerns you? which either lessens or increases your

happiness? I want you to be as happy, and, in order thereto, as holy, as an angel; that you may do the will of God on earth, as angels do in heaven.

I am less careful about your increase in knowledge, any farther than it tends to love. There is a danger of your laying more stress on this than sound reason requires. Otherwise, you would reap much profit from sermons, which do not improve your knowledge, — which do not apply to the understanding so directly as to the heart. I feel more want of heat than light. I value light; but it is nothing compared to love. Aim at this, my dear friend, in all public exercises; and then you will seldom be disappointed. Then you will not stop on the threshold of perfection; (I trust you do not now;) but will press on to the mark, to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; till you experimentally know all that love of God which passeth all (speculative) knowledge.

The lengthening of your life, and the restoring your health, are invaluable blessings. But do you ask, how you shall improve them to the glory of the Giver? And are you willing to know? Then I will tell you how. Go and see the poor and sick in their own poor little hovels. Take up your cross, woman! Remember the faith! Jesus went before you, and will go with you. Put off the gentlewoman: You bear a higher character. You are an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ! Are you not going to meet him in the air, with ten thousand of his saints? O be ready!

CCLXX. — *To the Same.*

February 7, 1776.

I HAVE found some of the uneducated poor who have exquisite taste and sentiment; and many, very many, of the rich who have scarcely any at all. But I do not speak of this: I want you to converse more, abundantly more, with the poorest of the people, who, if they have not taste, have souls, which you may forward in their way to heaven. And they have (many of them) faith, and the love of God, in a larger measure than any persons I know. Creep in among these, in spite of dirt, and a hundred disgusting circumstances; and thus put off the gentlewoman. Do not confine your conversation to genteel and elegant people. I should like this as well as you

do: But I cannot discover a precedent for it in the life of our Lord, or any of his Apostles. My dear friend, let you and I walk as he walked.

I now understand you with regard to the P——s; but I fear in this you are too delicate. It is certain their preaching is attended with the power of God to the hearts of many; and why not to yours? Is it not owing to a want of simplicity? “Are you going to hear Mr. Wesley?” “said a friend to Mr. Blackwell. “No,” he answered, “I am going to hear God: I listen to Him, whoever preaches; otherwise I lose all my labor.”

“You will only be content to convert worlds. You shall hew wood, or carry brick and mortar; and when you do this in obedience to the order of Providence, it shall be more profitable to your own soul than the other.” You may remember Mr. De Renty’s other remark: “I then saw that a well-instructed Christian is never hindered by any person or thing. For whatever prevents his doing good works gives him a fresh opportunity of submitting his will to the will of God; which at that time is more pleasing to God, and more profitable to his soul, than anything else which he could possibly do.”

Never let your expenses exceed your income. To servants I would give full as much as others give for the same service; and not more. It is impossible to lay down any general rules, as to “saving all we can,” and “giving all we can.” In this, it seems, we must needs be directed, from time to time, by the unction of the Holy One. Evil spirits have undoubtedly abundance of work to do in an evil world; frequently in concurrence with wicked men, and frequently without them.

CCLXXI. — *To the Same.*

February 26, 1776.

WHAT I advise you to is, not to contract a friendship, or even acquaintance, with poor, inelegant, uneducated persons; but frequently, nay, constantly, to visit the poor, the widow, the sick, the fatherless, in their affliction; and this, although they should have nothing to recommend them, but that they are bought with the blood of Christ. It is true, this is

not pleasing to flesh and blood. There are a thousand circumstances usually attending it which shock the delicacy of our nature, or rather of our education. But yet the blessing which follows this labor of love will more than balance the cross.

“To be uneasy under obligations which we cannot repay,” is certainly a fruit of diabolical generosity; and therefore Milton, with great propriety, ascribes it to the devil, and makes him speak quite in character when he says, concerning his obligations to God himself, —

“So burdensome still paying, still to owe.”

I am quite of another mind: I entirely agree with you, that the more sensible we are of such obligations, the more happy we are. Surely this yoke is easy, and this burden is light.

Perhaps, if you give another reading to “Thoughts upon Dress,” you will clearly see that both reason and religion are more deeply concerned than we are apt to imagine, even in the trifling article of dress; trifling if compared with the weightier matters of the law; yet, in itself, of no small importance; and that, whether you consider yourself as an individual, or as a member of a Christian society. Certainly, Dr. Young can only mean, “None is happy unless he thinks himself so;” and truly this is no great discovery. Is it any more than, “None is happy unless he is so?” If he means more than this, he means wrong: For we know the best man is the happiest; but if I thought myself the best man in the world, I should be very proud, and consequently not happy at all.

CCLXXII. — *To the Same.*

April 26, 1777.

To begin at the end: I did not preach any sermon for you in particular, though by accident. I know what sermon you mean; and both you and I have need of it.

I have some fine remains of Charles Perronet's, wherein he describes his own experience. It exactly agrees with yours. He too was led at first to Jesus the Mediator, and seemed, in a manner, to have no concern with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Afterwards, he had communion with the Father, next with the Spirit, and then with the whole Trinity. You therefore are afraid where no fear is. Our Lord is not displeased at your following his Spirit.

I do not remember the making mention of covetousness: But it is likely I might; for I am exceedingly afraid of it, lest it should steal unawares, (as it always comes in disguise,) either upon myself or my friends. I know no way to escape it, but (having saved all we can) to give all we can. I think this is, at present, your rule as well as mine; and I trust it always will be.

We cannot impute too much to divine Providence, unless we make it interfere with our free-agency. I suppose that young woman, by saying she did not believe God had any thing to do with it, only meant, that the passion itself was not at all from God, but altogether from evil nature: She could not mean that God does not, in a thousand instances, draw good out of evil; yea, that he may not sometimes permit us to be overtaken in a fault, to preserve us from a greater.

General rules are easily laid down. But it is not possible to apply them accurately in particular cases, without the anointing of the Holy One: This alone abiding with us, can teach us of all things. Thus our general rule is, "Thou shalt do no murder;" which plainly forbids everything that tends to impair health; and implies that we use every probable means of preserving or restoring it. But when we come to apply this to particular instances, we are presently in a labyrinth, and want that anointing which alone can make plain the way before our face, and direct us to do, in every minute circumstance, what is acceptable to God.

You have abundant reason to praise God, both for spiritual and temporal blessings. Beware of indulging gloomy thoughts: They are the bane of thankfulness. You are encompassed with ten thousand mercies: Let these sink you into humble thankfulness.

CCLXXIII. — *To the Same.**December 10, 1777.*

YOU do not at all understand my manner of life. Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry; because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true, I travel four or five thousand miles in a year. But I generally travel alone in my carriage; and, consequently, am as retired ten hours in a day, as if I was in a wilderness. On other days, I never spend less than three hours (frequently ten or twelve) in the day alone. So there are few persons in the kingdom who spend so many hours secluded from all company. Yet I find time to visit the sick and the poor; and I must do it, if I believe the Bible, if I believe these are the marks whereby the Shepherd of Israel will know and judge his sheep at the great day; therefore, when there is time and opportunity for it, who can doubt but this is matter of absolute duty? When I was at Oxford, and lived almost like a hermit, I saw not how any busy man could be saved. I scarce thought it possible for a man to retain the Christian spirit amidst the noise and bustle of the world. God taught me better by my own experience. I had ten times more business in America (that is, at intervals) than ever I had in my life. But it was no hindrance to silence of spirit.

Mr. Boehm was Chaplain to Prince George of Denmark; Secretary to him and Queen Anne; principal manager of almost all the public charities in the kingdom, and employed in numberless private charities. An intimate friend, knowing this, said to him when they were alone, "Sir, are you not hurt by that amazing hurry of business? I have seen you in your office, surrounded with people, listening to one, dictating to another, and at the same time writing to a third: Could you then retain a sense of the presence of God?" He answered, "All that company, and all that business, no more hindered or lessened my communion with God, than if I had been all alone in a church kneeling before the communion-table." Was it not the same case with him to whom Gregory Lopez said, "Go and be a hermit in Mexico?" I am concerned for you; I am sorry you should be content with lower degrees of usefulness and holiness than you are called to. But I cannot help it: So I submit; and am still,

My dear Miss M——,
Yours in sincere affection.

CCLXXIV. — *To Mr. Christopher Hopper.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS, *March 24, 1761.*

I STEPPED over from Manchester hither yesterday, and am to return thither tomorrow. I cannot fix my route through Scotland till I hear from Mr. Gillies: But I expect to be at Aberdeen in four or five weeks; and at Newcastle about the middle of May. My best friend (such she undoubtedly is, in a sense) remains still in London. I do not expect any change till the approach of death. And I am content. With regard to me, all is well.

John Nelson and John Manners both write to me from York, that they wish T. Olivers to spend some time longer in the Newcastle Circuit. I wish so too. I think it would be better for himself, and for many others. O let us follow after the things which make for peace!

I am,

Yours affectionately.

Alas! Alas! So poor Jacob Rowell says, Mr. Wesley has nothing to do with his round; and all the societies in it, but Barnard-castle, are willing to separate. In God's name, let one of you go into that round without delay!

CCLXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

NORWICH, *January 18, 1762.*

PUBLIC affairs do look exceeding dark; and the clouds gather more and more. Yet the Lord sitteth above the water-floods, and remaineth a King for ever. And He (whatever be the lot of his enemies) shall give his people the blessing of peace.

If you do not establish good order in the Orphan-house, it is pity you should go there. This is the very design of your Master: For this end are you sent. Do just as I would do in every instance if I were in your place. Act just the thing that is right, whoever is pleased or displeased. I hereby give it under my hand, I will stand by you with all my might.

I am glad you have had a free conversation with T. Olivers. There is good in him; though he is a rough stick of wood. But love can bow down the stubborn neck. By faith and love we shall overcome all things. Peace be with you and yours.

I am

Your ever affectionate brother.

I set out for London tomorrow.

CCLXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

CORK, *June 18, 1762.*

So your labor has not been in vain. I shall expect an account of the remaining part of your journey too. And you will be able to inform me of the real character and behavior of Robert Miller also. I do not rightly understand him. But I see James Kershaw and he do not admire one another.

Pray let me know, as particularly as you can, how William Fugill has behaved in Scotland; and what has hindered the increase of the work at Edinburgh. I thought the society would have been doubled before now.

I expect to be in Dublin on Saturday, July 24: Then Providence will determine how I shall go forward, and whether I am to embark for Parkgate, Liverpool, or Holyhead, in my way to Leeds; where I hope to meet you all on August 10.

I am

Yours affectionately.

I hope you will all exert yourselves in the Midsummer collection for Kingswood.

CCLXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *September 3, 1763.*

I AM much inclined to think you will be more useful this year than ever you have been in your life. From the first hour abate nothing of our Rules, whether of society or bands. Be a Methodist all over. Be exact in everything. Be zealous; be active. Press on to the one thing, and carry all before you. How much may be done before summer is at an end! Their little misunderstandings at Edinburgh you will soon remove, by hearing the parties face to face. I hope a Preacher is gone northward, and brother Roberts come southward. I hate delay. "The King's business requires haste!"

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Yours most affectionately.

Take the field everywhere as often as possible. Who goes to the Highlands now, quickly?

CCLXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

WELLING, *November 2, 1763.*

"DUNDEE," you say, "would be thankful for a Preacher." But who would give him things needful for the body? He cannot live upon air; and we now expect that Scotland should bear its own burden. John Hampson you must think of no more. But I doubt our Newcastle friends are out of all patience for want of R. Roberts. In spring you will need a fourth Preacher. But what would he have to do?

Why, then, I think you must get the plat without Cannongate. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Sevenpence halfpenny! Pshaw! Let it be eightpence, even money. By-and-by we may give Mr. Trail more work. O let us work in this fruitful season! We join in love to S. Hopper and you.

I am
Yours affectionately.

CCLXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *September 29, 1764.*

MY judgment is this, — That it is best for you to be at Edinburgh (but in a more airy lodging, if it can be had for love or money) before the end of next month, James Kershaw at Dundee, and Tommy Hanby at Aberdeen. If you have either love or pity for him, let him not stay too long at Dundee. His mind is by no means strong enough to bear that weight of applause. At any rate take him out of the furnace, or he will be consumed. And you well know a change is best for the people, as well as best for him. Is it not easiest for him and you to change at a day appointed; and then for you to stay at Dundee till you are relieved by James Kershaw? Peace be with your spirits!

I am
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *October 16, 1765.*

So honest Sander has outrode all the storms, and got safe into the haven! The Lord does all things well. I should not wish to stay here any longer than I would be useful.

You and James Kershaw are considerate men. You must set your wits to work to find out ways and means. I will venture to answer for one fifty pounds, payable next August. Let our brethren pray in good earnest, and God will provide the rest.

I am
Yours affectionately.

I am returning to London.

CCLXXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 20, 1766.*

THE letter now before me runs thus: "*Sunderland, November 10.* Mr. Hopper has been here preaching for a fortnight; and he proposes to come to live here, and be our Minister: And a house is to be built for him. Then we shall not want the Travelling Preachers so often. And I hope he will give us the sacrament."

You must explain this to me yourself. I can say nothing to it; for I know nothing of the matter.

I am
Yours affectionately.

November 27, 1766.

It is well my letter was overlooked till I came home: So one will do for two. John Fenwick will set out tomorrow morning, which is as soon as he could be spared from hence.

Nay, it is you must make the best of M. Fenwick. Cure him of his coxcomicality, and he may do good. If Mrs. Robinson continues to walk closely with God, I expect her health will continue.

Miss Lewen's Will probably will be a nine days' wonder. Mr. Whitefield acted according to the light he had: But I durst not have done so; because I am God's steward for the poor.

We all join in love. Adieu!

CCLXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

ATHLONE, *June 18, 1767.*

SOMETIMES the children forget the parents; but it is seldom that parents forget their children. I suppose it was the death of honest Paul Greenwood which occasioned the report of yours. He could ill be spared: But he was ready for the Bridegroom; so it was fit he should go to Him.

Michael should take care to be either in Dublin, or in the north of Ireland, before the end of July. If it be possible for him to be a simple, plain man, pretending to nothing but to follow Christ, God will find him employment. And if he walk circumspectly and humbly in Ireland, the people of England will soon be reconciled to him.

I wish you joy of having full employment. You know, the more work the more blessing. There is good work to be done in this kingdom also; and many of our Preachers do it in good earnest. But we want more laborers; especially in the north, where one Preacher is increased into seven! and the people cry aloud for more. But, alas! we can neither make them, nor hire them!

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

I hope to see you and honest John at the Conference. An exact account of the societies you will bring with you.

CCLXXXIII. — *To the Same.*MY DEAR BROTHER,
1769.LONDON, *November 20,*

IF she will return of her own accord, I will receive her with open arms. But I will not hire her to return. I think that would be foolish, nay, sinful.

Brother Fazzard was a good man, though for some years his head was a good deal wrong. I hope Brother Greenwood continues right, and is no longer puzzled by the smooth speakers.

If you love the souls or bodies of men, recommend, everywhere, the "Primitive Physic," and the small tracts. It is true, most of the Methodists are poor; but what then? Nine in ten of them would be no poorer, if they were to lay out a whole penny in buying a book every other week in the year. By this means, the work of God is both widened and deepened in every place.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *January 16, 1770.*

THERE is reason to believe that this has been indeed a festival time all over the kingdom. While a Sacheverell madness has spread far and wide, God gives us the spirit of love and of a sound mind.

I think verily, if we could procure those premises upon reasonable terms, together with such a servitude or security (are these synonymous terms?) as you mention, it would be a noble acquisition, and might tend much to the furtherance of the work of God in Edinburgh.

If all the Assistants would exert themselves with regard to the Yearly Collection as heartily as Christopher Hopper, a great deal might be done. We must have farther proof of William.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 13, 1770.*

YOU are quite right. If a man preach like an angel, he will do little good without exact discipline. I am glad honest William Hodgson has been of use; and hope you have made him and his brother friends. I will trust you for letting any place be six or eight weeks without preaching. Let this evil be removed, and the congregations will increase on Wednesdays as well as Sundays. Pray warn your young man continually, (and yourself,) “Not too long, or too loud!” I am right glad honest R. Roberts has preached at the Cross. “Go thou, and do likewise.” I leave both the Vicar and the Curate in your hands. I have no concern with them. I let them drop. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might!

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXXVI. — *To the Same.*MY DEAR BROTHER,
1770.LONDON, *December 21,*

WE are sure God is wise in all his ways, and gracious in all his works. But many times the reasons of them are past finding out. We can only say, “It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth him good.”

I wish that good young man, Mr. Hill, could be prevailed upon to cast in his lot among us. He is upright of heart, and bids very fair to be an useful laborer in our Lord’s vineyard.

I am, with love to sister Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

CORK, *May 5, 1771.*

THE work is to be delivered in weekly and monthly numbers: But it is of most use to have portable volumes. I have corrected as much as will make nine or ten out of the thirty volumes. All the verse works I have corrected, in conjunction with the Preachers, and left the corrected copy at London. If I live to finish the correction of my own works, I shall then revise the "Christian Library." If ever you should spend a twelvemonth in this kingdom, you would not repent of your labor. Here is a people ready prepared for the Lord.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 13, 1771.*

METHODIST Preachers cannot have always accommodations fit for gentlemen. But let us look upon David Brainerd, and praise God for what we have. In the general, your Circuit is one of the best in England. The living souls make us ample amends for the inconvenient houses.

I am persuaded, wherever the Assistant is earnest in the matter, and has a little address and patience, the weekly contribution will answer the end. Difficulties we must expect; but, by the help of God, you will conquer them. If Tommy Hanson and you live till May, you may change again.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCLXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEWISHAM, *February 26, 1772.*

WHEN Mr. Shirley (or rather Lady H.) published that wonderful Circular Letter, it was little imagined that it would be the occasion of establishing those very doctrines which it was intended to destroy. So different were God's thoughts from men's thoughts! T. Olivers was more afraid than hurt. We all agree in this: "By thy words thou shalt be justified" (in the last day); "and by thy words" (yea, and works) "thou shalt be condemned."

April 6th I hope to be at Manchester; and thence to go, by Whitehaven, to Glasgow, Perth, and Aberdeen. My Welsh church has a fine air; but no land or money belonging to it. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

February 6, 1773.

I AGREED last year (though contrary to my judgment) that we would have no more weekly subscriptions. I purposed likewise, in my own mind, to concern myself with the debt no more. But upon reflection it seemed to me, there was one way still; namely, not to apply to the poor at all, (though I would not reject any that offered,) but to take the burden on myself, and try my personal interest with the rich. I began at London, where about five hundred pounds are subscribed. Afterwards, I wrote to many in the country. Liverpool Circuit has subscribed about an hundred pounds; Bradford Circuit, an hundred and thirty. It must be now or never. I do not know that I shall concern myself with this matter any more.

Till now we have never had a rational prospect of clearing the whole debt in one year. Now it may be done. It certainly will, if our brethren in other Circuits do as those above mentioned have done. What I desire of you is,

to second the letters I have wrote, encouraging each man of property in your Circuit to exert himself; at least, to send me an answer: This, you know, is but common civility. Now do what you can; and show that you, my old friend, are not the last and least in love towards

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LIVERPOOL, *March 21, 1773.*

YOU have saved us an hundred pounds with regard to the house at Bradford. An hundred pounds less shall serve there, which may be applied to better purposes. So you may use your free thoughts on any other head (directing to Dublin) when you please. It is certain there has been little management at the Orphan-House, or you would not have been a penny in debt. However, do all you can in your own way toward discharging the general debt. I do not know where Peggy Dale could have made a better choice. Peace be with your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEWISHAM, *July 31, 1773.*

I BELIEVE what you desire is for the glory of God, and have therefore no objection to your spending another year in the Newcastle Circuit. I am glad you have preached on the Ballast-hills. Follow the blow, and you will soon see the fruit. Billy Smith will nearly supply your place at the Conference; and you will find full employment where you are.

We have money in hand both for Dundee and Edinburgh: But I do not think right that a shilling more should be given to either till the houses are settled in another manner. I am sorry so much has been given already.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *August 7, 1773.*

BEFORE any more money is paid for Dundee house, security must be given that the house shall be settled according to our plan as soon as the debt upon it is paid.

As to Edinburgh house, you say, "If they pay the interest and the out-rent, it is no matter whether you pay one shilling more." No matter! What becomes then of the Preachers' Fund? Blessed Committee, who lent near two hundred pounds out of it!

We have gone a few steps farther towards a general trust; but that matter goes on very slowly. You are to cure Robert Swan of preaching too long. We all judge it best that the four Preachers should follow one another through the whole Circuit.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 1, 1775.*

I AM glad to hear so good an account with regard to the preaching-houses at Liverpool and Warrington. Indeed it may be doubted, whether we should contribute toward those houses which are not settled according to our plan. It pleases God to continue my strength hitherto; and my disorder gives me little uneasiness. I expect to be at Stroud, (from Bristol,) Monday, March 13; Tuesday, 14, at Worcester; Thursday, 16, Birmingham; Friday, 17, Newcastle; Saturday, 18, Macclesfield; Monday, 20, Manchester; Tuesday, 21, Northwich. Whether it will be more advisable then to steer by Chester or Liverpool I do not see clearly. Let us work while the day is.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

Surely it cannot be, that you should find in the house at Newcastle an account which John Fenwick sent me, and that you should send it back to him!

CCXCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 11, 1775.*

THERE was something very awful in that storm which I suppose reached all over England and Ireland; although it seems not to have been altogether so violent in London as in most other places. I am sorry for Captain Davis and his widow. The judgments of God are abroad. The prayer-meetings may be of great use, not only to individuals, but to the whole nation. I see nothing besides prayer that can avail. For the one question is, "Have we any right to tax, or no?" If we have, they are rebels, and accountable to God and man for all the blood that is shed. If we have not, they are innocent, and the blood lies at our door. Will they allow that right? or can we give it up?

I am, with love to S. Hopper,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,
1775.

LONDON, *December 26,*

I SEE no possibility of accommodation. The one point is, Has the supreme power a right to tax, or not? If they have, they cannot, they ought not to, give it up. But I say, as Dean Tucker, "Let them drop." Cut off all other connection with them than we have with Holland or Germany. Four-and-thirty millions they have cost us to support them since Queen Anne died. Let them cost us no more. Let them have their desire, and support themselves.

You sent Harry Brooke one book; but I left two, the larger of which was not sent. If it is lost, I must buy another.

The disorder is universal throughout Great Britain and Ireland; but hitherto, scarce any die of it in London: So God lightly afflicts us at first. It is well if the people will now hear the rod, and Him that hath appointed it.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near LONDON, *February 1, 1777.*

J—— K—— is stark staring mad, more than ever John Reed was. He prophesies that “all the Methodists are to go over to America in the belly of a whale.” Take this as a specimen.

We shall not begin our building here before April. Probably I shall take a short journey (to Leeds, or Newcastle, or Dublin) once a month; but I must never be absent long at a time. How we shall be able to raise the money, I know not. But “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.”

I am
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *March 16, 1777.*

MADMEN have often a deal of cunning; and this frequently puzzles the cause; so that sometimes we can hardly say whether the man is more fool or knave.

Right precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints; and much good is usually done at their funerals. You do well to improve all those opportunities.

Our friends are about laying the foundation of the new chapel; so that in a few days I must return to London. Then I shall consider what time I can spare from thence; and shall fix my spring and summer journeys accordingly.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCXCIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 18, 1777.*

I BELIEVE what you say of ——— ——— is true; therefore I hindered the angry ones from falling upon him at the Conference.

There is no divine visitation which is likely to have so general an influence upon sinners as an earthquake. The rich can no more guard against it than the poor. Therefore, I have often thought this would be no undesirable event.

I hang out no false colors. Scriptural, Christian, etc., are all equivocal words. I mean a Magazine purposely wrote to defend Universal Redemption. Other Magazines give forty pages for sixpence; this gives eighty for a shilling. My time is short: So I publish as much as I can at once, if haply I may live to finish it. All these things I have maturely weighed.

I have said over and over, there are weighty reasons why no Preacher should ever be a Trustee. Sycophants are wide of this question.

I am
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1778.*

MANY angry opponents we are to expect; but they may say just what they please. It is my determination to answer none; but to go straight on my way.

On Sunday evening, March 1, I am to leave London. After spending a few days at Bristol, I purpose making the best of my way to Chester, in order to embark for Ireland. I hope to be in Dublin about the end of March. If so, I shall be able to visit all the societies before July.

I am, with love to S. Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 31, 1778.*

AT a General Conference David Evans was judged unqualified for a Travelling Preacher. At the last Conference we determined to receive no more married Preachers. For what reason? For an exceeding plain one, — because we cannot keep them. I cannot: If you can, you may. But the people cannot, or will not, keep any more.

J—— K——'s prophecies are very ingenious; and as authentic as Jacob Behmen's.

I really think the French will burn their fingers. We are much obliged to them for making our countrymen friends with each other.

I am glad the knotty affair at Bolton is concluded, and hope the sour man is now in a good humour.

I am, with love to sister Hopper,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, Near LONDON, *February 16, 1780.*

I DO not know that there is any matter of dispute between us, unless it be, whether you should do what I desire, or no. You are Assistant in Colne Circuit. I desire you to send me a plan of the Circuit: You send me an answer, but without the plan. I write again: You send a second answer, telling me, you have been very diligent for many years; and that you was the very person who introduced plans among us. Very good: But you send me no plan still; and till this comes, everything else is wide of the mark.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

Why should not you write an account of *your* life?

Isaac Waldron, T. Lee, W. Brammah, etc., etc., were not “strong and able men.” When any such obtrude themselves for easy Circuits, speak at that time, and you do something.

CCCIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, WHITTLEBURY, *October 25, 1780.*

IT was a shame that Keighley Circuit should be without preaching while there were so many Local Preachers all round it. Was John Oliver asleep, that he did not apply to the neighboring Assistants for help?

We must get your goodly countenance by and by. Some of your children will continue: Many will draw back. The Conference is nearly printed. It will cost a groat at least!

God is cleansing England and America, and sweeping away the wicked with the besom of destruction. When that is done, glory will dwell in our land!

I am, with love to S. Hopper,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1784.*

IT was your part to write to me, of the behavior of William Eells, particularly at Warrington, without waiting till I heard of it from so many other persons. Seeing I find I cannot overcome him by love, I am at length constrained to let him drop. Pray inform him, he is no longer in the number of our Itinerant Preachers. I shall today send another Preacher to supply his place in the Bolton Circuit. I have done all I could to save him; but it is in vain: So I must at length give him up.

I am

Your affectionate brother and friend.

CCCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

REDRUTH, *August 27, 1785.*

THE utmost that can be done at present is, to permit him to preach as a Local Preacher; for I will not run my head against all the Conference, by reversing what they have determined. I cannot, with either decency or prudence, go any farther yet. If his behavior is unblamable in this lower station, by and by he may rise higher.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

———, 1788.

I SAID nothing, less or more, in Bradford church, concerning the end of the world, neither concerning my own opinion, but what follows: — That Bengelius had given it as his opinion, not that the world would then end, but that the millennial reign of Christ would begin in the year 1836. I have no opinion at all upon the head: I can determine nothing at all about it.

These calculations are far above, out of my sight. I have only one thing to do, — to save my soul, and those that hear me.

I am
Yours affectionately.

CCCVII. — *To Mr. Thomas Carlill.*

DEAR TOMMY,

LONDON, *January 23, 1778.*

IN my father's poem on the Life of Christ there are many excellent lines; but they must be taken in connection with the rest: It would not be at all proper to print them alone.

Mr. Toplady might easily have answered Mr. Hervey, and maintained his point, upon supposition of absolute decrees; for it is certain, whatever is ordained of God is right. If, therefore, "whatsoever is, is ordained of God," then, "whatever is, is right." Mr. Toplady therefore was consistent with his principles; Mr. Hervey was not.

You two, and C. Pritchard, should procure all the subscribers you can to the Magazine.

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCVIII. — *To Mr. Thomas Rankin.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 20, 1762.*

BY all means go into Sussex again. And you may continue in that Circuit till another Preacher comes. I trust God has sent you thither for the good

of others, and of your own soul. Be exact in observing and in enforcing all the Rules of our Society. Then you will see more and more fruit of your labor.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

BRISTOL, *September 21, 1764.*

I SOMETIMES wonder that all our Preachers are not convinced of this, — that it is of unspeakable use to spread our practical tracts in every society. Billy Pennington, in one year, sold more of these in Cornwall, than had been sold for seven years before. So may you, if you take the same method. Carry one sort of books with you the first time you go the round, another sort the second time; and so on. Preach on the subject at each place; and after preaching encourage the congregation to buy and read the tract.

Neither James Mitchell nor William Thomas was without blame. We must make allowance when they tell their own story: But if they now behave well, it is all we desire.

Some years since there was something done in the way you mention, concerning brother Triggs. I remember two or three of our brethren from the west coming to London, recommended by Billy Roberts. The particulars he can best inform you of, as well as what success they had. Peace be with your spirit!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 2, 1764.*

AT the request of several of our Preachers, I have at length abridged Goodwin's "Treatise on Justification." I trust it will stop the mouths of gainsayers concerning imputed righteousness; and teach them (at least the most candid) to speak as the oracles of God.

I desire you to read the proposal and preface in every society within your Circuit: Then enforce it, as you see best, both in public and private conversation. Spare no pains. Exert yourself. See what you can do. Give this proof of your love for the truth, for the people, and for

Your affectionate friend and brother.

N. B. Be careful to keep an exact list of all the subscribers' names in each society; and also to leave a copy thereof with the person who takes care of the books.

CCCXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

LONDON, *November 6, 1764.*

IF the Crowan or Buryan society are able to bear the expense of building themselves, we have no objection; but we must not increase our debt this year. This is what we determined. If you do build, build large enough. In general, we do not pay rent out of the public stock; but get help from friends in the Circuit. For once, we may allow forty shillings.

I shall write to Plymouth-Dock this post. I hope John Cattermole (a sound man) will come and help you. I shall either mend William Darney, or end him. He must not go on in this manner.

Spread the little tracts wherever you go. You know the solid good which results therefrom. Go on; spend and be spent for a good Master.

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

LONDON, *December 15, 1764.*

I WILL send a man down to W. Darney, that is as rough as himself; namely, T. Bryant. But he is much changed for the better, and I think will not now jar with you. You need not indeed be very near one another: Cornwall is wide enough. Otherwise, let T. Bryant stay in Devonshire, and Peter Price move westward. John Cattermole sticks fast at Kingswood, and can get no farther.

I wish you could conquer J. Paynter too. And who knows? Love may do the deed.

Want of sleep will occasion hoarseness. You should sleep at least six hours in twenty-four, either at once or at twice.

For hoarseness, look into the “Primitive Physic;” and try, one after another, if need be, the garlic, the apple, the conserve, and the balsam. I know not how you will procure subscribers to Goodwin, while you are pressing the general subscription.

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate friend.

CCCXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *March 9, 1765.*

NOTHING can hurt you, if you are calm, mild, and gentle to all men, especially to the forward. I think you have done all you could do at

present for poor brother Jane. I will send to William Atkinson, and ask him how the house is settled. I know nothing about it; for I never saw the writings.

I suppose the Bill intended to be brought into Parliament will never see the light. The great ones find other work for one another. They are all at daggers' drawing among themselves. Our business is, to go straight forward.

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXIV.— *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

ST. JOHN'S, *September* 11, 1765.

THERE is a good work in Cornwall. But where the great work goes on well, we should take care to be great in little things.

I will tell you several of these, just as they occur to my mind. Grace Paddy, at Redruth, met in the select society, though she wore a large glittering necklace, and met no band.

They sing all over Cornwall a tune so full of repetitions and flourishes, that it can scarce be sung with devotion. It is to those words, —

“Praise the Lord, ye blessed ones.”

Away with it. Let it be heard no more.

They cannot sing our old common tunes. Teach these everywhere. Take pains herein.

The societies are not half supplied with books; not even with Jane Cooper's Letters, or the two or three Sermons which I printed last year: No, not with the shilling Hymn-Book, or “Primitive Physic.”

They almost universally neglect fasting.

The preaching-houses are miserable, even the new ones. They have neither light nor air sufficient; and they are far, far too low, and too small. Look at Yarm house.

We have need to use all the common sense God has given us, as well as all the grace.

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

Recommend the Notes on the Old Testament in good earnest. Every society, as a society, should subscribe. Remind them, everywhere, that two, four, or six might join together for a copy, and bring the money to their Leader weekly.

CCCXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,
1765.

LONDON, *November* 18,

YOU have satisfied me with regard to the particulars which I mentioned in my letter from Cornwall. Only one thing I desire you to remember, — Never sit up later than ten o'clock; no, not for any reason, (except a watch-night,) not on any pretense whatsoever. In general, I desire you would go to bed about a quarter after nine.

Likewise, be temperate in speaking; never too loud, never too long: Else Satan will befool you; and on pretense of being more useful, quite disable you from being useful at all.

Richard Henderson desired that he might be the bookkeeper this year in Wiltshire, and save me two shillings in the pound. But whoever you approve of, so do I. Write to Mr. Franks accordingly.

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXVI.— *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

LONDON, *March 1, 1775.*

I THINK the March packet will do as well as the April packet; so I answer you without delay.

As soon as possible, you must come to a full and clear explanation, both with brother Asbury (if he is recovered) and with Jemmy Dempster. But I advise brother Asbury to return to England the first opportunity.

There is now a probability that God will hear the prayer, and turn the counsels of Ahithophel into foolishness. It is not unlikely that peace will be re-established between England and the colonies. But certainly the present doubtful situation of affairs may be improved to the benefit of many. They may be strongly incited now “to break off their sins by repentance, if it may be a lengthening of their tranquillity.”

I am, my dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

P.S. Tomorrow I intend to set out for Ireland.

I add a line to all the Preachers:—

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

LONDON, *March 1, 1775.*

YOU were never in your lives in so critical a situation as you are at this time. It is your part to be peace-makers; to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word against one or the other side. Keep yourselves pure: Do all you can to help and soften all: But beware how you adopt another’s jar.

See that you act in full union with each other: This is of the utmost consequence. Not only let there be no bitterness or anger, but no shyness

or coldness, between you. Mark all those that would set one of you against the other. Some such will never be wanting. But give them no countenance; rather ferret them out, and drag them into open day.

The conduct of T. Rankin has been suitable to the Methodist plan: I hope all of you tread in his steps. Let your eye be single. Be in peace with each other, and the God of peace will be with you.

I am, my dear brethren,
Your affectionate brother.⁸⁸

CCCXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

PORTARLINGTON, *April 21, 1775.*

I AM glad there is so good an understanding between Jemmy Dempster and you. He is an upright man, and, unless I am much mistaken, a friend both to the Methodist doctrine and discipline.

I am sorry for poor T. R. It is certain God did lift up his head; and I hoped that his besetting sin would no more gain dominion over him. However, you must in nowise give him up. And he has much more need of comfort than of reproof. His great danger is despair.

Brother Asbury has sent me a few lines, and I thank him for them. But I do not advise him to go to Antigua. Let him come home without delay. If one or two stout, healthy young men would willingly offer themselves to that service, I should have no objection; but none should go, unless he was fully persuaded in his own mind.

You are a bold man, Tommy, to commence author in these critical times. I wish the success may answer your expectation: There is a call for every help. I am afraid you will soon find a day of trial: The clouds are black both over England and America. It is well if this summer passes over without some showers of blood. And if the storm once begins in America, it will soon spread to Great Britain.

I have a friendly letter from ———, who writes warmly against the ———. Pray remember my love to him and his wife. I am glad to find he is still walking in the good old way. He sends me word that one or two men of fortune are gone out to preach the Gospel. If they are, I expect little from them. God hath chosen the weak to confound the strong.

Go on, doing and suffering the will of our Lord!

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

BALLINROBE, *May 19, 1775.*

THAT letters travel very slow from us to America is a great inconvenience. But it is a still greater, that they travel so uncertainly: Sometimes reaching you too late, sometimes not at all.

I doubt not but brother Asbury and you will part friends: I shall hope to see him at the Conference. He is quite an upright man. I apprehend, he will go through his work more cheerfully when he is within a little distance from me.

We must speak the plain truth, wherever we are, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear. And among our societies we must enforce our Rules, with all mildness and steadiness. At first, this must appear strange to those who are as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke. But after a time, all that desire to be real Christians see the advantage of it

I am afraid Mr. B. is a weak brother, a little enlightened in his understanding, and having a kind of faith. But I would rather (of the two) be in the case of poor T. R., than of him. I think there is more probability of his being a real Christian, than of the other's.

Never was there a time, when it was more necessary for all that fear God, both in England and in America, to stir up the gift of God that is in them,

and wrestle with God in mighty prayer. In all the other judgments of God, the inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness. When a land is visited with famine, or plague, or earthquake, the people commonly see and acknowledge the hand of God. But wherever war breaks out, God is forgotten, if he be not set at open defiance. What a glorious work of God was at Cambuslang and Kilsythe, from 1740 to 1744! But the war that followed tore it all up by the roots, and left scarce any trace of it behind; insomuch that when I diligently inquired a few years after, I could not find one that retained the life of God!

I am, my dear Tommy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXIX.— *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY, CLARMAIN, *near* ARMAGH, *June* 13, 1775.

I AM afraid our correspondence for the time to come will be more uncertain than ever; since the sword is drawn: And it is well if they have not on both sides thrown away the scabbard. What will the end of these things be, either in Europe or America? It seems, huge confusion and distress, such as neither we nor our fathers had known! But it is enough, if all issues in glory to God, and peace and goodwill among men.

I am sorry for poor T. R. I well hoped God had thoroughly healed his backsliding, and so lifted up his head that he would have fallen no more. But the case is not desperate yet: You must in nowise give him up. I have scarcely ever known an habitual drunkard finally reclaimed, before he had relapsed more than once or twice. Your point is, first save him from the occasions of sin: Then incite him, not to cast away hope. Nothing but this, despair of conquering, can totally destroy him. As long as he keeps up the faintest hope, he will strive against sin.

My brother wrote me word, that he had received a copy of the tract that you have written. Something of the kind may be very seasonable. Never had America such a call to repentance. For unless general reformation prevent general destruction, what a scene will soon be opened! Ruin and

desolation must soon overspread the land, and fair houses be turned into ruinous heaps. But what are those strange phenomena which you speak of? Send me an account of just so much as you can depend upon.

Should not you appoint in America (as we do in England and Ireland) one or more general days of fasting and prayer?

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

Near LEEDS, July 28, 1775.

I REJOICE to hear that the work of our Lord still prospers in your hands. If the temple is built even in troublous times, it is not by the power of man. I rejoice too over honest Francis Asbury, and hope he will no more enter into temptation. Do not despair of poor T. R. He is not out of God's reach yet. I know no reason why we should not print the names of the American Preachers. You may print an edition of the "Christian Pattern," and apply the profits of it to the payment of the debt. The societies should pay the passage of the Preachers. But you must not imagine that any more of them will come to America till these troubles are at an end.

Certainly this is the point which we should insist upon, in season and out of season. The universal corruption of all orders and degrees of men loudly calls for the vengeance of God; and inasmuch as all other nations are equally corrupt, it seems God will punish us by one another. What can prevent this, but a universal, or, at least, a general repentance? Otherwise we have great reason to fear, God will soon say, "Sword, go through that land, and destroy it."

Those Clergymen should be lovingly advised not to hurt our Preachers. I will pay your arrears. We have only to live today! God will take care of tomorrow.

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXXI.— *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

LONDON, *August 13, 1775.*

I DO not give up T. R. yet; he is not out of God's reach. I am not sorry that brother Asbury stays with you another year. In that time it will be seen what God will do with North America; and you will easily judge whether our Preachers are called to remain any longer therein. If they are, God will make their way plain, and give them favor even with the men that delight in war. In the civil wars of Rome, Atticus stood fair in the esteem of both the contending parties. And so did the Archbishop of Cambray, during the war in the Netherlands; not only the officers, but the common soldiers, when they went by, treating him with love and regard. The clouds do indeed gather more and more; and it seems a heavy storm will follow; certainly it will, unless the prayers of the faithful obtain a longer reprieve.

A few weeks ago, I was at the gates of death, in the north of Ireland. But

The fever felt His touch, and fled;

and I am now just as I was before it came.

You did well to remove the books into a place of safety, if any such can be found in America. It is no wonder that the spirits of the men who know not God are sharpened into madness; that human creatures commence lions and bears. This is the genuine fruit of war!

Certainly, if they persecute you in one city, you should flee to another. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR TOMMY,

LONDON, *October 20, 1775.*

THE account given in our newspapers of my death was not wholly without foundation; for I was only not dead; my pulse being quite gone, and “the wheel at the cistern without motion.” But then our Lord stepped in, and

The fever own'd His touch, and fled.

My strength returned by swift degrees; and I am now at least as well as before my illness.

In the country places I believe you will have the largest harvest, where they know little and talk little about politics. Their hearts are engaged with something better, and they let the dead bury their dead. I am glad you are going into North Carolina; and why not into South Carolina too? I apprehend those provinces would bear much fruit, as most parts of them are fresh, unbroken ground. And as the people are farther removed from the din of war, they may be more susceptible of the Gospel of peace.

A paper was sent to me lately, occasioned by the troubles in America; but it would not do good. It is abundantly too tart; and nothing of that kind will be of service now. All parties are already too much sharpened against each other: We must pour water, not oil, into the flame. I had written a little tract upon the subject before I knew the American ports were shut up. I think there is not one sharp word therein; I did not design there should. However, many are excessively angry; and would willingly burn me and it together. Indeed it is provoking: I suppose above forty thousand of them have been printed in three weeks and still the demand for them is as great as ever.

I was glad to receive yours by Captain Crawford. I am entirely of your mind. I am persuaded love and tender measures will do far more than violence. And if I should have an interview with a great man, (which seems to be not unlikely,) I will, by the grace of God, tell him so, without any

circumlocution. Our time is in God's hands: Let us stand ready for all things!

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXXIII. — *To Mr. James Dempster.*

DEAR JEMMY,

BALLINROBE, *May 19, 1775.*

THAT one point I earnestly recommend, both to brother Rankin, and you, and all our Preachers, — by prayer, by exhortation, and by every possible means, to oppose a party spirit. This has always, so far as it prevailed, been the bane of all true religion; more especially when a country was in such a situation as America is now. None but the God of almighty love can extricate the poor people out of the snare. O what need have you to besiege His throne with all the power of prayer!

I am, dear Jemmy,
Yours affectionately.

CCCXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JEMMY,

Near LEEDS, July 28, 1775.

LAST month I was at the gates of death. But it pleased God just then to rebuke the fever, so that my pulse began to beat again, after it had totally ceased. Since that time I have been gradually recovering strength, and am now nearly as well as ever. Let us use the short residue of life to the glory of Him that gave it!

I am
Yours affectionately.

CCCXXV. — *To Mr. John King.* ⁸⁹

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near LEEDS, July 28, 1775.*

ALWAYS take advice or reproof as a favor: It is the surest mark of love.

I advised you once, and you took it as an affront: Nevertheless I will do it once more.

Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me, whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can; but do not scream. Speak with all your heart; but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, "He shall not *cry*." The word properly means, He shall not *scream*. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud; often vehemently; but I never scream; I never strain myself. I dare not: I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. Perhaps one reason why that good man, Thomas Walsh, yea, and John Manners too, were in such grievous darkness before they died, was, because they shortened their own lives.

O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper! By nature you are very far from it: You are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others, surely you might take it from

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXXVI. — *To Mr. John King.* ⁹⁰

Near LONDON, February 16, 1787.

I GENERALLY write to all that desire it; though not often in many words. What I have to say may be confined in a narrow compass. It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the perfect love of God; and one

great means of retaining it is, frankly to declare what God has given you, and earnestly to exhort all the believers you meet with to follow after full salvation.

CCCXXVII. — *To the Same.*

Near BRISTOL, April 21, 1787.

IF you have a desire to go and labor with brother Clarke in the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey, you may, after the Conference. By that time I expect they will have both work and food for another laborer.

With what is past, or what is to come, we have little to do. Now is the day of salvation. The great salvation is at hand, if you will receive it as the free gift of God. What you have already attained, hold fast. Whatever you want, it is ready to be given. Reason not about it, but believe. His word is, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." There is a wonderful work of God in several parts of this kingdom; and it increases more and more.

CCCXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near LONDON, October 31, 1787.

BOTH in Jersey, Alderney, and Guernsey, the fields are white to the harvest. Hitherto there is an open door into many places, without any considerable opposition. And I am not sorry we were detained there, by contrary winds, longer than we intended.

There is no need at all that Thirsk Circuit should ever be in debt. You have several persons there that are of considerable ability, and that love the cause of God. Represent things to them in a proper manner, and nothing will be wanting.

If any of the Class-Leaders teaches strange doctrine, he can have no more place among us. Only lovingly admonish him first.

I am

Yours affectionately.

CCCXXIX. — *To Mrs. A. F.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

October 12, 1764.

THAT great truth, “that we are saved by faith,” will never be worn-out; and that sanctifying as well as justifying faith is the free gift of God. Now, with God one day is as a thousand years. It plainly follows, that the quantity of time is nothing to Him: Centuries, years, months, days, hours, and moments are exactly the same. Consequently, he can as well sanctify in a day after we are justified, as a hundred years. There is no difference at all, unless we suppose Him to be such a one as ourselves. Accordingly we see, in fact, that some of the most unquestionable witnesses of sanctifying grace were sanctified within a few days after they were justified. I have seldom known so devoted a soul as S—— H——, at Macclesfield, who was sanctified within nine days after she was convinced of sin. She was then twelve years old, and I believe was never afterwards heard to speak an improper word, or known to do an improper thing. Her look struck an awe into all that saw her. She is now in Abraham’s bosom.

Although, therefore, it usually pleases God to interpose some time between justification and sanctification, yet, as it is expressly observed in the “Farther Thoughts,” we must not fancy this to be an invariable rule. All who think this, must think we are sanctified by works, or, which comes to the same, by sufferings: For, otherwise, what is time necessary for? It must be either to do or to suffer. Whereas, if nothing be required but simple faith, a moment is as good as an age.

The truth is, we are continually forming general rules from our own particular experience. Thus S—— R——, having gone about and about herself, which took up a considerable time, might very naturally suppose, all who are sanctified must stay for it near as long a time as she did. Again: If God has so rooted and grounded her in love (which I neither affirm nor deny) that she cannot now fall from Him, she very naturally thinks this is the case with all that are sanctified. Formerly S——

C—— drew the same inference from her own experience, and was as positive that she could not fall from that state, or sin, as S—— R—— can be now.

But “none can be sanctified without a deep knowledge of themselves, and of the devices of Satan.” They may, without the latter; which God will give them in due time. And the former He can give in a moment; and frequently does, of which we have fresh instances almost everyday.

In the “Thoughts on Perfection,” it is observed, that, before any can be assured they are saved from sin, they must not only feel no sin, but “have a direct witness” of that salvation. And this several have had as clear as S—— R—— has, who afterwards fell from that salvation: Although S—— R——, to be consistent with her scheme, must deny they ever had it; yea, and must affirm, that witness was either from nature or from the devil. If it was really from God, is he well-pleased with this?

I know not how to reconcile speaking sharply or roughly, or even a seeming want of meekness, with perfection. And yet I am fearful of condemning whom God has not condemned. What I cannot understand, I leave to Him.

How is it that you make me write longer letters to you than I do almost to any one else? I know not how, I find a greater concern for your welfare. I want you to be exactly right. This occasions my not thinking much of any pains that may give you help or satisfaction. The Lord touch your heart now, that all your tempers, thoughts, words, and works may be holiness unto our God.

I am yours, etc.

CCCXXX. — *To Lady Maxwell.*

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *June 20, 1764.*

WILL it be agreeable to my dear Lady Maxwell, that I trouble her with a letter so soon? and that I write with so little ceremony? that I use no

compliment, but all plainness of speech? If it be not, you must tell me so, and I shall know better how to speak for the time to come. Indeed, it would be displeasing to me to use reserve: The regard I feel for you strongly inclines me to “think aloud,” to tell you every thought which rises in my heart. I think God has taken unusual pains, so to speak, to make you a Christian; a Christian indeed, not in name, worshipping God in spirit and in truth; having in you the mind that was in Christ, and walking as Christ also walked. He has given you affliction upon affliction; he has used every possible means to unhinge your soul from things of earth, that it might fix on him alone. How far the design of his love has succeeded, I could not well judge from a short conversation. Your Ladyship will therefore give me leave to inquire, Is the heaviness you frequently feel merely owing to weakness of body, and the loss of near relations? I will hope it is not. It might, indeed, at first spring from these outward pressures. But did not the gracious Spirit of God strike in, and take occasion from these to convince you of sin, of unbelief, of the want of Christ? And is not the sense of this one great cause, if not the greatest, of your present distress? If so, the greatest danger is, either that you should stifle that conviction, not suffering yourself to be convinced that you are all sin, the chief of sinners; or, that you should heal the wound slightly, that you should rest before you know Christ is yours, before his Spirit witnesses with your spirit, that you are a child of God. My dear Lady, be not afraid to know yourself; yea, to know yourself as you are known. How soon, then, will you know your Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous! And why not this day? Why not this hour? If you feel your want, I beseech the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to look upon you now! O give thy servant power to believe! to see and feel how thou hast loved her! Now let her sink down into the arms of thy love; and say unto her soul, “I am thy salvation.”

With regard to particular advises, I know not how far your Ladyship would have me to proceed. I would not be backward to do anything in my power; and yet I would not obtrude. But in any respect you may command,

My dear Lady,

Your Ladyship's affectionate servant.

CCCXXLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

MANCHESTER, *July 10, 1764.*

TILL I had the pleasure of receiving yours, I was almost in doubt, whether you would think it worth your while to write or not. So much the more I rejoiced when that doubt was removed, and removed in so agreeable a manner. I cannot but think of you often: I seem to see you just by me, panting after God, under the heavy pressure of bodily weakness and faintness, bereaved of your dearest relatives, convinced that you are a sinner, a debtor that has nothing to pay, and just ready to cry out,

“Jesus, now I have lost my all,
Let me upon thy bosom fall”

Amen, Lord Jesus! Speak, for thy servant heareth! Speak thyself into her heart! Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. Let her see these full of grace and truth, and make her glad with the light of thy countenance.

Do not stop, my dear Lady, one moment, “because you have not felt sorrow enough.” Your Friend above has felt enough of it for you.

O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine!

Look, look unto him, and be thou saved! He is not a God afar off; he is now hovering over you with eyes of tenderness and love! Only believe! Then he turns your heaviness into joy. Do not think you are not humble enough, not contrite enough, not earnest enough. You are nothing; but Christ is all, and he is yours. The Lord God write it upon your heart, and take you for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

O that you may be ever as dead to the world as you are now! I apprehend the greatest danger from that quarter. If you should be induced to seek happiness out of Christ, how soon would your good desires vanish! Especially, if you should give way to the temptation to which your

person, your youth, and your fortune, will not fail to expose you. If you escape this snare, I trust you will be a real Christian, having the power, as well as the form, of religion. I expect you will then have likewise better health and spirits; perhaps tomorrow. But, O! take Christ today! I long to have you happy in him! Surely, few have a more earnest desire of your happiness than,

My very dear Lady,
Your Ladyship's most affectionate servant.

CCCXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

September 22, 1764.

YOU need be under no manner of apprehension of writing too often to me. The more frequent your letters are, the more welcome they will be. When I have not heard from you for some time, I begin to be full of fears; I am afraid, either that your bodily weakness increases, or that your desires after God grow cold. I consider, you are at present but a tender, sickly plant, easily hurt by any rough blast. But I trust this will not be so long; for you have a strong Helper. And the Lord, whom you serve, though feebly and imperfectly, will suddenly come to his temple. When, Lord? Are all things ready now? Here is the sinner; one whose mouth is stopped; who has nothing to pay; who pleads neither her own harmlessness, nor works, nor good desires, nor sincerity; but can adopt that strange word, —

“I give up every plea beside,
Lord, I am damn'd; but thou hast died.”

He has died; therefore, you shall live. O do not reason against him! Let him take you now! Let him take you just as you are, and make you what is acceptable in his sight.

It gives me pleasure, indeed, to hear that God has given you resolution to join the society. Undoubtedly you will suffer reproach on the account; but it is the reproach of Christ. And you will have large amends, when the Spirit of glory and of God shall rest upon you. Yet I foresee a danger: At first you will be inclined to think that all the members of the society are in

earnest. And when you find that some are otherwise, (which will always be the case in so large a body of people,) then prejudice may easily steal in, and exceedingly weaken your soul. O beware of this rock of offense! When you see anything amiss, (upon hearsay you will not readily receive it,) remember our Lord's word, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." And I entreat you, do not regard the half-Methodists, — if we must use the name. Do not mind them who endeavor to hold Christ in one hand, and the world in the other. I want you to be all a Christian; such a Christian as the Marquis de Renty, or Gregory Lopez, was. Such a one as that saint of God, Jane Cooper; all sweetness, all gentleness, all love. Methinks you are just what she was when I saw her first. I shrink at the thought of seeing you what she was when I saw her last. But why should I? What is all the pain of one that is glorifying God in the fires, with, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit?"

May I not take upon me to give you one advice more? Be very wary how you contract new acquaintance. All, even sincere people, will not profit you. I should be pained at your conversing frequently with any but those who are of a deeply serious spirit, and who speak closely to the point. You need not condemn them, and yet you may say, "This will not do for me."

May He that loves you richly supply all your wants, and answer your enlarged desires! So prays,

My very dear Lady,

Your affectionate servant.

CCCXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,
25,1765.

LONDONDERRY, *May*

It is not easy for me to express the satisfaction I received in the few hours I lately spent with you. Before I saw you, I had many fears concerning you, lest your concern for the one thing should be abated, lest your desires should be cooled, or your mind a little hurt, by any of the things which

have lately occurred. So much the greater was my joy, when all those fears were removed; when I found the same openness and sweetness as before, both in your spirit and conversation, and the same earnestness of desire after the only thing which deserves the whole strength of our affection. I believe tenderness and steadiness are seldom planted by nature in one spirit. But what is too hard for almighty grace? This can give strength and softness together. This is able to find your soul with all firmness, as well as with all gentleness. And hereunto are you called; for nothing less than all the mind which was in Christ Jesus.

It was with great pleasure that I observed your fixed resolution not to rest in anything short of this. I know not why you should; why you should be content with being half a Christian, devoted partly to God, and partly to the world, or more properly to the devil. Nay, but let us be all for God. He has created the whole, our whole body, soul, and spirit. He that bought us hath redeemed the whole; and let him take the purchase of his blood. Let him sanctify the whole, that all we have and are may be a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving!

I am not afraid of your being satisfied with less than this; but I am afraid of your seeking it the wrong way. Here is the danger, that you should seek it, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. See how exactly the Apostle speaks: You do not seek it directly, but as it were by works. I fear, lest this should be your case, which might retard your receiving the blessing. Christ has died for you; he has bought pardon for you. Why should not you receive it now? while you have this paper in your hand? Because you have not done thus or thus? See your own works. Because you are not thus and thus? more contrite? more earnest? more sincere? See your own righteousness. O let it all go! None but Christ! None but Christ! And if he alone is sufficient; if what he has suffered and done, if his blood and righteousness are enough, they are nigh thee! in thy mouth, and in thy heart! See, all things are ready! Do not wait for this or that preparation! for something to bring to God! Bring Christ! Rather, let him bring you; bring you home to God! Lord Jesus, take her! Take her and all her sins! Take her as she is! Take her now! Arise, why tarriest thou? Wash away her sins! Sprinkle her with thy blood! Let her sink down into the arms of thy love, and cry out, "My Lord and my God!"

Let me hear from you as soon as you can. You do not know how great a satisfaction this is to,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

Be pleased to direct to the New Room, in Dublin.

CCCXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

KILKENNY, *July 5, 1765.*

As yours was sent from Dublin to Cork, and then back again hither, I did not receive it till yesterday. I am now setting my face again towards England; but I expect to be in Dublin till the beginning of next month, and then to cross over, so as to be at Manchester (if it please God) about the middle of August. Either at Dublin, or at Manchester, I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you. This is indeed a pleasure, as it is to write to you; though sometimes I do this with fear; a fear, lest I should give you any pain, as I know the tenderness of your spirit. I wish I could be of some service to you; that I could encourage you to cast yourself on Him that loves you; that is now waiting to pour his peace into your heart, to give you an entrance into the holiest by his blood. See him, see him! full of grace and truth! full of grace and truth for thee! I do not doubt but he is gradually working in you; but I want you to experience, likewise, an instantaneous work. Then shall the gradual go on swiftly. Lord, speak! Thy servant heareth! Say thou, "Let there be light;" and there shall be light. Now let it spring up in your heart!

It may be, He that does all things well has wise reasons, though not apparent to us, for working more gradually in you, than he has done of late years in most others. It may please him to give you the consciousness of his favor, the conviction that you are accepted through the Beloved, by almost insensible degrees, like the dawning of the day. And it is all one, how it began, so you do but walk in the light. Be this given in an instant, or by degrees, hold it fast. Christ is yours; He hath loved you; He hath given

himself for you. Therefore, you shall be holy as He is holy, both in heart, and in all manner of conversation.

Give me leave, my dear friend, to add a word, likewise, concerning your bodily health. You should in anywise give yourself all the air and exercise that you can. And I should advise you (even though long custom made it difficult, if that were the case) to sleep as early as possible; never later than ten, in order to rise as early as health will permit. The having good spirits, so called, or the contrary, very much depends on this. I believe medicines will do you little service: You need only proper diet, exact regularity, and constant exercise, with the blessing of God.

Your speaking or writing was never tedious to me yet; and I am persuaded never will be. Your letters are more and more agreeable to,

My very dear Lady,
Your most affectionate servant.

CCCXXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *December 1, 1765.*

PERHAPS there is scarce any child of man that is not, at some time, a little touched by prejudice, so far, at least, as to be troubled, though not wounded. But it does not hurt, unless it fixes upon the mind. It is not strength of understanding which can prevent this. The heart, which otherwise suffers most by it, makes the resistance which only is effectual. I cannot easily be prejudiced against any person whom I tenderly love, till that love declines. So long, therefore, as our affection is preserved by watchfulness and prayer to Him that gave it, prejudice must stand at a distance. Another excellent defense against it is openness. I admire you upon this account. You dare (in spite of that strange reserve which so prevails in North Britain) speak the naked sentiments of your heart. I hope my dear friend will never do otherwise. In simplicity and godly sincerity, the very reverse of worldly wisdom, have all your conversation in the world.

Have you received a gleam of light from above, a spark of faith? O let it not go! Hold fast, by His grace, that token of His love, that earnest of your inheritance. Come just as you are, and come boldly to the throne of grace. You need not delay! Even now the bowels of Jesus Christ yearn over you. What have you to do with tomorrow? I love you today. And how much more does He love you! He

Pities still his wand'ring sheep,
Longs to bring you to his fold!

Today hear His voice; the voice of Him that speaks as never man spake; the voice that raises the dead, that calls the things which are not as though they were. Hark! What says He now? "Fear not; only believe! Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee; Go in peace; thy faith hath made thee whole." Indeed

I am, my dear Lady,
Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *May 6, 1766.*

It was well that I did not hear anything of a trial you lately had till it was past. You have great reason to bless God that this did not turn you out of the way. You might easily have inferred from it, that "all these people are alike;" and thence have given way to a thousand reasoning, which would have brought you into utter darkness: But it is plain you are not left to your own weakness. You have a strong Helper. The Lord stands on your right hand; therefore you are not moved. And I make no doubt but he will continue to help, till his arm brings you salvation. But, in the mean time, you have need of patience; and the more so, because you have a weak body. This, one may expect, will frequently press down the soul; especially till you are strong in faith. But how soon may that be, seeing it is the gift, yea, and the free gift, of God! Therefore, it is never far off. The word is nigh thee! "Only believe!" Look unto Jesus! Be thou saved!

Receive, out of his fulness, grace upon grace; mercy, and grace to keep mercy.

On the 24th instant I hope to be at Edinburgh, with my wife and daughter. But perhaps you will see the salvation of God, before you see,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

NORWICH, *February 23, 1767.*

FOR a considerable time, I was under apprehensions that you were in a state of temptation. And as I had no other way of helping you, this put me upon commending you the more frequently to Him that is able to save you. Your last, therefore, was doubly acceptable to me, as it relieved me from my fears concerning you, and gave me the occasion of rejoicing over one, for whom I have the most sincere and tender affection. Sure it is, that the grace of God is sufficient for you in this, and in every trying hour. So you have happily experienced it to be already; and so I trust you will experience to the end. But you must not imagine that you are yet out of the reach of temptation: Thoughts will be suggested again and again; so that you have still need to be

For ever standing on your guard,
And watching unto prayer.

And let my dear friend keep at the utmost distance from temptation, and carefully shun all occasions of evil. O it is a good though painful fight! You find you are not sent a warfare at your own cost. You have Him with you, who can have compassion on your infirmities; who remembers you are but dust; and who, at the same time, has all power in heaven and earth, and so is able to save you to the uttermost. Exercise, especially as the spring comes on, will be of greater service to your health than a hundred medicines; and I know not whether it will not be restored in a larger measure than for many years, when the peace of God fixes in your heart.

Is it far off? Do not think so. His ear is not heavy; he now hears the cry of your heart. And will he not answer? Why not today? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Your openness obliges me to be more than ever,

My dear Lady,

Your affectionate friend and servant.

CCCXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

CORK, *June 4, 1767.*

MY belief is, that a journey to England might be of great service to your health. And it is not improbable, you might receive much benefit from the water of the Hot-Wells near Bristol. In August I hope to be at Bristol; and again in the latter end of September. My chaise and horses are at Bristol, which, you would oblige me much, if you would please to use as your own, (if you do not bring any with you,) during your stay there; for you should, if possible, ride out daily. My wife, who is at Newcastle, will be exceeding glad to wait upon you there. And if you choose to rest a few days, I should be happy if you would make use of the Orphan-House. You would be pleased with the Miss Dales, and they with you: You and they have drank into one Spirit. Miss Peggy is one of the holiest young women that I have any knowledge of: Indeed I think both the sisters have no desire, but to glorify God with their body and with their spirit. You will be so kind as to let me know when you expect to be at Newcastle; and possibly I may meet you there. As you were providentially called to the place where you now are, I cannot doubt but you will be preserved. But you have need of much prayer and continual watching, or you may insensibly lose what God has given. I am jealous over you: I cannot but be interested in whatever concerns you. I know your tender spirit; your desire to please all for their good; your unwillingness to give pain. And even these amiable dispositions may prove a snare; for how easily may they be carried too far! If you find anything hurts you, or draws your soul from God, I conjure you, flee for your life! In that case, you must not stand upon ceremony; you must escape without delay. But I hope better things: I hope you are sent to Brisbane, not to receive hurt, but to do good;

to grow in grace, to find a deeper communion than ever with Him that gave himself for you; and to fulfill the joy of,

My dear Lady,

Your most affectionate friend.

CCCXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *March 3, 1769.*

To be incapable of sympathizing with the distressed is not a desirable state. Nor would one wish to extirpate either sorrow or any other of our natural passions. And yet it is both possible and highly desirable to attain the same experience with the Marquis de Renty, who, on occasion of his lady's illness, told those who inquired how he could bear it, "I cannot say but my nature is deeply affected with the apprehension of so great a loss. And yet I feel such a full acquiescence in the will of God, that, were it proper, I could dance and sing."

I have heard my mother say, "I have frequently been as fully assured that my father's spirit was with me, as if I had seen him with my eyes." But she did not explain herself any further. I have myself many times found on a sudden so lively an apprehension of a deceased friend, that I have sometimes turned about to look: At the same time I have felt an uncommon affection for them. But I never had anything of this kind with regard to any but those that died in faith. In dreams, I have had exceeding lively conversations with them; and I doubt not but they were then very near.

It gives me pleasure to hear, that you did not neglect our own preaching, in order to attend any other. The hearing Mr. F. at other times, I do not know that any could blame; unless you found it unsettled your mind, or weakened your expectation of an entire deliverance from sin. And this, I apprehend, it did not.

You never "take up too much of my time." To converse with you, even in this imperfect way, is both agreeable and useful to me. I love your spirit,

and it does me good. I trust, God will still give you that hunger and thirst after righteousness, till you are satisfied therewith. And who knows how soon?

I am, my dear Lady,
Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXL. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDONDERRY, *April 29, 1769.*

A WHILE ago I was concerned at hearing from Edinburgh, that you were unwell; although I could not doubt, but it was ordered well by an unerring Providence, as a means of keeping you dead to all below, and of quickening your affections to things above. And indeed this is the rule whereby the inhabitants of a better world judge of good and evil. Whatever raises the mind to God is good; and in the same proportion as it does this. Whatever draws the heart from its center is evil; and more or less so, as it has more or less of this effect. You have accordingly found pain, sickness, bodily weakness, to be real goods; as bringing you nearer and nearer to the fountain of all happiness and holiness. And yet, it is certain, nature shrinks from pain, and that without any blame. Only in the same moment that we say, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," the heart should add, like our great Pattern, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Lady Baird I did not see before I left London; and Lady K. B. I did not understand. She was exceedingly civil, and I think affectionate; but perfectly shut up; so that I knew no more of her state of mind than if I had never seen her.

I am, my dear Lady,
Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *February 17, 1770.*

TO us it may seem, that uninterrupted health would be a greater help to us than pain or sickness. But herein we certainly are mistaken: We are not such good judges in our own cause. You may truly say, "Health I shall have, if health be best." But in this and all things, you may trust Him that loves you. Indeed, nervous disorders are, of all others, as one observes, enemies to the joy of faith. But the essence of it, that confidence in a loving, pardoning Gods they can neither destroy nor impair. Nay, as they keep you dead to all below, they may forward you therein; and they may increase your earnestness after that pure love which turns earth into paradise.

It will be by much pains and patience that you will keep one in high life steadfast in the plain, old way. I should wish you to converse with her as frequently as possible. Then, I trust, God will use you to keep alive the fire which He has kindled. I am in great hopes that chapel will be of use; but it will not be easy to procure a converted Clergyman. A Schoolmaster will be more easily found; although many here are frightened at the name of Scotland. A diligent master may manage twenty or perhaps thirty children. If one whom I lately saw is willing to come, I believe he will answer your design.

I have some thoughts of going to America; but the way is not yet plain. I wait till Providence shall speak more clearly, on one side or the other. In April I hope to reach Inverness, and to take Edinburgh in my way back to England. But let us live today! What a blessing may you receive now!

Now let your heart with love o'erflow,
And all your life his glory show!

I am, my dear Lady,
Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *January 24, 1771.*

ALTHOUGH Mr. M'Nab⁹¹ is quite clear as to justification by faith, and is in general a sound and good Preacher, yet I fear he is not clear of blame in this. He is too warm and impatient of contradiction; otherwise he must be lost to all common sense, to preach against final perseverance in Scotland. From the first hour that I entered the kingdom, it was a sacred rule with me, never to preach on any controverted point, — at least not in a controversial way. Any one may see, that this is only to put a sword into our enemies' hands. It is the direct way to increase all their prejudices, and to make all our labors fruitless. You will shortly have a trial of another kind. Mr. De Courcy purposes to set out for Edinburgh in a few days. He was from a child a member of one of our societies in the south of Ireland. There he received remission of sins, and was for some time groaning for full redemption. But when he came to Dublin, the Philistines were upon him, and soon prevailed over him. Quickly he was convinced, that “there is no perfection;” and that “all things depend on absolute, unchangeable decrees.” At first he was exceedingly warm upon these heads: Now he is far more calm. His natural temper, I think, is good: He is open, friendly, and generous. He has also a good understanding, and is not unacquainted with learning, though not deeply versed therein. He has no disagreeable person, a pleasing address, and is a lively, as well as a sensible, Preacher. Now, when you add to this, that he is quite new, and very young, you may judge how he will be admired and caressed! “Surely such a Preacher as this never was in Edinburgh before! Mr. Whitefield himself was not to compare with him! What an angel of a man!” Now, how will a raw, inexperienced youth be able to encounter this? If there be not the greatest of miracles to preserve him, will it not turn his brain? And may he not then do far more hurt than either Mr. W—— or Mr. T—— did? Will he not prevent your friend from “going on to perfection,” or thinking of any such thing? Nay, may he not shake you also? He would; but that the God whom you serve is able to deliver you. At present, indeed, he is in an exceedingly loving spirit. But will that continue long? There will be danger on the one hand if it does; there will be danger on the other if it does not. It does not appear that any great change has been wrought in our neighbors

by Mr. Wh——'s death. He had fixed the prejudice so deep, that even he himself was not able to remove it; yet our congregations have increased exceedingly, and the work of God increases on every side. I am glad you use more exercise. It is good for both body and soul. As soon as Mr. De Courcy is come, I shall be glad to hear how the prospect opens. You will then need a larger share of the wisdom from above; and I trust you will write with all openness to,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

February 26, 1771.

I CANNOT but think the chief reason of the little good done by our Preachers at Edinburgh, is the opposition which has been made by the Ministers of Edinburgh, as well as by the false brethren from England. These steeled the hearts of thy people against all the good impressions which might otherwise have been made, so that the same Preachers by whom God has constantly wrought, not only in various parts of England, but likewise in the northern parts of Scotland, were in Edinburgh only not useless. They felt a damp upon their own spirits; they had not their usual liberty of speech; and the word they spoke seemed to rebound upon them, and not to sink into the hearts of the hearers. At my first coming I usually find something of this myself; but the second or third time of preaching, it is gone; and I feel, greater is He that is with us, than all the powers of earth and hell.

If any one could show you, by plain Scripture and reason, a more excellent way than that you have received, you certainly would do well to receive it; and, I trust, I should do the same. But I think it will not be easy for any one to show us, either that Christ did not die for all, or that he is not willing as well as able to cleanse from all sin, even in the present world. If your steady adherence to these great truths be termed bigotry, yet you have no need to be ashamed. You are reproached for Christ's sake, and the Spirit of glory and of Christ shall rest upon you. Perhaps our Lord may use you to soften some of the harsh spirits, and to preserve Lady G——,

or Mr. De Courcy, from being hurt by them. I hope to hear from you (on whom I can depend) a frequent account of what is done near you. After you have suffered awhile, may God stablish, strengthen, settle you!

I am, my dear Lady,

Your very affectionate servant.

CCCXLIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *February 8, 1772.*

I COMMEND you for meddling with points of controversy as little as possible. It is abundantly easier to lose our love in that rough field, than to find truth. This consideration has made me exceedingly thankful to God for giving me a respite from polemical labors. I am glad he has given to others both the power and the will to answer them that trouble me; so that I may not always be forced to hold my weapons in one hand, while I am building with the other. I rejoice, likewise, not only in the abilities, but in the temper, of Mr. Fletcher. He writes as he lives: I cannot say that I know such another Clergyman in England or Ireland. He is all fire; but it is the fire of love. His writings, like his constant conversation, breathe nothing else, to those who read him with an impartial eye. And although Mr. Shirley scruples not to charge him with using subtlety and metaphysical distinctions, yet he abundantly clears himself of this charge, in the “Second Check to Antinomianism.” Such the last letters are styled, and with great propriety; for such they have really been. They have given a considerable check to those, who were everywhere making void the law through faith; setting “the righteousness of Christ” in opposition to the law of Christ, and teaching that “without holiness any man may see the Lord.”

Notwithstanding both outward and inward trials, I trust you are still on the borders of perfect love. For the Lord is nigh!

See the Lord thy Keeper stand
Omnipotently near!
Lo! he holds thee by thy hand,
And banishes thy fear!

You have no need of fear. Hope unto the end! Are not all things possible to him that believeth? Dare to believe! Seize a blessing now! The Lord increase your faith! In this prayer I know you join with,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

NEWCASTLE, *May 3, 1777.*

THE new chapel which we are now building in London requires much of my attendance there, so that I cannot conveniently be absent more than two Sundays together. Accordingly, when I set out, I fixed Saturday, the 19th instant, for my return; and ordered notice to be given of my design to meet the classes the week following. I cannot therefore have the pleasure of seeing you now; which, if it could be, I should greatly desire. I love your spirit; I love your conversation; I love your correspondence; I have often received both profit and pleasure thereby. I frequently find a want of more light: But I want heat more than light. And you have frequently been an instrument of conveying this to my soul; of animating me to run the glorious race. I trust you find no decay in your own soul, but a still increasing vigour. Some time since, you enjoyed a measure of that great salvation, deliverance from inbred sin. Do you hold fast whereunto you had attained, and still press forward, to be filled with all the fulness of God? There is the prize before you! Look up, believe, and take all you want!

Wishing you the whole Gospel blessing,

I remain, my dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

I hear sister Gow is gone hence. Did she go in triumph, or only in peace?

CCCXLVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

DUBLIN, *July 4, 1787.*

OUR correspondence, I hope, will never be broken off, till one of us be removed into a better world. It is true, I have often wondered that you were not weary of so useless a correspondent: For I am very sensible the writing of letters is my brother's talent, rather than mine. Yet I really love to write to you, as I love to think of you. And sometimes it may please Him, who sends by whom He will send, to give you some assistance by me. And your letters have frequently been an encouragement and a comfort to me. Let them never, my dear friend, be intermitted, during the few days I have to stay below. After Miss Roe first, and then Miss Ritchie, had given me so particular an account of that branch of their experience, I examined, one by one, the members of the select society in London on that head. But I found very few, not above nine or ten, who had any conception of it. I think there are three or four in Dublin, who likewise speak clearly and scripturally of having had such a manifestation of the several Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity. Formerly I thought this was the experience of all those that were perfected in love; but I am now clearly convinced that it is not. Only a few of these are favored with it. It was indeed a wonderful instance of divine mercy, that, at a time when you were so encumbered with the affairs of this world, you should have so much larger a taste of the powers of the world to come. It reminds me of brother Laurence's words: "When I was charged with the affairs of the convent at Burgundy, I did not understand them; and yet, I know not how, all was well done!" I doubt not you will find the very same experience, in everything which God calls you to: His word will be more and more eminently fulfilled, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths." I rejoice to be,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *August 8, 1788.*

IT is certain, many persons both in Scotland and England would be well pleased to have the same Preachers always. But we cannot forsake the plan of acting which we have followed from the beginning. For fifty years God has been pleased to bless the itinerant plan; the last year most of all: It must not be altered, till I am removed; and I hope will remain till our Lord comes to reign upon earth.

I do not know (unless it unfits us for the duties of life) that we can have too great a sensibility of human pain. Methinks I should be afraid of losing any degree of this sensibility. I had a son-in-law (now in Abraham's bosom) who quitted his profession, that of a Surgeon, for that very reason; because he said it made him less sensible of human pain. And I have known exceeding few persons who have carried this tenderness of spirit to excess. I recollect but one who was constrained to leave off, in a great measure, visiting the sick, because he could not see any one in pain without fainting away. Mr. Charles Perronet was the first person I was acquainted with who was favored with the same experience as the Marquis de Renty, with regard to the ever-blessed Trinity; Miss Ritchie was the second; Miss Roe (now Mrs. Rogers) the third. I have as yet found but a few instances; so that this is not, as I was at first apt to suppose, the common privilege of all that are "perfect in love."

Pardon me, my dear friend, for my heart is tenderly concerned for you, if I mention one fear I have concerning you, lest, on conversing with some, you should be in any degree warped from Christian simplicity. O do not wish to hide that you are a Methodist! Surely it is best to appear just what you are. I believe you will receive this as a proof of the sincerity with which I am,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLVIII. — *To Mrs. Crosby.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

June 14, 1757.

I WAS concerned at not hearing from you for so long a time, whereas I would not willingly pass a fortnight without it. Whenever you have leisure, write; whether any one else does or not. I shall be here near three weeks, and then at York. It comforts me to hear that your love does not decrease: I want it to increase daily. Is there not height and depth in Him with whom you have to do, for your love to rise infinitely higher, and to sink infinitely deeper, into Him than ever it has done yet? Are you fully employed for Him; and yet so as to have some time daily for reading and other private exercises? If you should grow cold, it would afflict me much. Rather let me always rejoice over you. As for me, I seem only to be just beginning to aim feebly at God; though I have found more liberty in the respects you mention lately, than of a long season. Dear Sally, never forget to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXLIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 14, 1761.*

MISS———— gave me yours on Wednesday night. Hitherto, I think you have not gone too far. You could not well do less. I apprehend all you can do more is, when you meet again, to tell them simply, “You lay me under a great difficulty. The Methodists do not allow of women Preachers: Neither do I take upon me any such character. But I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart.” This will, in a great measure, obviate the grand objection, and prepare for J. Hampson’s coming. I do not see that you have broken any law. Go on calmly and steadily. If you have time, you may read to them the Notes on any chapter before you speak a few words; or one of the most awakening sermons, as other women have done long ago.

The work of God goes on mightily here, both in conviction and conversion. This morning I have spoken with four or five who seem to have been set at liberty within this month. I believe, within five weeks, six in one class have received remission of sins, and five in one band received a second blessing. Peace be with you all!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCL. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

KINGSWOOD, *October 5, 1765.*

YOU oblige me much by speaking so freely. What an admirable teacher is experience! You have great reason to praise God for what He has taught you hereby, and to expect; that he will teach you all things. But, whatever you find now, beware you do not deny what you had once received: I do not say, “a divine assurance that you should never sin, or sustain any spiritual loss.” I know not that ever you received this. But you certainly were saved from sin; and that as clearly, and in as high a degree, as ever Sally Ryan was. And if you have sustained any loss in this, believe, and be made whole.

I never doubted but —— would recover her strength, though she has long walked in a thorny way.

A general temptation now is, the denying what God had wrought. Guard all whom you converse with from this; and from fancying great grace can be preserved without great watchfulness and self-denial.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

SLIGO, May 2, 1766.

IT is a long time since I heard either of you, or from you. I hope you think of me oftener than you write to me. Let us but continue in prayer,

And mountains rise, and oceans roll,
To sever us, in vain.

I frequently find profit in thinking of you, and should be glad if we had more opportunities of conversing together. If a contrary thought arises, take knowledge from whom it comes: You may judge by the fruit of it; for it weakens your hands, and slackens you from being instant in prayer. I am inclined to think I found the effect of your prayer at my very entrance into this kingdom. And here, especially, we have need of every help; for snares are on every side. Who would not, if it could be done with a clear conscience, run out of the world; wherein the very gifts of God, the work of God, yea, his grace itself, in some sense, are all the occasion of temptation?

I hope your little family remains in peace and love, and that your own soul prospers. I doubt only whether you are so useful as you might be. But herein look to the anointing which you have of God, being willing to follow wherever he leads, and it shall teach you of all things.

There is an amazing increase of the work of God within these few months in the north of Ireland. And no wonder; for the five Preachers who have labored there, are all men devoted to God; men of a single eye, whose whole heart is in the work, and who

Constantly trample on pleasure and pain;

Do they gain ground in London? I am afraid [Christian] perfection should be forgotten. Encourage Richard Blackwell and Mr. Colley to speak plainly, and to press believers to the constant pursuit, and earnest expectation, of it. A general faintness, in this respect, is fallen upon this

whole kingdom. Sometimes I seem almost weary of striving against the stream both of Preachers and people. See that you all strengthen the hands of,

My dear sisters,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CHESTER, *March* 18, 1769.

THE westerly winds detain me here, I care not how long: Good is the will of the Lord. When I am in Ireland, you have only to direct to Dublin, and the letter will find me.

I advise you, as I did Grace Walton formerly,

1. Pray in private or public, as much as you can.
2. Even in public, you may properly enough intermix short exhortations with prayer; but keep as far from what is called preaching as you can: Therefore never take a text; never speak in a continued discourse, without some break, above four or five minutes. Tell the people, "We shall have another prayer-meeting at such a time and place." If Hannah Harrison had followed these few directions, she might have been as useful now as ever.

As soon as you have time, write more particularly and circumstantially; and let S. Bosanquet do the same. There is now no hindrance in the way; nothing to hinder your speaking as freely as you please to,

Dear Sally,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDONDERRY, *June* 13, 1771.

I THINK the strength of the cause rests there; on your having an extraordinary call. So I am persuaded has every one of our lay Preachers:

Otherwise, I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me, that the whole work of God termed Methodism is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore, I do not wonder if several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was, "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation." Yet, in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions; at Corinth in particular.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NEWCASTLE, *May 11.*

NEITHER must the witness supersede the fruit, nor the fruit the witness, of the Spirit. Let other men talk this way, or that, the word of the Lord shall stand.

I believe your spending a little time at P. may be of use. Probably it will remove their prejudice against [Christian] perfection. But if Mr. T. has a mind to marry our friend, I think neither you nor I shall forward it. She is far happier, since she is free, so to abide.

Do you never find any tendency to pride? Do you find nothing like anger? Is your mind never ruffled; put out of tune? Do you never feel any useless desire? any desire of pleasure, of ease, of approbation, or increase of fortune? Do you find no stubbornness, sloth, or self-will? no unbelief?

Certainly the more freely you speak to me, the better.

I found what you said in your last, helpful. It is of great use to have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance, even of the things which we know already. I speak of myself very little to any one, were it only for fear of hurting them. I have found exceeding few that could bear it. So I am constrained to repress my natural openness. I find scarcely any temptation from anything in the world: My danger is from persons.

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free!

Dear Sally, adieu!

CCCLV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 7, 1784.*

To those who know the world, hardly anything that is wrong or foolish in it appears strange. Otherwise, we should have thought it strange, that so good a woman should take such a step. One would not have expected her to marry at; all; at least none but an eminent Christian. I am more and more inclined to think, that there are none living so established in grace, but that they may possibly fall.

The case of Hetty Rogers was widely different. I know more of it, beginning, middle, and ending, than most people in England. And I am clear, that, first to last, she acted in all good conscience toward God and man. As things stood, it was not a sin for her to marry, but a duty; and to marry when she did. And never was any one woman so owned of God in Dublin as she has been already.

T. Briscoe, I am persuaded, will do some good. But his wife will do much more, if you encourage her, and strengthen her hands. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLVI. — *To Miss A——.*

DEAR MISS A——,

LONDON, *August 21, 1766.*

YOUR letters will always be agreeable to me; and the more largely and freely you write, the better. I am deeply concerned for your happiness;

and a measure of happiness you may enjoy, as long as you feel any love in your heart to God, though it be but in a small degree. Be thankful for what you have; and in peace and love wait for the whole promise. God has not only promised, but confirmed that promise by an oath, that, “being delivered from all your enemies, you shall serve Him in righteousness and holiness all the days of your life.” By what art can this be made to mean the last day, or the last moment, of your life? Look for it now! Today hear His voice. Do not reason against God, against yourself. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.” “The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

I advise you,

1. Get all the opportunities you can of hearing the preaching, and conversing with the children of God.
2. Avoid disputing with your might.
3. Spend some time everyday in private prayer, in meditation, and in reading the Notes on the New Testament, the first volume of Sermons, and the Appeals.
4. When you may be free, use it rather. Peace be with your spirit.

I am, etc.

CCCLVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR MISS A——,

LONDON, *January 15, 1767.*

TIME changes thought, especially in youth, and amidst variety of company. So that it would be nothing strange, if you should forget those for whom you once had a regard; but you need not. Every reasonable affection is intended to last to eternity. And the true affection for our friends is, as Milton says,

A scale

Whereby to heavenly love thou mayest ascend.

For the present, you seem to be in your place, the place which the wisdom of God has assigned you; and the crosses you now meet with, as they are

not of your own choosing, will surely work together for good. Your want of more public opportunities may, in a good measure, be supplied by private exercises. Let no day pass without more or less private prayer, reading, and meditation. And does not God see in secret? Does he not now read your heart, and see if it pants for His pure love? If so, are not all things ready? May you not now find what you never did before? Ask Him that loves you; whose nature and whose name is Love!

I am, etc.

CCCLVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

LONDONDERRY, *April 20, 1767.*

CERTAINLY the point we should always have in view is, What is best for eternity? And I believe it would be best for you to change your condition, if a proper person offers. But I should scruple doing this without a parent's consent. If your mother is willing, I see no objection to your marrying one that fears God, and is seeking salvation through Christ. Such a one is not an unbeliever, in the sense wherein that word is taken in 2 Corinthians 6:14.

I love to think of you and hear from you. I want you to be always holy and happy. And why not? You have a strong Helper; and shall not His strength be made perfect in your weakness? Why then should you stop short of His whole promise? — “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.” Hold Him to his word, and let not your hope be weakened by the subtle reasoning of men. Still let the language of your heart be,

“Big with earnest expectation,
Let me sit — at thy feet,
Longing for salvation!”

As long as you are in this spirit you will not forget

Yours, etc.

CCCLIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

NEWCASTLE, *August 8, 1767.*

WE have many instances of this: Persons cold and dull, and scarce knowing how to believe their own words, have asserted, as they could, the truths of the Gospel, and enforced them upon others, and at that very time God has caused light and love to spring up in their own hearts. Therefore, however you feel it in your own breast, speak as well as you can for God. Many times you will see some fruit upon others: If not, you shall have a recompense in your own bosom. In one sense, you do believe, that God is both able and willing to cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and to do it now; but not in that sense, wherein all things are possible to him that believeth. But what, if He should give you this faith also? yea, while you have this paper in your hand! Today hear His voice! O listen! and heaven springs up in your heart.

Among the hearers of Mr. Madan and Mr. Romaine (much more among those of Mr. Whitefield) there are many gracious souls, and some who have deep experience of the ways of God. Yet, the hearing them would not profit you: It would be apt to lead you into unprofitable reasonings, which would probably end in your giving up all hope of a full salvation from sin in this life. Therefore, I advise you, check all curiosity of this kind, and keep quite out of the way of danger.

Hannah Harrison is a blessed woman. I am glad you had an opportunity of conversing with her. And why should not you enjoy the same blessing? The Lord is at hand.

I am, etc.

CCCLX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

October 14, 1767.

AT length I get a little time (after having been some weeks almost in a perpetual motion) to write a few lines to one I sincerely love. Grow in

grace every hour; the more the better. Use now all the grace you have; this is certainly right; but also now expect all the grace you want! This is the secret of heart religion; at the present moment to work, and to believe. Here is Christ your Lord; the lover of your soul. Give yourself up to Him without delay; and, as you can, without reserve. And simply tell Him all you desire, and all you want. What situation is it that hurries you? Is it not determined whether you shall change your condition or no? Be it either way, God sitteth on the throne, and ruleth all things well.

I am, etc.

CCCLXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,
1767.

NORWICH, *November 2,*

IN the way of life you are entering upon, you will have need of great resolution and steadiness. It will be your wisdom to set out with two rules, and invariably adhere to them.

1. "I will do everything I can to oblige you, except what I cannot do with a clear conscience."
2. "I will refrain from everything I can, that would displease you, except what I cannot refrain from with a clear conscience." Keep to this, on both sides, from the hour you meet, and your meeting will be a blessing. You will do well likewise, constantly to pray with, as well as for, one another.

Now, Nancy, put on, by the grace of God, the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left! Beware of foolish desires! Beware of inordinate affections! Beware of worldly cares! But, above all, I think, you should beware of wasting time in what is called innocent trifling. And watch against unprofitable conversation, particularly between yourselves. Then your union may be (as it ought) a type of the union between Christ and his church; and you may, in the end, present each other before Him, holy and unblamable at His coming.

I am, etc.

CCCLXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,
1767.

LONDON, *November 20,*

YOUR letter was exceeding acceptable to me; and the more so, because I was almost afraid you had forgotten me. I am glad to find you have not forgotten the blessing which God gave you when at Newcastle, and the resolutions which you formed there; and I trust you never will, till God gives you the full enjoyment of the glorious liberty which you then tasted. Do not imagine that this is afar off; or, that you must do and suffer a great deal before you attain it; — I dare not affirm that. Has not Christ done and suffered enough for you? The purchase is made; the price is paid already; you have only to believe, and enter into rest; to take the purchased possession; all is ready; and today is the day of salvation! Why should you not now be all love? all devoted to Him that loves you? Is it not the language of your heart? —

“Henceforth may no profane delight
Divide this consecrated soul;
Possess it Thou, who hast the right,
As Lord and Master of the whole.”

You are to obey your parent in the Lord only, not in opposition to Him. If, therefore, any means should offer whereby you might enjoy that full liberty of conscience which every creature has a right to, I judge it would be not only lawful, but your bounden duty, to accept of such an offer. Mrs. Wilberforce’s charity is a good omen: What is it God will not do if we can trust Him? Only cast your whole care upon Him, and He will do all things well: He will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good. O let Him have all your heart!

I am, dear sister, etc.

CCCLXIII. — *To Lady M*—.

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *August 17, 1764.*

SINCE I had the pleasure of yours, I have hardly had an hour that I could call my own; otherwise I should not have delayed writing so long, as I have a very tender regard for you, and an earnest desire that you should be altogether a Christian. I cannot be content with your being ever so harmless or regular in your behavior, or even exemplary in all externals: Nay, more than all this you have received already; for you have the fear of God. But shall you stop here? God forbid. This is only the beginning of wisdom. You are not to end here: Fear shall ripen into love. You shall know (perhaps very soon) that love of God which passeth knowledge. You shall witness the kingdom of God within you; even righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

It is no small instance of the goodness of God towards you, that you are conscious of your want; your want of living faith. And His goodness herein is more remarkable, because almost all your neighbors would set you down for a right good believer. O beware of those flatterers! Hold fast the conviction which God hath given you! Faith, living, conquering, loving faith, is undoubtedly the thing you want. And of this you have frequently a taste to encourage you in pressing forward: Such is the tender mercy of Him that loves you; such His desire that you should receive all His precious promises! Do not think they are afar off. Do not imagine you must stay long (years or months) before you receive them. Do not put them off a day, an hour! Why not now? Why should you not look up this instant, and see, as it were, Jesus Christ set forth, evidently set forth, crucified before your eyes? O hear his voice! “Daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee!” “Say not in thy heart, Who shall go up into heaven, or who shall go down into the deep?” No; “the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart.” “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief.”

Joy in the Holy Ghost is a precious gift of God, but yet tenderness of conscience is still greater; and all this is for you. Just ready, —

The speechless awe which dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.

I am no great friend to solitary Christianity; nevertheless, in so peculiar a case as yours, I think an exception may be admitted. It does seem most expedient for you to retire out of the city, at least for a season, till God has increased your strength. For the company of those who know not God, who are strangers to the religion of the heart, especially if they are sensible, agreeable people, might quite damp the grace of God in your soul.

You cannot oblige me more than by fully opening your mind to me: There is no danger of your tiring me. I do not often write such long letters; but when I write to you, I am full of matter. I seem to see you just before me, a poor, feeble, helpless creature, but just upon the point of salvation; upright of heart, (in a measure,) full of real desires for God, and emerging into light. The Lord take you wholly! So prays

My dear Lady,
Your affectionate servant.

CCCLXIV. — *To Miss Pywell.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

KILKENNY, *April 23, 1771.*

I HARDLY knew whether you were dead or alive, having not heard from you for so long a season. Yesterday I received yours of March 28th, and am glad to hear you are not moved from your steadfastness. Certainly it is not the will of our Lord that you should: His gifts are without repentance. Do you find no decay in faith? Do you as clearly as ever see Him who is invisible? Is your hope as lively as at first? Do you still taste of the powers of the world to come? And can you say, in as strong a sense as ever,

“I nothing want beneath, above,
Happy in a Savior’s love?”

Do you feel no anger at any time? no pride? no will but what is subordinate to the will of God? And have you the witness in yourself that all your ways please Him? Then expect to see greater things than these, for there is no end of His goodness; and do not forget,

My dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 22, 1772.*

YOU have given me clear and satisfactory answers to the questions which I proposed, and I rejoice over you for the grace of God which is in you. May He increase it more and more! How should I rejoice to see you, and to talk with you more particularly on these subjects! I hope that may be in the spring; but before then you can tell me whether you are always sensible of the presence of God. Is that sense never interrupted by company, or by hurry of business? Is your heart lifted up to God, whatever your hands are employed in? Do you rejoice evermore? Are you always happy? always more or less enjoying God? Do you never fret; never so grieve at anything as to interrupt your happiness? Do you never find lowness of spirits? Are you enabled in everything to give thanks?

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 19, 1773.*

It is plain the wisdom and power of God order all things well: He has brought you to the right place, and you have no need to be careful for anything, but only in everything to make your requests known unto Him

with thanksgiving. I am glad to hear that Mrs. K——y's love does not grow cold. One part of your work is to stir up all who have believed, to go on to perfection, and every moment to expect the full salvation which is received by simple faith. I am persuaded your being where you are will be for good. Speak to all about you, and spare not. God will bear witness to his own truth.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 29, 1774.*

I AM glad you parted from our honest friend C——ne upon so good terms. All the trials you suffered while you were there, are now passed away like a dream. So are all the afflictions we endured yesterday; but they are noted in God's book, and the happy fruit of them may remain when heaven and earth are passed away. Trials you are likewise to expect where you are now; for you are still in the body, and wrestle, if not with flesh and blood, yet with "principalities, and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with wicked spirits in high places;" and it is good for you that every grain of your faith should be tried; afterwards you shall come forth as gold. See that you never be weary or faint in your mind; account all these things for your profit, that you may be a full partaker of His holiness, and

Brighter in all His image shine.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXVIII. — *To the Rev. Mr. F——.*

DEAR SIR,

ST. IVES, September 15, 1762.

*Spectatum satis, ac donatum jam rude quaeris,
Maecenas, iterum antiquo me includere ludo?
Non eadem est aetas, non mens.*⁹²

I HAVE entirely lost my taste for controversy. I have lost my readiness in disputing; and I take this to be a providential discharge from it. All I can now do with a clear conscience is, not to enter into a formal controversy about the new birth, or justification by faith, any more than Christian perfection, but simply to declare my judgment; and to explain myself as clearly as I can upon any difficulty that may arise concerning it.

So far I can go with you, but no farther. I still say, and without any self-contradiction, I know no persons living who are so deeply conscious of their needing Christ both as Prophet, Priest, and King, as those who believe themselves, and whom I believe, to be cleansed from all sin; I mean, from all pride, anger, evil desire, idolatry, and unbelief. These very persons feel more than ever their own ignorance, littleness of grace, coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their Divine Pattern; are more convinced of the insufficiency of all they are, have, or do, to bear the eye of God without a Mediator; are more penetrated with the sense of the want of Him than ever they were before.

If Mr. M—— or you say, “that coming short; is sin,” be it so; I contend not. But still I say, “These are they whom I believe to be scripturally perfect. And yet these never felt their want of Christ so deeply and strongly as they do now.” If in saying this I have “fully given up the point,” what would you have more? Is it not enough that I leave you to “boast your superior power against the little, weak shifts of baffled error?” “Canst thou not be content,” as the Quaker said, “to lay J. W. on his back, but thou must tread his guts out?”

Here are persons exceeding holy and happy; rejoicing evermore, praying always, and in everything giving thanks; feeling the love of God and man every moment; feeling no pride, or other evil temper. If these are not; perfect, that scriptural word has no meaning. Stop! you must not cavil at that word: You are not wiser than the Holy Ghost. But if you are not, see that you teach perfection too. “But are they not sinners?” Explain the term one way, and say, Yes; another, and I say, No. “Are they cleansed from all sin?” I believe they are; meaning from all sinful tempers. “But have they then need of Christ?” I believe they have, in the sense, and for the reasons above mentioned. Now, be this true or false, it is no contradiction; it is consistent with itself; and, I think, consistent with right reason, and the whole oracles of God.

O let you and I go on to perfection! God grant we may so run as to attain!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCLXIX. — *To the Rev. Mr—.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

1775.

I HAVE obligations to you on many accounts, from the time I first saw you; particularly for the kind concern you showed when I was ill at Tanderagee. These have increased upon me every time that I have since had the pleasure of waiting upon you. Permit me, Sir, to speak without reserve. Esteem was added to my affectionate regard when I saw the uncommon pains you took with the flock committed to your care; as also, when I observed the remarkably serious manner wherein you read prayers in your family. Many years have passed since that time; many more than I am likely to see under the sun. But before I go hence, I would fain give you one instance of my sincere regard; the rather, because I can scarce expect to see you again till we meet in a better world. But it is difficult for me to do it, as I feel myself inferior to you in so many respects. Yet permit me to

ask a strange question: Is your soul as much alive to God as it was once? Have you not suffered loss from your relations or acquaintance, that are sensible and agreeable men, but not encumbered with religion? Some of them, perhaps, as free from the very form, as from the power, of it. O Sir, if you lose any of the things which you have wrought, who can make you amends for that loss? If you do not receive a full reward, what equivalent can you gain? I was pained, even at your hospitable table, in the midst of those I loved so well. We did not begin and close the meal in the same manner you did ten years ago! You was then, contrary to almost universal custom, unfashionably serious in asking a blessing and returning thanks. I know many would blame you for it: But surely the Lord said, "Servant of God, well done!" Wishing you and your lovely family every blessing,

I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate brother and servant.

CCCLXX. — *To Lady* —.

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *June* 19, 1771.

MANY years since I saw that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way how to attain this; namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, "We are saved from sin, we are made holy, by faith." This I testified in private, in public, in print; and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. I have continued to declare this for above thirty years; and God hath continued to confirm the word of his grace. But during this time well-nigh all the religious world hath set themselves in array against me, and, among the rest, many of my own children, following the example of one of my eldest sons, Mr. W. Their general cry has been, "He is unsound in the faith; he preaches another Gospel!" I answer, Whether it be the same which they preach or not, it is the same which I have preached for above thirty years. This may easily appear from what I have published during that whole term. I instance only

in three sermons: That on Salvation by Faith, printed in the year 1738; that on the Lord our Righteousness, printed a few years since; and that on Mr. Whitefield's funeral, printed only some months ago. But it is said, "O but you printed ten lines in August last, which contradict all your other writings!" Be not so sure of this. It is probable, at least, that I understand my own meaning as well as you do; and that meaning I have yet again declared in the sermon last referred to. By that interpret those ten lines, and you will understand them better: Although I should think that any one might see, even without this help, that the lines in question do not refer to the condition of obtaining, but of continuing in, the favor of God. But whether the sentiment contained in those lines be right or wrong, and whether it be well or ill expressed, the Gospel which I now preach, God does still confirm by new witnesses in every place; perhaps never so much in this kingdom as within these last three months. Now, I argue from glaring, undeniable fact; God cannot bear witness to a lie. The Gospel therefore which he confirms, must be true in substance. There may be opinions maintained at the same time which are not exactly true; and who can be secure from these? Perhaps I thought myself so once: When I was much younger than I am now, I thought myself almost infallible; but, I bless God, I know myself better now.

To be short: Such as I am, I love you well. You have one of the first places in my esteem and affection. And you once had some regard for me. But it cannot continue, if it depends upon my seeing with your eyes, or on my being in no mistake. What, if I was in as many as Mr. Law himself? If you were, I should love you still, provided your heart was still right with God. My dear friend, you seem not to have well learned yet the meaning of those words, which I desire to have continually written on my heart, "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

I am, my dear Lady,
Your affectionate.

CCCLXXI. — *To Miss Jane Hilton, afterwards Mrs. Barton, of Beverley.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YORK, *July 22, 1766.*

SEE that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free. You need never more be entangled either with pride, or anger, or desire of any creature. Christ is yours; all is yours. O be all His, and admit no rival into your heart! But above all, beware of unbelief. Beware of the reasoning devil. In every cloud, or shadow of doubt, look up; and help, while yet you ask, is given. All you want is ready! Only believe!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

I hope your health is better.

CCCLXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YORK, *June 25, 1768.*

YOUR conversation gave me much satisfaction. I rejoiced to find that you were sensible of your loss, and determined, by the grace of God, never to rest till you had recovered all which you once enjoyed. Nay, and you will recover it with increase; you will find a deeper communion with God, and a more full self-devotion than ever. An earnest of this was given you the other day. Hold that fast, and continually expect the rest. How did you find yourself on Thursday morning? Had you not again a taste of the great salvation? And how have you been since? Are you still happy in God; and resolved not to rest, till you are all devoted to Him? See that you do not fall again into evil reasonings! Be simple before God. Continue instant in prayer; and watch against whatever you know, by experience, to be a weight upon your mind. How soon may you then have your whole desire! How soon may your heart be all love! Why not now? All things are ready: Only believe! And speak freely to

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

GUISELEY, *July 1, 1768.*

YOU must now expect temptations. Perhaps they will assault you on every side; for all the powers of hell are enraged at you, and will use every art to move you from your steadfastness. But He that is for you is greater than all that are against you: Only beware of evil reasoning! Hang simply on Him that loves you, and whom you love; just as a little helpless child. Christ is yours, all yours: That is enough. Lean your whole soul upon Him! Do you find a witness in yourself, that He has cleansed your heart? Do you feel this always? And have you a constant sense of the loving presence of God? You never need lose anything that God has given, so you keep close to Him. Be little and mean in your own eyes, glorying only in the Lord. And do not cease to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

You may direct to me at Epworth, near Thorne, Yorkshire.

It is a pity but you should now read the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," (I suppose you may get it at Hull,) and the First Epistle of St. John.

CCCLXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

EPWORTH, *July 13, 1768.*

COMING here this afternoon, I found your welcome letter. I would have you write as often as you can. For you have need of every possible help; inasmuch as your grace is as yet young and tender, and all the powers of darkness are at work to move you from your steadfastness. But it is enough that Christ is yours: And He is wiser and stronger than all the powers of hell. Hang upon Him, and you are safe: Lean on Him with the whole weight of your soul. Do you find now as clear an evidence of the

invisible as of the visible world? And are your thoughts continually fixed on the God of your salvation? Do you pray without ceasing? Does He preserve you even in your dreams? Hold fast what you have, and look for more: For there is no end of his goodness.

Mr. Robertshaw is to stay with you another year; and doubt not, the Lord will stay with you for ever. Think always of Him; and think sometimes of

Your affectionate brother.

Tomorrow I go hence: But I expect to be here again next week, and to stay here till Monday se'nnight.

CCCLXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 20, 1768.*

I WRITE often, because I know you are yet weak and tender, and in need of every help. I am not sorry that you have trials: They are intended to show you your own helplessness; and to give you a fuller confidence in Him who has all power in heaven and earth. You have reason to cast all your care upon Him; for He has dealt bountifully with you. When any trial comes, see that you do not look to the thing itself; but immediately look unto Jesus. Reason not upon it, but believe. See the hand of God in Shimei's tongue. If you want advice in any point, write to me without delay. And, mean time, stay your whole soul upon Him who will never leave you nor forsake you. Tell Him simply all you fear, all you feel, all you want.

Pour out your soul into His bosom. Do you feel no pride, no anger, no desire? You will feel temptations to all: And the old deceiver will tell you again and again, "That is pride, that is anger!" But regard him not. And cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Your affectionate brother.

I am to spend a month or two in and near Bristol.

CCCLXXVI. — *To the Same.*BRISTOL, *September 30, 1768.*

YOU, as it were, ask my advice. But I know nothing of the matter: You should have spoken to me when I saw you. Is the person a believer? Is he a Methodist? Is he a member of our society? Is he clear with regard to the doctrine of perfection? Is he athirst for it? If he fails in any of these particulars, I fear he would be a hindrance to you, rather than a help. Was not inordinate affection for him one cause of your losing the pure love of God before? If it was, you have a great reason to be afraid lest it should again rob you of that pearl. Has it not already? Have you all the life you had two months ago? Is your soul still all love? Speak freely to

Your affectionate brother

CCCLXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *October 8, 1768.*

YOU need never be afraid “of wearying my patience,” unless it be by your silence. There is no danger of your writing too often. I can easily believe, the description you give is just: Therefore, there are only two particulars remaining: First, Have you both the consent of your parents? Without this, there is seldom a blessing. Secondly, Is he able to keep you? I mean, in such a manner as you have lived hitherto. Otherwise, remember! “When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.”

Do you find as much as ever of the spirit of prayer, and of continual watchfulness? Are you always sensible of the presence of God? in the greatest hurry of business? Have you power over wandering thoughts?

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 26, 1768.*

THERE seems to have been a particular providence in Hannah Harrison's coming to Beverley, especially at that very time when a peace-maker was so much wanting: And it was a pledge that God will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.

The words of our Lord himself show us, what we are to expect from "those of our own household." But all this, likewise, shall be for good. "It is given to you to suffer" for Him: And all will turn to your profit, that you may be more largely a partaker of his holiness.

Do you feel, when you are tried in a tender point, no temper contrary to love? Grief there may be: But is there no resentment or anger? Do you feel invariable calmness of spirit? Do you perceive nothing but pity and tender goodwill, both at the time and afterwards?

Write to me of the trials you meet with. You may always direct to London, and the letter will come safe. Expect more faith and love daily.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *March 1, 1769.*

I REJOICE that I have confidence in you in all things. I believe you do not willingly lose any opportunity of speaking for a good Master. I apprehend you should particularly encourage the believers to give up all to God; and to expect the power whereby they will be enabled so to do, everyday, and every moment. I hope none of your Preachers speak against this; but rather press all the people forward.

Do you now feel anything like anger, or pride, or self-will, or any remains of the carnal mind? Was your second deliverance wrought while I was at

Beverley? at the time of the Sermon, or after it? You did not tell me, in what manner you found the change; and whether it has continued without; any intermission from that moment. Certainly there never need be any decay: There never will, if you continue watching unto prayer. Continue to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LISBURN, *April 9, 1769.*

I THANK brother Barton for his letter. Both of you have now more need than ever continually to watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. There will be a great danger of so cleaving to each other, as to forget God; or of being so taken up with a creature, as to abate your hunger and thirst after righteousness. There will be a danger likewise of whiling away time; of not improving it to the uttermost; of spending more of it than needs, in good sort of *talk* with each other, which yet does not quicken your souls. If you should once get into a habit of this, it will be exceeding hard to break it off. Therefore you should now attend to every step you take, that you may begin as you hope to hold on to the end. And beware you are not entangled with worldly care, any more than worldly desire. Be careful for nothing; but in everything make your request known to God, with thanksgiving

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 9, 1769.*

NOW I understand you well; but I did not understand you before: I thought you meant, that you had not now the love that you had once. I am glad to find that I was mistaken; and that you still retain that precious gift of God. Undoubtedly, you may retain it always; yea, and with a continual increase. You may have a deeper and deeper fellowship with the Father, and with

his Son Jesus Christ. You may have more and more of the mind which was in him, and be more fully renewed in His likeness. You should send me word, from time to time, what your present experience and your present trials are. Peace be with your spirits!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *November 1, 1769.*

HAVE you been tried with bodily weakness, or with outward afflictions? If with the latter, have you found a deliverance from them? It is certain, in every temptation He will make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. When you are tempted, it is an unspeakable blessing that there is nothing in your heart which joins with the temptation. And there never need be more: The enemy is thrust out, and cannot re-enter, if you continue to watch and pray. Continue likewise to be useful in your generation: As you have time, do good to all men. Snatch all the opportunities you can of speaking a word to any of your neighbors. Comfort the afflicted; support the weak; exhort the believers to go on unto perfection. Never be weary in well-doing: In due time you shall reap, if you faint not.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 24, 1769.*

SOME of the trials which you must frequently have are of a delicate nature. You will need much of the wisdom from above, or you would suffer loss under them. Those who are very near to you, were (and probably are still) prejudiced against William Fallowfield beyond all sense and reason. And how extremely difficult it is for you, not to drink in a *little* of their spirit!

Only, what is ill-will in them, may in you be a simple error of judgment. Yet there is danger lest it should weaken your soul, and insensibly lead you to some wrong temper.

I believe you may speak without reserve to brother Howard. He is a cool, thinking man. But does he preach Christian perfection clearly and explicitly? Which of your other Preachers does?

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

TEWKESBURY, *March* 15, 1770.

I REJOICE to hear that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and the more, because, although many taste of that heavenly gift, deliverance from inbred sin, yet so few, so exceeding few, retain it one year; hardly one in ten; nay, one in thirty. Many hundreds in London were made partakers of it, within sixteen or eighteen months: But I doubt whether twenty of them are now as holy and as happy as they were. And hence, others had doubted whether God *intended that salvation* to be enjoyed long. That many *have* it for a season, that they allow; but are not satisfied that any *retain* it always. Shall not you, for one? You will, if you watch and pray, and continue hanging upon Him. Then you will always give matter of rejoicing to

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

May 8, 1770.

TWO things are certain: The one, that it is possible to lose even the pure love of God; the other, that it is not necessary, it is not unavoidable; it may be lost, but it may be kept. Accordingly, we have some, in every part of the kingdom, who have never been moved from their steadfastness. And

from this moment you need never be moved: His grace is sufficient for you. But you must continue to grow, if you continue to stand; for no one can stand still. And is it not your Lord's will concerning you, that you should daily receive a fresh increase of love? And see that you labor so much the more, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to confirm the wavering, and recover them that are out of the way. In June I hope to see you. Peace be with your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCLXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *November 5, 1770.*

FOR many years I had a kind of scruple with regard to praying for temporal things. But three or four years ago I was thoroughly persuaded that scruple was unnecessary. Being then straitened much, I made it matter of prayer; and I had an immediate answer. It is true, we can only ask onward blessings with reserve: "If this is best; if it be thy will:" And in this manner we may certainly plead the promise, — "All these things shall be added unto you."

I hope the little debates which were some time since in the society at Beverley are at an end; and that you all now continue in love, and bear one another's burdens. You had, for a long time, a hard part to act between the contending parties: But as God preserved you from anger and from a party-spirit, you suffered no loss thereby. Beware of suffering loss from another quarter, from worldly care. This is a dangerous enemy. You had need steadily to cast your care on Him that careth for you. To Him I commit you and yours; and am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1772.*

I BELIEVE you will never willingly give me pain. You will give me pleasure as long as you are pressing on to the mark; ready to do, and patient to suffer, the whole will of God. You cannot be separated from the people till you are removed into Abraham's bosom. In order to make your continuance with them the easier, I hope Mr. Thompson has now fixed the class as I directed. He is a good Preacher, and a good man; though liable to mistake, or he would be more than man.

Can you still give God your whole heart? Is He always present with you? Have these trials weakened or strengthened your faith? Have you a clear evidence that you are saved from sin? See that you strengthen each other's hands, and press on to the mark together!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

December 18, 1772.

IT is a little thing to trust God as far as we can see Him; so far as the way lies open before us. But to trust in Him when we are hedged in on every side, and can see no way to escape, this is good and acceptable with God. This is the faith of Abraham our father; and, by the grace of God, this is your faith!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

January 21, 1773.

CONSULT with some experienced and sensible person upon every step you take. Concerning removing to Hull, you would do well to consult Thomas Snowdon, or some one that lives there. It would be expedient, too, to take good advice before you enter upon any new business. Everything now is full of uncertainty and danger, during the amazing dearness of provisions. Hence, most people have just money to buy food, and have nothing more to lay out. Yet the promise stands sure, "Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you." Yea, surely the Lord will sooner make windows in heaven, than suffer his truth to fail. Peace be with your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *October 8, 1774.*

IT is exceeding certain that God did give you the second blessing, properly so called. He delivered you from the root of bitterness, from inbred, as well as actual, sin. And at that time you were enabled to give Him all your heart; to rejoice evermore, and to pray without ceasing. Afterwards, He permitted his work to be tried; and sometimes as by fire. For a while you were not moved; but could say in all things, "Good is the will of the Lord." But it seems you gave way, by little and little, till you were in some measure shorn of your strength. What have brother Barton and you to do, but to arise at once, and shake yourselves from the dust? Stir up the gift of God that is in you! Look unto Him that is mighty to save! Is He not able, in every sense, to turn your captivity? He has not forgotten to be gracious; neither will He shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure. He is a God nigh at hand. Only believe; and help, while yet you ask, is given! Trust in Him, and conquer all.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December* 30, 1774.

ONE observes well, that, in order to judge of the grace which God has given us, we must likewise consider what our temptations are; because a little grace will balance little temptations; but to conquer great temptations, much grace is requisite. Formerly, you had comparatively little temptation: And through His grace, you could rejoice with joy unspeakable. At present, you do not find that joy. No; for you have the temptations which you had not then. You have little children; you have worldly care; and, frequently, a weak body. Therefore, you may have far more grace than you had before, though you have not so much joy; nay, though you should for a time have no joy at all, but sorrow and heaviness; yea, though you should say, with your Master, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” O what a gainer are you by this! when you are enabled to say in the midst of all, “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” See how He loveth whom he chasteneth! And what is at the end? An eternal weight of glory! It is laid up for you both. Taste of it now.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February* 19, 1777.

I AM glad to hear that your little society prospers. If they increase in grace, they will increase in number; of which I can have no doubt, if you watch against all jealousies, and continue open and loving to each other. There will be nothing wanting, I am persuaded, on the part of the Preachers. Whenever they speak, they will speak as the oracles of God; with sound speech, which cannot be reproved. And, what is more, the whole tenor of their life is agreeable to their doctrine. Whatever they preach, you will

experience. What you have received is a pledge of what you will receive. For He that loves you will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *July 29, 1777.*

It is well that you have learned to say, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.” Your child is gone but a little before you. How soon shall we overtake her! It is noway inconsistent with Christian resignation, to ask conditionally, “Let this cup pass from me;” only with the addition, “Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

Rapturous joy, such as is frequently given in the beginning of justification, or of entire sanctification, is a great blessing; but it seldom continues long before it subsides into calm, peaceful love. I believe if Miss H—— were to spend a little time with you, it might be of great use to many.

I am, with love to brother Barton,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 13, 1778.*

I AM glad sister Crosby has been at Beverley, and that you had an opportunity of hearing her. She is useful wheresoever she goes; particularly in exciting believers to go on to perfection.

There is frequently something very mysterious in the ways of divine Providence. A little of them we may understand; but much more is beyond our comprehension; and we must be content to say, “What thou doest I

know not now; but I shall know hereafter.” At present it is sufficient for me to know, that all His ways are mercy and truth to them that love Him.

Even in these troublous times, there is a very considerable increase of the work of God. Cleave to Him with your whole heart, and you will have more and more reason to praise Him.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February* 11, 1779.

THIS is our comfort, that we know our Lord has all power in heaven and in earth; and that whensoever He willeth to deliver, to do is present with Him. He did indeed very remarkably interpose in your behalf, by raising up those friends in time of need. You have reason to praise Him; and you have reason to trust Him. He will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.

I am glad to hear that at length there is likely to be a day of visitation even for poor Beverley. If you have two or three that are strong in faith, they will wrestle with God in mighty prayer, and bring down a blessing on all that are round about them.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November* 9, 1779.

IF you continue earnest to save your souls, both of you must expect temptations; and those of various sorts. Sometimes you will be tried by friends, or enemies: Sometimes by one another; at some times perhaps you will be quite out of conceit with each other, and all things will appear

wrong. Then beware of anger; of fretfulness, or peevishness, which maketh the grasshopper a burden. But from all this, the God whom you serve is able to deliver you; yea, and He will deliver you. Trust Him, and praise Him.

I am

Yours affectionately.

CCCXCVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

EDINBURGH, *May* 19, 1780.

IT is no burden to me to hear from you. Indeed, I had rather, when Providence permits, see you; but that cannot be very often. This summer, after visiting a few places which I have not seen for many years, I must contrive, if it be possible, to spend a little time in London, Bath, and Bristol, before the Conference; so that I do not attempt, in this broken, irregular year, to visit many of the societies. I believe I shall not come any nearer Beverley than York. I am glad to hear so good an account of your Preachers. John Furz is fairly worn-out; he is hardly able to preach at all. If he lives till next year, I expect he will be a Supernumerary. As God begins to visit poor Beverley, you have reason to hope you shall see better days than ever. But you have had as yet little more than the earnest of a shower. But who knows how soon you will see the general blessing?

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December* 9, 1780.

GOD knoweth the way wherein you go; and when you have been tried, you shall come forth as gold. I believe, if you drank nettle-tea, (five or six leaves,) instead of common tea, it would swiftly restore your strength. If a proper application be made to the Magistrates, undoubtedly they will secure the peace. Persecution is more and more out of fashion since King

George came to the throne. But, in the mean time, let prayer be made continually.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 6, 1781.*

I AM always well pleased to hear from you, especially when you tell me that God has dealt well with you. I trust He has yet greater blessings in store for you, and for the little flock at Beverley. I was glad of the little time we had together, and hoped it would not be in vain. I found love to your two little maidens. There is good seed sown in their hearts, which, if it be carefully watered, will probably bring forth fruit to your comfort, and the glory of God. Let your husband and you go on hand in hand, stirring up the gift of God that is in you, and running with resignation and patience the race that is set before you. You have met, and undoubtedly will meet, with manifold temptations: But you have had full proof that God is faithful, who will never suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. O tarry, then, the Lord's leisure! Be strong, and He shall comfort thy heart. And put thou thy trust in the Lord.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *April 23, 1783.*

IT has pleased God, for many years, to lead you in a rough and thorny way. But He knoweth the way wherein you go; and when you have been tried, you shall come forth as gold. Every proof you have had of God's care over you is a reason for trusting him with your children. He will take care of them, whether you are alive or dead; so that; you have no need to

be careful in this matter. You have only, by prayer and supplication, to make your requests known to God; and whenever He sees it will be best for you, He will deliver you out of your captivity. In two or three weeks I hope to be in England again: But it is all one where we are, so we are doing the will of our Lord.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *July 5, 1783.*

LAST month I made a little journey to Holland; from whence I returned yesterday. There is a blessed work at the Hague, Amsterdam, Utrecht, and many other of the principal cities; and in their simplicity of spirit, and plainness of dress, the believers vie with the old English Methodists. In affection they are not inferior to any. It was with the utmost difficulty we could break from them.

I am glad to hear so good an account of my two little maids. I found much love to them when I was at Beverley. Now is the time for them to choose that better part which shall never be taken from them. Now is the time for them to choose whether they will seek happiness in God or in the world. The world never made any one happy; and it is certain it never will. But God will. He says, —

“Love shall from me returns of love obtain;
And none that seek me early seek in vain.”

I am, with love to brother Barton,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *June 11, 1788.*

YOU have indeed had a series of trials, one upon the back of another. It is well you know in whom you have believed; otherwise you would have been weary and faint in your mind. For it is not an easy thing always to remember, (then especially when we have most need of it,) that “the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Who could believe it, if He had not told us so himself? It is well that He never fails to give us strength according to our day; and that we know these “light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

I am

Your affectionate brother

CCCCIII. — *To the Stewards of the Foundry.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

PEMBROKE, *August 6, 1768.*

THE thing you mention is of no small concern, and ought not to be determined hastily. Indeed, it would be easy to answer, if we considered only how to save money: But we are to consider also how to save souls. Now, I doubt whether we should act wisely in this respect were we to give up the chapel in Spitalfields. We have no other preaching-place in or near that populous quarter of the town; and a quarter which, upon one account, I prefer before almost any other; namely, that the people in general are more simple, and less confused by any other Preachers. I think, therefore, it would not be well to give up this, if we could gain a thousand pounds thereby. I should look upon it as selling the souls of men for money; which God will give us in due time without this. That many who live near the Foundry would be glad of it, I allow, because it would save them trouble.

But neither can I put the saving of trouble in competition with the saving of souls.

I am, my dear brethren,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCIV. — *To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, of Limerick.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

PEMBROKE, *August 23, 1763.*

YOU did well to write; this is one of the means which God generally uses to convey either light or comfort: Even while you are writing you will often find relief; frequently, while we propose a doubt, it is removed.

There is no doubt but what you at first experienced was a real foretaste of the blessing, although you were not properly possessed of it till the *Whit-Sunday* following. But it is very possible to cast away the gift of God, or to lose it by little and little; though I trust this is not the case with you: And yet you may frequently be in heaviness, and may find your love to God not near so warm at some times as it is at others. Many wanderings, likewise, and many deficiencies, are consistent with pure love; but the thing you mean is, the abiding witness of the Spirit touching this very thing. And this you may boldly claim, on the warrant of that word, “We have received the Spirit that is of God; that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God.”

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

MANCHESTER, *March 29, 1766.*

ONE of our Preachers has lately advanced a new position among us, — that there is no direct or immediate witness of sanctification, but only a perception or consciousness that we are changed, filled with love, and cleansed from sin. But, if I understand you right, you find a direct testimony that you are a child of God.

Now, certainly, if God has given you this light, he did not intend that you should hide it under a bushel. “It is good to conceal the secrets of a King; but it is good to tell the loving-kindness of the Lord.” Every one ought to declare what God has done for his soul, and that with all simplicity: Only care is to be taken to declare to several persons that part of our experience which they are severally able to bear; and some parts of it, to such alone as are upright and simple of heart.

One reason why those who are saved from sin should freely declare it to believers is, because nothing is a stronger incitement to them to seek after the same blessing. And we ought, by every possible means, to press every serious believer to forget the things which are behind, and with all earnestness go on to perfection. Indeed, if they are not thirsting after this, it is scarce possible to keep what they have: They can hardly retain any power of faith, if they are not panting after holiness.

A thousand infirmities are consistent, even with the highest degree of holiness; which is in other than pure love, an heart devoted to God; one design and one desire. Then, whatever is done, either in word or deed, may be done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Press after all the residue of the promises.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEEDS, *August 14, 1766.*

ALTHOUGH I am at present exceedingly hurried with various business, yet love constrains me to write a few lines. Your letters are always welcome to me, as the picture of an honest and affectionate heart.

What you say concerning the witness of the Spirit is agreeable to all sound experience. We may, in some measure, be satisfied without it, in the time of broad sunshine; but it is absolutely necessary in the time of clouds, and heaviness, and temptation; otherwise it would be hardly possible to hold fast your confidence.

Beware of voluntary humility: Even this may create a snare. In the “Thoughts on Christian Perfection,” and in the “Farther Thoughts,” you have the genuine experience of the adult children of God. Oppose that authority to the authority of any that contradict, (if reason and Scripture are disregarded,) and look daily for a deeper and fuller communion with God. O what is it to walk in the light, as He is in the light!

Do not cease to pray for

Your truly affectionate brother.

CCCCVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER BENNIS,

DUBLIN, *July 25, 1767.*

WHEN you write to me, you have only to “think aloud,” just to open the window in your breast. When we love one another, there is no need of either disguise or reserve. I love you, and I verily believe you love me: So you have only to write just what you feel.

The essential part of Christian holiness is giving the heart wholly to God; and certainly we need not lose any degree of that light and love which at first attend this: It is our own infirmity, if we do; it is not the will of the Lord concerning us. Your present business is, not to reason whether you

should call your experience thus or thus; but to go straight to Him that loves you, with all your wants, how great or how many soever they are. Then all things are ready; help, while you ask, is given. You have only to receive it by simple faith. Nevertheless, you will still be encompassed with numberless infirmities; for you live in a house of clay, and therefore this corruptible body will, more or less, press down the soul, yet not so as to prevent your rejoicing evermore, and having a witness that your heart is all His. You may claim this: It is yours; for Christ is yours. Believe, and feel him near.

My dear sister, adieu.
Yours affectionately.

CCCCVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

CORK, *May 30, 1769.*

SOME years since, I was inclined to think that none who had once enjoyed and then lost the pure love of God must ever look to enjoy it again till they were just stepping into eternity. But experience has taught us better things: We have at present numerous instances of those who had cast away that unspeakable blessing, and now enjoy it in a larger measure than ever. And why should not this be your case? Because you are unworthy? So were they. Because you have been an unfaithful steward? So had they been also; yet God healed them freely: And so he will you, only do not reason against him. Look for nothing in yourself but sin and unworthiness. Forget yourself.

Worthy is the Lamb, and he has prevailed for you. You shall not die, but live; live all the life of heaven on earth. You need nothing in order to this but faith; and who gives this? He that standeth at the door.

I hope to see you at Limerick on Monday next; and I pray, let there never more be any reserve between you and

Your truly affectionate, etc.

CCCCIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *July 24, 1769.*

IF the reading over your papers has no other effect, this it certainly has, it makes me love you abundantly better than I did before: I have now a more intimate knowledge of you; I enter more into your spirit, your tempers, and hopes, and fears, and desires; all which tends to endear you to me. It is plain, one of your constant enemies, and the most dangerous of all, is evil reasoning. Accordingly, the thing which you chiefly want is Christian simplicity. Brother Bourke and you should carefully watch over each other in that respect, and let each deal faithfully with the other; let there be no reserve between you; encourage one another, also to pray for and expect the continual and direct witness of the Spirit. My dear friend, remember

Yours affectionately, etc.

CCCCX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 18, 1769.*

I WROTE a longer letter to you than I usually do, before I set out from Dublin: Where or how it stopped, I cannot imagine. I think of you everyday; indeed, I do not know that I ever loved you so well as since I was at Limerick last. The more we are acquainted with each other, the more we ought to love one another.

I hope brother Bourke and you faithfully endeavor to help each other on. Is your own soul all alive; all devoted to God? Do you find again what you found once? And are you active for God? Remember, you have work to do in your Lord's vineyard; and the more you help others, the more your soul will prosper.

I am, my dear sister,

Yours affectionately, etc.

CCCCXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

WHITEHAVEN, *April 12, 1770.*

IF two or three letters have miscarried, all will not; so I am determined to write again. How does the work of God go on at Limerick? Does the select society meet constantly? And do you speak freely to each other? What Preachers are with you now? Do you converse frankly and openly with them, without any shyness or reserve? Do you find your own soul prosper? Do you hold fast what God has given you? Do you give Him all your heart? And do you find the witness of this abiding with you? One who is now in the house with me has not lost that witness one moment for these ten years. Why should you lose it any more? Are not the gifts of God without repentance? Is He not willing to give always what he gives once? Lay hold, lay hold on all the promises.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YARM, *June, 13, 1770.*

JUST now we have many persons all over England that are exactly in the state you describe. They were some time since renewed in love, and did then rejoice evermore; but after a few years, months, or weeks, they were moved from their steadfastness: Yet several of these have within a few months recovered all they had lost, and some with increase; being far more established than ever they were before. And why may it not be so with you? The rather, because you do not deny or doubt of the work which God did work in you; and that by simple faith. Surely you should be everyday expecting the same free gift; and He will not deceive your hope.

If you can guard brother S. against pride, and the applause of well-meaning people, he will be a happy man, and an useful laborer. I hope brother M. has not grown cold. Stir up the gift of God which is in you!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

ASHBY, *July 27, 1770.*

WILL YOU ever find in yourself anything but unfitness? Otherwise your salvation would be of works, not of grace. But you are frequently sick of a bad disease, — evil reasoning; which hinders both your holiness and happiness: You want the true Christian simplicity, which is indeed the highest wisdom. Nothing is more clear, according to the plain Bible account, than sanctification; pure love reigning in the heart and life. And nothing is more plain than the necessity of this, in order to feel happiness here and hereafter. Check all reasoning concerning these first principles, else you will exceedingly darken your soul; and go on denying yourself, and taking up your cross, until you

Sink into perfection's height,
The depth of humble love.

Still draw near to the fountain by simple faith, and take all you want; but be not slothful in your Lord's vineyard.

My dear sister,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCXIV. — *To the Same.*

My Dear Sister,

Limerick, *May 15, 1771.*

WHENEVER there is a dependence, though frequently secret and unobserved, on any outward thing, it is the mercy of God which disappoints us of our hope, that we may be more sensibly convinced, "neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

From time to time you must find many difficulties and perplexities that none but God can clear. But can He clear them? That is enough. Then He surely will. This is the very use of that anointing which we have from God. It is to teach us of all things, to clear up a thousand doubts and perplexities which no human wisdom could do. This was given you in the case of your child; and when that came, temptation spake not again. This is never more needful than with regard to anger; because there is an anger which is not sinful, a disgust at sin which is often attended with much commotion of the animal spirits; and I doubt whether we can well distinguish this from sinful anger, but by that light from heaven.

I really hope J. C. will do well: Within these two years he is improved exceedingly.

If our sisters miss you any more, there is but one way, — you must go or send after them. Be not idle; neither give way to voluntary humility. You were not sent to Waterford for nothing; but to “strengthen the things that remain.”

It would be a strange thing if I should pass a day without praying for you: By this means at least we may reach each other; and there may be a still increasing union between you and

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *July 20, 1771.*

I AM much pleased to hear so good an account of J. C. If I was resolved to understand all God’s dispensations, I should embrace his opinion: Because it in a manner accounts for some things which otherwise are unaccountable. But this I do not expect: I am content to understand exceeding little, while I am in the body. What He does, I know not now: It is enough that I shall know hereafter. Our business now is to love and obey: Knowledge is reserved for eternity. My chief objection to Milton’s doctrine of election is, that I cannot reconcile it to the words of St. Peter, which manifestly

refer to the eternal state of men: “God is no respecter of persons.” Now, how can we allow this, if we believe he places one man, as it were, suspended between heaven and hell, while he fixes another, ere ever he is born, under an absolute impossibility of missing heaven?

I am well pleased you see some reason to hope well of Mr. T. Speak closely to him. He has a strong, cultivated understanding, and would make a shining Christian. If he continues serious, he will not long be pleased with his former company: They will grow tasteless, nay, irksome.

It is not material whether this or that infirmity or defect be consistent with this or that gift of God. Without reasoning about this, it is your part simply to spread all your wants before Him who loves you; and He will richly supply them all!

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

RYE, *October 28, 1771.*

It is no wonder that finite cannot measure infinite; that man cannot comprehend the ways of God. There always will be something incomprehensible, something like Himself, in all his dispensations. We must therefore be content to be ignorant, until eternity opens our understanding; particularly with regard to the reasons of His acting thus or thus. These we shall be acquainted with when in Abraham’s bosom.

As thinking is the act of an embodied spirit, playing upon a set of material keys, it is not strange that the soul can make but ill music when her instrument is out of tune. This is frequently the case with you; and the trouble and anxiety you then feel are a natural effect of the disordered machine, which proportionably disorders the mind. But this is not all: As long as you have to wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, wise as well as powerful, will they not serve themselves of every bodily weakness to increase the distress of the soul? But let them do as they may; let our frail bodies concur with subtle and

malicious spirits; yet see that you cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Whereunto you have attained, hold fast; and when you feel the roughest and strongest assault, when the enemy comes in like a flood, do not reason, do not (in one sense) fight with him; but sink down in the presence of your Lord, and simply look up, telling him, "Lord, I cannot help myself; I have neither wisdom nor strength for this war; but I am thine, I am all thine: Undertake for me: Let none pluck me out of thine hands. Keep that safe which is committed to thee, and preserve it unto that day."

I am in great hopes, if we live until another Conference, J. C. will be useful as a Travelling Preacher: So would J. M. if he had courage to break through. However, I am pleased he exercises himself a little: Encourage him. I wish you would lend Mrs. Dawson the Appeals: Take them from the Book-Room, and present them to her in my name. Go yourself: For I wish you to be acquainted with her. I believe they will satisfy her about the Church. She halts just as I did many years ago. Be not shy towards brother C.: He is an upright man. Sister L. is already doing good in Clonmell. Do you correspond with her?

Your affectionate.

CCCCXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CANTERBURY, *December 3, 1771.*

I DID believe brother C. would be of use to you, and you may be of use to him: Speak to each other without reserve, and then you will seldom meet in vain. Thrust him out to visit the whole society, (not only those that can give him meat and drink,) from house to house, according to the plan laid down in the Minutes of Conference: Then he will soon see the fruit of his labor. I hope he is not ashamed to preach full salvation, receivable now by faith. This is the word which God will always bless, and which the devil peculiarly hates; therefore he is constantly stirring up both his own children and the weak children of God against it.

All that God has already given you, hold fast. But expect to see greater things than these.

Your affectionate.

CCCCXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LIVERPOOL, *March 31, 1772.*

YOU did well to break through and converse with Mrs. D——. There is no doubt but she has living faith; but, not having opportunity to converse with believers, she cannot express herself with that clearness that our friends do: Cultivate the acquaintance. Now, lay before her, by way of promise, the whole Christian salvation: She will quickly see the desirableness of it. You may then lend her the “Plain Account of Christian Perfection.” She will not be frightened, but rather encouraged, at hearing it is possible to attain what her heart longs for. While you are thus feeding God’s lambs, he will lead you into rich pastures.

I do not wonder you should meet with trials: It is by these your faith is made perfect. You will find many things, both in your heart and in your life, contrary to the perfection of the Adamic law; but it does not follow that they are contrary to the law of love: Let this fill your heart, and it is enough. Still continue active for God. Remember, a talent is entrusted to you: See that you improve it: He does not like a slothful steward.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YARM, *June 16, 1772.*

AS often as you can, I request you will converse personally or by letter with Mrs. D.: Her heart is much united to you; and I believe you are particularly called to be useful to those whom the riches or the grandeur of this world keep at a distance from the pure word of God. When you are at Waterford, see that you be not idle there. You should gather up and meet a

band immediately. If you would also meet a class or two, it would be so much the better: You know, the more labor the more blessing.

Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore, every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin; and nothing else, if we speak properly. To strain the matter farther is only to make way for Calvinism. There may be ten thousand wandering thoughts, and forgetful intervals, without any breach of love, though not without transgressing the Adamic law. But Calvinists would fain confound these together. Let love fill your heart, and it is enough!

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1772.*

MY health is not worse, but rather better. Your account of the society in Waterford is pleasing. Continue to exercise your talent amongst them, and you will be a gainer by it. You need not dispute or reason about the name which belongs to the state you are in. You know what you have: Be thankful for it. You know what you want, — zeal, liveliness, stability, deliverance from wandering imaginations. Well then, ask, and they shall be given. The way into the holiest is open through the blood of Jesus. You have free access through Him.

To Him your every want
In instant prayer display;
Pray always, pray and never faint,
Pray, without ceasing pray!

See, help, while yet you ask, is given!

I am, dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

COLCHESTER, *November 3, 1772.*

YOUR time was well bestowed at Waterford: Many, I doubt not, will remember it with thankfulness. But why this want of discipline in Limerick? Wherever this is dropped, all is confusion: See that it be immediately restored. Captain Webb is now in Dublin: Invite him to visit Limerick: He is a man of fire, and the power of God constantly accompanies his word. Speak a little to as many as you can; go among them, to their houses; speak in love, and discord will vanish. It is hardly possible for you to comfort or strengthen others, without some comfort returning into your own bosom.

It is probable I shall visit Ireland in the spring, though I am almost a disabled soldier. I am forbid to ride, and am obliged to travel mostly in a carriage.

You have need to stir up the gift of God that is in you. Light will spring up. Why not now? Is not the Lord at hand?

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER BENNIS,

SHOREHAM, *December 16, 1772.*

THE plan which you mention, I prefer to any other, and have written to put it in practice immediately.

I think you make most of your trials by unbelief and giving too much way to reasoning. Do not stop to reason with the adversary, but flee to the Strong for more strength, which, by asking, you will receive. Be diligent in helping others. I hope you visit Mrs. D—— frequently. Let not your talent rust, but see to gain a double interest. You work for a generous

Master. Fight on, and conquer all! Joy you shall have, if joy be best. My dear sister, adieu.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

February 12, 1773.

WHEN we draw near to God in his appointed ways, he will surely draw near to us. Pray remind Mr. G—— of using the same means: Then he and you will find the same blessing. Write to Waterford to brother S——, and encourage him to do there as he did at Limerick.

I can observe, by Mrs. D——'s manner of writing, a very considerable change in her spirit; more acquaintance with God; more humility, and more artless, simple love. I am much pleased that you visit so frequently. Continue to lead the simple, and God will give you more wisdom.

As long as you trust, not in yourself, but in Him that has all power in heaven and in earth, you will find his grace sufficient for you, and his strength made perfect in your weakness. Look to him continually, and trust in him, that you may increase with all the increase of God.

I am, my dear sister,

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXXIV. — *To the Same.*

April 1, 1773.

I FEAR you are too idle: This will certainly bring condemnation. Up and be doing! Do not loiter. See that your talent rust not: Rather let it gain ten more; and it will, if you use it.

You are permitted to be in heaviness, to humble and prove you yet more. Then you shall come forth as gold. If you love me, you will both write and speak freely to,

My dear sister,
Your affectionate.

CCCCXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 10, 1773.*

WHEN two or three agree to seek God by fasting and prayer, it cannot be that their labor should be in vain. Especially if they add their endeavors to their prayers for the increase of the work of God. I hope you will encourage every Preacher to visit the whole society in order, from house to house: Dinner, or drinking tea, does not answer the same intention. This may and ought to be done over and above.

I thought you had been in more danger of being hurt by worldly abundance than worldly care. But we cannot stand under either one or the other, unless we be endued with power from on high; and that continually, from hour to hour, or rather from moment to moment. Yet distress is not sin: We may be grieved, and still resigned. And this is acceptable with God. In all these cases, you should remember that observation, never to be let slip,

“With even mind, thy course of duty run:
God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
But thou wouldst do thyself, if thou couldst see
The end of all events, as well as He!”

My dear sister, adieu.
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

SHEERNESS, *December 1, 1773.*

SOME time since, when I heard brother Bennis had got very rich, I was in fear for you, lest the world should again find a way into your heart, and damp your noblest affections. I am not sorry that you have not that temptation. It is most desirable, to have neither poverty nor riches; but still you cannot be without temptation, unless you would go out of the world. How far that sudden emotion which you speak of is a preternatural dart from Satan, and how far it springs from your own heart, it is exceeding hard to judge. It is possible it may be neither one nor the other, but a mere effect of the natural mechanism of the body, which has no more of good or evil than blushing or turning pale. But whether it be natural or preternatural, it is grievous to one whose conscience is tender. We may therefore undoubtedly pray against it. And surely He can and will deliver us. Come therefore boldly to the throne of grace, and find grace to help in time of need.

You will find full employment in Waterford: I believe that society wants your exertions. See therefore that you be not weary of well-doing.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 18, 1774.*

A WILL steadily and uniformly devoted to God is essential to a state of sanctification; but not a uniformity of joy, or peace, or happy communion with God. These may rise and fall in various degrees; nay, and may be affected either by the body or by diabolical agency, in a manner which all our wisdom can neither understand nor prevent. As to wanderings, you would do right well to consider the sermon on Wandering Thoughts: You might likewise profit by Elizabeth Harper's Journal, whose experience much resembled yours, only she was more simple: And you may learn

from her to go straight to God, as a little child, and tell him all your troubles, and hindrances, and doubts; and desire him to turn them all to good. You are not sent to Waterford to be useless. Stir up the gift of God which is in you; gather together those that have been scattered abroad, and make up a band, if not a class or two. Your best way would be to visit from house to house. By this means you can judge of their conduct and dispositions in domestic life, and may have opportunity to speak to the young of the family. By motion you will contract warmth; by imparting life, you will increase it in yourself.

As to the circumstance mentioned in the postscript of your last, I should think you would do well to exert yourself in that matter as much as possible. It will be a cross: Take up that cross; bear your cross, and it will bear you; and if you do it with a single eye, it will be no loss to your soul.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *March 1, 1774.*

ELIZABETH HARPER was frequently in clouds too; and in that case it is the best way to stand still: You can do nothing but simply tell all your wants to Him that is both able and willing to supply them.

I enclose James Perfect's letter, on purpose that you may talk with him. He has both an honest heart and a good understanding; but you entirely mistake his doctrine. He preaches salvation by faith in the same manner that my brother and I have done; and as Mr. Fletcher (one of the finest writers of the age) has beautifully explained it. None of us talk of being accepted for our works: That is the Calvinist slander. But we all maintain, we are not saved without works; that works are a condition (though not the meritorious cause) of final salvation. It is by faith in the righteousness and blood of Christ that we are enabled to do all good works; and it is for the sake of these that all who fear God and work righteousness are accepted of Him.

It is far better for our people not to hear Mr. Hawksworth. Calvinism will do them no good. As to the rest, I refer to my enclosure to Mr. M., with whom I wish you to have some conversation. Be not discouraged: I really believe God will visit poor Waterford in love. Do you go on. Bear up the hands that hang down; by faith and prayer support the tottering knee; reprove, encourage. Have you appointed any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace, and persevere therein, and mercy will come down.

I am
Yours, etc.

CCCCXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEEDS, *May 2, 1774.*

UNTIL Mr. Hill and his associates puzzled the cause, it was as plain as plain could be. The Methodists always holden, and have declared a thousand times, the death of Christ is the meritorious cause of our salvation, that is, of pardon, holiness, and glory; loving, obedient faith is the condition of glory. This Mr. Fletcher has so illustrated and confirmed, as I think scarcely any one has done before since the Apostles.

When Mr. W. wrote me a vehement letter concerning the abuse he had received from the young men in Limerick, and his determination to put them all out of the society, if they did not acknowledge their fault; I much wondered what could be the matter, and only wrote him word, "I never put any out of our society for anything they say of me." You are come in good time to make peace. Go on, and prosper.

Your ever affectionate.

CCCCXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 21, 1776.*

YOU are a great deal less happy than you would be, if you did not reason too much. This frequently gives that subtle adversary an advantage against you. You have need to be continually as a little child, simply looking up for whatever you want.

It is devoutly to be wished for, that we may rejoice evermore; and it is certain, the inward kingdom of God implies not only righteousness and peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost. You have therefore reason to ask for, and expect, the whole Gospel blessing. Yet it cannot be denied that many times joy is withholden, even from them that walk uprightly. The great point of all is, a heart and a life entirely devoted to God. Keep only this, and let all the rest go: Give Him your heart, and it sufficeth.

I am, my dear sister,

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXI. — *To Miss Bosanquet, afterwards Mrs. Fletcher.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 16, 1767.*

So the Lord has chastened and corrected you; but he hath not given you over unto death. It is your part to stand ready continually for whatever He shall call you to. Everything is a blessing, a means of holiness, as long as you can clearly say, "Lord, do with me and mine what thou wilt, and when thou wilt, and how thou wilt."

Undoubtedly she was (and so was I) in the third stage of a consumption. And Physicians have long since agreed that this is not curable by any natural means. But what signifies this in the sight of God? As,

When obedient Nature knows His will,
A fly, a grapestone, or a hair, can kill;

so, when it is his will to restore life or strength, any means shall be effectual. But we are slow of heart to believe that He is still the uncontrolled, Almighty Lord of hell, and earth, and heaven.

You judge right. I never knew, till you wrote me word, that Richard Taylor had been at Leytonstone at all. At this Conference it will be determined whether all our Preachers, or none, shall continually insist upon Christian perfection. Remember in all your prayers,

My dear sister,
Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 11, 1768.*

I AM afraid lest you should straiten yourself; and I was not in haste. Yet we have such a number round about us here, that I have a ready call for what I have to spare. I am glad B. Taylor's affair has been heard: It seems all parties are now pretty well satisfied. If we live till next autumn, the yearly Conference is to be at Leeds. It will be a little strange if you do not see me then; though it were twice three miles from Gildersome.

You have no reason to fear, but as your day so your strength shall be. Hitherto the Lord hath helped you. He has delivered; and you may rest assured that he will yet deliver. He gave, and he took away: But still you can praise him, since he does not take his Spirit from you. I hope you find no shyness in brother Lee, or Hopper. If there be, you are to overcome evil with good. I shall always be glad to hear from you, or S. Crosby. I trust neither life nor death will part you from,

My dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 28, 1768.*

To hear from you is always agreeable to me: And at present there is no hindrance. In this house we have no jarring string; all is peace and harmony. "Right precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and to hear particular accounts of this kind is exceedingly helpful to those they leave behind. Therefore I wanted as particular an account as Sally Crosby or you can give.

T. Lee is of a shy, backward natural temper, as well as of a slow, cool speech and behavior; but he is a sincere, upright man; and it would be worth all the pains to have a thorough good understanding with him. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 15, 1770.*

It is not strange if the leading of one soul be very different from that of another. The same Spirit worketh in every one; and yet worketh several ways, according to his own will. It concerns us to follow our own light; seeing we are not to be judged by another's conscience.

A little time will show who hinders, and who forwards, the welfare of the family; and I hope you will have steadiness to pursue every measure which you judge will be to the glory of God.

I am glad you find your temporal difficulties are lessened. Beware of increasing your expenses. I advise you not to take any other child till all these expenses are over. It is pity but you had an electric machine. It

would prevent much pain in a family, and supersede almost all other physic. I cure all vomiting and purging by warm lemonade.

She is there still, and likely so to be, unless I would hire her to return; which I dare not do. I will not buy a cross, though I can bear it. Many are much stirred up here, and are greatly athirst for pure love. I am sure you tasted it once, though you was reasoned out of it. How soon may you find it again! Simple faith is all we want. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

MACCLESFIELD, *March 26, 1770.*

I AM now moving northward. In about a fortnight I expect to be at Whitehaven; and a week after, at Glasgow; in the beginning of May, at Aberdeen; and May 11, at Edinburgh.

To exert your faith is the very thing you want. Believe, and enter in. The experience of Eliz. Jackson has animated many. It is the very marrow of Christianity; and if it be diligently spread among our believers, it may be of unspeakable use. It is certainly right to pray, whether we can pray or no. God hears, even when we hardly hear ourselves.

She saw it so, through the advice and importunity of Clayton Carthy. And God permitted it. So all is well. With regard to us, I do not at present see any danger, either on one side or the other. You have need of a steady guide, and one that knows you well. If my brother had not given Mrs. Gausson that fatal advice, “to keep from me,” she would not have fallen into the hands of others.

I am glad Richard Taylor is of use. He will be more and more so, if he continues simple of heart, and speaks explicitly of full redemption, and exhorts believers to accept it *now*. The same rule it will be well for you to

observe in conversation with all that are in earnest. Peace be with your spirit!

My dear sister, adieu!

CCCCXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *March 4, 1772.*

I BELIEVE my last letter took away a good part of your apprehensions. All the inconvenience I find (from a little bruise) is, that I am advised to ride as much in a carriage as I can, and as little on horseback. I take your offer exceeding kindly, and am,

My dear friend,
Ever yours.

CCCCXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *July 17, 1773.*

BY the blessing of God, I reached this place an hour ago, in nearly as good health as I left it. I am glad my friend was at your house: She would receive no hurt; and possibly a little good. I think Thomas Mitchell, at least, may spend another year in Birstal Circuit. There did seem to be a providential call for what was done at Harrowgate! I am glad you find your soul unencumbered. You are just in your place. Stand fast in glorious liberty!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *October 17, 1773.*

I WAS laid up for a week or two last month; but have now nearly recovered my strength. If I live till spring, and am as well as I am now, I shall move

northward, as usual. I am glad you have begun that little meeting for prayer. It will not be without a blessing. T. Lee may have half a dozen of the "Instructions for Children," to give as he sees needful.

If you undertake the care of the books, I shall be under no farther concern about them; for I know what you do you will do in earnest. I wish you would immediately cause all the books which are at Birstal to be removed to your house. You will then be so kind as to send me a catalogue of them, and of the books which you would have sent down. All those who keep my books for the future, I shall desire to state their accounts once a month. But I do not know what you send me the bills for.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 17, 1773.*

I AM afraid the assortment of books which is at Birstal house is exceeding imperfect. As soon, therefore, as we receive the account from you, we shall send down such small books as are wanting, and such as are most called for, and most useful.

My health seems now to be as well established as for many years; and this we are sure of, —

Health we shall have, if health be best.

What have we to do, but to make the best use of all our talents; and according to our power to glorify Him with our bodies and with our spirits?

I am, my dear sister,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCXL. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 9, 1774.*

THE mob which hurt, not me, but the old hired chaise which I then used, made their assault some months since at Inniskillen in Ireland. We are little troubled at present with English mobs; and probably shall not while King George the Third lives.

In July I hope to see you in Cross-hall. My spring journey lies thus: — Manchester, April 4; Monday, April 18, Halifax; Tuesday, Huddersfield, Dewsbury; Thursday, Bradford; Sunday, 24, Haworth church.

Surely, though we have seen great things already, we shall see greater than these. "If thou canst believe!" That is the point: Then what is impossible?

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CLONES, *May 29, 1775.*

I WAS particularly glad to hear from you at this time, as I wanted to know how you was going on, and whether you was the person concerning whom one of our Preachers warily asked my advice. Whether you should part with your house, and things pertaining to it, is a very important question. The answering of this depends upon many circumstances which I am not yet acquainted with. But necessity has no law. It must be done, if your income will not otherwise answer the expenses.

The last day of June I hope to be in Dublin, and the end of July in England. If I have a ready passage, probably I may have an opportunity of hiding myself a day or two with you; but I do not desire any of the Preachers to come to me till I send for them. If they do, I shall run away. I will not be in a crowd.

Probably you know whether Mr. Saunderson is at Knaresborough. If he is, pray take up a cross for me. Write to him, in my name, and tell him, I desire him, without delay or excuse, to return to Bristol; otherwise, he will disoblige me for ever.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 23, 1778.*

ALTHOUGH I hope to see you next week, I cannot but write a few lines. Who knows but the illness of Miss Bishop might be permitted for this very thing, — that you might have a more clear and open way to help the women at Bath forward? What you have to do at Bristol does not yet appear: Providence will open itself by and by. I am glad Philly Cousens retains her confidence. See that she has something to do.

I had not heard anything of Tommy Westall's daughter; and am glad she is so well disposed of. Let brother Taylor and Nancy Tripp do all they can for God. This is an acceptable time. I hope to see you on Tuesday afternoon; and am,

My dear sister,
Yours very affectionately.

CCCCXLIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 5, 1780.*

I SNATCH time from the Conference to write two or three lines. I am in hopes Nancy Tripp will find a perfect cure. I am glad you have begun a prayer-meeting at Hunslet, and doubt not but it will be productive of much good. Hitherto we have had a blessed Conference. The case of the Church

we shall fully consider by and by; and I believe we shall agree, that none who leave the Church shall remain with us. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, my dear sister,
Yours most affectionately.

CCCCXLIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 18, 1780.*

I AM glad to hear that the work of God is going on in your own soul, and in those about you. That young woman's dream is very remarkable, and gives us good encouragement to press on to the mark. I believe Mr. D. was the better for his journey; but he has very little fellowship with the Methodists.

We have many here who have the same experience with honest George Clark, and far more clear ideas of the life of faith than he has. Such are George Hufflet, in the chapel at Spitalfields; Mary Landers, in the Tower; S. Collet, in Bishopsgate-street; S. Cayleys, at G. Clark's; Jenny Thornton, and some others, in the city; S. Peters, in the Curtains; Molly Monk, at Moorfields; S. Garston and Charles Wheeler, in Old-street. Joseph Bradford would introduce any one you sent to these, or to our select society. It will be well to advertise the tracts now. I remember you daily; and am,

My dear sister,
Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXLV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 15, 1785.*

I WANTED much to hear from you, being desirous to know whether you have thought where you should settle, if God should please to prolong your life. I should love to be as near you as I could; and on that account should be glad if you chose Bristol or London. I expect to be in town on

Monday fortnight, October the first. Mr. Ireland has printed a thousand or two of your Letters, with some little variations, I think for the worse.

Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,
Ever yours.

I am glad the people desire to join us. I shall reprint your letter when I come to London.

CCCCXLVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *October 2, 1785.*

THERE is much of divine Providence in this, that the people are permitted to choose their own Curate. I believe Mr. Horne to be a sound Methodist, and think he will serve them well, if he can procure ordination. If he cannot, Mr. Dickenson may do near as well; a very pious and sensible young man, who has for two or three years served good Mr. Perronet, at Shoreham, but expects to be turned away by the new Vicar.

Surely, your thought of spending much of your time in London is agreeable to the will of God. I never thoroughly approved of your going so far from it, although much good was drawn out of it. I hope to be there tomorrow. Should not you now consider me as your first human friend? I think none has a more sincere regard for you than,

My dear sister,
Yours most affectionately.

CCCCXLVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *October 22, 1785.*

THIS morning I received and read your papers. You have done justice to the character of that excellent man, as far as you could be expected to do in so small room. I do not observe any sentence that need be left out, and

very few words that need to be omitted or altered: Only I omit a very little, which I had inserted before I received yours, in that part of my sermon which I had transcribed. I hope to procure some more materials, in order to the writing of his Life. May the Lord bless you, and keep you!

I am, my dear sister,
Yours in tender affection.

CCCCXLVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January* 13, 1786.

WHEN I receive letters from other persons, I let them lie, perhaps a week or two, before I answer them: But it is otherwise when I hear from you. I then think much of losing a day, for fear I should give a moment's pain to one of the most faithful friends I have in the world. The circumstance you add respecting the behavior of those Custom-House Officers is very well worth relating. O what pity that it was not then made known to their superiors; that those inhospitable wretches might have been prevented from misusing other strangers!

I think your advice is exactly right. With the materials I have already, or can procure in England, I will write and publish as soon as I conveniently can.

I am, my very dear sister,
Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXLIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December* 9, 1786.

THE book is now finished: I have the last proof now before me. Two of the three accounts you give, I have at large. I only wait a few days, to see if my brother will write his Elegy.

I am clearly satisfied that you will do well to spend a considerable part of your time at Madeley. But I can by no means advise you to spend all your time there. I think you are a debtor to several other places also; particularly to London and Yorkshire. Nay, and if we live, I should rejoice if you and I can contrive to be in those places at the same time: For I feel a great union of spirit with you. I cannot really tell you how much

I am, my dear sister,
Yours invariably.

CCCCL. — *To Mr. Joseph Benson.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WYCOMB, *November 7, 1768.*

YOU have now twenty more volumes of the “Philosophical Transactions.” Dr. Burton’s Latin and Greek Poems you have in the study. Malebranche, and some other books, are coming. Logic you cannot crack without a tutor: I must read it to Peter and you, if we live to meet. It would not be amiss if I had a catalogue of the books at Kingswood; then I should know the better what to buy. As fast as I can meet with them at sales, I shall procure what are yet wanting. But beware you be not swallowed up in books: An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 4, 1768.*

I CANNOT yet convince you of one thing, (and it is a thing of importance,) that you may make greater progress in valuable knowledge, by reading those books, (particularly if read in that order,) than you can by reading any other books which are now extant in England. It follows, that your

friend B., in this respect, is not your friend. For he puts you out of your way; he retards you in the attainment of the most useful knowledge. He gratifies your curiosity (a bad principle too) at the expense of your improvement. It is better for you to read these books than his; which (if they are not hurtful or dangerous, at least) do not lead directly to the end you propose. Choose the best way.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

SHOREHAM, *December 22, 1768.*

YOU do not quite take my meaning yet. When I recommend to any one a method or scheme of study, I do not barely consider this or that book separately, but in conjunction with the rest. And what I recommend I know; I know both the style and sentiments of each author; and how he will confirm or illustrate what goes before, and prepare for what comes after. Now, supposing Mr. Stonehouse, Roquet, or any other, to have ever so great learning and judgment, yet he does not enter into my plan. He does not comprehend my views, nor keep his eye fixed on the same point. Therefore, I must insist upon it, the interposing other books between these, till you have read them through, is not good husbandry. It is not making your time and pains go so far as they might go. If you want more books, let me recommend more, who best understand my own scheme. And do not ramble, however learned the persons may be that advise you so to do. This does indulge curiosity, but does not minister to real improvement, as a stricter method would do. No; you would gain more clearness and strength of judgment by reading those Latin and Greek books, (compared with which most of the English are whipped syllabub,) than by fourscore modern books. I have seen the proof, as none of your Bristol friends have done, or can do. Therefore, I advise you again, Keep to your plan, (though this implies continual self-denial,) if you would improve your understanding to the highest degree of which it is capable.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

CORK, *May 27, 1769.*

YOU have now (what you never had before) a clear providential call to Oxford. If you keep a single eye, and have courage and steadiness, you may be an instrument of much good. But you will tread on slippery ground; and the serious persons you mention may do you more hurt than many others. When I was at Oxford, I never was afraid of any but the almost Christians. If you give way to them and their prudence a hair's breadth, you will be removed from the hope of the Gospel. If you are not moved, if you tread in the same steps which my brother and I did, you may be a means, under God, of raising another set of real Bible Christians. How long the world will suffer them (whether longer than they did us or not) is in God's hand.

With regard to Kingswood school, I have one string more: If that breaks, I shall let it drop. I have born the burden one-and-twenty years; I have done what I could: Now, let some one else do more.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 26, 1769.*

EVERY man of sense, who reads the rules of the school, may easily conclude that a school so conducted by men of piety and understanding will exceed any other school or academy in Great Britain or Ireland. In this sentiment you can never be altered. And if it was not so conducted since you were there, why was it not? You had power enough. You have all the power which I have. You may do just what you please; —

and I will second you to the uttermost.

Trevecka is much more to —— than Kingswood is to me. *I* mixes with everything. It is *my* College, *my* Masters, *my* Students. I do not speak so of this school. It is not mine, but the Lord's. I look for no more honor than money from it.

I am glad you defer your journey; and am,

Dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *October 5, 1770.*

YOU need no apology for your writing: The more frequently and freely you write, the better. I cannot doubt, but your neighbor means well; but he is a thorough enthusiast, and has hardly one clear conception of anything, natural or spiritual. Mr. Keard, from Aberdeen, and Mr. Wootton, (our new writing-master, a man of an excellent spirit,) are at Kingswood. But does Mr. J. know the price? — Sixteen pounds a year. Does he know the rules of the school? Again: Of what age are the children? I will take none that is above nine years old: Now especially; because I will not have our children corrupted; nine of whom, together with our three maid servants, have just now experienced a gracious visitation, and are rejoicing in a pardoning God.

I am glad you had the courage to speak your mind on so critical an occasion. At all hazards, do so still; only with all possible tenderness and respect. She is much devoted to God, and has a thousand valuable and amiable qualities. There is no great fear that I should be prejudiced against one whom I have intimately known for these thirty years. And I know what is in man; therefore I make large allowance for human weaknesses. But what you say is exactly the state of the case. They are “jealous of their authority.” Truly there is no cause: *Longe mea discrepat illi et vox et*

*ratio.*⁹⁴ I fear and shun, not desire, authority of any kind. Only when God lays that burden upon me, I bear it, for his and the people's sake.

“Child,” said my father to me, when I was young, “you think to carry everything by dint of argument. But you will find, by and by, how very little is ever done in the world by clear reason.” Very little indeed! It is true of almost all men, except so far as we are taught of God, —

Against experience we believe,
We argue against demonstration;
Pleased while our reason we deceive,
And set our judgment by our passion.

Passion and prejudice govern the world; only under the name of reason. It is our part, by religion and reason joined, to counteract them all we can. It is yours, in particular, to do all that in you lies to soften the prejudices of those that are round about you, and to calm the passions from which they spring. Blessed are the peace-makers!

You judge rightly: Perfect love and Christian liberty are the very same thing; and those two expressions are equally proper, being equally scriptural. “Nay, how can they and you mean the same thing? They say, you insist on holiness in the creature, on good tempers, and sin destroyed.” Most surely. And what is Christian liberty, but another word for holiness? And where is this liberty or holiness, if it is not in the creature? Holiness is the love of God and man, or the mind which was in Christ. Now, I trust, the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you. And if you are holy, is not that mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus?

And are not the love of God and our neighbor good tempers? And so far as these reign in the soul, are not the opposite tempers, worldly-mindedness, malice, cruelty, revengefulness, destroyed? Indeed, the unclean spirit, though driven out, may return and enter again; nevertheless, he was driven out. I use the word “destroyed,” because St. Paul does: “Suspended” I cannot find in my Bible. “But they say, you do not consider this as the consequence of the power of Christ dwelling in us.” Then what will they not say? My very words are, “None feel their need of Christ like these;

none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give light to the soul separate from, but in and with, himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatever 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.’ For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root; but like that of a branch, which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but severed from it, is ‘dried up and withered.’”

At length, *veres vincor*:⁹⁵ I am constrained to believe, (what I would not for a long time,) these are not the objections of judgment, but of passion; they do not spring from the head, but the heart. Whatever I say, it will be all one. They will find fault, because I say it. There is implicit envy at my power, (so called,) and a jealousy rising therefrom. Hence prejudice in a thousand forms; hence objections springing up like mushrooms. And while those causes remain, they will spring up, whatever I can do or say. However, keep thyself pure; and then there need be no strangeness between you and,

Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *November 30, 1770.*

FOR several years I had been deeply convinced, that I had not done my duty with regard to that valuable woman; that I had not told her what, I was thoroughly assured, no one else would dare to do, and what I knew she would bear from no other person, but possibly might bear from me. But being unwilling to give her pain, I put it off from time to time. At length I did not dare to delay any longer, less death should call one of us hence. So I at once delivered my own soul, by telling her all that was in my heart. It was my business, my proper business, so to do; as none else either could or would do it. Neither did I take at all too much upon me: I know the office of a Christian Minister. If she is not profited, it is her own fault, not mine: I have done my duty. I do not know, there is one charge in

that letter, which was either unjust, unimportant, or aggravated; any more than that against the doggerel hymns, which are equally an insult upon poetry and common sense.

We had a good time, both at the Tabernacle and Tottenham-Court chapel. The congregations were immense. Perhaps not a third part could come within hearing; and they were more quiet than could well have been expected. The sermon will be published on Monday, and sent down to Bristol. Mr. Reen and Hardy, his executors, have, I apprehend, the whole and sole disposal of the Tabernacle, Tottenham-Court chapel, and all the other houses which were occupied by Mr. Whitefield. The chapel and Tabernacle are supplied by Mr. Joss and Brooksbank; and Mr. Neale administers the sacrament there.

I find no such sin as legality in the Bible: The very use of the term speaks an Antinomian. I defy all liberty, but liberty to love and serve God; and fear no bondage, but bondage to sin. Sift that text to the bottom, and it will do the business of poor H—— and all his disciples: “God sent his own Son in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” *Justitia legis, justitia legalis!*⁹⁶ Here is legality indeed!

I am glad you come a little nearer the good old Emperor’s advice, *Την των βιβλιων διψαν ριπτε*.⁹⁷ That thirst is the symptom of an evil disease; and *crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops*.⁹⁸ What is the real value of a thing, but the price it will bear in eternity? Let no study swallow up, or entrench upon, the hours of private prayer. *Nil tanti*.⁹⁹ Simplify both religion and every part of learning as much as possible. Be all alive to God, and you will be useful to men!

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 28, 1770.*

WHAT a blessing it is, that we can speak freely to each other, without either disguise or reserve! So long as we are able to do this, we may grow wiser and better everyday.

One point I advise you to hold fast, and let neither men nor devils tear it from you. You are a child of God; you are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Your sins are forgiven! Cast not away that confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Now, can any be justified, but by faith? None can. Therefore you are a believer; you have faith in Christ; you know the Lord; you can say, "My Lord and my God." And whoever denies this, may as well deny that the sun shines at noonday.

Yet still ten thousand lusts remain,
And vex your soul, absolved from sin;
Still rebel nature strives to reign,
And you are all unclean, unclean!

This is equally clear and undeniable. And this is not only your experience, but the experience of a thousand believers beside, who yet are sure of God's favor, as of their own existence. To cut off all doubt on this head, I beg you to give another serious reading to those two sermons, "Sin in Believers," and "The Repentance of Believers."

"But is there no help? Is there no deliverance, no salvation from this inbred enemy?" Surely there is; else many great and precious promises must fall to the ground. "I will 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 circumcise thy heart," (from all sin,) "to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." This I term sanctification, (which is both an instantaneous and a gradual work,) or perfection, the being perfected in love, filled with love, which still admits of a thousand degrees. But I have no time to throw away in contending for words; especially where the thing is allowed. And you allow the whole thing which I contend for; an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it you in an instant. You trust he will. O hold fast

this also; this blessed hope, which he has wrought in your heart! And with all zeal and diligence confirm the brethren, —

1. In holding fast that whereto they have attained; namely, the remission of all their sins, by faith in a bleeding Lord:
2. In expecting a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin, and perfected in love.

If they like to call this “receiving the Holy Ghost,” they may: Only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all “received the Holy Ghost” when they were justified. God then “sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

O Joseph, keep close to the Bible, both as to sentiment and expression! Then there will never be any material difference between you and

Your affectionate brother.

This morning I have calmly and coolly read over my letter to L—— H——. I still believe every line of it is true. And I am assured I spoke the truth in love. It is great pity, any who wish her well should skin over the wounds which are there searched. As long as she resents that office of true esteem, her grace can be but small!

CCCCLVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *January 21, 1771.*

It was of their own mere motion, that the students, when I was in Wales, desired me to come and spend a little time with them. I had no thought or desire so to do, having work enough upon my hands. When Mr. Ireland asked me, why I did not go thither in August, I answered, “Because my Lady had written to me to the contrary.” But I do not remember, that I showed him her letter: I believe I did not.

I know not why you should not keep the rest of your terms at Oxford, and take a Bachelor’s degree. Only if you should be pressed in spirit to give

yourself up to the work of God sooner, I think you must follow your own conscience. Write quite freely to,

Dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 11, 1772.*

MR. HILL, however, leaves me a little time to take breath, and, I have some hope, will not renew the combat. But I doubt he is too warm to be convinced. He “sets his judgment by his passion.”

It is a shame for any Methodist Preacher to confine himself to one place. We are debtors to all the world. We are called to warn every one, to exhort every one, if by any means we may save some.

I love prayer-meetings, and wish they were set up in every corner of the town. But I doubt whether it would be well to drop any of the times of preaching. Three-and-thirty years they have had at least as much preaching at Bristol as at Newcastle. And the congregations are far larger than they were ten or twenty years ago. But I should not object to the transferring Wednesday night’s preaching to eight on Sunday morning.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,
1773.

LONDON, *March 2,*

CERTAINLY you cannot stir, unless you are clearly satisfied of your call from God. ¹⁰⁰ An impression on the mind of another man is no rule of action to you. The reasons you give on the other side are weighty, and will not easily be answered. At present you do seem to be in your place: And

your labor will not be in vain. If you could transfer a night in a week from Newcastle to some new place, Think it might do well.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother. ¹⁰¹

CCCCLXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LEWISHAM, *July 31, 1773.*

I AM glad you have preached so much abroad: This will everywhere do most execution. Some time since I promised you to Billy Thompson, for his fellow-laborer the ensuing year: And you will have no cause to repent of it; for his heart (as well as yours) is in the work. Mr. Hopper desires to spend another year in the Newcastle Circuit. I refer it to him, whether it would not suffice to have preaching at Newcastle five nights in a week.

“God has made practical divinity necessary, and the devil, controversial.” Sometimes we must write and preach controversially; but the less, the better. I think we have few, if any, of our Travelling Preachers that love controversy. But there will always be men, *οὐς δεῖ ἐπισομιζεῖν*: ¹⁰³ Antinomians and Calvinists in particular. By our long silence, we have done much hurt, both to them and the cause of God.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *September 10, 1773.*

IF Mr. Thompson consents, all is well. The more you preach abroad, both in England and Scotland, the better. Only take care, not to do more than you can do; not to go beyond your strength. And keep to the plain, old Methodist doctrine, laid down in the Minutes of the Conference. At Trevecka you were a little warped from this; but it was a right-hand error. You will be buried in Scotland, if you sell your mare and sit still. Keep her,

and ride continually. Contrive (you and Mr. Thompson) how this may be. Sit not still, at the peril of your soul and body! Mr. F. ought to have received their thanks.

Dear Joseph, adieu!

Do all you can for poor Scotland; and write how things are there.

CCCCLXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,
1773.

LONDON, *October 23,*

I WISH every one of our Preachers, who goes to Scotland, were of the same mind with you. We are not called to sit still in one place: It is neither for the health of our souls nor bodies. Billy Thompson never satisfied me on this head, not in the least degree. I say still, we will have Travelling Preachers in Scotland, or none. The thing is fixed: The manner of effecting it is to be considered. Now set your wit to this: Find out the *το πως*.¹⁰⁴ How shall this be accomplished? You did not do well in selling your horse, and thereby laying another bar in the way. Though I am (by the exquisite negligence of my late bookkeeper) a thousand pounds worse than nothing, I would have spared a few pounds to have eased that burden. However, you must do as you can. Our Preachers shall either travel there, as in England, or else stay in England.

I am, dear Joseph

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *January 8, 1774.*

MANY persons are in danger of reading too little: You are in danger of reading too much. Wherever you are, take up your cross, and visit all the society from house to house. Do this according to Mr. Baxter's plan, laid down in the Minutes of the Conference. The fruit which will ensue,

(perhaps in a short time,) will abundantly reward your labor. Fruit also we shall have, even in those who have no outward connection with us.

I am glad you “press all believers” to aspire after the full liberty of the children of God. They must not give up their faith, in order to do this: Herein you formerly seemed to be in some mistake. Let them go on from faith to faith; from weak faith, to that strong faith, which not only conquers but casts out sin. Meantime it is certain, many call themselves believers who do not even conquer sin; who are strangers to the whole inward kingdom of God, and void of the whole fruit of the Spirit.

We must not go on at Dunbar in this manner. Rather we must quit the place. For who will pay that debt?

On Tuesday I was under the Surgeon’s hands, but am now (blessed be God) quite recovered.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *March 4, 1774.*

I AM glad you have been at Greenock, and think it highly expedient that you should follow the blow. Meantime let brother Broadbent supply Glasgow, and Billy Thompson, Edinburgh. I think with you, that it is no great matter if Dunbar be left for a season. When you have been three or four weeks at Greenock and Port-Glasgow, brother Broadbent should change with you. But I agree with you, the harvest cannot be large till we can preach abroad.

Before I settled my plan, that thought occurred, “It would be better to go a little later into Scotland.” Accordingly, I have contrived not to be at Glasgow till Friday, the 6th of May, coming by way of Edinburgh. Probably it may then be practicable to take the field. I incline to think it will be of use for you to spend another year in that Circuit.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

SHEFFIELD, *July 26, 1774.*

CERTAINLY an account of the societies in the Edinburgh Circuit will be expected from you at the Conference. I will then propose the case of Greenock. I am glad you have sent brother Ferguson the Appeals. I believe Billy Eels might come to you directly, if you wrote to him, and to Joseph Cownley. At length I hope good may be done in Scotland, and I incline to prefer your scheme to Dr. H.'s. Three Preachers may do better than two, provided they change regularly, according to the plan you lay down. I know not but you must make a private subscription, and wire over the cupola. "Be zealous and humble; but never be still!"

Dear Joseph, adieu!

CCCCLXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *August 8, 1774.*

I JUST snatch time to write two or three lines. Consider the thing thoroughly, and then send me word of the exact Circuit wherein three Preachers may follow one another. If this be steadily done, I am not without hope, that, before the next Conference, there will be such a flame kindled, as has not been seen for some years in poor Scotland.

I was sorry to find, that Mr. P. was almost discouraged from proceeding in his little labor of love. I commend you for dealing tenderly with him. Certainly he is an honest man; and undoubtedly he is useful in his little way. Pray what becomes of Mrs. L.? Is she gaining or losing ground? O Joseph, fight through, and conquer all!

I am
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *September* 18, 1774.

YOUR last proposal is incomparably the best: I approve of it entirely. Without consulting any at Dunbar, (which would only puzzle the cause,) immediately begin to put it in execution. Let the Preacher go to Ormiston on Wednesday, Dunbar on the Thursday, and return to Edinburgh, by Linton, on Friday, every week. At present we sate them with preaching. It will be best to keep a horse: Then both your health and your soul will prosper.

If William Eels crawls in at last, send him directly to Aberdeen. And you should be preparing to change with John Bredin.

I wish Dr. Hamilton would send me the receipt for extracting the opiate from sow-thistles, and give me some account of its effects.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your ever affectionate friend and brother.

P.S. I left ninety members in the society: I hope there are not fewer now.

CCCCLXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *October* 16, 1774.

I HAVE written to Dr. Hamilton, that brother Eels must go to Aberdeen, and Edinburgh and Dunbar must be supplied by one Preacher. They should have thought of preaching in the churchyard before. While I live, Itinerant Preachers shall be itinerants: I mean, if they choose to remain in connection with us.

The society in Greenock are entirely at their own disposal: They may either have a Preacher between them and Glasgow, or none at all. But more

than one between them, they cannot have. I have too much regard both for the bodies and souls of our Preachers, to let them be confined to one place any more. I hope J. B. will punctually observe your direction, spending either three days, or a week, at each place alternately. I have weighed the matter, and will serve the Scots as we do the English, or leave them. I wish you would write a letter to John Campbell, and another to R. Mackie, and argue the case with them. If J. B. does not go to Greenock, let him (or his successor) spend half his time at Dunbar: Then a Preacher may be constantly at Edinburgh. But give me only six days in a fortnight there, and I will visit all the society from house to house.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

Near LONDON, February 22, 1776.

WE must threaten no longer, but perform. In November last, I told the London society, "Our rule is, to meet a class once a week; not once in two or three. I now give you warning: I will give tickets to none in February, but those that have done this." I have stood to my word. Go you and do likewise, wherever you visit the classes. Begin, if need be, at Newcastle, and go on at Sunderland. Promises to meet are now out of date. Those that have not met seven times in the quarter, exclude. Read their names in the society; and inform them all you will the next quarter exclude all that have not met twelve times: That is, unless they were hindered by distance, sickness, or by some unavoidable business.

And I pray, without fear or favor, remove the Leaders, whether of classes or bands, who do not watch over the souls committed to their care "as those that must give account."

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

SHOREHAM, *July 31, 1776.*

I THINK of Joseph Fothergill, and just as you do; and shall willingly propose him at the Conference. I believe he has considerable gifts, and is truly alive to God. You are in the right. We must beware of distressing the poor. Our substantial brethren are well able to bear the burden. I shall write a letter for each Assistant before the Conference is over. If they are in earnest, all will go well.

If the assertors of the decrees are quiet and peaceable, troubling no one with their opinions, reason is that we should bear with them. But if they will not be quiet, if they trouble others, we cannot keep them. Do all you can for God!

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

Pray tell Joseph Thompson, I have set him down for Leeds.

CCCCLXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

October 22, 1776.

I APPREHEND Joseph Fothergill was not designedly omitted. I take him to be a good man, and a good Preacher.

You did right in excluding from our society so notorious an offender. And you have now a providential call to stand in the gap between the living and the dead. Fear nothing. Begin in the name of God, and go through with the work. If only six will promise you to sin no more, leave only six in the society. But my belief is, a hundred and fifty are now clear of blame; and if you are steady, a hundred more will amend. You must, at all events, tear up this evil by the roots. The “Word to a Smuggler” should be read and dispersed. And secure your fellow-laborers, that you may all speak one thing. Go on; for God is with you!

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *November 7, 1776.*

NOT only the Assistant, but every Preacher, is concerned to see all our rules observed. I desire brother Rhodes will give no tickets, either to those who have not constantly met their classes, or to any that do not solemnly promise to deal in stolen goods no more. He and you together may put a stop to this crying sin.

I wish Edward Jackson would go into the Dales. But here is a great difficulty: Robert Wilkinson, you know, is married: Therefore, he cannot live (though he may starve) in the Dundee Circuit. I designed that he and brother Lumley should change places. But what can be done now? Consider the matter, and advise,

Dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

CHATHAM, *November 26, 1776.*

IF any Leader oppose, you see your remedy: Put another in his place. Nay, if he does not join heart and hand; for “he that gathereth not with you scattereth.” The “Word to a Smuggler” is plain and home, and has done much good in these parts.

Taking opium is full as bad as taking drams. It equally hurts the understanding, and is, if possible, more pernicious to the health, than even rum or brandy. None should touch it, if they have the least regard either for their souls or bodies.

I really think you are in the right. It is better to help R W. where he is, than to burden the Dales with an additional weight. But then what shall we do? We have no supernumerary Preachers. See if you can do anything with Edward Jackson.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

Near LONDON, December 24, 1776.

THE total suppression of that vile practice will, doubtless, be a difficult task: But it is worth all the labor; yea, though you should be obliged to cut off some of our oldest members. For you must absolutely go through with your work; leave neither root nor branch; else the reformation will be but for a season, and then the evil will sprout up again.

The case of John Reed is one of the most remarkable which has fallen under my notice. From the beginning it was my judgment, that the disorder was more than natural. I wish he would take opportunities of writing down as many particulars as he can recollect; and send me as circumstantial an account as he can. You may much assist him herein.

I am, dear Joseph,,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,
1777.

LONDON, *January 11,*

THE matter is short. I require you to meet the societies of Sunderland and Shields next quarter, and to give no tickets to any person who will not

promise neither to buy nor sell unaccustomed goods any more. I am sorry — did not save you the trouble: I thought he had been another man.

Pray worry John Reed till he writes a circumstantial account. It must be done while things are fresh in his memory; otherwise we shall lose many particulars which ought not to be forgotten.

They have made good haste to finish the preaching-house at Sheephill already: I thought it had hardly been begun.

I have just received two letters from New-York; one of them from George Robinson, late of Newcastle. They inform me that all the Methodists there were firm for the Government, and, on that account, persecuted by the rebels, only not to the death; that the Preachers are still threatened, but not stopped; and the work of God increases much in Maryland and Virginia.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WORCESTER, *July 8, 1777.*

WHAT you say is unquestionably right. Why then should it not immediately be put in execution? Let Berwick directly be taken into the Newcastle Circuit, and Dunbar be supplied, once a fortnight, from Edinburgh. Pray write this instantly to brother M'Nab, and admit of no excuse. If by this means there is a Preacher to spare, let him step over as soon as possible from Portpatrick, and supply the place of that good young man, John Harrison, in the Lisburn Circuit. Mr. Smythe calls aloud for help: He is zealous and active, but is quite overborn. I have set down you with brother Hopper in the Manchester Circuit; and am,

Dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WITNEY, *October 22, 1777.*

I DO not wonder you do not conceive what Grotius meant by that odd sentence; for I doubt whether he conceived it himself. I can translate it, but I cannot understand it: It is well if any one can. "Everything exists necessarily, or of itself; not as it is considered in a general view, but as it actually exists. But individual things" (only) "exist actually." There is a good English translation of this book, published some years since by Dr. John Clarke, Dean of Sarum. He was (I think younger) brother to Dr. Samuel Clarke.

I have no objection to your printing a thousand or two of the account of Mrs. Hutton's death. It may be of use for you to visit Manchester again, when opportunity serves. Only do everything in full concurrence with the Assistant.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 8, 1777.*

UNDOUBTEDLY Bishop Newton's book on the Prophecies is well written. And he is certainly a man of sense, and of considerable learning. This he has shown in what he writes on the Revelation. But with regard to the passage you mention, I cannot agree with him at all. I believe the Romish antichrist is already so fallen, that he will not again lift up his head in any considerable degree. The Bishop of Rome has little more power now, than any other of the Italian Princes. I therefore concur with you in believing his tyranny is past never to return.

But there is no comparison, either as to sense, learning, or piety, between Bishop Newton and Bengelius. The former is a mere child to the latter. I advise you to give another serious and careful reading to that extract from

his Comment on the Revelation, which concludes the Notes. There you have one uniform consistent [view], far beyond any I ever saw. And I verily believe, the more deeply you consider it, the more you will admire it.

Does any one deny that a kite is bigger than a lark; or that Ogilvie has written a larger book than Virgil? And certainly there are larger Magazines than ours: But it does not follow that they are better. Ours is reduced to half the price, and will contain forty eight pages, which is the usual number for sixpence.

We are called to propagate Bible religion through the land; that is, faith working by love; holy tempers and holy lives. Let us do it with our might!

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXXX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 26, 1780*

YOU have great reason to be thankful to God; for he has dealt mercifully with you. And as long as you improve these outward blessings to the end for which they were given, so long they will be continued. But you have great need to be jealous over yourself, and to keep your heart with all diligence. You need all the power of God to preserve you from loving the creature more than the Creator.

Dr. Edwards is a dry, displeasing writer: And probably his main design was, to justify God in damning all the Heathens as not having a spark of virtue among them. Peace be with you and yours!

I am
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

MANCHESTER, *April 2*, 1781.

ALTHOUGH our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we walk in simplicity and godly sincerity, this no way contradicts, “God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of Christ.” In all, and after all,

His passion alone, The foundation we own;
And pardon we claim,
And eternal redemption in Jesus’s name.

How admirably pardon and holiness are comprised in that one word, “grace!” Mercy and strength! So are our justification and sanctification woven together.

I hope your sermons will do good. But why do not you publish your poems? I think you can make verses as fast as John Murlin; yea, indeed, if need were, *stans pede in uno*.¹⁰⁵ for a parent.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXXXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WARRINGTON, *May 21*, 1781.

As I have not leisure myself, I am exceeding glad that you have entered into the lists with Mr. A——. And I am in hopes you will “reply at large” to all his cavils and objections. If he cites anything from me, you should answer simply, “I never undertook to defend every sentiment of Mr. W——’s. He does not expect or desire it. He wishes me and every man to think for himself.”

If you remember, I do not insist on the term “impression.” I say again, I will thank any one that will find a better; be it “discovery,”

“manifestation,” “deep sense,” or whatever it may. That some consciousness of our being in favor with God, is joined with Christian faith, I cannot doubt; but it is not the essence of it. A consciousness of pardon cannot be the condition of pardon.

But I am still more glad, that you have some thoughts of answering that pernicious book of poor Mr. Madan. Analyze it first with the postscript; then overturn it thoroughly, from the beginning to the end. You may steer between the extremes of too much roughness, and too much smoothness. And see that you are plain enough for women and pretty gentlemen. I allow you a hundred pages.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *February 22, 1782.*

WHO Mr. Tyndall is, I know not; but he is just as sound a Divine as Mr. Madan. I regard no authorities but those of the ante-Nicene Fathers; nor any of them, in opposition to Scripture. And I totally deny that (supposed) matter of fact, that polygamy was allowed among the primitive Christians; or, that the converts “who had many wives were not required to put any of them away.” I have not yet time to read over the MS.: When I do, I must read it all in a breath.

Having talked with my friends, I judge it will be expedient to visit the north this year. I expect to be at Manchester on Wednesday, the 10th of April; and in Yorkshire in the beginning of May.

I have no objection to your printing a few copies of those two sermons, to oblige your friends in the neighborhood. I doubt we are not explicit enough, in speaking on full sanctification, either in public or private.

I am, with kind love to sister Benson,

Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

Near LONDON, *August 3, 1782.*

DO not you know that all the Preachers cannot leave a Circuit at once? Therefore, if you left it, brothel Hopper could not. Perhaps, likewise, I can depend upon your judgment more than that of another man.

Two or three years ago, when the kingdom was in imminent danger, I made an offer to the Government of raising some men. The Secretary of War (by the King's order) wrote me word, that "it was not necessary; but if it ever should be necessary, His Majesty would let me know." I never renewed the offer, and never intended it. But Captain Webb, without my knowing anything of the matter, went to Colonel B——, the new Secretary of War, and renewed that offer. The Colonel (I verily believe, to avoid his importunity) asked him how many men we could raise. But the Colonel is out of place. So the thing is at an end.

I read over both the sermons; but I did not see anything materially wrong in either.

I am, with love to sister Benson,
Your affectionate brother.

We will consider what you propose.

CCCCLXXXV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *September 17, 1788.*

I AM glad you have determined to correct Mr. Fletcher's Letters. You will observe, that it is "dangerous, on such subjects, to depart from Scripture, either as to language or sentiment;" and I believe, that "most of the controversies which have disturbed the church, have arisen from people's wanting to be wise above what is written, not contented with what God

has plainly revealed there.” What have you or I to do with that “difficulty?” I dare not, will not, reason about it for a moment. I believe just what is revealed, and no more; but I do not pretend to account for it, or to solve the difficulties that may attend it. Let angels do this, if they can; but I think they cannot. I think even these

Would find no end, in wandering mazes lost.

Some years since, I read about fifty pages of Dr. Watts’s ingenious treatise upon the “Glorified Humanity of Christ.” But it so confounded my intellects, and plunged me into such unprofitable reasonings, yea, dangerous ones, that I would not have read it through for five hundred pounds. It led him into Arianism. Take care that similar tracts (all of which I abhor) have not the same effect upon you.

I like your thoughts upon Materialism; as I doubt not I should, those on the separate existence of the soul. It will be best to print at Hull or York, if you can print almost as cheap, and have as good paper. Should there not be a thousand copies? Then you will reserve a hundred of them for yourself.

I am, with love to sister Benson,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXXXVI. — *To Mrs. Benson.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

WARRINGTON, *May 21, 1781.*

AS you are now one of my family, and indeed by a nearer tie than when you were only a member of the society, I rejoice in doing you any service, or giving you any satisfaction that I can. I therefore take the first opportunity of acquainting you, that I will appoint Mr. Benson for Leeds the ensuing year. I trust he will be more useful there than ever, and I doubt not but you will strengthen his hands in God. If you desire anything of me that is in my power, you may be assured it will not be refused by,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

P. S. I am now going to Whitehaven.

CCCCLXXXVII. — *To Mr. Walter Churchey, of Brecon.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1771.*

I AM glad Mr. Benson and you had an opportunity of conversing freely with Mr. Fletcher, and that he has dealt so faithfully with my Lady. Perhaps it may have a good effect. At least, he has delivered his own soul, whether she will hear, or whether she will forbear.

Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God. The Refiner's fire purges out all that is contrary to love, and that many times by a pleasing smart. Leave all this to Him that does all things well, and that loves you better than you do yourself.

I am, with love to brother Thomas,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 23, 1773.*

YOU and I love one another; therefore, we speak freely.

1. "They have thrown themselves on Providence." Not at all. From a very low state, most of them had thrown themselves into plenty and honor.
2. "It is possible they may do good." True; but it is probable they may do harm. They have everywhere done our societies all the harm they could.
3. "The place they now have is a cold place." I see no good of their having any at Hay. The land is wide enough.
4. They have no inclination, to peace.

5. "Our neighbors will see our professions true." I do not profess any coalition with Calvinism. I see the mischievousness of it more and more.
6. "Their preaching would not lessen the number of our hearers." Indeed it would, if the people minded what they say. And besides, it would puzzle and perplex those that still hear us; and probably set many a one's sword against his brother.
7. "They do not intend Antinomianism." But they preach it continually.
8. "And our people will not hear Calvinists." Indeed they will, if they play with the fire. You forget my brother's verses: —

What my soul does as hell-fire reject,
A Pope, a Count, a Leader of a sect.

I am of no sect, but the Church of England.

If James Barry or Stephen Proctor is faulty in the article you mention, tell them of it, and, I am persuaded, they will mend. You will do well to remind them, in particular, of teaching the children, and visiting the sick. I believe they will take it kindly.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near LONDON, February 25, 1774.

THE deliverance of our two fellow-travellers should certainly be matter of thankfulness, to grace prevailing over nature. And should it not be a means of stirring up those that remain to greater zeal and diligence in serving Him who will be our Guide even unto death? Should not you labor to convince and stir up others, that they may supply the place of those that are called away? And let us lose no time. Work while it is day: The night come, wherein no man can work.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

GLASGOW, *May 15, 1774.*

I CANNOT but agree with you entirely, in respect of John Prickard. Unless he has a clearer call than I apprehend, he ought not to go to America. The reason is plain: There is a greater call for him in Wales, than in the province of New-York, or Pennsylvania; and there is no call at all in the northern or southern provinces. To go thither is stark staring madness. But if John has a mind, he may come to the Conference at Bristol, and talk with me about it.

T. Judson, at No. 11, in Carey-court, Gray's Inn, is a Christian attorney. I ordered the third epistle to be sent to your sister, and I suppose it was. Your friend Joseph Benson sits at my elbow, and is much at your service.

I am, with love to sister Churchey,
Your affectionate brother.

P. S. I have seen an exceeding well wrote book, an "Introduction to the Study of the Law," published eleven or twelve years ago, I think, by one Simpson. It is a thin octavo. You should have it, if you have it not already.

The Conference begins the second week in August. Immediately after it, I hope to see you at Brecon.

CCCCXCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 21, 1775.*

A FEW days ago, my brother gave me a letter of yours, dated November 24. I am surprised that one who has passed a winter in Scotland should complain of cold in Wales. It is not a good sign. I advise no one above twenty to think of learning Greek or Latin: He may employ his time abundantly better. But if John Broadbent has a turn for learning languages, by all means let him learn Welsh. This will turn to good account. And now

is his time: You can direct and assist him herein. Meantime, persuade him to refrain from screaming, and he will do well.

I may speak in confidence to you; take care it do not transpire. Put no confidence either in T——, or his wife. I stand in doubt of them both.

The printer is hastening on with the History; yet still I think him slow.

I am, with love to S. Churchey,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

June 25, 1777.

AT present I am very safe; for I am a good many pounds, if not scores of pounds, worse than nothing. In my Will I bequeath no money but what may happen to be in my pocket when I die.

It is my religion which obliges me “to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers.” Loyalty is with me an essential branch of religion, and which I am sorry any Methodist should forget. There is the closest connection, therefore, between my religious and my political conduct; the selfsame authority enjoining me to “fear God,” and to “honor the King.”

Dr. Coke promises fair, and gives us reason to hope, that he will bring forth not only blossoms, but fruit. He has hitherto behaved exceeding well, and seems to be aware of his grand enemy, applause. He will likewise be in danger from offense. If you are acquainted with him, a friendly letter might be of use, and would be taken kindly. He now stands on slippery ground, and is in need of every help.

I expect to be at Monmouth (coming from Worcester) on Wednesday, July the ninth, and at Brecon on the tenth.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 18, 1777.*

YOU see how “good wits jump.” We agree that no politics shall have a place in the *Arminian Magazine*. But poetry will; only my brother and I are the judges what pieces shall be admitted. It may be, some will think us too nice in our choice; but that we cannot help. As to a review of religious books, it might be well; but I have two objections:

1. I scruple my own sufficiency for the work:
2. I would not, at any price, be bound to read over all the present religious productions of the press.

Peace be with you and yours, young and old!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCIV. — *To the Same.*MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near LONDON, November 21, 1783.*

YOU have indeed had a sea of troubles. But I have not heard any one say, it was your own fault: Which I wonder at; because it is the way of the world still, (as it was in the days of Job,) always to construe misfortune into sin. But you and I know that there is a God in the world; and that He has more to do in it, than most men are aware of. So little do they advert to that great truth, “Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

One thing only I have heard of you, which, if it be true, I should not commend: I mean, that you have wholly forsaken the poor Methodists, and do not so much as attend the public preaching.¹⁰⁶ One was mentioning this a few days ago, when I was saying something in favor of you; and it stopped my mouth; nay, supposing it true, I do not know what to say yet. For surely, when affliction presses upon us, we need every possible help. Commending you to Him that careth for you,

I am

Your affectionate brother.

P. S. My kind love to S. Churchey.

CCCCXCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

WHITBY, *June 14, 1788.*

YOURS of May 24th overtook me here this morning.: But I have not received the parcel which you say was sent by the coach; and probably I shall not receive it, unless it pleases God to bring me back to London.

Health is wonderfully continued. Only I am in the fashion: I have a little of the rheumatism.

The case of that old woman was very remarkable. It is a true saying, "None are ruined while they are out of hell." One would be sorry for the death of George Jarvis, only that we know, God does all things well. If Mr. Holmes has any money of mine in his hands, I desire he would give you a guinea for the widow. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

YORK, *June 26, 1788.*

I ANSWERED your last: By what means my letter miscarried, I cannot tell. About half of that paragraph (which has travelled over most of the kingdom) is very true: The other half is a blunder. What I spoke was a citation from Bengelius, who thought, not that the world would end, but that the Millennium would begin, about the year 1836. Not that I affirmed this myself, nor ever did. I do not determine any of these things: They are too high for me. I only desire to creep on in the vale of humble love. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 6, 1788.*

I AM glad you wrote to poor Mr. Henderson; for certainly he stands in great need of comfort; and he must now needs seek it in God, for all other streams are cut off.

I cannot learn anything concerning the manner of John Henderson's death, whether it was with or without hope; as I cannot find that any of his religious friends were near him at that important season.

The Methodists in general have very little taste for any poems but those of a religious or a moral kind; and my brother has amply provided them with these. Besides those that are already printed, I have six volumes of his poems in manuscript. However, if you furnish me with the proposals, I will do you what little service I can. I should be glad to see or hear from Mr. Cowper: But I have no means of access to him at all.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCXCVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *June 20, 1789.*

MICHAEL —— is an original. He tells lies innumerable, many of them plausible enough. But many talk full as plausibly as he; and they that can believe him, may. I do not doubt, but some part of your verse, as well as prose, will reach the hearts of some of the rich.

Dr. Coke made two or three little alterations in the Prayer-Book without my knowledge. I took particular care throughout, to alter nothing merely

for altering' sake. In religion, I am for as few innovations as possible. I love the old wine best. And if it were only on this account, I prefer "*which*" before "*who* art in heaven."

Mr. Howard is really an extraordinary man. God has raised him up to be a blessing to many nations. I do not doubt, but there has been something more than natural in his preservation hitherto, and should not wonder if the providence of God should hereafter be still more conspicuous in his favor.

About three weeks hence, I expect to embark for England. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCIX. — *To the Same.*

1789.

I HAVE now revised the five volumes in my brother's Hymns on the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. He had himself revised them no less than seven times in the space of twenty years. Many of them are little or nothing inferior to the best of them that have been printed. Those of them that savor a little of mysticism I have rather corrected or expunged; but I have no thought or design at all of printing them. I have other work to do which is of more immediate importance. Besides that, I have not two or three hundred pounds to spare. I will order my printer to strike off some of your proposals, which I will then occasionally recommend to my friends. Some of them I know will subscribe; and it may be, God will incline the hearts of more than I am aware of. But with whom do you agree for paper and printing? Proceed warily, or you may get into much trouble! That God may bless you and yours, and be your Guide in this and in all things, is the prayer of

Your affectionate brother. ¹⁰⁷

D. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *September 20*, —.

AT length Jenny has broke through, and given me the satisfaction of exchanging a few words with her. You send us strange news that the lions of Wales are become lambs! I really think a spirit of humanity and benevolence is gone forth upon the earth, perhaps intimating, that the time is drawing near when men shall not know war any more. Mr. Wrigley has been detained here by a sore face, ever since the Conference; but is now also on the mending hand; though he is not yet able to go abroad. I am glad to hear that Dr. Powell, of Brecon, continues in the good way. He seems to be of a frank, open temper; and to be skillful in his profession. I am rather gaining than losing ground as to my health.

I think Mr. Cowper has done as much as is possible to be done with his lamentable story. I can only wish he had a better subject. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

I set out for London on Monday.

DI. — *To a Young Disciple.*LONDON, *February 25*, 1769.

YOU have no need to take thought for the morrow: As your day, so your strength will be. With regard to little compliances, I should be of ——'s mind; only, if we begin, we know not where we shall stop. If you plead your conscience for not complying with anything, you must use the most mild and respectful expressions you possibly can, and God will order all things well. You will want no help which is in the power of

Yours affectionately.

DII. — *To the Same.*

January 25, 1771.

As you desire a few directions with regard to the improvement of your mind, I will set down just what occur to me at present. Only as my business is great, and my time is short, I cannot stay to explain them at large.

All the knowledge you want is comprised in one book, — the Bible. When you understand this, you will know enough. I advise you, therefore, to begin everyday (before or after private prayer) with reading a portion, more or less, of the Old or New Testament, or of both, if you have time, together with the Notes, which may lead you by the hand into suitable meditation. After breakfast, you may read, in order; the volumes of Sermons, and the other practical books which we have published; more or less at a time, (as other business permits,) with meditation and prayer. Young, Milton, and the Moral and Sacred Poems, you may read chiefly in the afternoons. Whatever you write, you should write in the forenoons. Take care never to read or write too long at a time. That is not conducive either to bodily or spiritual health. If I can be of use to you in anything else, tell me; you know you may speak freely to

Yours affectionately.

DIII. — *To the Same.*

DUBLIN, *March 30, 1771.*

So poor, tempted, disconsolate ——— was sent to London for your sake also! She was sent to you among others, to quicken your expectation of the great salvation. And what is it our Lord calls you to now? Whereunto thou hast attained, hold fast! You may undoubtedly lose what God has given; but you never need. Is not his grace sufficient for you? Is not his

strength made perfect in weakness? Indeed you shall pass through the fire; but lean upon Him, and the flames shall not kindle upon you. You shall go through the waters; but keep hold on Him, and the floods shall not run over you. Suffer all and conquer all.

In every temptation, He keeps you to prove
His utmost salvation, His fulness of love!

Be exceeding wary in your conversation, that it may be worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Let not the liveliness of your spirit lead you into levity: Cheerful seriousness is the point you are to aim at. And be willing to suffer with Him, that you may reign with Him. Deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Him!

I am
Yours affectionately.

DIV. — *To the Same.*

BANDON, *May 2, 1771.*

THERE is no fear I should forget you, especially at this time, when all the powers of hell are engaged against you; but let them come about you like bees, they shall be extinct as the fire among the thorns. Tempted you are, and will be; otherwise, you could not know your own weakness, and the strength of your Master. But all temptations will “work together for good;” all are for your profit, that you may be partaker of his holiness. You may always have an evidence both of God’s love to you, and of yours to him. And, at some times, the former may be more clear; at other times, the latter. It is enough if, in one case or the other, you simply stay your soul upon Him. S. Harper’s is the ordinary experience of those who are renewed in love. S. Jackson’s experience is quite extraordinary, and what very few of them have yet attained.

There is a danger of every believer’s mistaking the voice of the enemy, or of their own imagination, for the voice of God. And you can distinguish one from the other, not by any written rule, but only by the unction in the

Holy One. This only teaches Christian prudence, consistent with simplicity and godly sincerity. The four volumes of Sermons, the Appeals, the Notes, and the Extracts from Mr. Law's Works, and from Dr. Young, might best suit you now: Meddle with nothing that does not suit your present temper. Meet with them that meet on a Friday, and speak in God's name, without fear or shame. The general rule, "not to correspond but with those who have both grace and understanding," admits of several exceptions, in favor of a few who want one of them, or the other, or both. Be not afraid of writing too long letters to me. The longer, the more agreeable to,

My dear ——,
Yours affectionately.

DV. — *To the Same.*

GALWAY, *May 20, 1771.*

YOUR concern is with the present moment: Your business is, to live today. In every sense, let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. It is true, the full assurance of hope excludes all doubt; of our final salvation; but it does not, and cannot, continue any longer than we walk closely with God. And it does not include any assurance of our future behavior; neither do I know any word in all the Bible which gives us any authority to look for a testimony of this kind. But just so far you may certainly go, with regard to the present moment, —

"I want the witness, Lord,
That all I do is right,
According to thy will and word,
Well-pleasing in thy sight."

Seriously and steadily, my dear maid, aim at this; and you will not be disappointed of your hope. With regard to the impression you speak of, I am in doubt whether it be not a temptation from the enemy. It may occasion many wrong tempers; it may feed both pride and uncharitableness. And the Bible gives us no authority to think ill of any one, but from plain, undeniable, overt acts.

Rollin was a pious man, and a fine historian. If you read one volume, you would feel whether it enlivened or deadened your soul. The same trial you may make, as to serious poetry. Very probably this would enliven your soul; and certainly the volumes of Philosophy may, as Galen entitles his description of the human body, “A Hymn to the Creator.” Temporal business need not interrupt your communion with God, though it varies the manner of it. It is certain every promise has a condition; yet that does not make the promise of none effect; but by the promise you are encouraged and enabled to fulfill the condition. You might like it better, were there no condition; but that would not answer the design of Him that makes it. It is certain, there are times of nearer access to God, and that it nearly imports us to improve those precious seasons. But we may find plausible objections against this; and, indeed, against anything. The more free you are with me, the more you oblige,

My dear ——,
Yours affectionately.

DVI. — *To the Same.*

DUBLIN, *July 13, 1771.*

TRUTH and falsehood, and so right and wrong tempers, are often divided by an almost imperceptible line. It is the more difficult to distinguish right and wrong tempers, or passions, because, in several instances, the same motion of the blood and animal spirits will attend both one and the other. Therefore, in many cases, we cannot distinguish them, but by the unction of the Holy One. In the case you mention, all self-complacency or self-approbation is not pride. Certainly there may be self-approbation, which is not sin, though it must occasion a degree of pleasure. “This is our rejoicing, even the testimony of our conscience toward God.” And this joy is neither better nor worse, for being accompanied with a natural motion of the blood and spirits. Equally natural, and equally innocent, is the joy which we receive from being approved by those we love. But, in all these instances, there is need of the utmost care, lest we slide from innocent joy, or self-approbation, into that which is not innocent, into pride, (thinking

of ourselves more highly than we ought to think,) or vanity, a desire of praise.

For thin partitions do their bounds divide.

Be all in earnest; and always speak without reserve to

Yours, etc.

DVII. — *To the Same.*

THE HAY, *August 24, 1771.*

IF you find any comfort or help thereby, write on, without any reasoning about the matter. The various thoughts and suggestions you mention are just such as any person of a lively imagination may expect. Satan, too, very well knows whereof we are made, and always attacks us on the weak side. But these, and a thousand clouds passing over your mind, prove nothing as to the state of your heart: See that this be devoted to Him, and it is enough. You have given it Him: Stand to your gift. However, then, your imagination may be affected, you will have the testimony of a good conscience toward God. Not but that you may plead that promise, "The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." As the former word takes in all your passions, so does the latter all the workings of your reason and imagination. Pray, therefore, and look for the answer of your prayer. It shall come, and not tarry!

DVIII. — *To the Same.*

KINGSWOOD, *September 13, 1771.*

YOUR present weakness will, I hope, be an unspeakable blessing. You were in danger of having more sail than ballast, more liveliness of imagination than solid wisdom. But it seems God is correcting this defect, and giving you more steadiness of mind. You now see and feel what is the real value of this poor perishable world, and how little real happiness is to be found in all things under the sun.

It is right to pour out our whole soul before Him that careth for us. But it is good, likewise, to unbosom ourselves to a friend, in whom we can confide. This also is an appointed means which it generally pleases God to bless. Whenever, therefore, you have opportunity, speak all that is in your heart to

Your affectionate brother.

DIX. — *To the Same.*

WITNEY, *October 16, 1771.*

It is no fault to be grieved at the unkindness of those we love: Only it may go to an excess; so that we have need to watch in this, as in all things, seeing the life of man is a temptation upon earth. And it is no fault not to grieve for the censure we must often meet with for following our own conscience. Of those little ones you cannot be too tender, or too careful; and as you are frequently alone, you may teach them many important lessons, as they are able to bear them. But it requires immense patience; for you must tell them the same thing ten times over, or you do nothing.

A higher degree of that peace which may well be said to pass all understanding will keep, not only your heart, but all the workings of your mind, (as the world properly signifies,) both of your reason and imagination, from all irregular sallies. This peace will increase as your faith increases: One always keeps pace with the other. So that on this account also your continual prayer should be, "Lord, increase my faith!" A continual desire is a continual prayer; that is, in a low sense of the word; for there is a far higher sense, — such an open intercourse with God, such a close, uninterrupted communion with him, as G. Lopez experienced, and not a few of our brethren now alive. This you also should aspire after; as you know, He with whom we have to do is no respecter of persons.

DX. — *To the Same.**January 5, 1772.*

It is not always a defect to mind one thing at a time. And an aptness so to do, to employ the whole vigour of the mind on the thing in hand, may answer excellent purposes. Only you have need to be exceeding wary, lest the thing you pursue be wrong. First, be well assured not only that it is good, but that it is the best thing for you at that time; and then, whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might. But you have all things in one, the whole of religion contracted to a point, in that word, "Walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us." All is contained in humble, gentle, patient love. Is not this, so to speak, a divine contrivance to assist the narrowness of our minds, the scantiness of our understandings? Every right temper, and then all right words and actions, naturally branch out of love. In effect, therefore, you want nothing but this, — to be filled with the faith that worketh by love.

DXI. — *To the Same.**LEITH, May 13, 1772.*

To set the state of perfection too high, is the surest way to drive it out of the world. The substance of that test, I believe, I have seen; and I judge it not consistent with humanity; I mean with the state of a human soul, as long as it is united to a corruptible body. Do not puzzle yourself any more with these nice inquiries; but, in order to re-settle your judgment, give another deliberate reading, to the "Farther Thoughts," or the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." He that long ago gave you to taste of his pardoning love, gave you afterwards a taste of His pure love. Whereunto you have attained, hold fast; never cast it away through a voluntary humility. But see that you do not rest there. Comparatively, forget the things that are behind. Reach forward! This one thing do: Press on to the prize of your high calling.

DXII. — *To the Same.*WHITBY, *June 20, 1772.*

It is of admirable use to bear the weaknesses, nay, and even the faults, of the real children of God. And the temptations to anger which arise herefrom are often more profitable than any other. Yet surely, for the present, they are not joyous, but grievous: Afterwards comes the peaceable fruit. You shall have exactly as much pain and as much disappointment as will be most for your profit, and just sufficient to

Keep you dead to all below,
Only Christ resolved to know.

Never make it matter of reasoning that you have not either a larger or a smaller share of suffering. You shall have exactly what is best, both as to kind, degree, and time. O what a blessing is it to be in His hand who “doeth all things well!”

Of all gossiping, religious gossiping is the worst: It adds hypocrisy to uncharitableness, and effectually does the work of the devil in the name of the Lord. The Leaders, in every society, may do much towards driving it out from among the Methodists. Let them, in the band or class, observe,

1. “Now we are to talk of no absent person, but simply of God and our own souls.”

2. “The rule of our conversation here is to be the rule of all our conversation. Let us observe it (unless in some necessarily exempt cases) at all times and in all places.” If this be frequently inculcated, it will have an excellent effect.

Instead of giving a caution once, as to a grown person, you must give it to a child ten times. By this means you may keep a sensible child from an improper familiarity with servants. Cautions should also be given frequently and earnestly to the servants themselves; and they will not always be thrown away, if they have either grace or sense.

DXIII. — *To the Same.*BRISTOL, *August 31, 1772.*

NONE are or can be saved but those who are by faith made inwardly and outwardly holy. But this holy faith is the gift of God; and he is never straitened for time. He can as easily give this faith in a moment as in a thousand years. He frequently does give it on a death-bed, in answer to the prayer of believers, but rarely, if ever, to those who had continued unholy, upon the presumption that He would save them at last. But, if He did, what unspeakable losers must they be! Could grief be in heaven, they would grieve to eternity, seeing every one there shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor.

And *he* will perplex you more than enough, if you listen to his sallies of imagination: “Every one has some pursuit; therefore a man cannot be always in communion with God.” I deny the consequence. While Mr. De Renty was serving the poor, he was in constant communion with God. So was Gregory Lopez, while he was writing books. “At first, indeed,” as Lopez observed, “large manifestations from God were apt to suspend the exercise of his senses, as well as of his understanding. But, after some time, they made no difference at all, but left him the full exercise of his understanding and senses.” I remember a much later instance of the same kind: An old Clergyman told me, some years since, “I asked Mr. Boehm, (Chaplain to Prince George of Denmark,) ‘Sir, when you are in such an hurry of business, surrounded with a crowd of people, hearing one, and dictating to another, at the same time, does it not interrupt your mental prayer?’ He answered immediately, ‘All that hurry no more hinders my communion with God, than if I was all the time sitting alone in my study, or kneeling at the altar.’” No business, therefore, of any kind, no conversation, need hinder one that is strong in faith, from rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks. Follow after this, and you will surely attain it.

DXIV. — *To the Same.**March 23, 1773.*

IF useless words or thoughts spring from evil tempers, they are properly evil; otherwise, not; but still they are contrary to the Adamic law: Yet not to the law of love; therefore there is no condemnation for them, but they are matter of humiliation before God. So are those (seemingly) unbelieving thoughts, although they are not your own, and you may boldly say, “Go, go, thou unclean spirit; thou shalt answer for these, and not I.”

Your affections were apt to be too impetuous, and sometimes uneven too; but nature yields to healing grace, which I trust has made you both more calm and more steady: And what will it not make you, if you persevere? All that is amiable, holy, and happy! Already He that loves you, gives you a taste of what he has prepared for you. Let patience have its perfect work; and you shall be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. See that you make the best of life! The time is short!

DXV. — *To the Same.**July 23, 1773.*

AT many times our advances in the race that is set before us are clear and perceptible; at other times they are no more perceptible (at least to ourselves) than the growth of a tree. At my time you may pray, —

“Strength and comfort from thy word,
Imperceptibly supply.”

And when you perceive nothing, it does not follow that the work of God stands still in your soul; especially while your desire is unto Him, and while you choose Him for your portion. He does not leave you to yourself, though it may seem so to your apprehension. The difference between temptation and sin is generally plain enough to all that are simple of heart; but in some exempt cases it is not plain: There we want the

unction of the Holy One. Voluntary humility, calling every defect a sin, is not well pleasing to God. Sin, properly speaking, is neither more nor less than “a voluntary transgression of a known law of God.”

There are a thousand instances wherein it is not possible literally to make restitution. All that we can advise in the case you mention is,

1. Let him that stole, steal no more; let him be from this hour rigorously just.
2. Let him be a faithful steward of the mammon of unrighteousness, restoring all he can to God, in the poor.

DXVI. — *To the Same.*

August 20, 1773

I OFTEN heard my own mother make the same complaint with you. She did not *feel* near so much as my father did; but she *did* ten times more than he did. You must labor to do so much the more, and pray that God would supply whatever is wanting. One degree of forgiveness is due to every one, though impenitent; still I love him as I love all men. But the other degree, whereby I should again receive him as a friend, is only due to one who says, “I repent;” that is, convinces me that he does really repent, and is entirely changed.

It is certain God has given you a talent, and I still think it ought to be used. I grant indeed, to be hid and to be still is more agreeable to flesh and blood; but is it more agreeable to Him “who hath left us an example, that we might tread in his steps?”

One cannot be saved from evil tempers, without being devoted to God; neither can a soul be all devoted to God, without being saved from sin: But it is often exceeding hard to judge of others, whether they are saved from all evil tempers, and whether they are all devoted to God, or not; yea, it is hard to judge of ourselves; nay, we cannot do it, without the anointing of the Holy One given for that very purpose. Out of darkness, God will command light to shine. Be plain and open to all; then, whether they are sincere or insincere, you will have a conscience void of offense. You find

all things work together for good. They must, while the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Yours affectionately.

DXVII. — *To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *September 8, 1773.*

WE have the clearest proof, when we have to do with children, that “the help which is done upon earth, God doeth it himself.” All our wisdom will not even make them understand, much less feel, the things of God. The “Instructions for Children” contain the best matter that we can possibly teach them. But nothing less than the finger of God can write it on their hearts. On Saturday night, he sent another shower of grace upon our children at Kingswood. Sixteen of them were deeply affected; and, I think, thirteen found peace with God. Four or five of them were some of the smallest we had, not above seven or eight years old.

Although there may be some use in teaching very young children to “say their prayers daily;” yet I judge it to be utterly impossible to teach any to “practice prayer,” till they are awakened. For, what is prayer, but the desire of the soul expressed in words to God, either inwardly or outwardly? How then will you teach them to express a desire who feel no desire at all? When, therefore, Madame Guion talks in that manner, it often makes me afraid, that both she and her teacher, Archbishop Fenelon, talked by rote of the things they knew not. Both of them had an amazing genius, but, I doubt, full little experience. It is exceeding certain, neither his nor her writings are likely to do us any solid service. We have all the gold that is in them, without the dross; which is often not only useless, but dangerous. Let you and I keep the good old way: —

In doings and bearing The will of our Lord,
We still are preparing To meet our reward.

Go on steadily in this path: There is none better. By patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality. You shall reap, if you faint not.

DXVIII. — *To the Same.*BRISTOL, *September 29, 1773.*

YOUR own experience may give an answer to your question. You did yourself enjoy a foretaste of that constant communion with God, though it did not continue long. And you know it was given you in a moment. It was the same case with all those whom I have known, that are now enabled to pray without ceasing. To every one of them that blessing was given in an instant. So it will be given to you again; although, probably, you will find a strong hope first, which will incite you to cry out,

“Big with earnest expectation,
See me sit At thy feet,
Longing for salvation.”

Grace in one sense will make all things new. And I have sometimes known this done to such a degree, that there has been no trace of the natural temper remaining. But generally the innocent natural temper does remain; only refined, softened, and cast into the mold of love.

DXIX. — *To the Same.*LEWISHAM, *December 3, 1773.*

YOU are yourself a living witness of this religion. But it is only in a low degree. I grant you are only just beginning to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is an unspeakable blessing, that he shows you this, in so clear and strong a light. And undoubtedly he is able to make you completely serious; and yet this is consistent with much cheerfulness. You shall have more or less of reproach, as he chooses. Your part is, to leave all in His hands, who orders all things well. Go straight forward, and you shall be all a Christian! I expect that you will be more and more a confront to,

My dear,
Yours affectionately.

DXX. — *To Mr. John Mason.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

PEMBROKE, *August 6, 1768.*

I WOULD advise to make a longer trial of Kinsale. I am still in hope that goodwill be done there. And there has been considerable good done at Bandon; and will be more, if the Preachers do not coop themselves up in the house. But no great goodwill be done at any place without field-preaching. I hope you labor to keep the bands regular in every place, which cannot be done without a good deal of care and pains. Take pains, likewise, with the children, and in visiting from house to house; else you will see little fruit of your labor. I believe it will be best to change the Preachers more frequently.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 15, 1768.*

FOR one Preacher to stay long at one place is neither profitable for him nor for the people. If there is only one Preacher at Limerick, he must duly visit the country societies. As David Evans is now gone over to Waterford, brother Burke will be at liberty; so either he or you should go without delay, and relieve John Hilton at Londonderry. If any deny the witness of sanctification, and occasion disputing in the select society, let him or her meet therein no more. I hope the singing goes on well.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 26, 1772.*

TWO old members recovered I make more account of than three new ones. I love to see backsliders return. I was afraid there was no more place for us in Workington. Scarce any one came to hear. It is well the people are now of a better mind. You cannot expect to do good at Carlisle till you either procure a more comfortable place, or preach in the open air. For many years Cockermouth has been the same, and will be till you can preach abroad.

You will observe the letter which I desired brother Mather to write to you concerning the books; and make all the haste which the nature of the thing will admit. I shall endeavor to see you in summer; and am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 10, 1774.*

IT is nothing strange that those who love the world should not love to continue with us. Our road is too strait.

Down the stream of nature driven,
They seek a broader path to heaven.

However, let us keep in the good old way; and we know it will bring us peace at the last.

If you press all the believers to go on to perfection, and to expect deliverance from sin every moment, they will grow in grace. But if ever they lose that expectation, they will grow flat and cold.

Last week I was under the Surgeon's hands; but am now, blessed be God, better than I have been for some years.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

November 21, 1776.

ONE of Mr. Fletcher's Checks considers at large the Calvinistic supposition, "that a natural man is as dead as a stone;" and shows the utter falseness and absurdity of it; seeing no man living is without some preventing grace; and every degree of grace is a degree of life.

That "by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men" (all born into the world) "unto condemnation," is an undoubted truth; and affects every infant, as well as every adult person. But it is equally true, that, "by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men" (all born into the world, infant or adult) "unto justification." Therefore no infant ever was, or ever will be, "sent to hell for the guilt of Adam's sin;" seeing it is cancelled by the righteousness of Christ, as soon as they are sent into the world.

Labor on, especially by visiting from house to house, and you will see the fruit of your labor.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

November, 1779.

AN Assistant at the last Conference said, "I will do as my predecessors have done: I will leave those as members that never met. They are as good members as I found them."

Whoever does this for the time to come, I will exclude from our Connection without delay. To prevent this vile practice, I desire you will,

1. Take an exact plan of your Circuit at Christmas, and send it to me in January; and do the same every quarter.
2. If you live till August, leave for your successor an exact list of the societies in your Circuit.

I desire, likewise, that, at the next Quarterly Meeting, you would change at least one of the Stewards in every society where there are two.

One thing more I desire, — that you would read the proposals for the general Hymn-Book in every society, and procure as many subscribers as you can.

By your diligence and exactness in these particulars, I shall judge whether you are qualified to act as an Assistant or not.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

Pray send me word in January how many subscriptions you have procured in your Circuit.

DXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near LONDON, November 3, 1784.

YOU judge right. If the people were more alive to God, they would be more liberal. There is money enough, and particularly in Somersetshire; but they are straitened in their own bowels. When I complied with the desire of many, and divided the Circuit into two, we were not a jot better. You have one thing to point at, — the revival and increase of the work of God. Get as many as possible to meet in band. Be exact in every part of discipline, and give no ticket to any that does not meet his class weekly.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER

LONDON, *January 24, 1787.*

I DO not wonder that the work of God should flourish at Trowbridge, where a few of our sisters are a pattern to the whole town. But it is exceeding strange that any considerable good should be done at poor, dead, quarrelsome Frome! We can only say, “The wind bloweth where it listeth!” Now avail yourself of the opportunity! It is equally strange that there should be such peace at Stullbridge. At Ditcheat I doubt not but you will overcome evil with good.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near OXFORD, October 27, 1789.

WHEREVER the congregation increases, we have reason to hope the work of God will increase also. And it is certain, distress is one means whereby God awakens men out of sleep. You know famine is one of God’s sore judgments; and the people should be strongly encouraged to improve by it. Suffer no Leader to whisper in his class; but to speak so that all who are present may hear; otherwise, how shall

Each his friendly aid afford;
And feel his brother’s care?

Speak strong and home to all.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near LONDON, *January* 13, 1790.

As long as I live, the people shall have no share in choosing either Stewards or Leaders among the Methodists. We have not, and never had, any such custom. We are no republicans, and never intend to be. It would be better for those that are so minded to go quietly away. I have been uniform both in doctrine and discipline for above these fifty years; and it is a little too late for me to turn into a new path now. I am gray-headed. Neither good old brother Pascoe (God bless him!) expects it from me, nor brother Wood, nor brother Flamank. If you and I should be called hence this year, we may bless God that we have not lived in vain. Come, let us have a few more strokes at Satan's kingdom, and then we shall depart in peace!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXX. — *To —.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November* 16, 1770.

To see even the superscription of a letter from you, always gives me pleasure. I am glad you are still waiting for the kingdom of God; although as yet you are rather in the state of a servant, than of a child. But it is a blessed thing to be even a servant of God! You shall never have cause to be ashamed of his service. What I peculiarly advise is, that you will never omit private duties, whatever hurry you may be in, and however dull and dry your soul may be; still they shall not be without a blessing. And therein you will receive power against that temptation which, to your tender spirit, may be the most dangerous of any.

On Sunday I am to preach a funeral sermon for that blessed man, Mr. Whitefield, at the Tabernacle, and at Tottenham-Court chapel. If it is an help or comfort to you, write often to

Your brother.

DXXXI. — *To Mr. Henry Eames, after his emigration to America.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS, *August 3, 1772.*

It is a great blessing that God has looked upon you in a strange land, and given you food to eat, and raiment to put on; but a still greater, that he has given you to eat of that bread which the world knoweth not of. You have likewise the invaluable advantage of companions on the way. I suppose you gladly entered the society as soon as one was formed; and that you never willingly neglect any opportunity of meeting your brethren. Whatever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might. Beware of spiritual sloth; beware of carelessness and listlessness of spirit. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." See that you are one of those violent ones that "take it by force."

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

CHESTER, *July 5, 1789.*

AFTER the many proofs which you have already had, both of the power and goodness of God, particularly in giving you your heart's desire, in the change wrought in several of your children, you can have no reason to doubt but that He will give you your mother also, if you continue earnest in prayer. The great hindrance to the inward work of God is Antinomianism, wherever it breaks in. I am glad you are aware of it. Show

your faith by your works. Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. Peace be with you and yours.

I am
Yours affectionately.

DXXXIII. — *To Mr. George Shadford.*

DEAR GEORGE,

1773.

THE time is arrived for you to embark for America. You must go down to Bristol, where you will meet with Thomas Rankin, Captain Webb, and his wife.

I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can.

I am, dear George,
Yours affectionately.

DXXXIV. — *To Miss Ball, of High-Wycomb.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

Near INISKILLEN, May 23, 1773.

I THANK you for your comfortable letter. Right “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” Where there is any eminent instance of mercy in this kind, it is almost always a means of convincing and converting others. It is a season one would wish to improve to the uttermost; for then the windows of heaven are open.

It cannot be doubted but your heaviness was owing in part to diabolical agency. Nay, and Satan sometimes, by God's permission, weakens the body. Nevertheless, we are, even in that weakness, to use natural means, just as if it was owing to natural causes. I believe it would be of use, if you took a cup-full of the decoction of burdock (sweetened or unsweetened) both morning and evening. I never remember its having any ill effect on any person whatsoever.

Our point is, to improve by everything that occurs: By good or ill success, so called; by sickness or health; by ease or pain: And this we can do, through Christ strengthening us. We know chance is an empty sound: The Lord sitteth on his throne, and ruleth all things well. Love him, trust him; praise him.

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DXXXV. — *To Mr. Alexander Hume, Peeltown, Isle of Man.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *September 22, 1775.*

I REJOICE to hear that God has made Mr. Crook's labor of love profitable to some of you, and cannot blame you for desiring to have him with you a little longer. I will write to Mr. Mason, the Assistant at Whitehaven, that Mr. Crook is coming to be a third Preacher in that Circuit. The three Preachers may then visit the Isle, month by month; so that you will have Mr. Crook one month in three. They will all teach you, that religion is holy tempers and holy lives; and that the sum of all is love.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DXXXVI. — *To the Rev. Peard Dickinson.*

DEAR SIR,

CORK, *May 6, 1767.*

I AM now come to my second station in Ireland: For here we expect to stay seven days; only with a digression of two out of the seven, to Bandon and Kinsale. I know not that I shall spend two whole days in any other place before I return to Dublin. I am glad you are fairly discharged from Oxford; although there is a little seed left there still. When we were there, we profited much of watching continually against “the lust of finishing;” to mortify which, we broke off writing in the middle of a sentence, if not in the middle of a word; especially the moment we heard the chapel-bell ring, or a knock at our door. If nature reclaimed, we remembered the word of the Heathen: *Ejicienda est haec mollities animi.* ¹⁰⁸

I am glad there is so good an understanding among the Preachers: A great deal depends upon it. But I hope you do not forget gentle T. O. May not you venture to give him a hint, that your Hints were incorrectly printed? If he says, “They were written so, I could hardly read them;” you can tell him, “I hope to write the next better.”

Miss Briggs’s spending so much of her time at Shoreham answers an excellent design. It, in a great measure, supplies the want both of Miss Perronet and of her father, whom I remember with sincere affection.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

LONDONDERRY, *June 5, 1787.*

THE Irish posts are not the quickest in the world; though I have known one travel full two miles in an hour. And they are not the most certain, Letters fail here more frequently than they do in England.

Mr. Heath has need of abundance of faith and patience. He is in a very unpleasing situation. But this I am determined on; he shall not want, as long as I have either money or credit. He is a truly pious and a very amiable man: His wife and children are cast in the same mould. I am glad you all showed him, while he was in London, the respect which he well deserves.

As the work of God increases in so many parts both of England and Ireland, it would be strange if there were no increase of it in London; especially while all the Preachers are of one mind, and speak the same thing. Only do not forget strongly and explicitly to urge the believers to “go on to perfection.” When this is constantly and earnestly done, the word is always clothed with power.

Truly I claim no thanks for loving and esteeming Betsy Briggs; for I cannot help it. And I shall be in danger of quarrelling with you, if you ever love her less than you do now. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXXVIII. — *To Mr. Charles Perronet.*

DEAR CHARLES,

LONDON, *December 28, 1774.*

CERTAINLY there is nothing amiss in the desire to do something for a good Master; only still adding, (in this, as in all things else,) “Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

If we could once bring all our Preachers, itinerant and local, uniformly and steadily to insist on those two points, “Christ dying for us,” and “Christ reigning in us,” we should shake the trembling gates of hell. I think most of them are now exceeding clear herein, and the rest come nearer and nearer; especially since they have read Mr. Fletcher’s Checks, which have removed many difficulties out of the way.

I expect more good from Mrs. B.'s medicine than from a heap of others.
Remember Hezekiah's figs.

I am, dear Charles,
Ever yours.

DXXXIX. — *To Miss Perronet.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

Near LEEDS, August 6, 1775.

I BELIEVE my late illness has already answered many wise ends of Providence. It has been a blessing to me and to many others, — a fresh proof that God doeth all things well.

I doubt not but brother Wood and his fellow-laborer will be still zealous and active for God; and, if so, his work will surely increase at Sevenoaks and the Wells, as well as other places. Nay, I do not despair of poor Canterbury: It is not out of God's reach.

I dreamed last night that the Spaniards were come, and were searching all houses, and putting men to the torture. But on a sudden they were vanished out of the land, I could not tell how. My Betsy should not think that I am ever so busy as not to have leisure to read and answer her letters. I think Philothea too, since I am alive again, should have written to me, either in verse or prose.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

DXL. — *To Miss Briggs.*

MY DEAR BETSY,

CHESTER, *March 17, 1771.*

YOU have great reason to praise Him who has done great things for you already. What you now want is, to come boldly to the throne of grace, that the hunger and thirst after His full image, which God has given you, may be satisfied. Full salvation is nigh, even at the door. Only believe, and it is yours. It is a great blessing that, at your years, you are preserved from seeking happiness in any creature. You need not, seeing Christ is yours! O cleave to Him with your whole heart!

I am, my dear Betsy,
Yours affectionately.

DXLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BETSY,

ATHLONE, *April 14, 1771.*

YOU may be assured that I am always well pleased to hear from you; and that I shall never think your letters too long. Always tell me whatever is in your heart; and the more freely the better. Otherwise, it would be hardly possible to give you the advice you may want from time to time. As soon as you had your armor on, it was fit that it should be proved: So God prepared for you the occasions of fighting, that you might conquer, and might know both your own weakness and His strength. Each day will bring just temptation enough, and power enough to conquer it; and, as one says, “temptations, with distinct deliverances from them, avail much.” The unction of the Holy One is given to believers for this very end, — to enable them to distinguish (which otherwise would be impossible) between sin and temptation. And this you will do, not by any general rule, but by listening to Him on all particular occasions, and by your consulting with those that have experience in the ways of God. Undoubtedly both you, and Philothea, and my dear Miss Perronet, are now more particularly called to speak for God. In so doing you must expect to meet with many things which are not pleasing to flesh and blood. But all is well. So much

the more will you be conformed to the death of Christ. Go on in his name, and in the power of his might. Suffer and conquer all things.

I am, my dear Betsy,
Yours affectionately.

DXLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BETSY,

CASTLEBAR, *May 31, 1771.*

YOU judge exceeding right: As yet you are but a little child, just a babe in the pure love of Christ. As a little child, hang upon him, and simply expect a supply of all your wants. In this respect reasoning profits you nothing: Indeed, it is just opposite to believing, whereby you hearken to the inward voice, which says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Undoubtedly it would be a cross to declare what God has done for your soul: Nay, and afterwards Satan would accuse you on the account, telling you, "You did it out of pride." Yea, and some of your sisters would blame you, and perhaps put the same construction upon it. Nevertheless, if you do it with a single eye, it will be well pleasing to God.

Your letters will be always agreeable to,

My dear Betsy,
Yours affectionately.

DXLIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BETSY,

December 28, 1774.

YOU have done what you could in this matter; and "angels can do no more." I am glad you tried: By and by she may see more clearly. I am always glad to hear from you, whether you have time to write accurately or not. And I love that you should tell me both what you feel, and what you do; for I take part in all. I doubted not but you would find a blessing at this solemn season: See that you strengthen each other's hands in God. I should be glad to see both, or either of you, when it is convenient.

I am, my dear Betsy,
Yours affectionately.

DXLIV. — *To Lady Huntingdon.*

MY DEAR LADY,

September 14, 1772.

WHEN I received the former letter from your Ladyship, I did not know how to answer; and I judged, not only that silence would be the best answer, but also that with which your Ladyship would be best pleased. When I received your Ladyship's of the 2nd instant, I immediately saw that it required an answer; only I waited till the hurry of the Conference was over, that I might do nothing rashly. I know your Ladyship would not "servilely deny the truth." I think, neither would I; especially that great truth, — justification by faith; which Mr. Law indeed flatly denies, (and yet Mr. Law was a child of God,) but for which I have given up all my worldly hopes, my friends, my reputation; yea, for which I have so often hazarded my life, and, by the grace of God, will do again. The principles established in the Minutes, I apprehend to be no way contrary to this, or to that faith, that consistent plan of doctrine, which was "once delivered to the saints." I believe, whoever calmly considers Mr. Fletcher's Letters will be convinced of this. I fear therefore, "zeal against those principles" is no less than zeal against the truth, and against the honor of our Lord. The preservation of His honor appears so sacred to me, and has done for above these forty years, that I have counted, and do count, all things loss in comparison of it. But till Mr. Fletcher's printed letters are answered, I must think everything spoken against those Minutes is totally destructive of His honor, and a palpable affront to Him, both as our Prophet and Priest, but more especially as the King of his people. Those letters, which therefore could not be suppressed without betraying the honor of our Lord, largely prove that the Minutes lay no other foundation than that which is laid in Scripture, and which I have been laying, and teaching others to lay, for between thirty and forty years. Indeed, it would be

amazing, that God should at this day prosper my labors as much if not more than ever, by convincing as well as converting sinners, if I was “establishing another foundation, repugnant to the whole plan of man’s salvation under the covenant of grace, as well as the clear meaning of our established Church, and all other Protestant churches.” This is a charge indeed! But I plead, Not guilty. And till it is proved upon me, I must subscribe myself,

My dear Lady,

Your Ladyship’s affectionate but much injured servant.

DXLV. — *To the Rev. Dean D—.*

REV. SIR,

WHEN Dr. Bentley published his Greek Testament, one remarked, “Pity but he would publish the Old; then we should have two New Testaments!” It is done. Those who receive Mr. Hutchinson’s emendations certainly have two New Testaments! But I stumble at the threshold. Can we believe that God left his whole church so ignorant of the Scripture till yesterday? And if He was pleased to reveal the sense of it now, to whom may we suppose He would reveal it? “All Scripture,” says Kempis, “must be understood by the same Spirit whereby it was written.” And a greater than he says, “Them that are meek will he guide in judgment, and them that are gentle will He learn his way.” But was Mr. Hutchinson eminently meek and gentle?

However, in order to learn all I could from his Works, after first consulting them, I carefully read over Mr. Spearman, Mr. Jones’s ingenious book, and the Glasgow Abridgement. I read the last with Mr. Thomas Walsh, the best Hebraean I ever knew. I never asked him the meaning of an Hebrew word but he would immediately tell me how often it occurred in the Bible, and what it meant in each place! We then both observed that Mr. Hutchinson’s whole scheme is built upon etymologies; the most uncertain

foundation in the world, and the least to be depended upon. We observed, secondly, that if the points be allowed, all his building sinks at once; and, thirdly, that, setting them aside, many of his etymologies are forced and unnatural. He frequently, to find the etymology of one word, squeezes two radices together; a liberty never to be taken, where a word may fairly be derived from a single radix.

But may I hazard a few words on the points? Mr. H. affirms they were invented by the Masorites, only thirteen or fourteen hundred years ago, in order to destroy the sense of Scripture. I doubt this: Who can prove it? Who can prove they were not as old as Ezra, if not co-eval with the language? Let any one give a fair reading only to what Dr. Cornelius Bayley has offered in the preface to his Hebrew Grammar, and he will be as sick of reading without points as I am; at least, till he can answer the Doctor's arguments, he will not be so positive upon the question.

As to his theology, I first stumble at his profiles encomiums on the Hebrew language. But, it may be said, Is it not the language which God himself used? And is not Greek too the language which God himself used? And did He not use it in delivering to man a far more perfect dispensation than that which He delivered in Hebrew? Who can deny it? And does not even this consideration give us reason at least to suspect that the Greek language is as far superior to the Hebrew, as the New Testament is to the Old? And indeed if we set prejudice aside, and consider both with attention and candor, can we help seeing that the Greek excels the Hebrew as much in beauty and strength as it does in copiousness? I suppose no one from the beginning of the world wrote better Hebrew than Moses. But does not the language of St. Paul excel the language of Moses, as much as the knowledge of St. Paul excelled his?

I speak this, even on supposition that you read the Hebrew, as I believe Ezra, if not Moses, did, with points; for if we read it in the modern way, without points, I appeal to every competent judge, whether it be not the most equivocal.

DXLVI. — *To the Assistant Preachers.*
(Circular)

MY DEAR BROTHER,

ABOUT March you may begin to make the subscription for the new chapel. Till then I will beg you, with all possible diligence, to procure subscriptions for the Philosophy. Spare no pains. It will be the most complete thing in its kind of any in the English tongue. But it is well if I procure as many subscribers as will pay the expense of the edition.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXLVII. — *To the Members and Friends of the Methodist Societies.* (Circular.)

MY DEAR BROTHER,

October 18, 1776.

THE society at London have given assistance to their brethren in various parts of England. They have done this for upwards of thirty years; they have done it cheerfully and liberally. The first year of the subscription for the general debt they subscribed above nine hundred pounds, the next, about three hundred; and not much less, every one of the ensuing years.

They now stand in need of assistance themselves. They are under a necessity of building; as the Foundry, with all the adjoining houses, is shortly to be pulled down: And the city of London has granted ground to build on; but on condition of covering it, and with large houses in front; which, together with the new chapel, will, at a very moderate computation, cost upward of six thousand pounds. I must therefore beg the assistance of all our brethren. Now help the parent society, which has helped others for

so many years, so willingly and so largely. Now help me, who account this as a kindness done to myself; perhaps the last of this sort which I shall ask of you. Subscribe what you conveniently can, to be paid either now, or at Christmas, or at Lady-day next.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

The Trustees are, John Duplex, Charles Greenwood, Richard Kemp, Samuel Chancellor, Charles Wheeler, William Cowland, John Folgham.

DXLVIII. — *To Mr. Richard Tompson.* ¹⁰⁹

June 28, 1755.

SOME days since, I received your favor of the 22nd instant, which came exceeding seasonably; for I was just revising my Notes on the fifth chapter to the Romans: One of which I found, upon a closer inspection, seemed to assert such an imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, as might make way for the "horrible decree." I therefore struck it out immediately; as I would willingly do whatsoever should appear to be anyway inconsistent with that grand principle, "The Lord is loving to every man; and his mercy is over all his works."

If you have observed anything in any of the tracts I have published, which you think is not agreeable to Scripture and reason, you will oblige me by pointing it out, and by communicating to me any remarks you have occasionally made. I seek two things in this world, — truth and love. Whoever assists me in this search is a friend indeed, whether personally known or unknown to,

Sir,

Your humble servant.

DXLIX. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

July 25, 1755.

IT would be a pleasure to me to write more largely than my time will now permit. Of all the disputants I have known, you are the most likely to convince me of any mistakes I may be in; because you have found out the great secret of speaking the truth in love. When it is thus proposed, it must surely win its way into every heart, which is not purposely shut against it.

That you may clearly see wherein we agree, or wherein we differ, I have sent you the Minutes of some of our late Conferences. Several concessions are made therein, both with regard to assurance and Christian perfection; some difficulties cleared, and a few arguments proposed, though very nakedly and briefly. When you have read these, you may come directly to any point of controversy which may still remain: And if you can show me that any farther concessions are needful, I shall make them with great pleasure.

On the subject of your last, I can but just observe, first, with regard to the assurance of faith, I apprehend that the whole Christian church in the first centuries enjoyed it. For though we have few points of doctrine explicitly taught in the small remains of the ante-Nicene Fathers; yet, I think, none that carefully reads Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Polycarp, Origen, or any other of them, can doubt whether either the writer himself possessed it, or all whom he mentions as real Christians. And I really conceive, both from the "*Harmonia Confessionum*," and whatever else I have occasionally read, that all the Reformed churches in Europe did once believe, "Every true Christian has the divine evidence of his being in favor with God."

So much for authority. The point of experience is touched upon in the Conferences.

As to the nature of the thing, I think a divine conviction of pardon is directly implied in the evidence, or conviction, of things unseen. But if not, it is no absurdity to suppose, that, when God pardons a mourning,

broken-hearted sinner, His mercy obliges him to another act, — to witness to his spirit, that He has pardoned him.

I know that I am accepted: And yet that knowledge is sometimes shaken, though not destroyed, by doubt or fear. If that knowledge were destroyed, or wholly withdrawn, I could not then say I had Christian faith. To me it appears the same thing, to say, “I know God has accepted me;” or, “I have a sure trust that God has accepted me.”

I agree with you, that justifying faith cannot be a conviction that I am justified; and that a man who is not assured that his sins are forgiven may yet have a kind or degree of faith, which distinguishes him, not only from a devil, but also from a Heathen; and on which I may admit him to the Lord’s supper. But still I believe the proper Christian faith, which purifies the heart, implies such a conviction.

I am, Sir,

Your servant for Christ’s sake.

DL. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

February 5, 1756.

I WAS in Cornwall when your last was brought to the Foundry, and delivered to my brother. When I returned, it was mislaid, and could not be found; so that I did not receive it till some months after the date.

You judge right with regard to the tract enclosed to you. It was sent to you by mistake, for another that bears the same name.

Christian perfection, we agree, may stand aside for the present. The point now to be considered is Christian faith. This, I apprehend, implies a divine evidence, or conviction, of our acceptance. You apprehend it does not.

In debating this (or indeed any) point with you, I lie under a great disadvantage. First, You know me; whereas, I do not know you. Secondly, I am a very slow, you seem to be a very swift, writer. Thirdly, My time is

so taken up, from day to day, and from week to week, that I can spare very little from my stated employments: So that I can neither write so largely, nor so accurately, as I might otherwise do. All, therefore, which you can expect from me is, not a close-wrought chain of connected arguments, but a short sketch of what I should deduce more at large, if I had more leisure.

I believe the ancient Fathers are far from being silent on our question; though none, that I know, have treated it professedly. But I have not leisure to wade through that sea. Only to the argument from the baptism of heretics, I reply, If any had averred, during that warm controversy, “I received a sense of pardon when I was baptized by such a heretic;” those on the other side would in no wise have believed him; so that the dispute would have remained as warm as ever. I know this from plain fact. Many have received a sense of pardon when I baptized them. But who will believe them when they assert it? Who will put any dispute on this issue?

I know likewise, that Luther, Melancthon, and many other (if not all) of the Reformers, frequently and strongly assert, that every believer is conscious of his own acceptance with God; and that by a supernatural evidence, which if any choose to term immediate revelation he may. But neither have I leisure to re-examine this cloud of witnesses. Nor, indeed, as you justly observe, would the testimony of them all together be sufficient to establish an unscriptural doctrine. Therefore, after all, we must be determined by higher evidence. And herein we are clearly agreed: We both appeal “to the law and to the testimony.” May God enable us to understand it aright!

But, first, that you may not beat the air, by disproving what I never intended to prove, I will show you, as distinctly as I can, what my sentiments are upon the question; and the rather, because I plainly perceive you do not yet understand them. You seem to think I allow no degrees in grace; and that I make no distinction between the full assurance of faith, and a low or common measure of it.

Several years ago, some Clergymen, and other gentlemen, with whom we had a free conversation, proposed the following questions to my brother and me, to which we gave the answers subjoined: —

“June 25, 1744.

“QUESTION. What is faith?

“ANSWER. Faith, in general, is a divine, supernatural *ελεγχος*¹¹⁰ of things not seen; that is, of past, future, or spiritual. It is a spiritual sight of God, and the things of God. Justifying faith is a divine *ελεγχος*, that Christ loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*.

“Q. Have all Christians this faith? And may not a man have it, and not know it?

“A. That all Christians have such a faith as implies a consciousness of God’s love, appears from Romans 8:15; Ephesians 4:32; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Hebrews 8:10; 1 John 4:10; 5:1, etc. And that no man can have it, and not know that he has, appears from the nature of the thing. For faith, after repentance, is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from its immediate fruits; which are, peace, joy, love, and power over sin.

“Q. Does any one believe any longer than he sees, loves, obeys God?

“A. We apprehend not: ‘Seeing God’ being the very essence of faith; love and obedience, the inseparable properties of it.”

August 2, 1745.

“QUESTION. Is an assurance of God’s pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favor? Or may there possibly be some exempt cases?

“ANSWER. We dare not positively say there are not.

“Q. Is it necessary to final salvation, in those (as Papists) who never heard it preached?

“A. We know not how far invincible ignorance may excuse. ‘Love hopeth all things.’

“Q. But what, if one who does hear it preached should die without it?

“A. We determine nothing. We leave his soul in the hands of Him that made it.

“Q. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

“A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be very many degrees of seeing God; even as many as are between seeing the sun with the eyelids closed, and with the eyes open.”

The doctrine which I espouse, till I receive farther light, being thus explained and limited, I observe, —

First. A divine conviction of my being reconciled to God is, I think, directly implied (not in a divine evidence, or conviction, of something else, but) in a divine conviction that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me; and still more clearly in the Spirit’s bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God.

Secondly. I see no reason either to retract or soften the expression, “God’s mercy, in some cases, obliges him to act thus and thus.” Certainly, as his own nature obliges him (in a very clear and sound sense) to act according to truth and justice in all things; so, in some sense, his love obliged him to give his only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, might not perish. So much for the phrase. My meaning is, The same compassion which moves God to pardon a mourning, broken-hearted sinner, moves Him to comfort that mourner, by witnessing to his spirit, that his sins are pardoned.

Thirdly. You think, “full assurance excludes all doubt.” I think so too. But there may be faith without full assurance. And these lower degrees of faith do not exclude doubts, which frequently mingle therewith, more or less. But this you cannot allow. You say, it cannot be shaken without being overthrown; and trust I shall be “convinced upon reflection, that the distinction between ‘shaken’ and ‘destroyed’ is absolutely without a difference.” Hark! The wind rises: The house *shakes*; but it is not *overthrown*. It *totters*; but it is not *destroyed*.

You add, “Assurance is quite a distinct thing from faith. Neither does it depend upon the same agent. Faith is an act of my mind; assurance an act of the Holy Ghost.” I answer, first, The assurance in question is no other than the full assurance of faith: Therefore it cannot be a distinct thing from faith; but only so high a degree of faith as excludes all doubt and fear. Secondly, This *plerophory*, or full assurance, is doubtless wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. But so is every degree of true faith; yet the mind of man is the subject of both. I believe feebly: I believe without all doubt.

Your next remark is, “The Spirit’s witnessing that we are accepted, cannot be the faith whereby we are accepted.” I allow it. A conviction that we are justified, cannot be implied in justifying faith.

You subjoin, “A sure trust that God hath accepted me is not the same thing with knowing that God has accepted me.” I think it is the same thing with some degree of that knowledge. But it matters not whether it be so, or no. I will not contend for a term. I contend only for this, — that every true Christian believer has “a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, he is reconciled to God;” and that, in consequence of this, he is able to say, “The life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

It is a very little thing to excuse a warm expression, (if you need any such excuse,) while I am convinced of your real goodwill to,

Sir,

Your servant for Christ’s sake.

DLI. — *To the Same.*

SIR,

February 18, 1756.

YOU ask,

1. "Can a man who has not a clear assurance that his sins are forgiven, be in a state of justification?"

I believe there are some instances of it.

2. "Can a person be in a state of justification, who, being asked, 'Do you know your sins are forgiven?' answers, 'I am not certainly sure; but I do not entertain the least doubt of it?'"

I believe he may.

3. "Can he who answers, 'I trust they are?'"

It is very possible he may be in that state.

4. "Can any one know that his sins are forgiven while he doubts thereof?"

Not at that instant when he doubts of it. But he may generally know it, though he doubts at some particular time.

I answer as plainly and simply as I can, that if I am in a mistake, I may the more easily be convinced of it.

DLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

March 16, 1756.

MY belief, in general, is this, — that every Christian believer has a divine conviction of his reconciliation with God. The sum of those concessions is, "I am inclined to think, there may be some exceptions."

Faith implies both the perceptive faculty itself, and the act of perceiving God and the things of God. And the expression, "seeing God," may include both; the act, and the faculty, of seeing him.

Bishop Pearson's definition is abundantly too wide for the faith of which we are speaking. Neither does he give that definition, either of justifying or saving faith. But if he did, I should prefer the definition of Bishop Paul.

A clear conviction of the love of God cannot remain in any who do not walk closely with God. And I know no one person who has lost this without some voluntary defect in his conduct: Though perhaps at the time he was not conscious of it; but upon prayer it was revealed to him.

Your reasons for concealing your name were good. We cannot too carefully guard against prejudice. You have no need of any excuse at all: For you have done no wrong, but rather a pleasure, to

Your affectionate brother.

DLIII. — *To the Same.*

August 22, 1759.

I AM afraid you would hardly save yourself harmless by the publication of those letters. However, if you are inclined to run the hazard, I do not object. Only it would be needful to advertise the readers, that what I wrote was in haste, just as I could snatch a little time, now and then, to answer the private letter of a private friend, without any thought of its going any farther.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLIV. — *To Samuel Sparrow, Esq.* ¹¹¹

SIR,

February 26, 1772.

I HAVE read with pleasure your ingenious book, which contains many just and noble sentiments, expressed in easy and proper language. I observe only two points in which we do not quite think alike. One of these is expressly treated of in that Tract which reduces us to that clear dilemma: "Either Jesus Christ was God, or he was not an honest man." The other is largely considered in the book ¹¹² of which I now desire your acceptance. Wishing you all happiness in this life, and in a better,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

Near LEEDS, July 2, 1772.

I HAVE delayed answering our favor from time to time, hoping for leisure to answer it at large. But when that leisure will come, I cannot tell; for, in the summer months, I am almost continually in motion. So I will delay no longer, but write a little as I can, though not as I would.

I incline to think, that when you engaged in business, though you had no leisure for reading polemical writers, you had leisure to converse with those who ridiculed the doctrines which you till then believed, and perhaps of hearing a Preacher who disbelieved them, and talked largely against human authority, bodies of divinity, systems of doctrine, and compiling of creeds. These declamations would certainly make an impression upon an unexperienced mind; especially when confirmed by frequent descants upon the errors of translators; although I really believe our English translation, with all its faults, is the best translation of the Bible now in the world. When you had heard a good deal of this kind, then was the time to offer you such arguments as the cause afforded; which, to a mind so prepared,

would naturally appear as so many demonstrations. And it is no wonder at all, that by lending you a few books, and properly commenting upon them, those new apostles should confirm you in the sentiments which they had so artfully infused.

To the questions which you propose, I answer,

1. I really think, think if an hundred, or an hundred thousand, sincere, honest (I add, humble, modest, self-diffident) men were, with attention and care, to read over the New Testament uninfluenced by any but the Holy Spirit, nine in ten of them, at least, if not every one, would discover that the Son of God was “adorable,” and one God with the Father; and would be immediately led to “honor Him, even as they honored the Father;” which would be gross, undeniable idolatry, unless He and the Father are one.

2. The doctrine of original sin is surely more humbling to man than the opposite: And I know not what honor we can pray to God, if we think man came out of His hands in the condition wherein he is now. I beg of you, Sir, to consider the fact. Give a fair, impartial reading to that account of mankind in their present state, which is contained in the book on Original Sin. It is no play of imagination, but plain, clear fact. We see it with our eyes, and hear it with our ears, daily. Heathens, Turks, Jews, Christians, of every nation, are such men as are there described. Such are the tempers, such the manners, of Lords, gentlemen, clergymen, in England, as well as of tradesmen and the low vulgar. No man in his senses can deny it; and none can account for it, but upon the supposition of original sin.

O Sir, how important a thing is this! Can you refuse to worship Him whom “all the angels of God worship?” But if you do worship one that is not the supreme God, you are an idolater! Commending you and yours to His care,

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

WINDMILL-HILL, *October 9, 1773.*

ON Scripture and common sense I build all my principles. Just so far as it agrees with these, I regard human authority.

God could not command me to worship a creature without contradicting Himself: Therefore, if a voice from heaven bade me honor a creature as I honor the Creator, I should know, This is the voice of Satan, not of God.

The Father and the Son are not “two beings,” but “one.” As he is man, the Father is doubtless “greater than the Son;” who, as such, “can do nothing of himself,” and is no more omniscient than omnipresent. And, as man, he might well say, “I ascend to my Father and your Father,” and pray to his Father and his God. He bids his disciples also to pray to him, but never forbids their praying to himself. I take this to be the plain, obvious, easy meaning of our Lord’s words; and the only one wherein they are reconcilable with a hundred passages both of the Old and New Testament.

With regard to original sin, (I mean the proneness to evil which is found in every child of man,) you have supposed it in the Essays with which you favored me, almost from the beginning to the end: And you have frequently asserted it; although you could not assert it in plainer terms than the honest, unbiased Heathens have done: *Vitiis nemo sine nascitur.*

¹¹³ Hence, *Omnes natura proclives ad libidinem.* ¹¹⁴ Hence, *Dociles imitandis turpibus et pravis omnes sumus.* ¹¹⁵

But I believe nothing can set this point in a more clear and strong light than the tract which I beg you to accept of. ¹¹⁶ Accept, likewise, the best wishes of,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

December 28, 1773.

UPON the head of authority we are quite agreed. Our guides are Scripture and reason. We agree, too, that Preachers who “relax our obligation to moral virtues, who decry holiness as filthy rags, who teach men that easy, palatable way to heaven, of faith without works,” cannot easily fail of having a multitude of hearers; and that, therefore, it is no wonder if vast numbers crowd Blackfriars church, and the chapel at the Lock.

There is also too “just a ground for charging the Preachers both there and at the Tabernacle with grievous want of charity.” For most of them flatly maintain, all who do not believe as they believe, are in a state of damnation; all who do not believe that absolute decree of election, which necessarily infers absolute reprobation.

But none were induced to hear my brother and me, or those connected with us, by any such means as these: Just the reverse. We set out upon two principles:

1. None go to heaven without holiness of heart and life:
2. Whosoever follows after this (whatever his opinions be) is my “brother, and sister, and mother:” And we have not swerved an hair’s breadth from either one or the other of these to this day.

Thus it was, that two young men, without a name, without friends, without either power or fortune, “set out from College with principles totally different from those of the common people,” to oppose all the world, learned and unlearned; to “combat popular prejudices” of every kind. Our first principle directly attacked all the wickedness, our second, all the bigotry, in the world. Thus they attempted a reformation, not of opinions, (feathers, trifles not worth the naming,) but of men’s tempers and lives; of vice in every kind; of everything contrary to justice, mercy, or truth. And for this it was, that they carried their lives in their hands, — that both the great vulgar and the small looked upon them as mad dogs, and

treated them as such; sometimes saying in terms, “Will nobody knock that mad dog on the head?”

Let every one, then, speak as he finds: As for me, I cannot admire either the wisdom, or virtue, or happiness of mankind. Wherever I have been, I have found the bulk of mankind, Christian as well as Heathen, deplorably ignorant, vicious, and miserable. I am sure they are so in London and Westminster. Sin and pain are on every side. And who can account for this, but on the supposition that we are in a fallen state? I have proved at large, it can no otherwise be accounted for. Yet none need perish; for we have an almighty Savior; one who is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLVIII. — *To Miss Bolton.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BANDON, *May 2, 1771.*

I WANTED much to know how your soul prospered. I could not doubt but the God of this world, the enemy of all righteousness, would use every means to move you from your steadfastness. Blessed be God, you are not moved! that all his labor has been in vain! Hitherto hath God helped you; and, fear not, he will help you to the end. He gives you health as a token for good: He can trust you with it, while you give him your heart. And O stand fast in the glorious liberty wherewith he has made you free! You are not called to desire suffering. Innocent nature is averse from pain; only, as soon as his will appears, yours is to sink down before it. Hark! what does he say to you now? “Lovest thou me more than these?” more than these,

Wealth, honor, pleasure, or what else
This short enduring world can give?

Then, “feed my lambs;” carry the little ones in thy bosom; gently lead those that are great with young.

Be not weary of well-doing: In due time thou shalt reap, if thou faint not, etc., etc.

Yours most affectionately.

DLIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *June 15, 1771.*

A LETTER from you is always welcome; but never more so than now; as this is the time therein it seems good to our Lord to try you as by fire. Fear nothing; only believe. He is with you in the fire, so that the flames shall not kindle upon you. O how will you praise him by and by, for his wise and gracious visitation! He is purging away all your dross, that you may be a vessel meet for the Master’s use. Happy are they that do his will; and happier still, they that suffer it. But, whatever you suffer, cast not away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward. In order to keep it, do not reason, but simply look up to Him that loves you. Tell him, as a little child, all your wants. Look up, and your suit is made: He hears the cry of your heart. And tell all that troubles you to

Yours affectionately.

DLX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LYNN, *November 7, 1771.*

AT length I have snatched an hour to repeat to you in writing the advises which I gave you before.

1. Keep that safe which God has given you: Never let slip any blessing which you have received. Regard none who tell you, “You must lose it.” No; you never need lose one degree of love.

2. You never will, provided you are a careful steward of the manifold gifts of God. To him that hath, that is, useth what he hath, it shall be given still, and that more abundantly. Therefore,

3. Use your every grace. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Be zealous! Be active! Spare no one. Speak for God, wherever you are. But, meantime,

4. Be humble: Let all that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. And be clothed with humility. Pray that you may always feel that you are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. In this spirit speak and do everything, giving all the glory to Him that lives and rules in your heart by faith.

Last night I was reading some advices of a French author, part of which may be of use to you. Only observe, he is writing to one that had living faith, but was not perfected in love.

“How can I distinguish pride from temptation to pride?” “It is extremely difficult to distinguish these, and still more so to lay down rules for doing it. Our eyes cannot penetrate the ground of our hearts. Pride and vanity are natural to us; and, for that reason, nothing is more constantly at hand, nothing less observed, than their effects. The grand rule is, to sound sincerely the ground of our hearts, when we are not in the hurry of temptation. For if, on inquiry, we find that it loves obscurity and silence; that it dreads applause and distinction; that it esteems the virtue of others, and excuses their faults with mildness; that it easily pardons injuries; that it fears contempt less and less; that it sees a falsehood and baseness in pride, and a true nobleness and greatness in humility; that it knows and reveres the inestimable riches of the cross, and the humiliations of Jesus Christ; that it fears the lustre of those virtues which are admired by men, and loves those that are more secret; that it draws more comfort even from its own defects, through the abasement which they occasion; and that it prefers any degree of compunction before all the light in the world: Then you may trust that all the motions you feel tending to pride or vanity, whether they are sudden or are thrust against you for some time, are not sin, but temptation. And then it may be the best to turn from and despise them, instead of giving them weight, by fixing your attention upon them.”

I want a particular account both of your inward and outward health. Tell me how you are, and what you are doing: Withhold nothing from

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DLXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 5, 1772.*

I KNOW not that ever you asked me a question which I did not readily answer. I never heard any one mention anything concerning you on that account; but I myself was jealous over you. Perhaps I shall find faults in you that others do not; for I survey you on every side. I mark your every motion and temper; because I long for you to be without spot or blemish.

What I have seen in London occasioned the first caution I gave you. George Bell, William Green, and many others, then full of love, were favored with extraordinary revelations and manifestations from God. But by this very thing Satan beguiled them from the simplicity that is in Christ. By insensible degrees they were led to value these extraordinary gifts more than the ordinary grace of God; and I could not convince them that a grain of humble love was better than all these gifts put together. This, my dear friend, was what made me fear for you. This makes me remind you again and again. Faith and hope are glorious gifts, and so is every ray of eternity let into the soul. But still these are but means: The end of all, and the greatest of all, is love. May the Lord just now pour it into your heart as he never has done before.

By all means spend an hour every other day in the labor of love, even though you cannot help them as you would. Commending you to Him who is able to make you perfect in every good word and work,

I am

Yours affectionately.

DLXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *July 18, 1773.*

YOUR late conversation was exceeding pleasant to me. I had sometimes been almost inclined to think that your affection was lessened; but I now believe it is not. I trust your love is not grown cold. This gave me much satisfaction though I could not but be concerned at seeing you so encumbered with worldly business. Surely it will not be so always. But God's time is best! Two or three of those little things I have sent you: —

WITH peaceful mind thy race of duty run:
 God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
 But what thou wouldst thyself, if thou couldst see,
 Through all events of things as well as He.

Let thy repentance be without delay:
 If thou defer it to another day,
 Thou must repent for a day more of sin,
 While a day less remains to do it in.

Nor steel nor flint alone produces fire,
 Nor spark arises till they hath conspire:
 Nor faith alone, nor works without, is right;
 Salvation rises when they both unite.

If gold be offer'd thee, thou dost not say,
 "Tomorrow I will take it, not today:"
 Salvation offer'd? why art thou so cool
 To let thyself become tomorrow's fool?

PRAYER and thanksgiving is the vital breath
 That keeps the spirit of a man from death:
 For prayer attracts into the living soul
 The life that fills the universal whole;
 And giving thanks is breathing forth again
 The praise of Him who is the life of men.

Two different painters, artists in their way,
 Have drawn religion in her full display.
 To both she sat: One gazed at her all o'er;
 The other fix'd upon her features more.
 Hervey has figured her with every grace
 That dress could give; but Law has hit her face.

The specious sermons of a learned man
 Are little else than flashes in the pan.
 The mere haranguing upon what they call
 Morality, is power without ball:
 But he who preaches with a Christian grace
 Fires at your vices, and the shot takes place.

Faith, Hope, and Love, were question'd what they thought
 Of future glory, which Religion taught.
 Now Faith believed it firmly to be true,
 And Hope expected so to find it too:
 Love answer'd, smiling with a conscious glow,
 "Believe! expect! I know it to be so."

Go on in this humble, gentle love; that you may abound therein more and more. Aim at nothing higher than this: And may the God of love still possess you whole, and guide your every thought, and word, and work. Continue to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

DLXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 8, 1773.*

IT gives me much pleasure to observe that you do not lose your simplicity. You seem not only to retain simplicity of spirit, (the great thing,) but likewise of sentiment and language. God has indeed dealt very graciously with you from the beginning hitherto. He has led you tenderly by the hand from grace to grace, and from faith to faith: And you may well say,

"The mercy I feel To others I show;
 I set to my seal That Jesus is true."

Go on in His name, and earnestly exhort all that know Him to press forward to the mark. Encourage them to aspire after full salvation, salvation into the whole image of God. Beware you do not decline in your zeal for this: Let no prudence hinder you. Let prudence “guide, not cool, its fires.”

Still let it for His glory burn,
 With unextinguishable blaze:
 And trembling to its source return,
 In flames of love, and joy and praise.

But I had forgotten that I am in haste. I hope Mr. S. will be a blessing to many. He is alive to God. This day I set out for Bristol, and thence to Cornwall; but I hope to be at Bristol again on the 28th instant. Life is short! We have need to improve every moment!

Adieu!

DLXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 27, 1777.*

UNDOUBTEDLY Satan, who well understands the manner how the mind is influenced by the body, can, by means of those parts in the animal machine which are more immediately subservient to thinking, raise a thousand perceptions and emotions in the mind, so far as God is pleased to permit. I doubt not but he was the chief agent in your late painful exercises. And you gave him advantage by reasoning with him, that is, fighting him with his own weapons; instead of simply looking up, and saying, “Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God.” You undoubtedly want more thankfulness; and you want more simplicity; that grace, Cambray says, “which cuts the soul off from all unnecessary reflections upon itself.” You are encompassed with ten thousand mercies; and the greatest of all is,

Christ in a pure and spotless heart.

Beware of ever admitting any doubt or reasoning concerning this! Whereunto you have attained, hold fast; and use all the grace you have received. Warn every one, and exhort every one, and especially those who groan after full salvation.

I cannot, on any account, pass a whole day without commending you to God in prayer.

I thank you for writing to me so soon. Continue to love and pray for

Yours most affectionately.

DLXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 2, 1781.*

IT is a great step towards Christian resignation, to be thoroughly convinced of that great truth, that there is no such thing as chance in the world; that fortune is only another name for Providence; only it is covered Providence. An event, the cause of which does not appear, we commonly say, comes by chance. O no; it is guided by an unerring hand; it is the result of infinite wisdom and goodness. Such are all the afflictive circumstances that have followed you in a constant succession, almost from your childhood. He that made the Captain of your salvation perfect through sufferings has called you to walk in the same path, and for the same end; namely, that you may learn obedience, more full, inward obedience, a more perfect conformity to His death, by the things that you suffer. A little while, and “He will wipe all tears from your eyes; and there shall be no more sorrow or crying; neither shall there be any more pain!” but you shall hear the great voice out of heaven, saying, “The tabernacle of God is with men; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God!” Still love and pray for

Your ever affectionate brother.

DLXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1784.*

MANY years ago, Mr. Hall, then strong in faith, believed God called him to marry my youngest sister. He told her so. She fully believed him, and none could convince one or the other to the contrary. I talked with her about it; but she had “so often made it matter of prayer, that she could not be deceived.” In a week he dropped her, courted her elder sister; and, as soon as was convenient, married her. The disappointed one then found exactly the same temptations that you do now. But neither did she keep the devil’s counsel. She told me all that was in her heart; and the consequence was, that, by the grace of God, she gained a complete victory. So will you. And you will be the better enabled, by your own experience, to guard all, especially young persons, from laying stress upon anything but the written word of God. Guard them against reasoning in that dangerous manner, “If I was deceived in this, then I was deceived in thinking myself justified.” Not at all; although nature, or Satan in the latter case, admirably well mimicked the works of God. By mighty prayer repel all those suggestions, and afterwards your faith will be so much the more strengthened; and you will be more than conqueror through Him that loveth you. Whenever you find yourself pressed above measure, you must make another little excursion. While you help others, God will help you. This may be one end of this uncommon dispensation. You must not bury your talent in the earth. Wishing you more and more of that

Lovely, lasting peace of mind.

I am

Yours most affectionately.

DLXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

WEDNESBURY, *March 28, 1785.*

You are in danger of falling into both extremes; of making light of, as well as fainting under, His chastening. This you do whenever you look at any circumstance, without seeing the hand of God in it; without seeing at the same instant, This unkindness, this reproach, this returning evil for good, as well as this faintness, this weariness, this pain, is the cup which my Father hath given me. And shall I not drink it? Why does He give it me? Only for my profit, that I “may be a partaker of his holiness.”

I have often found an aptness both in myself and others, to connect events that have no real relation to each other. So one says, “I am as sure this is the will of God, as that I am justified.” Another says, “God as surely spake this to my heart as ever he spoke to me at all.” This is an exceedingly dangerous way of thinking or speaking. We know not what it may lead us to. It may sap the very foundation of our religion. It may insensibly draw us into Deism or Atheism. My dear Nancy, my sister, my friend, beware of this! The grace of God is sufficient for you! And whatever clouds may interpose between, his banner over you is love. Look to yourself that you lose not the things that you have gained; but that you may receive a full reward.

Adieu!

DLXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 9, 1789.*

“SIR, you are troubled,” said Mr. Law to me, “because you do not understand how God is dealing with you. Perhaps if you did, it would not so well answer his design. He is teaching you to trust Him farther than you can see Him.” He is now teaching you the same lesson. Hitherto you cannot understand his ways. But they are all mercy and truth. And though you do not know now what He does, you shall know hereafter.

I am acquainted with several persons whom I believed to be saved from sin. But there is great variety in the manner wherein God is pleased to lead them. Some of them are called to act much for God; some to rejoice much; some to suffer much. All of these shall receive their crown. But when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, the brightest crown will be given to the sufferers. Look up, thou blessed one! the time is at hand!

I am
Ever yours.

DLXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEEDS, *August 1, 1789.*

I THANK you for sending me so particular an account of your sister's death. "Right precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints!" It is well you have learned to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" And you can say it even

When loss of friends ordain'd to know, —
Next pain and guilt; the sorest ill below.

But why does our Lord inflict this upon us? Not merely for his pleasure, but that we may be partakers of his holiness. It is true, one grand means of grace is the doing the will of our Lord. But the suffering it is usually a quicker means, and sinks us deeper into the abyss of love. It hath pleased God to lead you in the way of suffering, from your youth up until now. For the present this is not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, it has yielded peaceable fruit. Your soul is still as a watered garden, as a field which the Lord hath blessed. Cleave to Him still with full purpose of heart. To His tender care I commend you; and am

Yours affectionately.

DLXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

HIGH-WYCOMB, *November 4, 1790.*

THE more I consider your case, the more I am convinced that you are in the school of God, and that the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. From the time you omitted meeting your class or band, you grieved the Holy Spirit of God, and he gave a commission to Satan to buffet you: Nor will that commission ever be revoked, till you begin to meet again. Why were you not a mother in Israel? — a repairer of the waste places? — a guide to the blind? — a healer of the sick? — a lifter up of the hands which hung down? Wherever you came, God was with you, and shone upon your path. Many daughters had done virtuously; but thou excellest them all. Woman, remember the faith! In the name of God, set out again, and do the first works! I exhort you, for my sake, (who tenderly love you,) for God's sake, for the sake of your own soul, begin again without delay. The day after you receive this, go and meet a class or a band. Sick or well, go! If you cannot speak a word, go; and God will go with you. You sink under the sin of omission! My friend, my sister, go! Go, whether you can, or not. Break through! Take up your cross. I say again, do the first works; and God will restore your first love! and you will be a comfort, not a grief, to

Yours most affectionately.

DLXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 15, 1790.*

THERE can be no possible reason to doubt concerning the happiness of that child. He did fear God, and, according to his circumstances, work righteousness. This is the essence of religion, according to St. Peter. His soul, therefore, was "darkly safe with God," although he was only under the Jewish dispensation.

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and assign every man his own reward, that reward will undoubtedly be proportioned,

1. To our inward holiness, our likeness to God:
2. To our works: And,
3. To our sufferings.

Therefore, whatever you suffer in time, you will be an unspeakable gainer in eternity. Many of your sufferings, perhaps the greatest part, are now past. But your joy is to come! Look up, my dear friend, look up! and see your crown before you! A little longer, and you shall drink of the rivers of pleasure that flow at God's right hand for evermore.

Adieu!

DLXXII. — *To Mr. John Valton.*

LONDON, *June* 30, 1764.

It is certainly right, with all possible care, to abstain from all outward occasions of evil. But this profits only a little: The inward change is the one thing needful for you. You must be born again, or you will never gain a uniform and lasting liberty.

Your whole soul is diseased, or rather dead, — dead to God, — dead in sin. Awake then, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. To seek for a particular deliverance from one sin only is mere lost labor. If it could be attained, it would be of little worth; for another would rise in its place; — but indeed it cannot, before there is a general deliverance from the guilt and power of all sin. This is the thing which you want, and which you should be continually seeking for. You want to be freely justified from all things, through the redemption that is in Jesus. It might be of use if you would read over the first volume of Sermons, seriously, and with prayer. Indeed nothing will avail without prayer. Pray, whether you can or not: When you are cheerful, when you are heavy, pray; with many or few words, or none at all. You will surely find an answer of peace. And why not now?

I am

Your servant for Christ's sake.

DLXXIII. — *To the Same.*DUBLIN, *March 23, 1769.*

CERTAINLY the Lord is preparing you for a more extensive work, and showing, that he can and will give you a mouth. Take care you do not cleave to any person or thing! God is a jealous God. And stay where you are as long as you can stay; but do not resist, when he thrusts you out into his harvest. That God has called you to a more extensive work, I cannot doubt in the least. He has given you an earnest of it at Stroud; and your weakness of soul or body is no bar to Him. Leave Him to remove that, when and as it pleases Him. But I doubt concerning the time: It does not seem to be fully come. At present you are to do all you can where you are, and to be always hearkening to his voice, and waiting till he makes plain the way before your face.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *November 21, 1769.*

IT is a great thing to be open to the call of God. It really seems as if he were now calling you. When I wrote last, you was not willing to go out; and, probably, he is now thrusting you out into his harvest. If so, take care you be not disobedient to the heavenly calling. Otherwise, you may be permitted to fall lower than you imagine.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 2, 1769.*

CERTAINLY you are not called to go out now. I believe you will be by and by. Your inabilities are no bar; for, when you are sent, you will not be sent a warfare at your own cost. Now improve the present hour where you are.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 29, 1786.*

DO not cast water upon a drowning man: And take care of receiving anything upon Joseph ——'s testimony. Speaking is not the thing, but revealing what is spoken in band, had it been true. Unless Sy—— be convinced of this sin, I will expel her the society, the first time I come to Bath. I must do justice, if the sky falls. I am the last resort. A word to the wise! I am sure Michael Griffith is good enough for the place, if he is not too good. I hope Mr. Jones is set out for Brecon. See that Michael have fair play.

DLXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 29, 1786.*

I CANNOT hope for the recovery of your health and strength, unless you intermit preaching. I therefore positively require you, for a month from the date of this, not to preach more than twice in a week; and if you preach less, I will not blame you. But you should, at all hazards, ride an hour everyday; only wrapping yourself up very close. Take care not to lodge in too close a room, and not to draw your curtains close. As we are just entering upon the affair of the poor in London, I want to know what has been done at Bristol. A particular account of the steps which have been taken there may both animate and instruct our friends here.

It is amazing that we cannot find in the three kingdoms a fit master for Kingswood school! Talk largely with Michael Griffith, then pray with him and for him; and God will give him gifts.

Your affectionate friend and brother.

Pray do as much as you can, and do not attempt to do more, or you will very soon do nothing.

DLXXVIII. — *To Mr. Frances Wolfe.*

DEAR FRANCIS,

LONDON, *November 22, 1772.*

AT what place are the fifty-four pounds, (old debt,) and at what places the three hundred and sixty-three?

You should speak plainly to brother A. Before his illness I am afraid he had lost much ground. He should receive this stroke as a call from God, and, for the time to come, live as he did when he travelled first.

Let both of you strongly exhort the believers everywhere to “go on to perfection;” otherwise, they cannot keep what they have.

I am, with love to sister W.,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DLXXIX. — *To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *September 15, 1773.*

FRANKY, are you out of your wits? Why are you not at Bristol? ¹¹⁷

DLXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 26, 1775.*

So the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away! He hath done all things well. What a word was that of M. de Renty on a like occasion! — “I cannot say but my soul is greatly moved at the sense of so great a loss. Nevertheless, I am so well satisfied that the will of the Lord, rather than that of a vile sinner, is done, that, were it not for offending others, I could shout and sing.”

Now, give yourself up more entirely and unreservedly to God. You have nothing else to care for, but the things of the Lord, how you may please the Lord.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

YORK, *July 30, 1781.*

To allow money for the keeping of children is not the business of the Conference, but of the Circuit wherein a Preacher labors. So it is expressly appointed in the Minutes. I do not judge it is expedient for you to remain any longer in the west of England. I am glad to hear that your spirit revives. You need not “let Him go except He bless you.”

I am, dear Franky,

Yours, etc.

DLXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 24, 1782.*

YOU have much reason to bless God, both on your own account, and on account of the people. Now, see that you adorn in all things the doctrine of

God our Savior. See that your conversation be in grace, always seasoned with salt, and meet to minister grace to the hearers; and let none of your Preachers touch any spirituous liquors upon any account! I am sorry for poor Joseph B——. The loss of that excellent woman will be a loss indeed! But there is One who is able to turn all to good.

I am, dear Franky, etc.

DLXXXIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *August 6, 1782.*

NECESSITY has no law. Till your strength is restored, do all the good you can as a Local Preacher. ¹¹⁸

DLXXXIV. — *To Miss Fuller.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YOU did well in giving me a plain and circumstantial account of the manner wherein God has dealt with your soul. Your part is now to stand fast in the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. There is no need that you should ever be entangled again in the bondage of pride, or anger, or desire. God is willing to give always what he grants once. Temptations, indeed, you are to expect. But you may tread them all under your feet: His grace is sufficient for you. And the God of all grace, after you have suffered a while, shall establish, strengthen, and settle you.

I am, my dear sister,

Yours affectionately.

DLXXXV. — *To Miss H—*.

WITHOUT doubt it seems to you, that yours is a peculiar case. You think there is none like you in the world. Indeed there are. It may be, ten thousand persons are now in the same state of mind as you. I myself was so a few years ago. I felt the wrath of God abiding on me. I was afraid every hour of dropping into hell. I knew myself to be the chief of sinners. Though I had been very innocent, in the account of others, I saw my heart to be all sin and corruption. I was without the knowledge and the love of God, and therefore an abomination in his sight.

But I had an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And so have you. He died for your sins; and he is now pleading for you at the right hand of God. O look unto Him, and be saved! He loves you freely, without any merit of yours. He has atoned for all your sins.

See all your sins on Jesus laid!

His blood has paid for all. Fear nothing; only believe. His mercy embraces you: It holds you in on every side. Surely you shall not depart hence, till your eyes have seen his salvation.

I am, Madam,

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXXVI. — *To Mrs. Marston, of Worcester.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BROAD-MARSTON, *March 16, 1770.*

I WANT to ask you several questions. At what time, and in what manner, was you justified? Did you from that time find a constant witness of it? When and how was you convinced of the necessity of sanctification? When did you receive it, and in what manner? Did you then find the witness of it? Has it been clear ever since? Have you not found any decay

since that time? Do you now find as much life as ever you did? Can you give God your whole heart? In what sense do you “pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks?” Do you find a testimony in yourself, that all your words and actions please Him?

You have no need to be nice or curious in answering these questions. You have no occasion to set your words in order; but speak to me, just as you would do to one of your sisters. The language of love is the best of all. One truly says, —

“There is in love a sweetness ready penn’d:
Copy out only that, and save expense.”

You have love in your heart: Let that teach you words. Out of the abundance of the heart let your mouth speak. I shall know better how to advise you. I have a great concern for you, and a desire that you should never lose anything which God has wrought, but should receive a full reward. Stand fast in the name of the Lord, and in the power of his might!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

You may direct to me, at the preaching-house in Manchester.

DLXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CHESTER, *April 1, 1770.*

As I had not time to converse with you as I would at Worcester, I was exceedingly glad to see you at Wednesbury. It was the very thing I desired. And surely our Lord will withhold from us no manner of thing that is good. I am glad that you can both speak and write to me freely: It may often be of service to you; especially if God should suffer you to be assaulted by strong and uncommon temptations. I should not wonder if this were to be the case: Though, perhaps, it never will; especially if you continue simple; if, when you are assaulted by that wicked one, you do not reason with him, but just look up for help, hanging upon Him that has

washed you in his own blood. Do you now find power to “rejoice evermore?” Can you “pray without ceasing?” Is your heart to Him, though without a voice? And do you “in everything give thanks?” Is your whole desire to Him? And do you still find an inward witness that He has cleansed your heart? Stand fast, then, in that glorious liberty, wherewith Christ has made you free!

I am, dear Molly,

Your affectionate brother.

I expect to be in Glasgow about the 17th of this month.

DLXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

August 11, 1770.

I THOUGHT it long since I heard from you, and wanted to know how your soul prospered. Undoubtedly, as long as you are in the body, you will come short of what you would be; and you will see more and more of your numberless defects, and the imperfection of your best actions and tempers. Yet all this need not hinder your rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks. Heaviness you may sometimes feel; but you never need come into darkness. Beware of supposing darkness, that is, unbelief, to be better than the light of faith. To suppose this is one of the gross errors of Popery. “He that followeth me,” says our Lord, “shall not walk in darkness.” That you are tempted a thousand ways will do you no hurt. In all these things you shall be more than conqueror. I hope the select society meets constantly, and that you speak freely to each other. Go on humbly and steadily, denying, yourselves, and taking up your cross daily. Walk in the light as He is in the light, in lowliness, in meekness, in resignation. Then He will purely sanctify you throughout, in spirit, soul, and body. To hear from you is always a pleasure to,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

I am going to Bristol.

DLXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

ST. IVES, *August 26, 1770.*

YOUR last gave me a particular satisfaction; because I was jealous over you. I was afraid lest you, like some others, should have received that dangerous opinion, that we must sometimes be in darkness. Wherever you are, oppose this, and encourage all who now walk in the light to expect, not only the continuance, but the increase, of it, unto the perfect day. Certain it is, that unless we grieve the Holy Spirit, He will never take away what He has given. On the contrary, He will add to it continually, till we come to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

I am glad the select society meets constantly. See that you speak freely to each other. And do not speak of your joys and comforts only; this is well-pleasing to flesh and blood: But speak also of your sorrows, and weaknesses, and temptations; this is well-pleasing to God, and will, be a means of knitting you together by a bond that shall never be broken.

I hope you lose no opportunity of speaking a word for God, either to them that know Him, or them that do not. Why should you lose any time? Time is short. Work your work betimes! Today receive more grace, and use it! Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DXC. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

December 14, 1770.

IF I live till spring, and should have a clear, pressing call, I am as ready to embark for America, as for Ireland. All places are alike to me: I am attached to none in particular. Wherever the work of our Lord is to be carried on,

that is my place for today. And we live only for today: It is not our part to take thought for tomorrow.

You expect to fight your way through. But I think the Preachers understand you, and can receive your report: And so do most of your sisters. What forces then can Satan raise up against you? You can speak to me without reserve; for you know I love you much.

Abundance of deficiencies must remain, as long as the soul remains in this house of clay. So long the corruptible body will more or less darken and press down the soul. But still your heart may be all love; and love is the fulfilling of our law. Still you may rejoice evermore; you may pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Peace be multiplied unto you!

I am, dear Molly,
Your affectionate brother.

DXCI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CORK, *May 6, 1771.*

I AM always pleased to hear from you, and expect to hear nothing but good. Conflicts and various exercises of soul are permitted: These also are for good. If Satan has desired to have you sifted as wheat, this likewise is for your profit: You will be purified in the fire, not consumed, and strengthened unto all long-suffering with joyfulness. Does Mr. Clough, or any other of the Preachers, speak against perfection, or give occasion to them that trouble you? You would do well to speak to any one that does, that you may come to a better understanding. So far as in you lies, let not the good that is in you be evil spoken of. But beware, lest the unkind usage of your brethren betray you into any kind of guile or false prudence. Still let all your conversation be in simplicity and godly sincerity. Be plain, open, downright, without disguise. Do you always see God, and feel his love? Do you pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks? I hope you do not forget to pray for,

My dear Molly,
Your affectionate brother.

DXCII. — *To Mrs. Mary Savage, of Worcester.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1771.*

RIGHT precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints! And I believe many of the blessings which we receive are in answer to their dying prayers. It is well if the great change be wrought in a soul even a little before it leaves the body. But how much more desirable it is that it should be wrought long before, that we may long glorify Him with our body and with our spirit! O exhort all whom you have access to, not to delay the time of embracing all the great and precious promises! Frankly tell all those that are simple of heart, what He has done for your soul; and then urge,

“May not every sinner find
The grace which found out me?”

If Mr. Fletcher has time to call upon you, he will surely bring a blessing with him. He is a man full of faith. Be free with S. Briscoe, who brings this.

My dear sister, adieu!

DXCIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 19, 1771.*

A REPORT was spread abroad of my coming to Broad-Marston, and several other places; but I know not what was the occasion of it. I am now expected in the southern parts of the kingdom, and my course has been for several years as fixed as that of the sun.

Mr. Ellis is a steady, experienced man, and a sound Preacher. Wherever he is, the work of our Lord prospers in his hand; and the more so, as he is a lover of discipline, without which the best preaching is of little use. I

advise you to speak to him as freely as possible, and he will be made profitable to your soul. Your late trials were intended to give you a deeper sense of your poverty and helplessness. But see that you cast not away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward. Cleave to Him with your whole heart, and all is well.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DXCIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

GRIMSBY, *July 22, 1772.*

IT is easy to see the difference between those two things, sinfulness and helplessness. The former you need feel no more; the latter you will feel as long as you live. And indeed the nearer you draw to God, the more sensible of it you will be. But beware this does not bring you into the least doubt of what God has done for your soul. And beware it does not make you a jot the less forward to speak of it with all simplicity. Do you still feel an entire deliverance from pride, anger, and every desire that does not center in God? Do you trust Him both with soul and body? Have you learned to cast all your care upon him? Are you always happy in him? In what sense do you pray without ceasing? Expect all the promises!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

In about a fortnight, I am to be at Mr. Glynne's, Shrewsbury.

DXCV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *June 30, 1773.*

I REJOICE to hear that the work of God does not decrease among you, and that you find an increase of it in your own soul. Perhaps the best way to examine your own growth is, first, to consider whether your faith remains unshaken. Do you continually see Him that is invisible? Have you as clear

an evidence of the spiritual as of the invisible world? Are you always conscious of the presence of God, and of his love to your soul? In what sense do you pray without ceasing? Are you never in a hurry, so as to dim the eye of your soul, or make you inattentive to the voice of God? Next, consider your hope. Do you thereby taste of the powers of the world to come? Do you sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus? Do you never shrink at death? Do you steadily desire to depart, and to be with Christ? Do you always feel that this is far better? Can you in pain and trouble rejoice in hope of the glory of God? You may answer me at your leisure. I hope to see you in March; and am,

Dear Molly,
Yours affectionately.

DCXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEWISHAM, *July 31, 1773.*

I DID receive a letter from you while I was in Ireland; but whether I answered it or no I cannot tell. It gives me pleasure to hear that you still stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and that his blessed work still continues to widen and deepen among you. It will do so, as long as you walk in love, and strive together for the hope of the Gospel. As God has made Mr. Wolfe an instrument of promoting this among you, I think it will be well for him to stay another year.

When I was at Worcester, a young woman had just joined the society, who had her fortune in her own hands. Is she with you still? And is she married or single? I have a particular reason for asking. How has Mr. Seed behaved? Is he serious, zealous, active? And has God prospered his word?

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

DXCVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 11, 1773.*

WHATEVER was reported concerning brother Wolfe, it did not come to my ears. I never heard anything of him but good; nor do I know of anything laid to his charge. I advise you to speak very freely to Mr. Collins. He has much experience in the things of God; and has likewise seen so much of trouble and temptation, that he knows how to sympathize with those that are tempted.

By stirring up the gift of God that is in you, you will find a constant increase of inward life. Labor to be more and more active, more and more devoted to Him. Be ready to do and suffer His whole will; then will He

Sink you to perfection's height,
The depth of humble love.

I am, dear Molly,

Your affectionate brother.

DXCVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

WHITEHAVEN, *May 6, 1774.*

YOU send me an agreeable account of the work of God in Worcester. I expected that he would give a blessing to the zeal and activity of your present Preachers, and of Mr. Collins in particular, who is everywhere of use to those that are simple of heart. But much also depends upon the spirit; and behavior of those who are united together. If their love does not grow cold; if they continue walking in the Spirit, using the grace they have already received, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior, and going on to perfection; their light, shining before men, will incite many to glorify our Father which is in heaven. I am glad to hear that Billy Savage and you are still pressing toward the mark. Indeed, God will permit all the grace you have to be tried: He prepares occasions of fighting, that you may conquer;

yea, in all these things, you shall be more than conquerors through Him that loveth you. To His tender care I commit you; and am,

My dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

DICIX. — *To Mr. Samuel Bardsley.*

DEAR SAMMY,
1771.

LONDON, *November 24,*

IT is a great blessing that your fellow-laborers and you are all of one mind. When that is so, the work of the Lord will prosper in your hands. It will go on widening, as well as deepening, while you draw in one yoke. If you desire it should deepen in believers, continually exhort them to go on unto perfection; steadily to use all the grace they have received, and every moment to expect full salvation. The “Plain Account of Christian Perfection” you should read yourself, more than once, and recommend it to all that are groaning for full redemption.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

DC. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *January 29, 1773.*

IF David Evans is satisfied, all is well. You will not want work, nor a blessing upon it, if you are zealous and active. John Hallam is a good man, but a queer one: I am in hopes he will do good. There is a surprising willingness in almost every one that has answered the Circular Letter, which I hope is a token for good. Some of our Preachers have asked, “Why will you refuse the help of the poorer members?” I answer, I do not refuse;

though neither do I require it, for fear of distressing any. The little draught on the other side is for your mother.

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate brother.

DCI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

NORWICH, *November 27, 1775.*

WHENEVER you want anything, you should tell me without delay. If Tommy Colbeck will give you two guineas, it may be deducted out of the book-money. I am glad you go again to Skipton, and hope to see it myself, if I live till summer. At present I am better than I was before my fever; only it has stripped me of my hair. The more pains you take, the more blessing you will find; especially in preaching full salvation, receivable now, by faith.

I am, dear Sammy,
Yours affectionately.

DCII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,
1776.

LONDON, *October 25,*

I LIKE your proposal well, of desiring help from your acquaintance in the neighboring Circuits; and the sooner it is put in execution, the better, that it may not interfere with the subscription we must shortly make for the New Foundry. Whatever you do, temporal or spiritual, do it with your might!

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *February 14, 1777.*

IT is uncertain yet, where I shall be this summer. If we do not build, I shall go to Ireland: If we do, I must reside chiefly in London. Only I would endeavor to make a little excursion into the north. I have not promised to open the House at Halifax in April or May, although it is probable I shall in my journey to or from Newcastle. But my time will be very short; because I can never be absent from the building but about two or three weeks at a time. I am glad you have found a way to Lancaster. Be zealous, be active, and conquer all things!

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *February 14, 1778.*

So your mother is at rest! We shall go to her; though she will not return to us. I am glad you are so agreeably situated, and that you already see some fruit of your labor. About the 27th of March I expect to be at Chester. If a ship be ready at Parkgate, I purpose to embark directly; if not, I shall pay you a visit at Liverpool. I fix upon nothing: Let the Lord do as seemeth him good.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

BRISTOL, *March 7, 1779.*

I AM now just set out on my great journey: Probably I shall not reach Inverness till June. It will be in July, if I am spared so long, that I shall

visit Derby and Nottingham. My journey is longer this time, than it was the last. Let us work while the day is!

Exhort all the believers, strongly and explicitly, to go on to perfection; and to expect every blessing God has promised, not tomorrow, but today.

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate brother.

DCVI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *January 30, 1780.*

I AM glad to hear that your people love one another: Then neither Mr. — — nor Mr. ——— can hurt them. They may make a bustle and a noise for a season; but it will be only a nine days' wonder. If you take up your cross, and visit all the societies, whenever you have time, from house to house, their profiting will appear to all men; and none will be able to stand against you. Take a little pains likewise, both brother Shadford and you, in recommending the Magazine. Urge it from love to me, and to the Preachers; and whatever you do, do it with your might.

I am, dear Sammy,
Yours affectionately.

P.S. Everywhere exhort the believers to expect full salvation now by simple faith.

DCVII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *June 25, 1782.*

I AM glad you find no reason to complain of our northern brethren. Many of them are as sincere and affectionate as any in England; and the way to do them good is, to observe all our rules at Inverness, just as you would at Sheffield; yea, and to preach the whole Methodist doctrine there, as plainly and simply as you would in Yorkshire. But you have not sent me

(neither you nor Peter Mill) any plan of the Circuit. This should be done without delay. See that you both do all you can for a good Master! Lose no time! Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate brother.

DCVIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

BIRMINGHAM, *March 25, 1787.*

YOU send me good news concerning the progress of the work of God in Colne Circuit. I should think brother Jackson or Sagar might set the heads of the people at Bacup right. Brother Jackson should advise brother Ridall, not to please the devil by preaching himself to death. I still think, when the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave them. Every year more and more of the Clergy are convinced of the truth, and grow well-affected towards us. It would be contrary to all common sense, as well as to good conscience, to make a separation now.

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate brother.

DCIX. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY

, CARLOW, *April 26, 1789.*

I AM glad to hear that the work of the Lord still prospers in your hands. But there needs great steadiness, or you will not be able to keep the good old Methodist discipline. Brother Rhodes is desirous to do this; and it will be right for you to strengthen his hands therein. Let the Preachers stand firm together, and then the people will be regular; but if any of you take their part against the Preacher; all will be confusion. Since you desire it, you may come to the Conference.

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate brother.

DCX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

OTLEY.

I AM glad to hear so good an account of the work of God at Bideford. That town had holden out long, and seemed to bid defiance to the Gospel. But if we are not weary of well-doing, we shall reap in due time. I should hardly have expected any increase of the work of God in Launceston: But probably it will be enlarged by your preaching in the Town-Hall; for many will come thither, who would not come to our preaching-house.

As long as you and your fellow laborers converse freely together, and act by united counsels, the work of the Lord will prosper in your hands. And continue instant in prayer, particularly in your closet.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXI. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

NORTHAMPTON, *November 25, 1789.*

YOURS of the 21st instant was sent to me hither. You have done exceedingly well, to take the upper room. If need be, we will help you out. Let us have no law, if it be possible to avoid it: That is the last and the worst remedy. Try every other remedy first. It is a good providence that the Mayor at Bideford is a friendly man. Prayer will avail much in all cases. Encourage our poor people to be instant in prayer. Take care of poor Michael; and do not forget,

Dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY, NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME, *March 27, 1790.*

TAKE particular care that neither Michael Fenwick, nor any other, give any just offense; and especially, that they offend not God: Then He will make your enemies be at peace with you.

If I remember well, I did write to the Mayor of Bideford; and I expect that makes him more quiet. By meekness, gentleness, and patience, with faith and prayer, you will prevail at Torrington also. You have only to go on calmly and steadily, and God will arise and maintain his own cause. Only let us labor to have a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward man.

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY, *Near LONDON, October 29, 1790.*

THE person that was appointed to come down to Bideford has been prevented from coming by want of health. And I believe it was well: It has confirmed me in a resolution which I had formed before, — not to send more Preachers into any Circuit than that Circuit can provide for. We are almost ruined by not observing this rule. I will observe it better for the time to come.

I am, dear Sammy,
Your affectionate brother.

DCXIV. — *To Miss Penelope Newman.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 9, 1776.*

BEFORE I received yours, we had been speaking in the Conference on that very head, — the means of preventing spiritual religion from degenerating into formality. It is continually needful to guard against this, as it strikes at the root of the whole work of God. One means whereby God guards us against it is, temptation; and, indeed, crosses of every kind. By these he keeps us from sleeping, as do others, and stirs us up to watch unto prayer. So He is now stirring you up! Hear his voice; and you will feel more life than ever.

I am, dear Penny,
Yours affectionately.

DCXV. — *To Mr. Jonathan Brown.*

DEAR JONATHAN,

YOU send us welcome news of the prosperity of the work of God in the Isle. A year ago, I was afraid that our members would scarce ever again amount to four-and-twenty hundred: So they rise now above our hope. I trust now it will be your business thoroughly to “purge the floor.” Purge out all the unworthy members, and strongly exhort the rest to “go on to perfection.” Get as many as possible to meet in band.

I am, with love to your wife,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXVI. — *To Mr. Thomas Funnell.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

November 24, 1787.

WHATEVER assistance I can give those generous men who join to oppose that execrable trade, I certainly shall give. I have printed a large edition of the "Thoughts on Slavery," and dispersed them to every part of England. But there will be vehement opposition made, both by slave-merchants and slave-holders; and they are mighty men: But our comfort is, He that dwelleth on high is mightier.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCXVII. — *To Mr. William Ferguson, of Hoxton.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, September 7, 1779.

THE proposal you sent me from the Hague, I like well. Pray talk with John Atlay about it; and if he and you are agreed, the sooner it is put in execution the better. Certainly all unsaleable books that are undamaged, I will take again. But if any sermon be translated into Dutch, it should first be "The Almost Christian." This is far more suitable to unawakened readers than "The Lord our Righteousness."

I am, dear Billy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXVIII. — *To Mrs. Ferguson.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

HARWICH, *June 12, 1783.*

HITHERTO God has helped us. As the weather last night was exceedingly rough, the Captain did not think it advisable to sail; for which I was not sorry. We expect to sail this morning, as it seems the storm is over; and probably we shall see Helvoetsluys tomorrow. Sally and my other companions are in perfect health, and are all in good spirits; knowing that they are under His protection whom the winds and the seas obey.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXIX. — *To the Rev. Mr. Davenport.*

DEAR SIR,

BRISTOL, *August 14, 1782.*

IT would have given me a good deal of satisfaction to have had a little conversation with you. But I do not stay long in one place. I have no resting-place on earth: —

A poor wayfaring man,
I dwell awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.

You would have been very welcome at our Conference. Mr. Pugh and Mr. Dodwell were present at it; and I believe are more determined than ever to spend their whole strength in saving their own souls, and them that hear them.

I believe one of our Preachers that are stationed in the Leicester Circuit will call upon you at Alexton; and I make no doubt but some of the seed which you have been long sowing will then grow up. No one should wish or pray for persecution. On the contrary, we are to avoid it to the uttermost of our power. "When they persecute you in one city, flee unto another." Yet, when it does come, notwithstanding all our care to avoid it, God will extract good out of evil.

Tomorrow, I am to set out for Cornwall. In about three weeks I expect to be here again. In the beginning of October, I generally move towards London; in the neighborhood of which I usually spend the winter.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXX. — *To Mrs. Rebecca Gains.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 4, 1770.*

I WAS glad to hear from you; and especially to hear that you are still athirst for God. O beware of setting up any idol in your heart! Give all to Him; for He is worthy. You did exceeding right in going to Jane Johnson. There is no end of shyness, if we stand aloof from each other. In this case, we have only to overcome evil with good; and they are wisest that yield first. Promises of that kind are of no force. The sooner they are broken the better. You should take Molly S—— in to board. O self-will! How few have conquered it! I believe it is a good providence for your account: She can pay but few visits. She fears God, and wishes to save her soul; and the visiting those that are otherwise minded will not profit her: She wants nothing but Christ. Surely you may tell anything to,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

Near DUNBAR, May 26, 1779.

IT was not your own desire to miss me at Alnwick, as well as at Newcastle; otherwise I might have blamed you, and supposed that your love was grown cold. But I do not believe that is the case; and it is still your desire to love God. What then should hinder your recovering His love, if you still walk in all his appointed ways? if you still contrive all the opportunities you can of hearing his word, of communicating, of prayer, reading, and meditation? It cannot be, if you seek Him, but you will soon find. He will return and abundantly pardon. Who knows how soon? Perhaps today; and why not at this hour? You ask what I think of that strange book. I think the writer was distracted; otherwise she could have no excuse.

I am, dear Becky,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, January 5, 1785.

YOU did well to write. Although I have not much time, yet I am always well-pleased to hear from a friend. If outward losses be a means of stirring you up to gain more inward holiness, you will never have need to repent of that loss, but rather to praise God for it. How soon will the moment of life be gone! It is enough, if we secure an happy eternity. Let brother Gains and you earnestly seek to be wholly devoted to God; and all things else will be added to you.

I am, dear Becky,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXIII. — *To the Commanding Officer in Lowestoft.*

SIR,
1782.

LONDON, *November 30,*

I AM informed by some of my friends in Lowestoft, that they have been frequently disturbed at their public worship by some officers quartered in the town. Before I use any other method, I beg of you, Sir, who can do it with a word, to prevent our being thus insulted any more. We are men; we are Englishmen: As such we have a natural and a legal right to liberty of conscience.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant.

DCXXIV. — *To Mr. Richard Rodda.*

DEAR RICHARD,

BRISTOL, *September 9, 1782.*

YOU should take particular care that your Circuit be never without an assortment of all the valuable books, especially the Appeals, the Sermons, Kempis, and “The Primitive Physic,” which no family should be without. Send for these, and, according to the rule of Conference, take them into your own keeping. You are found to be remarkably diligent in spreading the books: Let none rob you of this glory. If you can spread the Magazine, it will do good: The letters therein contain the marrow of Christianity.

Your affectionate friend and brother

It is very remarkable, that you should have a prospect of doing good at Oxford! And it is certainly a token for good, that you should find a Magistrate willing to do you justice.

DCXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

WALLINGFORD, *October 24, 1789.*

YOU are a man whom I can trust: Whatever you do, you will do it with your might. Some years since we wanted a preaching-place near Coleford, in Somersetshire. A neighboring gentleman, Mr. Salmon, gave us ground to build on, and timber for the house, and desired me to use his house as my own. He is now by wicked men reduced to want.

I am informed a master for a poor-house is wanted at Manchester. Pray inquire, and, if it be so, leave no means untried to procure the place for him. Apply in my name to B. Barlow, D. Yates, T. Phillips, Dr. Easton, Mr. Brocklehurst, Stonehouse, and all that have a regard for me. Make all the interest you can. Leave no stone unturned. "Join hands with God to make a good man live." I hope you will send me word in London that you have exerted yourself, and are not without a prospect of success.

I am, dear Richard,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXXVI. — *To Richard Davenport, Esq.*

I AM afraid, Sir, I shall not have an opportunity of procuring you those tunes until I return to London. The gentleman from whom I expected to procure them is not yet come hither. I have desired Mr. Swindells to beg your acceptance of two or three little tracts, which, perhaps, you have not seen, that I forgot to mention; one of which, if you have it not already, will probably give you pleasure. The title is nearly this: "A Letter to a Bishop, occasioned by some late Discoveries in Religion." There are two parts of it. May I request of you one thing, Sir? — Do not speak evil of Jesus Christ: You may sometime stand in need of Him; and if you should, (I can say from a very little experience,) you will find Him the best friend in heaven or earth.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant.

DCXXVII. — *To Mr. Samuel Wells.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *January 28, 1779.*

ACCORDING to the Act of Toleration,

1. You are required to certify to the Registrar of the Bishop's Court, or the Justices, the place of your meeting for divine worship. This is all you have to do. You ask nothing at all of the Bishop or Justices.

2. The Registrar, or Clerk of the Court, is "required to register the same, and to give a certificate thereof to such persons as shall demand the same; for which there shall be no greater fee or reward taken than sixpence."

I advise you to go once more to the Sessions, and say, "Gentlemen, we have had advice from London: We desire nothing at all of you; but we demand of your Clerk to register this place, and to give us a certificate thereof; or to answer the refusal at his peril."

Answer no questions to Justices or Lawyers, but with a bow, and with repeating the words, "Our business is only with your Clerk: We demand of him what the Act requires him to do."

If you judge proper, you may show this to any of the Justices. What I have written, I am ready to defend.

P.S. You led the Justices into the mistake, by your manner of addressing them. Beware of this for the time to come: You have nothing to ask of them.

DCXXVIII. — *To Mr. Gidley, Officer of Excise.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 18, 1776.*

I AM glad to hear that you are ordered to Exeter: There seems to be a particular providence in this. We have a small society there, which is but lately formed, and stands in need of every help; so that, I doubt not, your settling among them will be an advantage to them. See that you be not ashamed of a good Master, nor of the least of his servants.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *July 4, 1778.*

I AM glad to hear that the work of God begins to increase even in poor Exeter. If Jos. Jones is able and willing to preach morning and evening, I should have no objection to his laboring next year in your Circuit.

As to the house, it would, undoubtedly, be a means of much good if it can be procured. All the difficulty is, to procure the money. We cannot do much, because of the building at London. But “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.”

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 25, 1779.*

ANY house is *ipso facto* licensed, if the demand is made either at the Bishop’s Court, the Assizes, or the Quarter-Sessions. The Act of

Parliament licenses, not the Justices: They can neither grant nor refuse. If you have witnesses, your house is licensed: You need trouble the Sessions no farther. If they trouble you, the Lord Chief Justice will do you right. You should mildly and respectfully tell them so.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

P.S. I have wrote to the Chancellor, and hope he will trouble you no more.

DCXXXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BOLTON, *April 11, 1779.*

IT seems to me, that this is a very providential thing, and that you did well not to let the opportunity slip. There is no doubt but our brethren at the Conference will readily consent to your asking the assistance of your neighbors for your preaching-house. And the time appears to be now approaching, when poor Exeter will lift up its head. There is no danger at all of your being a loser, by any bond or security that you have given. If I live till the latter end of summer, I hope to call upon you in my way to Cornwall.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXXII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BRISTOL, *September 22, 1780.*

I HAVE much business to do in London; and as I do not depend upon seeing another year, I must be there as soon as possible; and to that end have taken a place in the mail-coach for next Sunday night. If I should live till the next autumn, I shall endeavor to see you at Plymouth. As it was evidently the providence of God which placed you in your present situation, he will doubtless give you grace sufficient for it. Only take care to improve the Sabbaths, and He will everyday stand at your right hand.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXXIII. — *To Miss Mary Stokes.*

DEAR MISS STOKES,

CHESTER, *March 17, 1771.*

I ALMOST wonder, have I found another Jenny Cooper? I take knowledge of her spirit in you. I doubt not God has begun a good work in your heart. He has given you a taste of the powers of the world to come. He has delivered you from the vain expectation of finding happiness in the things of earth; and I trust you will be entangled no more in that snare. You know where true joys are to be found. Now stand fast in that beginning of liberty, wherewith Christ has made you free. Yet do not stand still. This is only the dawn of day: The Sun of Righteousness will rise upon you, in quite another manner than you have hitherto experienced. And who knows how soon? Is He not near? Are not all things now ready? What hinders you from receiving Him now? "If thou canst believe." Here is all the bar: Only unbelief keeps out the mighty blessing! How many things have you been enabled to overcome since I saw you in the great garden? But do not leave my poor Molly Jones behind; — not that you can stay for her; but bring her on with you. I have much hopes that nothing will stop Sally James or Miss Flower. O bear one another's burdens! Then shall you be, not almost, but altogether, Christians! Then shall you fulfill the joy of,

My dear Miss Stokes,

Yours affectionately.

While I am in Ireland, you need only direct to Dublin.

DCXXXIV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR MISS STOKES,

DUBLIN, *April 4, 1771.*

THERE is a sweetness and friendliness in your spirit which is exceeding agreeable to me. And you have an openness withal which makes it the more pleasing. Let nothing rob you of this; although you cannot retain it without a good deal of resolution; for the example of all the world is against you; even of the religious world, which is full of closeness and reserve, if not of disguise also. How will you do then to retain that artless simplicity which almost every one disclaims? Nay, this is not all: You must likewise expect to be yourself deceived, more or less. You will believe persons to be sincere, who will abuse your confidence; who will say much and mean nothing. But let not my dear maid copy after them: Let them have all the artifice to themselves. Still let not mercy or truth forsake you, but write them upon the table of your heart. Only know to whom you speak; and then you cannot be too free. Open the window in your breast. I pray, never be afraid of writing too large letters: You must not measure yours by mine; for I have a little more business than you.

Your weakness and tenderness of constitution, without great care, may prove a snare to you. Some allowance must be made on that account; but the danger is of making too much. Steer the middle way. So far as you are able, rejoice to endure hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; and deny yourself every pleasure, which you are not divinely conscious prepares you for taking pleasure in God. I am glad you can converse freely with Sally Flower. Let her not lose her rising in the morning. Surely she and you together might overrule Molly Jones's Irish reason for not meeting, "*I said I would not.*" I feel much for poor Sally James. Perhaps she will outrun many of you by and by.

My dear Miss Stokes,

Your affectionate brother.

DCXXXV. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LYNN, *November 9, 1771.*

How glad should I be, could I be of any service to one I so tenderly regard! You have a heart susceptible of friendship; and shall it not be a blessing to you, a means of increasing every holy temper, and perhaps of guarding you against some of the dangerous temptations which are incident to youth?

Shall I give you a few advices?

1. Keep that safe which God has given; never let slip any blessing you have received. Regard none who tell you, "You must lose it." No; you may have more or less of joy. This depends upon a thousand circumstances: But you never need lose one degree of love.
2. You never will, if you are a careful steward of the manifold gifts of God. "To him that hath," (that is, uses what he hath,) "it shall be given" still, and that more abundantly. Therefore,
3. Use your every grace. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Be zealous, be native, according to your strength. Speak for God wherever you are. But, mean time,
4. Be humble! Let all that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Pray for the whole spirit of humility, that you may still feel you are nothing, and may feel those words,

"All might, all majesty, all praise,
All glory be to Christ my Lord!"

I am accustomed to remember a few of my friends about ten o'clock in the morning: I must take you in among them, on condition you will likewise remember me at that time. I never shall think your letters too long.

My dear Molly,
Yours affectionately.

DCXXXVI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 26, 1771.*

SANCTIFIED crosses are blessings indeed; and when it is best our Lord will remove them. A peculiar kind of watching, to which you are now called, is, against the suggestions of that wicked one, who would persuade you to deny or undervalue the grace of God which is in you. Beware of mistaking his voice for the voice of the Holy One. Do justice to Him that lives and reigns in you, and acknowledge His work with thankfulness. There is no pride in doing this: It is only giving Him his due, rendering Him the glory of his own graces. But in order to this, you stand in continual need of the unction, to abide with you and teach you of all things. So shall you never lose anything of what God has given; neither the blessing itself, nor the witness of it. Nay, rather you shall sink deeper and deeper into his love; you shall go on from faith to faith; and patience shall have its perfect work, until you are perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Cannot poor Molly Jones discern the difference between John Pawson and T. Jones? In Tommy's conversation there is nothing solid or weighty; as neither was there in his preaching. Therefore neither religion nor sound reason would lead one to admit either one or the other. It is only free, open love, however shy she may be, whereby you can make any impression upon her. And love, seconded with prayer, will persuade.

Do you not find as much life in your soul as ever? Can you still give God all your heart? Do you find as much of the spirit of prayer, and the same zeal for God? Go on, in his name, and in the power of his might, trampling yours and his enemies under your feet.

My dear Molly,
Your affectionate brother.

DCXXXVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

IN order to speak for God, you must not confer with flesh and blood, or you will never begin. You should vehemently resist the reasoning devil, who will never want arguments for your silence. Indeed, naturally all the passions justify themselves: So do fear and shame in particular. In this case, therefore, the simple, child-like boldness of faith is peculiarly necessary. And when you have broke through and made the beginning, then prudence has its office; that is, Christian (not worldly) prudence, springing from the unction of the Holy One, and teaching you, how far and in what manner to speak, according to a thousand various circumstances.

You do not yet see the day dawn, with regard to those who are near and dear to you. But you must not hence infer, that it never will. The prayer that goeth not out of feigned lips will not fall to the ground; but “though it seem to tarry long, true and faithful is His word.”

I am glad Miss Williams comes a little nearer to us. Do the same good office to Molly Jones. She professes to love you: If she really does, press on, and you will prevail. Does not Tommy Jones hurt her? He is lively and good natured, but has no liking either to the doctrine or discipline of the Methodists. Such a person is just calculated for weakening all that is right, and strengthening all that is wrong, in her. If you speak to Mr. Pawson concerning the preaching at the Hall on Sunday evening, I believe it may be continued. Only it could not be by the Travelling Preachers: They are otherwise engaged.

Yours affectionately.

DCXXXVIII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

February 11, 1772.

I AM glad you have had an opportunity of spending n little time with that lovely company. The day I leave Bristol, (Monday, March 9,) I hope to

be at Stroud myself. You are not sent thither for nothing, but in order to do, as well as to receive, good; and that not to one family only, or to those four of your acquaintance; nay, but you have a message from God, (you and — Eden too,) to all the women in the society. Set aside all evil shame; all modesty, falsely so called. Go from house to house; deal faithfully with them all; warn every one; exhort every one. God will everywhere give you a word to speak; and his blessing therewith. Be you herein a follower of Nancy Boltan, as she is of Christ.

In doing and bearing
The will of our Lord,
We still are preparing
To meet our reward.

I have great hope for Sally James. In the company which commonly surrounds her, it is best to use reserve. And this is apt to form a habit, which it is not easy to conquer, even with those she loves well; but I trust she will conquer this and every enemy. Perhaps we shall soon rejoice with her. It is good that you may be emptied, that you may be filled. But how is this, that you have never given me an hour's pain since I was first acquainted with you? Do you intend to be always going forward, without standing still, or going backward at all? The good Lord enable you so to do, and all those that are with you! So fulfill the joy of

Yours affectionately.

DCXXXIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

ABERDEEN, *May 1, 1772.*

SALLY JAMES is a letter in my debt. I have had but one letter from her since I left Bristol: And that I answered almost as soon as I received it. I a little wondered at not hearing from you; but as I know both the constancy and tenderness of your affection, there was no danger of my imputing it to ingratitude.

I think your present exercise, though it is one of the most trying, is one of the most profitable, which a good providence could prepare for you. And

it will probably be one means of plucking a brand out of the burning; of saving a soul alive. O what would not one do, what would not one suffer, for this glorious end! You certainly have good reason to hope: For any that feels himself a sinner will hardly perish; more especially if he sees where to look for help, and is willing to give up every plea beside.

You are never to put repentance and faith asunder; the knowledge of your emptiness and His fulness.

Naked, and blind, and poor, and bare,
You still your want of all things find.

But at the same instant, (such is the mystery of Christian experience,) you can say,

“Jesus, I all things have in thee!”

Our blessed Lord carries on his work in our souls, by giving us either to do or to suffer. Hitherto you are led most in the latter of these ways. I expect when you have more to do for Him, you shall suffer less. Every morning, and frequently in the day, you are very near to,

My dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

DCXL. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YARM, *June 16, 1772.*

THAT remedy mentioned in the “Primitive Physic” (the manna dissolved in a decoction of senna) hardly ever fails to relieve in the severest bilious colic, within twelve or thirteen minutes. Warm lemonade (so stupid are they who forbid acids in these cases) frequently gives ease in half a minute. And I have known this to take place in such inveterate complaints as would yield to no other remedy.

We are sure, the means which our blessed Lord uses to conform us to his image are (all circumstances considered) the very best; for He cannot but do all things well: Therefore, whenever it pleases Him to send affliction, then affliction is best. Yet we must not imagine He is tied down to this, or that he cannot give any degree of holiness without it. We have reason to believe, from the earliest records, that St. Paul suffered a thousand times more than St. John. And yet one can hardly doubt but St. John was as holy as he, or any of the Apostles. Therefore, stand ready for whatsoever our Lord shall send; but do not require him to send you affliction. Perhaps he will take another way; he will overpower your whole soul with peace, and joy, and love; and thereby work in you a fuller conformity to himself than you ever experienced yet. You have; — hold fast there, —

“All’s alike to me, so I
In my Lord may live and die.”

I am
Yours affectionately.

DCXLI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

SHEFFIELD, *August 10, 1772.*

HAVING finished, for the present, my business at Leeds, I am come thus far on my journey to Bristol. But I must take Haverford-West in the way thither; so that I do not expect to be there till the 30th instant. How many blessings may you receive in the mean time, provided you seek them in the good old way wherein you received the Lord Jesus Christ! So walk in him still. Beware of striking into new paths! of being wise above that is written! Perhaps we may find sweetness in the beginning; but it would be bitterness in the latter end. O my sister, my friend, I am afraid for you! I doubt you are stepping out of the way. When you enter into your closet, and shut the door, and pray to your Father who seeth in secret; then is the time to groan, to Him who reads the heart, the unutterable prayer. But to be silent in the congregation of his people is wholly new, and therefore wholly wrong. A silent meeting was never heard of in the church of Christ for sixteen hundred years. I entreat you to read over, with much prayer,

that little tract, "A Letter to a Quaker." I fear you are on the brink of a precipice, and you know it not. The enemy has put on his angel's face, and you take him for a friend. Retire immediately! Go not near the tents of those dead, formal men, called Quakers! Keep close to your class, to your band, to your old teachers: They have the words of eternal life! Have any of them offended you? Has any stumbling-block been laid in your way? Hide nothing from,

My dear Molly,
Yours in affection.

DCXLII. — *To Mr. James Bogie.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 11, 1788.*

IT is an excellent plan: The sooner you put it in execution, the better; only see that you be all punctual to follow one another exactly. Let not a little hindrance or inconvenience put you out of your way, — suppose a shower of rain or snow. Press on! Break through! Take up your cross each of you, and follow your Master: So shall the world and the devil fall under your feet.

I am, dear Jemmy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXLIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JEMMY,

LEEDS, *August 1, 1789.*

YOUR division of Scotland into the three southern Circuits is exceedingly well judged. You will see, by the minutes of the Conference, that it is put into execution. I trust, in a few months' time, to see thorough Methodist discipline both in Glasgow, Ayr, and Dumfries; and pray do not forget

Greenock. I have letters thence, asking for help. Let not any poor souls perish for lack of knowledge, if it be in your power to prevent it.

I am, dear Jemmy,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXLIV. — *To Mr. John Watson.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, *April 25, 1783.*

YESTERDAY I received yours from Perth. If brother M'Lean has been able to do any good at Perth or Dunkeld, it would be worth while to take a room. But truly I think, if the Highlanders will not pay for their own room, they are not worthy of preaching. To labor, and pay for our labor, is not right before God or man. Are you able to undertake a Circuit? You may address your next to London.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

DCXLV. — *To Mr. George Flamank, Officer of Excise, in Plymouth.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

PORTAFERRY, *June 7, 1789.*

“HEAVINESS may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” I hope to set out for the west immediately after the Conference; and probably I shall bring with me one or two men of peace, by whom all these misunderstandings will be removed. “In your patience,” meantime, “possess ye your souls.” And those that suffer all will surely conquer all.

I am, my dear brethren,
Your affectionate brother.

DCXLVI. — *To Mr. Abraham Orchard, of Bath.*

DEAR BROTHER,

1783.

YOU have reason to be thankful to God for enabling you to set out in his good way; and, if you would go on therein, remember that you cannot walk alone. Therefore, your wisdom is, not to think much of shame, or the fear of any temporal matter, to connect yourself in the closest manner you can with those you believe to be the children of God. A form of prayer used in private may be of considerable use; only now and then, at the beginning, or middle, or end of it, you may break out a little, and speak a few words, just according to the present temper of your mind. When your sins are forgiven, you will surely be sensible of it; and “every one that seeketh, findeth.” But it will be given you without money and without price; you know not how soon! Perhaps now!

I am

Yours affectionately.

DCXLVII. — *To Mr. Isaac Brown.*

DEAR ISAAC,

BRISTOL, *October 7, 1787.*

IT was at the request of brother Holder himself, that I ordered him to be removed from Whitby; and I have wrote once or twice to that effect. But if his mind is altered, and if you judge it safe for him to remain there, I have no objection to it.

Tomorrow I am to set out for London: When I come thither, I will consider with the Preachers what is to be done when the Circuits will not bear the expense allotted to them. Peace be with you and yours!

I am, dear Isaac,
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXLVIII. — *To Mrs. Mullis, of Hackney.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NEW CHAPEL, *May 31, 1789.*

YOU are right in your judgment, that God never withdraws the light of his countenance but for some fault in us: And in order to retain that light, you should carefully follow the conviction he gives you from time to time. You should likewise labor to avoid all unprofitable reasonings: Then you will soon walk in the light as he is in the light.

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

DCXLIX. — *To Mr. Richard Bunt, Bedeford, Devon.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

OTLEY, *July 21, 1789.*

REGARD no one who tells you that idle tale of the Mayor and Corporation moving the Court of King's Bench against a man for speaking such words. The whole Court would laugh a man to scorn that pretended to any such thing. If ever anything of the kind should be moved, send me word, (I hope to be in Plymouth in two or three weeks,) and I will make them sick of the King's Bench as long as they live.

I am
Your affectionate servant.

DCL. — *To Mr. William Mears, Chatham.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

PEMBROKE, *August 15, 1786.*

IT is my desire that all things be done to the satisfaction of all parties. If therefore it be more convenient, let brother Pritchard's family and sister Boone lodge at Chatham house. Why have you not set on foot a weekly subscription in order to lessen your debt? Have neither the Preachers nor the people any spirit? Who begins? I will give two shillings and sixpence a week, (for a year,) if all of you together will make up twenty shillings.

I am, dear Billy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCLI. — *To Mr. Jasper Winscom.*

DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *October 20, 1775.*

I SHOULD have had no objection at all to brother Skinner's going into Kent, but that it would interfere with our making a fair trial of the Isle of Wight. I would have this done without delay; and I much approve of the method you propose. We will help you out (as I said) with regard to the expense. I hope you will be able to procure the meeting-house. Peace be with you and yours.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCLII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *January 14, 1779.*

OURS are Travelling Preachers; therefore, I can never consent that any of them should remain for a month together in the Island. If you can contrive that the additional Preacher have full employment, then we can inquire where one can be found.

It seems to me that you take the matter exactly right, with regard to the Portsmouth preaching-house; and that the only thing to be done is, to get the mortgage out of Mr. Pike's hands.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCLIII. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JASPER,

LONDON, *August 10, 1782.*

THAT the work of God has not prospered in the Salisbury Circuit for several years is none of your fault. I am persuaded you have His work at heart, and will do all that is in your power to promote it. So will Mr. Mason: So will the other Preachers. Look for happy days!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCLIV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JASPER,

LONDON, *November 12, 1786.*

I AM glad to hear so good an account of the work of God in Witney. If the Lord will work, who shall hinder? This should encourage you to still greater zeal and activity. The death of that miserable backslider was a signal instance of divine Providence, and very probably might excite some others to flee from the wrath to come.

I am, dear Jasper,
Your affectionate brother.

DCLV. — *To the Same.*

DEAR JASPER,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *May 28, 1788.*

IT seems to me, the most proper Assistant for the Sarum Circuit (only do not talk of it yet) will be Jasper Winscom. I am convinced the person whom I had intended for it is not the proper person. It is exceeding well that the warning was given me before the Conference. We have found it so difficult to drive Calvinism out from among us, that we shall not readily let it in again.

I am, dear Jasper,
Yours affectionately.

DCLVI. — *To Mr. Abraham Brames, Brompton.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 12, 1779.*

IN the late Conference, it was agreed that one Steward (at least) in every society should be changed. And when I lately heard it was not yet done, I wrote to every Assistant on the head. I heard no objection to you. And in your case there is something peculiar, because of the debt lying on the house. Do all the good you can; work your work betimes; and in due time He will give you a full reward.

I am, with kind love to your wife,
Dear Abraham,
Your affectionate brother.

DCLVII. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *June 16, 1780.*

YOU have done exceeding well in setting that little collection on foot. I trust it will be productive of much good. On February 6th you may expect a Preacher from hence. Tell the Travelling Preachers whatever you think or fear respecting them, if you love either them or

Your affectionate brother.

DCLVIII. — *To Mr. John Ogilvie.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *August 7, 1785.*

As long as you are yourself earnestly aspiring after a full deliverance from all sin, and a renewal in the whole image of God, God will prosper you in your labor; especially if you constantly and strongly exhort all believers to expect full sanctification now, by simple faith. And never be weary of well-doing: In due time you shall reap, if you faint not!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCLIX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1786.*

YOU see God orders all things well. You have reason to thank Him, both for your sickness and your recovery. But whether sick or in health, if you keep in His way, you are to prepare your soul for temptations. For how shall we conquer if we do not fight? Go on, then, as a good soldier of Jesus

Christ. Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life! Salvation is nigh! Seek, desire nothing else!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCLX. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Near MANCHESTER, *July 24, 1787.*

As there are so few Preachers on the Isle, I think Mr. Crook's judgment is right. It will not be expedient for you to quit your station for the present. The work of God would very probably suffer if Mr. Crook and you should be absent at the same time. I believe it may be contrived for you to labor the ensuing year in some part of Yorkshire. Be zealous! Be active for God!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DCLXI. — *To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1791.*

I HAVE not been well for a few days; but I am now, by the blessing of God, much recovered. It should be matter of great thankfulness, that your wife and you were both enabled to give that lovely child to God. We are well assured that He does all things well; all things for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. It is not improbable that I may look upon you in the spring. Peace be with your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

NOTES

1. Whence did evil arise? — EDIT.
2. He afterwards married one of Mr. Wesley's sisters. — EDIT
3. His sister Emelia. — EDIT.
4. The other verses mentioned at the beginning of this letter are omitted, for the reason assigned by Mr. Wesley: They are on a "wrong subject." —EDIT
5. Nothing is worth such a sacrifice as this.—EDIT.
6. Written to his father.—EDIT.
7. A folio volume in Latin, consisting of Dissertations on the Book of Job, by his father, and dedicated to the Queen. —EDIT.
8. What I have been hitherto doing amounts to nothing.—EDIT.
9. May life itself no longer be pleasant to me.—EDIT.
10. Son of David, have mercy upon me.—EDIT.
11. O grovelling souls bent to the earth, and void of heavenly good!—EDIT.
12. The person who addressed a series of letters to Mr. Wesley in manuscript under the assumed name of John Smith, and whom the following answers were directed, there is reason to believe, was Dr. Thomas Secker, as that time Bishop of Oxford, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Secker was born in 1693. The writer of these letters says, "I was confirmed about the age of fourteen. What childish apprehensions I might have had before that time I cannot well say, but for about forty years since," etc. (These two periods added together will give us fifty four years, or rather fifty three, from his word "about." Let this be added to 1693, the year of Secker's birth, and it gives us 1746, the exact date of his letter. His letters are given entire in the Appendix to Moore's Life of Mr. Wesley, volume 2, page 475, etc.; and some account of the correspondence will be found in the same volume, page 95, etc.—EDIT.

13. Volume 1, page 231, of the present edition.—EDIT.
14. “Under thy guidance and direction, I entered into my inward parts: And I was unable to enter, because thou wast my Helper. I entered, and saw, with the eye of my soul, (such as it is,) the unchangeable light of the Lord [shining] above this very eye of my soul, and above my mind. I perceived that the light was not of this common kind, which is obvious to all flesh: Neither did it appear as if it was a larger light of the same kind. It was not a light of this description, but of another: a light that differed exceedingly from all these. Nor was it above my mind, in such a manner as the heavens are above the earth: But it was superior, because it made me. He who knows the truth is acquainted with this light; and he who knows it, knows eternity. Charity [or love] knows it.
- “O eternal Truth! Thou art my God. Day and night I sigh after thee. And when I obtained my first knowledge of thee, thou didst take me to see that there was something which I might behold. Thou didst likewise beat back the weakness of my own sight, and didst thyself powerfully shine into me. I trembled with love and with horror; and I found myself at a great distance from thee. (I exclaimed, ‘Is truth a nonentity?’) (And thou didst reply from afar, ‘No, indeed! I AM, THAT I AM!’) (I heard this, as we are accustomed to hear in the heart; and there was no ground whatever for doubting. Nay, I could more easily doubt of my existence itself, than that it was not the Truth.”
- EDIT
15. Among the shades of Academic groves. — EDIT.
16. Volume 8, page 76, etc., of the present edition. — EDIT.
17. Referring to the discomfiture of the Pretender’s forces in the year 1745. — EDIT.
18. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Francis: — “Yet may not truth in laughing guise be dress’d?” — EDIT.
19. Volume VIII, of the present edition. — EDIT.
20. The purification from his former sins. — EDIT.
21. To do the same thing repeatedly. — EDIT.

22. But, because I seemed reluctant to entertain his views, he expelled me from his dwelling. — EDIT.
23. Saying the same things ten times over. — EDIT.
24. See in the next page Mr. Wesley's translation of this allusion to 2 Corinthians 11:3. — EDIT.
25. It is the duty of the people to separate themselves from a wicked Bishop. — EDIT.
26. Without accomplishing their design. — EDIT.
27. I did not feel myself to be a boon companion, exactly suitable for such society. — EDIT.
28. It is denied. — EDIT.
29. Entirely. — EDIT.
30. Your own will, instead of reason. — EDIT.
31. With sufficient authority. — EDIT.
32. A relation of the Wesleys. — Edit.
33. For who forbids this? — EDIT.
34. Live this day. — EDIT.
35. Closeted only with him. — EDIT.
36. See Volume III, of the present edition of Mr. Wesley's Works. — EDIT.
37. This line from Horace is thus translated by Francis: —
 "Our minds with this exception gay,
 That you, our friend, were far away."
 — EDIT.
38. According to the rules of art. — EDIT.
39. Hasten onward with caution.— EDIT.
40. The head and fountain of the evil. — EDIT.
41. Words are wasted on a dead man. — EDIT.
42. For a translation of this passage see the preceding page.— EDIT.
43. Professedly. — EDIT.

44. In the spirit and temper of prize-fighters. — EDIT.
45. Do you know of any method which would be preferable? — EDIT.
46. He has no brains. — EDIT.
47. For the translation of this Greek, see Volume VIII. — EDIT.
48. This passage from Virgil may be thus rendered. — EDIT.
49. Old men that have attained to their sixtieth year. — EDIT.
50. All else is frothy laughter, and but dust. — EDIT.
51. We who are the chiefs. — EDIT.
52. O that the rest were like-minded! — EDIT.
53. Farewell. — EDIT.
54. This accommodated passage from Terence is thus translated by Colman: —
 “Now you may show what kind of man you are;
 ————— and in a cause
 Worthy the utmost reachings of your soul.”
 — EDIT.
55. Farewell. — EDIT.
56. The care of souls. — EDIT.
57. For a translation of this quotation see page 129. — EDIT.
58. Farewell to all of you. — EDIT.
59. I am entirely occupied with it. — EDIT.
60. Or, according to sister Martha’s account, my sixty second.— C. W.
61. “He is vanished; he is escaped.” Spoken by Cicero respecting Catiline. — EDIT.
62. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —
 “My former happy life restore.” — EDIT.
63. Each of us in turn asks and grants indulgence. — EDIT.

64. This quotation from Terence, as applied by Mr. Wesley, may be thus rendered: "This affair has brought him again into favor." — EDIT.
65. For a translation of this passage from Terence, see page 142.
66. Translated in Volume X. — EDIT.
67. Among the papers of Mr. Charles Wesley is the following copy of a letter, which he appears to have written at his brother's suggestion, and addressed to some person who was concerned in the erection of the chapel at Birstal. It shows the importance which he, as well as his brother, attached to the settlement of chapels upon the Methodist plan, so that they might never be alienated from the connection by the caprice of individuals, but always be used for the purpose of their original erection.

— EDIT.

SIR,

LONDON, *July 29, 1782.*

I WAITED to see my brother before I could answer your very sensible letter. You was informed that my brother *carefully perused* the Deed, and *attentively examined* and *considered* it, in the presence of several persons.

He did in the presence of several persons hear it read, but never read it himself, either before or after. Upon hearing it, he immediately and earnestly objected to it. A long and vehement debate ensued, at the close of which he rose up, and flatly declared he could not in conscience sign it. Therefore judge you, whether he was likely to say, that he "would not hesitate a moment after he had examined the Deed."

In the evening, after he had finished a hard day's labor, and was preparing for rest, some of them came again, and in truth worried him to sign it.

The case has not been fairly represented to you. You have been informed that "about thirty one years ago, *a number of poor Methodists* purchased ground, and built a preaching-house." But how? At the instance of my brother, all the Methodists of the neighboring societies contributed to the building; and this *in*

confidence that it would be settled on the same plan as all our preaching-houses were. "But the founders had a right to settle it as they pleased." True; but the Trustees were not the *founders*; although they lent a considerable sum of money for the completing of the building; as many others have done in all parts of England, who yet never imagined, this gave them a right to appoint the Preachers! "Accordingly they settled it" — *They!* I know not who: Certainly not the original contributors — "on nineteen members of the society." And pray, who could give these nineteen such a privilege over the rest? It seems to me here is no good foundation. *All the society* were willing my brother should name Trustees: But who besides had any authority to name them, I cannot understand! But be this as it may, "The founders did not choose, that after Mr. Wesley's death a body of men whom they *knew not* should appoint their Preachers, but the *Trustees*." *The founders!* Who were they? The fifty or five hundred subscribers? These are the real founders; and nine-tenths of these did and do choose that all the Travelling Preachers should be appointed, not by the Trustees of any particular houses, but (after Mr. Wesley's death) by the General Conference, that the Methodists may be one body throughout the three kingdoms.

You yourself very properly observe, of the first Deed, that great inconveniences might follow from vesting nineteen Trustees with a power to choose one another, and to appoint and displace Preachers at their pleasure. But you think, "the present Trustees *could not* legally transfer any of their power *to the Conference*." Then how can they transfer any of their power to the Leaders? or indeed to any other persons whatever? "A body of men whom their neighbors had entrusted with their concerns" — *Their neighbors!* No; they knew nothing of the matter. They desire that the Conference, not the Trustees, after all Wesley's death, may appoint and displace the Preachers. And if that bad Deed, which determines the contrary, cannot be *abrogated*, or, at least, so; "modified as to consist with the intention of the real founders," by giving the Conference a *conditionate power* with the Trustees, they will protest against it with both their hands.

You add: “As long as the Conference appoints Preachers with candid impartiality, we doubt not their appointments will be acquiesced in by the Trustees and Class Leaders.” But, according to this Deed, the Conference has no more business than the Parliament to appoint Preachers at all.

From the beginning of Methodism till now, (to touch on one more point,) the Assistants appointed the Stewards in all societies: But this Deed gives the Trustees and Leaders this power; which they think is “*necessary* to insure the repayment of the three hundred and fifty pounds to be advanced for the building.”

Necessary! Not at all. How many thousand pounds, advanced for buildings, have been paid within these forty years, though all the Stewards in England, Scotland, and Ireland, have been hitherto appointed by my brother or the Assistants!

You conclude your letter with a very just observation: — “The civil and religious rights of mankind have seldom been promoted by the assemblies of Ecclesiastics of any denomination: And they never will be, unless they are composed of men devoted to God, and dead to all the allurements of ease, and avarice, and ambition.” This is undoubtedly true; and this, we humbly hope, is the real character of most (at least) of those persons that meet in our assemblies. We hope, likewise, that “their consultations will always be moderated by some wise and truly religious man;” otherwise, that God will sweep away the very name of Methodist from the earth.

Upon the whole, I cannot, I dare not, sign that Deed. I can have nothing to do with it.

If the house should nevertheless be built, and settled upon that plan, I apprehend the consequence would be this:

1. No Methodist Preacher would ever preach in it. If any did, the whole body would disclaim him.
2. My brother would immediately set a subscription on foot for buying ground and building another house. The Trustees then might do what they pleased with theirs.

I am, Sir, Your humble servant.

68. The first and grand mistake. — EDIT.
69. The whole of our redemption by Christ is a metaphor. — EDIT.
70. It is not good that the supreme power should be lodged in many hands: Let there be one chief governor. — EDIT.
71. A person who presides over the rest. — EDIT.
72. This quotation from Juvenal is thus translated by Gifford: —
 “While something yet of health and strength remains,
 And yet no staff my faltering step sustains.”
 — EDIT.
73. Nothing is of equal consequence with this. — EDIT.
74. It is to be regretted, that no biographical account of this very excellent man was ever published; and so many years have now elapsed since his death, that few particulars of his personal history can be recovered. He was a principal partner in a banking establishment in Lombard-street, London; and had a country residence at Lewisham, in Kent, a few miles from the metropolis. For many years he was the intimate and cordial friend of Mr. Wesley; as the following letters, and numerous passages in Mr. Wesley’s Journal, abundantly testify. To Lewisham Mr. Wesley was accustomed to retire when writing for the press; and from that place, it will be observed, many of his sermons and other works are dated. Here he found an asylum during his serious illness in the year 1754, which was expected to terminate in his death; and from this place he was removed to the Bristol Hot-wells. Considerable sums of money were intrusted by Mr. Blackwell to Mr. Wesley for distribution among the poor; and some of the letters addressed to him show in what manner his bounty was applied. Mrs. Hannah Dewal and Mrs. Blackwell, so often mentioned in this correspondence, were women of exemplary piety, and both died in the Lord. Among the manuscripts left by Mr. Charles Wesley are two excellent hymns, of considerable length, on the death of these Christian ladies. Mrs. Blackwell died March 27, 1772. The second Mrs. Blackwell was the niece of Bishop Lowth. Her father was also a Clergyman. The late Mr. Charles Wesley, so justly celebrated for

his musical talents, who was intimately acquainted with the family, stated to the writer of this note, that the Bishop once dined with Mr. Wesley by appointment at Lewisham; on which occasion he refused to sit above Mr. Wesley at table; and in declining that honor, to which his rank in the Church entitled him, said to Mr. Wesley, "May I be found at your feet in another world!" Mr. Wesley, as might be supposed, still manifested considerable uneasiness; and the Bishop ended the dispute by requesting as a favor that he might sit below Mr. Wesley, inasmuch as he was deaf on one ear, and wished not to lose one word of Mr. Wesley's conversation. Under the date of July 24, 1782, Mr. Wesley says, in his Journal, "My brother and I paid our last visit to Lewisham, and spent a few pensive hours with the relict of our good friend Mr. Blackwell. We took one more walk round the garden and meadow, which he took so much pains to improve. Upwards of forty years this has been my place of retirement, when I could spare two or three days from London. In that time, first Mrs. Sparrow went to rest; then Mrs. Dewal; then good Mrs. Blackwell; now Mr. Blackwell himself. Who can tell how soon we may follow them?" Among the manuscript poems of Mr. Charles Wesley is a hymn entitled, "For Mr. Blackwell Departing, April 21, 1782;" and another, entitled, "On the Death of Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, April 21, 1782." In the latter of these compositions Mr. Blackwell is described as a man of Christian piety, who devoted a large proportion of his increasing property to the relief of the poor. — EDIT.

75. This quotation from Cicero on the Nature of the Gods is thus translated by Dr. Franklin:—
 "How much more laudable would it be, to acknowledge you do not know what you do not know, than to follow that blunderer, whom you must surely despise!" — EDIT.
76. The prime fallacy. — EDIT.
77. The whole of our redemption by Christ is a mere metaphor. — EDIT.
78. Mr. Wesley's housekeeper at Bristol. — EDIT.

79. This letter, though directed to Mr. Cownley, was addressed to the society at Leominster. — EDIT.
80. This quotation from Ovid is thus translated by Addison: —
 “I steer against their notions; nor am I
 Born back by all the current of the sky.” — EDIT.
81. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Francis: —
 “To the instruction of an humble friend,
 Who would himself be better taught, attend.” — EDIT.
82. Those who are clever in their particular profession. — EDIT.
83. From several expressions in this letter, it appears to have been addressed to the Reverend John Berridge, Vicar of Everton. — EDIT.
84. This quotation from Terence is thus rendered by Dr. Samuel Patrick: —
 “But now all is at your peril. I ride safe in the harbor.” — EDIT.
85. I prefer truth to the dearest friend. — EDIT.
86. Probably the conduct of John Bennet, who renounced his connection with Mr. Wesley about this period, and vehemently preached against him in that part of the country. — EDIT.
87. Volume 6 of the present edition of Mr. Wesley’s Works. — EDIT.
88. We add the following lines from the Rev. Charles Wesley to Mr. Rankin, written on the same occasion. — EDIT.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

March 1, 1775.

TO spare you the expense, I delayed answering your letter; but I bear you always on my heart, and rejoice when the Lord blesses you with success. He giveth grace, more grace, to the humble: Therefore wrestle with him for deep humility.

As to the public affairs, I wish you to be like-minded with me. I am of neither side, and yet of both; on the side of New England, and of Old. Private Christians are excused, exempted, privileged, to take no part in civil troubles. We love all and pray for all, with a sincere and impartial love. Faults there may be on both sides; but such as neither you nor I can remedy: Therefore, let us, and all our children, give ourselves unto prayer, and so stand still and see the salvation

of God. My love to Captain Webb, when you see him, and to Mr. Bowden, to whom I owe letters, and much love. Show yours for me, by praying more for me and mine.

Yours in the old love, C. W.

89. One of the Preachers in America. — EDIT.
90. One of the English Preachers. He was a different person from the Preacher to whom the preceding letter was addressed. — EDIT.
91. The Preacher then stationed in the Edinburgh Circuit. — EDIT.
92. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Francis: —
 “Wherefore, Maecenas, would you thus engage
 Your bard, dismiss’d with honor from the stage,
 Again to venture in the lists of fame,
 His youth, his genius, now no more the same?” — EDIT.
93. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen:
 “Destroy, build castles in the air,
 Now love the round, and now the square.” — EDIT.
94. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: -
 “Far different are my thoughts and strain.” — EDIT.
95. I am overcome by the force of truth. — EDIT.
96. The righteousness of the law is legal righteousness. — EDIT.
97. Throw away that thirst for books. — EDIT.
98. The dreadful dropsy increases by indulgence. — EDIT.
99. Nothing is of so much importance. — EDIT.
100. Mr. Wesley here refers to a pressing invitation which Mr. Benson had received to visit America. — EDIT.
101. We subjoin a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley to Mr. Benson.
 — EDIT.

MY DEAR BROTHER, THE FOUNDRY, *March 6, 1773.*

I HAVE barely time to say, your own reasons for not yet going to America, and Christopher Hopper’s, are unanswerable. Mr. F. is only the Captain’s echo. The Captain’s impressions are no more (or

very little more) to be depended on than George Bell's. He is an inexperienced, honest, zealous, loving enthusiast. God only knows whether you may not be called to America by and by. At present your call is not clear: Therefore stand still; and send our friends a loving, explicit refusal.

I do not want a heart to visit my very dear friends at Newcastle, but a body. If to my willing mind I had health and strength, still more is wanted; namely, a faithful man to attend me, and money to defray our expenses. When all these things meet, you may meet me once more in the north.

I have left my family, all but Charles, at Bristol. My old love to brother Hopper, Cownley, sister Proctor, and all my Newcastle friends. Stir them up to pray for me. I shall not need your prayers much longer.

Ἐρῶσο ἐν Χριστῷ.¹⁰²

102. Farewell in Christ.

103. Whose mouth it is necessary to stop. — EDIT.

104. The manner. — EDIT.

105. This quotation from Horace, and part of the sentence with which it is connected, are thus translated by Smart:

“He would often, as a great feat, dictate two hundred verses in an hour, standing in the same position.” — EDIT.

106. This was a misrepresentation. — W. C.

107. Mr. Churchey was now about to publish his large volume of poems, which Mr. Wesley permitted him to print at his own press. — EDIT.

108. This softness of mind must be cast away. — EDIT.

109. This person was a member of the Methodist society at an early period after its formation. He afterwards separated himself from his old friends, and questioned the truth of some of their religious tenets; especially the witness of the Spirit, and Christian perfection. He addressed several letters to Mr. Wesley, under the ashamed name of P. V.; and these called forth the replies now before the reader. In his last letter, Mr. Tompson disclosed his real name. The entire correspondence was published with Mr. Wesley's consent, in

the year 1760, in an octavo pamphlet, with the following title: —
 “Original Letters between the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, and Mr.
 Richard Tompson, respecting the Doctrine of Assurance, as holden
 by the former: Wherein that Tenet is fully examined; with some
 Strictures on Christian Perfection.” From this pamphlet, the
 subjoined letters have been copied. — EDIT.

110. Evidence or conviction. — EDIT.
111. Author of “Family Prayers, and Moral Essays in Verse and Prose.”
 He presented a copy of this work to Mr. Wesley, which occasioned
 their correspondence. A sermon on the occasion of his death, by Dr.
 Kippis, and selections from his papers, were published in 1782, in a
 small octavo volume, printed at Chesterfield. From this volume
 these letters of Mr. Wesley have been copied. — EDIT.
112. Mr. Wesley’s Answer to Dr. Taylor, on Original Sin. — EDIT.
113. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Smart:
 “No one is born without vices.” — EDIT.
114. This quotation from Terence is the rendered by Colman: —
 “The mind Falls easily from labor to delight.” — EDIT.
115. This quotation from Juvenal is thus translated by Gifford: —
 For youth is facile, and its yielding will
 Receives, with fatal ease, the’ imprint of ill.” — EDIT.
116. Mr. Fletcher’s “Appeal.” — EDIT.
117. This is the whole of the letter. Mr. Wolfe was appointed that year
 for the Bristol Circuit. — EDIT.
118. We subjoin the following letter to the same individual from Mr.
 Charles Wesley. — EDIT.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *July 2, 1774.*

Go on in the narrow way of the cross, praying, trusting, and
 laboring more abundantly. I shall always be glad to hear of your
 success. The first point is, “Take heed to thyself;” and then “to the
 doctrine.” Personal holiness we should above all things labor after,
 that we may be a pattern to the flock. My wife joins in love to your
 partner, etc., etc., with,

My dear brother,

Your sincerely affectionate friend.

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