

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 laboured 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 endeavours to avail himself of it. That kind of dulness 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 neighbourhood 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 hinderance 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 new-born 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 labour.

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 Saviour. 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 behaviour.

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.

Every one, 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 every day, 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 every day 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 to-day! 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 (endeavouring 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 fulfil 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 Saviour near!

When? to-morrow, or to-day? Nay, to-day 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 fulness 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: I 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 fulness 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 new-born 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 a 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 labour 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 labouring to be holy in body and spirit. You may have just so much and no more connexion 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 soever 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 connexion 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;* 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

* Vol. VI., p. 103, of the present edition of Mr. Wesley's Works.—EDIT.

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 held 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, &c.

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 reasonings 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 labour 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 neighbour; 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, &c.

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, &c.

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 hinderance 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 neighbours 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 hinderances, 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, "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 borne huge contradiction; and P— has stood such shocks as might have upset some of the most established souls 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. Quickened 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 labour.”

“ 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 labour 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 hinderance 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 to-morrow. 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 to-morrow.

CCLXXVI.—*To the Same.*

CORK, June 18, 1762.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

So your labour 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 behaviour 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.*

BRISTOL, September 3, 1763.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

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 fulness 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 could 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 to-morrow 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 labourers ; 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,

LONDON, *November 20, 1769.*

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, every

where, 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, LONDON, *December 21, 1770.*

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 labourer 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 labour. 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, LONDON, *December 26, 1775.*

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 connexion 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 colours. Scriptural, Christian, &c., 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.*

Near LONDON, February 16, 1780.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

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, &c., &c., were not "strong and able men." When any such obtrude themselves for easy Circuits, speak at that time, and you do something.

CCCIH.—*To the Same.*

WHITTLEBURY, *October 25, 1780.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

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 neighbouring 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 behaviour 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 to-day 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 behaviour 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 connexion 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 labour.

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 garlick, 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 froward. 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 exact 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,

LONDON, *November 18, 1765.*

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 pretence 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 pretence of being more useful, quite disable you from being useful at all.

Richard Henderson desired that he might be the book-

keeper 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. To-morrow 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 *

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

* 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.

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.*

CLARMAIN, near ARMAGH, June 13, 1775.

DEAR TOMMY,

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 good-will 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: They 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 to-day! God will take care of to-morrow.

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 favour 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.