

me." You are come in good time to make peace. Go on, and prosper.

Your ever affectionate.

CCCCXXX.—*To the Samv.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 21, 1776.*

You are a great deal less happy than you would be, if you did not reason too much. This frequently gives that subtle adversary an advantage against you. You have need to be continually as a little child, simply looking up for whatever you want.

It is devoutly to be wished for, that we may rejoice evermore; and it is certain, the inward kingdom of God implies not only righteousness and peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost. You have therefore reason to ask for, and expect, the whole Gospel blessing. Yet it cannot be denied that many times joy is withheld, even from them that walk uprightly. The great point of all is, a heart and a life entirely devoted to God. Keep only this, and let all the rest go: Give Him your heart, and it sufficeth.

I am, my dear sister,

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXI.—*To Miss Bosanquet, afterwards Mrs. Fletcher.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 16, 1767.*

So the Lord has chastened and corrected you; but he hath not given you over unto death. It is your part to stand ready continually for whatever He shall call you to. Everything is a blessing, a means of holiness, as long as you can clearly say, "Lord, do with me and mine what thou wilt, and when thou wilt, and how thou wilt."

Undoubtedly she was (and so was I) in the third stage of a consumption. And Physicians have long since agreed that this is not curable by any natural means. But what signifies this in the sight of God? As,

When obedient Nature knows His will,
A fly, a grapestone, or a hair, can kill;

so, when it is his will to restore life or strength, any means shall be effectual. But we are slow of heart to believe that

He is still the uncontrolled, Almighty Lord of hell, and earth, and heaven.

You judge right. I never knew, till you wrote me word, that Richard Taylor had been at Leytonstone at all. At this Conference it will be determined whether all our Preachers, or none, shall continually insist upon Christian perfection. Remember in all your prayers,

My dear sister,

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 11, 1768.*

I AM afraid lest you should straiten yourself; and I was not in haste. Yet we have such a number round about us here, that I have a ready call for what I have to spare. I am glad B. Taylor's affair has been heard: It seems all parties are now pretty well satisfied. If we live till next autumn, the yearly Conference is to be at Leeds. It will be a little strange if you do not see me then; though it were twice three miles from Gildersome.

You have no reason to fear, but as your day so your strength shall be. Hitherto the Lord hath helped you. He has delivered; and you may rest assured that he will yet deliver. He gave, and he took away: But still you can praise him, since he does not take his Spirit from you. I hope you find no shyness in brother Lee, or Hopper. If there be, you are to overcome evil with good. I shall always be glad to hear from you, or S. Crosby. I trust neither life nor death will part you from,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 28, 1768.*

To hear from you is always agreeable to me: And at present there is no hinderance. In this house we have no jarring string; all is peace and harmony. "Right precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and to hear particular accounts of this kind is exceedingly helpful to those they leave behind. Therefore I wanted as particular an account as Sally Crosby or you can give.

T. Lee is of a shy, backward natural temper, as well as

of a slow, cool speech and behaviour; but he is a sincere, upright man; and it would be worth all the pains to have a thorough good understanding with him. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *January 15, 1770.*

It is not strange if the leading of one soul be very different from that of another. The same Spirit worketh in every one; and yet worketh several ways, according to his own will. It concerns us to follow our own light; seeing we are not to be judged by another's conscience.

A little time will show who hinders, and who forwards, the welfare of the family; and I hope you will have steadiness to pursue every measure which you judge will be to the glory of God.

I am glad you find your temporal difficulties are lessened. Beware of increasing your expenses. I advise you not to take any other child till all these expenses are over. It is pity but you had an electric machine. It would prevent much pain in a family, and supersede almost all other physic. I cure all vomiting and purging by warm lemonade.

She is there still, and likely so to be, unless I would hire her to return; which I dare not do. I will not buy a cross, though I can bear it. Many are much stirred up here, and are greatly athirst for pure love. I am sure you tasted it once, though you was reasoned out of it. How soon may you find it again! Simple faith is all we want. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, MACCLESFIELD, *March 26, 1770.*

I AM now moving northward. In about a fortnight I expect to be at Whitehaven; and a week after, at Glasgow; in the beginning of May, at Aberdeen; and May 11, at Edinburgh.

To exert your faith is the very thing you want. Believe, and enter in. The experience of Eliz. Jackson has animated

many. It is the very marrow of Christianity; and if it be diligently spread among our believers, it may be of unspeakable use. It is certainly right to pray, whether we can pray or no. God hears, even when we hardly hear ourselves.

She saw it so, through the advice and importunity of Clayton Carthy. And God permitted it. So all is well. With regard to us, I do not at present see any danger, either on one side or the other. You have need of a steady guide, and one that knows you well. If my brother had not given Mrs. Gaussen that fatal advice, "to keep from me," she would not have fallen into the hands of others.

I am glad Richard Taylor is of use. He will be more and more so, if he continues simple of heart, and speaks explicitly of full redemption, and exhorts believers to accept it *now*. The same rule it will be well for you to observe in conversation with all that are in earnest. Peace be with your spirit!

My dear sister, adieu!

CCCCXXXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *March 4, 1772.*

I BELIEVE my last letter took away a good part of your apprehensions. All the inconvenience I find (from a little bruise) is, that I am advised to ride as much in a carriage as I can, and as little on horseback. I take your offer exceeding kindly, and am,

My dear friend,
Ever yours.

CCCCXXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *July 17, 1773.*

BY the blessing of God, I reached this place an hour ago, in nearly as good health as I left it. I am glad my friend was at your house: She would receive no hurt; and possibly a little good. I think Thomas Mitchell, at least, may spend another year in Birstal Circuit. There did seem to be a providential call for what was done at Harrogate! I am glad you find your soul unencumbered. You are just in your place. Stand fast in glorious liberty!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *October 17, 1773.*

I WAS laid up for a week or two last month; but have now nearly recovered my strength. If I live till spring, and am as well as I am now, I shall move northward, as usual. I am glad you have begun that little meeting for prayer. It will not be without a blessing. T. Lee may have half a dozen of the "Instructions for Children," to give as he sees needful.

If you undertake the care of the books, I shall be under no farther concern about them; for I know what you do you will do in earnest. I wish you would immediately cause all the books which are at Birstal to be removed to your house. You will then be so kind as to send me a catalogue of them, and of the books which you would have sent down. All those who keep my books for the future, I shall desire to state their accounts once a month. But I do not know what you send me the bills for.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 17, 1773.*

I AM afraid the assortment of books which is at Birstal house is exceeding imperfect. As soon, therefore, as we receive the account from you, we shall send down such small books as are wanting, and such as are most called for, and most useful.

My health seems now to be as well established as for many years; and this we are sure of,—

Health we shall have, if health be best.

What have we to do, but to make the best use of all our talents; and according to our power to glorify Him with our bodies and with our spirits?

I am, my dear sister,

Yours affectionately.

CCCCXL.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 9, 1774.*

THE mob which hurt, not me, but the old hired chaise which I then used, made their assault some months since at

Inniskillen in Ireland. We are little troubled at present with English mobs; and probably shall not while King George the Third lives.

In July I hope to see you in Cross-hall. My spring journey lies thus:—Manchester, April 4; Monday, April 18, Halifax; Tuesday, Huddersfield, Dewsbury; Thursday, Bradford; Sunday, 24, Haworth church.

Surely, though we have seen great things already, we shall see greater than these. "If thou canst believe!" That is the point: Then what is impossible?

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXLI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CLONES, *May 29, 1775.*

I WAS particularly glad to hear from you at this time, as I wanted to know how you was going on, and whether you was the person concerning whom one of our Preachers warily asked my advice. Whether you should part with your house, and things pertaining to it, is a very important question. The answering of this depends upon many circumstances which I am not yet acquainted with. But necessity has no law. It must be done, if your income will not otherwise answer the expenses.

The last day of June I hope to be in Dublin, and the end of July in England. If I have a ready passage, probably I may have an opportunity of hiding myself a day or two with you; but I do not desire any of the Preachers to come to me till I send for them. If they do, I shall run away. I will not be in a crowd.

Probably you know whether Mr. Saunderson is at Knaresborough. If he is, pray take up a cross for me. Write to him, in my name, and tell him, I desire him, without delay or excuse, to return to Bristol; otherwise, he will disoblige me for ever.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXLII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 23, 1778.*

ALTHOUGH I hope to see you next week, I cannot but write a few lines. Who knows but the illness of Miss

Bishop might be permitted for this very thing,—that you might have a more clear and open way to help the women at Bath forward? What you have to do at Bristol does not yet appear: Providence will open itself by and by. I am glad Philly Cousens retains her confidence. See that she has something to do.

I had not heard anything of Tommy Westall's daughter; and am glad she is so well disposed of. Let brother Taylor and Nancy Tripp do all they can for God. This is an acceptable time. I hope to see you on Tuesday afternoon; and am,

My dear sister,
Yours very affectionately.

CCCCXLIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 5, 1780.*

I SNATCH time from the Conference to write two or three lines. I am in hopes Nancy Tripp will find a perfect cure. I am glad you have begun a prayer-meeting at Hunslet, and doubt not but it will be productive of much good. Hitherto we have had a blessed Conference. The case of the Church we shall fully consider by and by; and I believe we shall agree, that none who leave the Church shall remain with us. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, my dear sister,
Yours most affectionately.

CCCCXLIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 18, 1780.*

I AM glad to hear that the work of God is going on in your own soul, and in those about you. That young woman's dream is very remarkable, and gives us good encouragement to press on to the mark. I believe Mr. D. was the better for his journey; but he has very little fellowship with the Methodists.

We have many here who have the same experience with honest George Clark, and far more clear ideas of the life of faith than he has. Such are George Hufflet, in the chapel at Spitalfields; Mary Landers, in the Tower; S. Collet, in Bishopsgate-street; S. Cayleys, at G. Clark's; Jenny Thornton, and some others, in the city; S. Peters, in the Curtains; Molly Monk, at Moorfields; S. Garston and

Charles Wheeler, in Old-street. Joseph Bradford would introduce any one you sent to these, or to our select society. It will be well to advertise the tracts now. I remember you daily ; and am,

My dear sister,

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXLV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 15, 1785.*

I WANTED much to hear from you, being desirous to know whether you have thought where you should settle, if God should please to prolong your life. I should love to be as near you as I could ; and on that account should be glad if you chose Bristol or London. I expect to be in town on Monday fortnight, October the first. Mr. Ireland has printed a thousand or two of your Letters, with some little variations, I think for the worse.

Peace be with your spirit !

I am, my dear sister,

Ever yours.

I am glad the people desire to join us. I shall reprint your letter when I come to London.

CCCCXLVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *October 2, 1785.*

THERE is much of divine Providence in this, that the people are permitted to choose their own Curate. I believe Mr. Horne to be a sound Methodist, and think he will serve them well, if he can procure ordination. If he cannot, Mr. Dickenson may do near as well ; a very pious and sensible young man, who has for two or three years served good Mr. Perronet, at Shoreham, but expects to be turned away by the new Vicar.

Surely, your thought of spending much of your time in London is agreeable to the will of God. I never thoroughly approved of your going so far from it, although much good was drawn out of it. I hope to be there to-morrow. Should not you now consider me as your first human friend ? I think none has a more sincere regard for you than,

My dear sister,

Yours most affectionately.

CCCCXLVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, NORWICH, *October 22, 1785.*

THIS morning I received and read your papers. You have done justice to the character of that excellent man, as far as you could be expected to do in so small room. I do not observe any sentence that need be left out, and very few words that need to be omitted or altered: Only I omit a very little, which I had inserted before I received yours, in that part of my sermon which I had transcribed. I hope to procure some more materials, in order to the writing of his Life. May the Lord bless you, and keep you!

I am, my dear sister,
Yours in tender affection.

CCCCXLVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *January 13, 1786.*

WHEN I receive letters from other persons, I let them lie, perhaps a week or two, before I answer them: But it is otherwise when I hear from you. I then think much of losing a day, for fear I should give a moment's pain to one of the most faithful friends I have in the world. The circumstance you add respecting the behaviour of those Custom-House Officers is very well worth relating. O what pity that it was not then made known to their superiors; that those inhospitable wretches might have been prevented from misusing other strangers!

I think your advice is exactly right. With the materials I have already, or can procure in England, I will write and publish as soon as I conveniently can.

I am, my very dear sister,
Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXLIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *December 9, 1786.*

THE book is now finished: I have the last proof now before me. Two of the three accounts you give, I have at large. I only wait a few days, to see if my brother will write his Elegy.

I am clearly satisfied that you will do well to spend a considerable part of your time at Madeley. But I can by no means advise you to spend all your time there. I think

you are a debtor to several other places also; particularly to London and Yorkshire. Nay, and if we live, I should rejoice if you and I can contrive to be in those places at the same time: For I feel a great union of spirit with you. I cannot really tell you how much

I am, my dear sister,
Yours invariably.

CCCCCL.—*To Mr. Joseph Benson.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WYCOMB, *November 7, 1768.*

You have now twenty more volumes of the "Philosophical Transactions." Dr. Burton's Latin and Greek Poems you have in the study. Malebranche, and some other books, are coming. Logic you cannot crack without a tutor: I must read it to Peter and you, if we live to meet. It would not be amiss if I had a catalogue of the books at Kingswood; then I should know the better what to buy. As fast as I can meet with them at sales, I shall procure what are yet wanting. But beware you be not swallowed up in books: An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCCL.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 4, 1768.*

I CANNOT yet convince you of one thing, (and it is a thing of importance,) that you may make greater progress in valuable knowledge, by reading those books, (particularly if read in that order,) than you can by reading any other books which are now extant in England. It follows, that your friend B., in this respect, is not your friend. For he puts you out of your way; he retards you in the attainment of the most useful knowledge. He gratifies your curiosity (a bad principle too) at the expense of your improvement. It is better for you to read these books than his; which (if they are not hurtful or dangerous, at least) do not lead directly to the end you propose. Choose the best way.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR JOSEPH, SHOREHAM, *December 22, 1768.*

YOU do not quite take my meaning yet. When I recommend to any one a method or scheme of study, I do not barely consider this or that book separately, but in conjunction with the rest. And what I recommend I know; I know both the style and sentiments of each author; and how he will confirm or illustrate what goes before, and prepare for what comes after. Now, supposing Mr. Stonehouse, Roquet, or any other, to have ever so great learning and judgment, yet he does not enter into my plan. He does not comprehend my views, nor keep his eye fixed on the same point. Therefore, I must insist upon it, the interposing other books between these, till you have read them through, is not good husbandry. It is not making your time and pains go so far as they might go. If you want more books, let me recommend more, who best understand my own scheme. And do not ramble, however learned the persons may be that advise you so to do. This does indulge curiosity, but does not minister to real improvement, as a stricter method would do. No; you would gain more clearness and strength of judgment by reading those Latin and Greek books, (compared with which most of the English are whipped syllabub,) than by fourscore modern books. I have seen the proof, as none of your Bristol friends have done, or can do. Therefore, I advise you again, Keep to your plan, (though this implies continual self-denial,) if you would improve your understanding to the highest degree of which it is capable.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH, CORK, *May 27, 1769.*

YOU have now (what you never had before) a clear providential call to Oxford. If you keep a single eye, and have courage and steadiness, you may be an instrument of much good. But you will tread on slippery ground; and the serious persons you mention may do you more hurt than many others. When I was at Oxford, I never was afraid of any but the almost Christians. If you give way

to them and their prudence a hair's breadth, you will be removed from the hope of the Gospel. If you are not moved, if you tread in the same steps which my brother and I did, you may be a means, under God, of raising another set of real Bible Christians. How long the world will suffer them (whether longer than they did us or not) is in God's hand.

With regard to Kingswood school, I have one string more: If that breaks, I shall let it drop. I have borne the burden one-and-twenty years; I have done what I could: Now, let some one else do more.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLIV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, December 26, 1769.

EVERY man of sense, who reads the rules of the school, may easily conclude that a school so conducted by men of piety and understanding will exceed any other school or academy in Great Britain or Ireland. In this sentiment you can never be altered. And if it was not so conducted since you were there, why was it not? You had power enough. You have all the power which I have. You may do just what you please;—

*Dirue et ædifica; muta quadrata rotundis; **

and I will second you to the uttermost.

Trevecka is much more to — than Kingswood is to me. *I* mixes with everything. It is *my* College, *my* Masters, *my* Students. I do not speak so of this school: It is not mine, but the Lord's. I look for no more honour than money from it.

I am glad you defer your journey; and am,

Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

* This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscauwen:—

“Destroy, build castles in the air,

Now love the round, and now the square.”—EDIT.

CCCCLV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, October 5, 1770.

You need no apology for your writing: The more frequently and freely you write, the better. I cannot doubt, but your neighbour means well; but he is a thorough enthusiast, and has hardly one clear conception of anything, natural or spiritual. Mr. Keard, from Aberdeen, and Mr. Wootton, (our new writing-master, a man of an excellent spirit,) are at Kingswood. But does Mr. J. know the price?—Sixteen pounds a year. Does he know the rules of the school? Again: Of what age are the children? I will take none that is above nine years old: Now especially; because I will not have our children corrupted; nine of whom, together with our three maid-servants, have just now experienced a gracious visitation, and are rejoicing in a pardoning God.

I am glad you had the courage to speak your mind on so critical an occasion. At all hazards, do so still; only with all possible tenderness and respect. She is much devoted to God, and has a thousand valuable and amiable qualities. There is no great fear that I should be prejudiced against one whom I have intimately known for these thirty years. And I know what is in man; therefore I make large allowance for human weaknesses. But what you say is exactly the state of the case. They are “jealous of their authority.” Truly there is no cause; *Longe mea discrepat illi et vox et ratio*.* I fear and shun, not desire, authority of any kind. Only when God lays that burden upon me, I bear it, for his and the people’s sake.

“Child,” said my father to me, when I was young, “you think to carry everything by dint of argument. But you will find, by and by, how very little is ever done in the world by clear reason.” Very little indeed! It is true of almost all men, except so far as we are taught of God,—

Against experience we believe,
We argue against demonstration;
Pleased while our reason we deceive,
And set our judgment by our passion.

Passion and prejudice govern the world; only under the

* This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen :—
“Far different are my thoughts and strain.”—EDIT.

name of reason. It is our part, by religion and reason joined, to counteract them all we can. It is yours, in particular, to do all that in you lies to soften the prejudices of those that are round about you, and to calm the passions from which they spring. Blessed are the peace-makers!

You judge rightly: Perfect love and Christian liberty are the very same thing; and those two expressions are equally proper, being equally scriptural. "Nay, how can they and you mean the same thing? They say, you insist on holiness in the creature, on good tempers, and sin destroyed." Most surely. And what is Christian liberty, but another word for holiness? And where is this liberty or holiness, if it is not in the creature? Holiness is the love of God and man, or the mind which was in Christ. Now, I trust, the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you. And if you are holy, is not that mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus?

And are not the love of God and our neighbour good tempers? And so far as these reign in the soul, are not the opposite tempers, worldly-mindedness, malice, cruelty, revengefulness, destroyed? Indeed, the unclean spirit, though driven out, may return and enter again; nevertheless, he was driven out. I use the word "destroyed," because St. Paul does: "Suspended" I cannot find in my Bible. "But they say, you do not consider this as the consequence of the power of Christ dwelling in us." Then what will they not say? My very words are, "None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give light to the soul separate from, but in and with, himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatever state of grace they are: 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: Without' (or separate from) 'me, ye can do nothing.' For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root; but like that of a branch, which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but severed from it, is 'dried up and withered.'"

At length, *veris vincor*:* I am constrained to believe, (what I would not for a long time,) these are not the

* I am overcome by the force of truth.—EDIT.

objections of judgment, but of passion ; they do not spring from the head, but the heart. Whatever I say, it will be all one. They will find fault, because I say it. There is implicit envy at my power, (so called,) and a jealousy rising therefrom. Hence prejudice in a thousand forms ; hence objections springing up like mushrooms. And while those causes remain, they will spring up, whatever I can do or say. However, keep thyself pure ; and then there need be no strangeness between you and,

Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCCLVI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *November 30, 1770.*

FOR several years I had been deeply convinced, that I had not done my duty with regard to that valuable woman ; that I had not told her what, I was thoroughly assured, no one else would dare to do, and what I knew she would bear from no other person, but possibly might bear from me. But being unwilling to give her pain, I put it off from time to time. At length I did not dare to delay any longer, lest death should call one of us hence. So I at once delivered my own soul, by telling her all that was in my heart. It was my business, my proper business, so to do ; as none else either could or would do it. Neither did I take at all too much upon me : I know the office of a Christian Minister. If she is not profited, it is her own fault, not mine : I have done my duty. I do not know, there is one charge in that letter, which was either unjust, unimportant, or aggravated ; any more than that against the doggerel hymns, which are equally an insult upon poetry and common sense.

We had a good time, both at the Tabernacle and Tottenham-Court chapel. The congregations were immense. Perhaps not a third part could come within hearing ; and they were more quiet than could well have been expected. The sermon will be published on Monday, and sent down to Bristol. Mr. Keen and Hardy, his executors, have, I apprehend, the whole and sole disposal of the Tabernacle, Tottenham-Court chapel, and all the other houses which were occupied by Mr. Whitefield. The chapel and Tabernacle are supplied by Mr. Joss and Brooksbank ; and Mr. Neale administers the sacrament there.

I find no such sin as legality in the Bible: The very use of the term speaks an Antinomian. I defy all liberty, but liberty to love and serve God; and fear no bondage, but bondage to sin. Sift that text to the bottom, and it will do the business of poor H— and all his disciples: “God sent his own Son in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” *Justitia legis, justitia legalis* !* Here is legality indeed !

I am glad you come a little nearer the good old Emperor’s advice, Τὴν τῶν βιβλίων διψαν ριπτε.† That thirst is the symptom of an evil disease; and *crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops*.‡ What is the real value of a thing, but the price it will bear in eternity? Let no study swallow up, or intrench upon, the hours of private prayer. *Nil tanti*.§ Simplify both religion and every part of learning as much as possible. Be all alive to God, and you will be useful to men !

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, December 28, 1770.

WHAT a blessing it is, that we can speak freely to each other, without either disguise or reserve ! So long as we are able to do this, we may grow wiser and better every day.

One point I advise you to hold fast, and let neither men nor devils tear it from you. You are a child of God ; you are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Your sins are forgiven ! Cast not away that confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Now, can any be justified, but by faith ? None can. Therefore you are a believer ; you have faith in Christ ; you know the Lord ; you can say, “ My Lord and my God.” And whoever denies this, may as well deny that the sun shines at noonday.

Yet still ten thousand lusts remain,
And vex your soul, absolved from sin ;
Still rebel nature strives to reign,
And you are all **unclean**, unclean !

* The righteousness of the law is legal righteousness.—EDIT.

† Throw away that thirst for books.—EDIT.

‡ The dreadful dropsy increases by indulgence.—EDIT.

§ Nothing is of so much importance.—EDIT.

This is equally clear and undeniable. And this is not only your experience, but the experience of a thousand believers beside, who yet are sure of God's favour, as of their own existence. To cut off all doubt on this head, I beg you to give another serious reading to those two sermons, "Sin in Believers," and "The Repentance of Believers."

"But is there no help? Is there no deliverance, no salvation from this inbred enemy?" Surely there is; else many great and precious promises must fall to the ground. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." "I will circumcise thy heart," (from all sin,) "to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." This I term sanctification, (which is both an instantaneous and a gradual work,) or perfection, the being perfected in love, filled with love, which still admits of a thousand degrees. But I have no time to throw away in contending for words; especially where the thing is allowed. And you allow the whole thing which I contend for; an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it you in an instant. You trust he will. O hold fast this also; this blessed hope, which he has wrought in your heart! And with all zeal and diligence confirm the brethren,—1. In holding fast that whereto they have attained; namely, the remission of all their sins, by faith in a bleeding Lord: 2. In expecting a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin, and perfected in love.

If they like to call this "receiving the Holy Ghost," they may: Only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all "received the Holy Ghost" when they were justified. God then "sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

O Joseph, keep close to the Bible, both as to sentiment and expression! Then there will never be any material difference between you and

Your affectionate brother.

This morning I have calmly and coolly read over my

letter to L— H—. I still believe every line of it is true. And I am assured I spoke the truth in love. It is great pity, any who wish her well should skin over the wounds which are there searched. As long as she resents that office of true esteem, her grace can be but small !

CCCCLVIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *January 21, 1771.*

It was of their own mere motion, that the students, when I was in Wales, desired me to come and spend a little time with them. I had no thought or desire so to do, having work enough upon my hands. When Mr. Ireland asked me, why I did not go thither in August, I answered, "Because my Lady had written to me to the contrary." But I do not remember, that I showed him her letter: I believe I did not.

I know not why you should not keep the rest of your terms at Oxford, and take a Bachelor's degree. Only if you should be pressed in spirit to give yourself up to the work of God sooner, I think you must follow your own conscience. Write quite freely to,

Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLIX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 11, 1772.*

MR. HILL, however, leaves me a little time to take breath, and, I have some hope, will not renew the combat. But I doubt he is too warm to be convinced. He "sets his judgment by his passion."

It is a shame for any Methodist Preacher to confine himself to one place. We are debtors to all the world. We are called to warn every one, to exhort every one, if by any means we may save some.

I love prayer-meetings, and wish they were set up in every corner of the town. But I doubt whether it would be well to drop any of the times of preaching. Three-and-thirty years they have had at least as much preaching at Bristol as at Newcastle. And the congregations are far larger than they were ten or twenty years ago. But I

should not object to the transferring Wednesday night's preaching to eight on Sunday morning.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *March 2, 1773.*

CERTAINLY you cannot stir, unless you are clearly satisfied of your call from God.* An impression on the mind of another man is no rule of action to you. The reasons you give on the other side are weighty, and will not easily be answered. At present you do seem to be in your place: And your labour will not be in vain. If you could transfer a night in a week from Newcastle to some new place, I think it might do well.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.†

CCCCLXI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LEWISHAM, *July 31, 1773.*

I AM glad you have preached so much abroad: This will everywhere do most execution. Some time since I promised you to Billy Thompson, for his fellow-labourer the ensuing year: And you will have no cause to repent of it;

* Mr. Wesley here refers to a pressing invitation which Mr. Benson had received to visit America.—EDIT.

† We subjoin a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley to Mr. Benson.—EDIT.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THE FOUNDERY, *March 6, 1773.*

I HAVE barely time to say, your own reasons for not yet going to America, and Christopher Hopper's, are unanswerable. Mr. F. is only the Captain's echo. The Captain's impressions are no more (or very little more) to be depended on than George Bell's. He is an inexperienced, honest, zealous, loving enthusiast. God only knows whether you may not be called to America by and by. At present your call is not clear: Therefore stand still; and send our friends a loving, explicit refusal.

I do not want a heart to visit my very dear friends at Newcastle, but a body. If to my willing mind I had health and strength, still more is wanted; namely, a faithful man to attend me, and money to defray our expenses. When all these things meet, you may meet me once more in the north.

I have left my family, all but Charles, at Bristol. My old love to brother Hopper, Cownley, sister Proctor, and all my Newcastle friends. Stir them up to pray for me. I shall not need your prayers much longer.

Ερρωστο εν Χριστω.*

* Farewell in Christ.

for his heart (as well as yours) is in the work. Mr. Hopper desires to spend another year in the Newcastle Circuit. I refer it to him, whether it would not suffice to have preaching at Newcastle five nights in a week.

"God has made practical divinity necessary, and the devil, controversial." Sometimes we must write and preach controversially; but the less, the better. I think we have few, if any, of our Travelling Preachers, that love controversy. But there will always be men, *ὡς δὲ ἐπιστομίζειν* : * Antinomians and Calvinists in particular. By our long silence, we have done much hurt, both to them and the cause of God.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *September 10, 1773.*

IF Mr. Thompson consents, all is well. The more you preach abroad, both in England and Scotland, the better. Only take care, not to do more than you can do; not to go beyond your strength. And keep to the plain, old Methodist doctrine, laid down in the Minutes of the Conference. At Trevecka you were a little warped from this; but it was a right-hand error. You will be buried in Scotland, if you sell your mare and sit still. Keep her, and ride continually. Contrive (you and Mr. Thompson) how this may be. Sit not still, at the peril of your soul and body! Mr. F. ought to have received their thanks.

Dear Joseph, adieu!

Do all you can for poor Scotland; and write how things are there.

CCCCLXIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *October 23, 1773.*

I WISH every one of our Preachers, who goes to Scotland, were of the same mind with you. We are not called to sit still in one place: It is neither for the health of our souls nor bodies. Billy Thompson never satisfied me on this head, not in the least degree. I say still, we will have Travelling Preachers in Scotland, or none. The thing is fixed: The manner of effecting it is to be considered. Now

* Whose mouth it is necessary to stop.—EDIT.

set your wit to this : Find out the *το πως*.* How shall this matter be accomplished? You did not do well in selling your horse, and thereby laying another bar in the way. Though I am (by the exquisite negligence of my late book-keeper) a thousand pounds worse than nothing, I would have spared a few pounds to have eased that burden. However, you must do as you can. Our Preachers shall either travel there, as in England, or else stay in England.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCCLXIV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *January 8, 1774.*

MANY persons are in danger of reading too little: You are in danger of reading too much. Wherever you are, take up your cross, and visit all the society from house to house. Do this according to Mr. Baxter's plan, laid down in the Minutes of the Conference. The fruit which will ensue, (perhaps in a short time,) will abundantly reward your labour. Fruit also we shall have, even in those who have no outward connexion with us.

I am glad you "press all believers" to aspire after the full liberty of the children of God. They must not give up their faith, in order to do this: Herein you formerly seemed to be in some mistake. Let them go on from faith to faith; from weak faith, to that strong faith, which not only conquers but casts out sin. Meantime it is certain, many call themselves believers who do not even conquer sin; who are strangers to the whole inward kingdom of God, and void of the whole fruit of the Spirit.

We must not go on at Dunbar in this manner. Rather we must quit the place. For who will pay that debt?

On Tuesday I was under the Surgeon's hands, but am now (blessed be God) quite recovered.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

* The manner.—EDIT.

CCCCLXV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *March 4, 1774.*

I AM glad you have been at Greenock, and think it highly expedient that you should follow the blow. Meantime let brother Broadbent supply Glasgow, and Billy Thompson, Edinburgh. I think with you, that it is no great matter if Dunbar be left for a season. When you have been three or four weeks at Greenock and Port-Glasgow, brother Broadbent should change with you. But I agree with you, the harvest cannot be large till we can preach abroad.

Before I settled my plan, that thought occurred, "It would be better to go a little later into Scotland." Accordingly, I have contrived not to be at Glasgow till Friday, the 6th of May, coming by way of Edinburgh. Probably it may then be practicable to take the field. I incline to think it will be of use for you to spend another year in that Circuit.

I am, dear Joseph,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXVI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

SHEFFIELD, *July 26, 1774.*

CERTAINLY an account of the societies in the Edinburgh Circuit will be expected from you at the Conference. I will then propose the case of Greenock. I am glad you have sent brother Ferguson the Appeals. I believe Billy Eels might come to you directly, if you wrote to him, and to Joseph Cownley. At length I hope good may be done in Scotland, and I incline to prefer your scheme to Dr. H.'s. Three Preachers may do better than two, provided they change regularly, according to the plan you lay down. I know not but you must make a private subscription, and wire over the cupola. "Be zealous and humble; but never be still!"

Dear Joseph, adieu!

CCCCLXVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *August 8, 1774.*

I JUST snatch time to write two or three lines. Consider the thing thoroughly, and then send me word of the exact

Circuit wherein three Preachers may follow one another. If this be steadily done, I am not without hope, that, before the next Conference, there will be such a flame kindled, as has not been seen for some years in poor Scotland.

I was sorry to find, that Mr. P. was almost discouraged from proceeding in his little labour of love. I commend you for dealing tenderly with him. Certainly he is an honest man; and undoubtedly he is useful in his little way. Pray what becomes of Mrs. L.? Is she gaining or losing ground? O Joseph, fight through, and conquer all!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXVIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *September 18, 1774.*

YOUR last proposal is incomparably the best: I approve of it entirely. Without consulting any at Dunbar, (which would only puzzle the cause,) immediately begin to put it in execution. Let the Preacher go to Ormiston on Wednesday, Dunbar on the Thursday, and return to Edinburgh, by Linton, on Friday, every week. At present we sate them with preaching. It will be best to keep a horse: Then both your health and your soul will prosper.

If William Eels crawls in at last, send him directly to Aberdeen. And you should be preparing to change with John Bredin.

I wish Dr. Hamilton would send me the receipt for extracting the opiate from sow-thistles, and give me some account of its effects.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your ever affectionate friend and brother.

P.S. I left ninety members in the society: I hope there are not fewer now.

CCCCLXIX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *October 16, 1774.*

I HAVE written to Dr. Hamilton, that brother Eels must go to Aberdeen, and Edinburgh and Dunbar must be supplied by one Preacher. They should have thought of preaching in the churchyard before. While I live, Itinerant Preachers shall be itinerants: I mean, if they choose to remain in connexion with us.

The society in Greenock are entirely at their own disposal: They may either have a Preacher between them and Glasgow, or none at all. But more than one between them, they cannot have. I have too much regard both for the bodies and souls of our Preachers, to let them be confined to one place any more. I hope J. B. will punctually observe your direction, spending either three days, or a week, at each place alternately. I have weighed the matter, and will serve the Scots as we do the English, or leave them. I wish you would write a letter to John Campbell, and another to R. Mackie, and argue the case with them. If J. B. does not go to Greenock, let him (or his successor) spend half his time at Dunbar: Then a Preacher may be constantly at Edinburgh. But give me only six days in a fortnight there, and I will visit all the society from house to house.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCCLXX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

Near LONDON, February 22, 1776.

WE must threaten no longer, but perform. In November last, I told the London society, "Our rule is, to meet a class once a week; not once in two or three. I now give you warning: I will give tickets to none in February, but those that have done this." I have stood to my word. Go you and do likewise, wherever you visit the classes. Begin, if need be, at Newcastle, and go on at Sunderland. Promises to meet are now out of date. Those that have not met seven times in the quarter, exclude. Read their names in the society; and inform them all, you will the next quarter exclude all that have not met twelve times: That is, unless they were hindered by distance, sickness, or by some unavoidable business.

And I pray, without fear or favour, remove the Leaders, whether of classes or bands, who do not watch over the souls committed to their care "as those that must give account."

I am, dear Joseph,

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

SHOREHAM, *July 31, 1776.*

I THINK of Joseph Fothergill, and just as you do; and shall willingly propose him at the Conference. I believe he has considerable gifts, and is truly alive to God. You are in the right. We must beware of distressing the poor. Our substantial brethren are well able to bear the burden. I shall write a letter for each Assistant before the Conference is over. If they are in earnest, all will go well.

If the assertors of the decrees are quiet and peaceable, troubling no one with their opinions, reason is that we should bear with them. But if they will not be quiet, if they trouble others, we cannot keep them. Do all you can for God!

I am, dear Joseph,

Yours affectionately.

Pray tell Joseph Thompson, I have set him down for Leeds.

CCCCLXXII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

October 22, 1776.

I APPREHEND Joseph Fothergill was not designedly omitted. I take him to be a good man, and a good Preacher.

You did right in excluding from our society so notorious an offender. And you have now a providential call to stand in the gap between the living and the dead. Fear nothing. Begin in the name of God, and go through with the work. If only six will promise you to sin no more, leave only six in the society. But my belief is, a hundred and fifty are now clear of blame; and if you are steady, a hundred more will amend. You must, at all events, tear up this evil by the roots. The "Word to a Smuggler" should be read and dispersed. And secure your fellow-labourers, that you may all speak one thing. Go on; for God is with you!

I am, dear Joseph,

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *November 7, 1776.*

NOT only the Assistant, but every Preacher, is concerned to see all our rules observed. I desire brother Rhodes will

give no tickets, either to those who have not constantly met their classes, or to any that do not solemnly promise to deal in stolen goods no more. He and you together may put a stop to this crying sin.

I wish Edward Jackson would go into the Dales. But here is a great difficulty: Robert Wilkinson, you know, is married: Therefore, he cannot live (though he may starve) in the Dundee Circuit. I designed that he and brother Lumley should change places. But what can be done now? Consider the matter, and advise,

Dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH, CHATHAM, *November 26, 1776.*

If any Leader oppose, you see your remedy: Put another in his place. Nay, if he does not join heart and hand; for "he that gathereth not with you scattereth." The "Word to a Smuggler" is plain and home, and has done much good in these parts.

Taking opium is full as bad as taking drams. It equally hurts the understanding, and is, if possible, more pernicious to the health, than even rum or brandy. None should touch it, if they have the least regard either for their souls or bodies.

I really think you are in the right. It is better to help R. W. where he is, than to burden the Dales with an additional weight. But then what shall we do? We have no supernumerary Preachers. See if you can do anything with Edward Jackson.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH, *Near LONDON, December 24, 1776.*

THE total suppression of that vile practice will, doubtless, be a difficult task: But it is worth all the labour; yea, though you should be obliged to cut off some of our oldest members. For you must absolutely go through with your work; leave neither root nor branch; else the reformation will be but for a season, and then the evil will sprout up again.

The case of John Reed is one of the most remarkable which has fallen under my notice. From the beginning it was my judgment, that the disorder was more than natural. I wish he would take opportunities of writing down as many particulars as he can recollect; and send me as circumstantial an account as he can. You may much assist him herein.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXVI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *January 11, 1777.*

THE matter is short. I require you to meet the societies of Sunderland and Shields next quarter, and to give no tickets to any person who will not promise neither to buy nor sell uncustomed goods any more. I am sorry — did not save you the trouble: I thought he had been another man.

Pray worry John Reed till he writes a circumstantial account. It must be done while things are fresh in his memory; otherwise we shall lose many particulars which ought not to be forgotten.

They have made good haste to finish the preaching-house at Sheephill already: I thought it had hardly been begun.

I have just received two letters from New-York; one of them from George Robinson, late of Newcastle. They inform me that all the Methodists there were firm for the Government, and, on that account, persecuted by the rebels, only not to the death; that the Preachers are still threatened, but not stopped; and the work of God increases much in Maryland and Virginia.

I am, dear Joseph,
Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WORCESTER, *July 8, 1777.*

WHAT you say is unquestionably right. Why then should it not immediately be put in execution? Let Berwick directly be taken into the Newcastle Circuit, and Dunbar be supplied, once a fortnight, from Edinburgh. Pray write this instantly to brother M^cNab, and admit of no excuse. If by this means there is a Preacher to spare, let him step over

as soon as possible from Portpatrick, and supply the place of that good young man, John Harrison, in the Lisburn Circuit. Mr. Smythe calls aloud for help: He is zealous and active, but is quite overborne. I have set down you with brother Hopper in the Manchester Circuit; and am,

Dear Joseph,

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

WITNEY, *October 22, 1777.*

I do not wonder you do not conceive what Grotius meant by that odd sentence; for I doubt whether he conceived it himself. I can translate it, but I cannot understand it: It is well if any one can. "Everything exists necessarily, or of itself; not as it is considered in a general view, but as it actually exists. But individual things" (only) "exist actually." There is a good English translation of this book, published some years since by Dr. John Clarke, Dean of Sarum. He was (I think younger) brother to Dr. Samuel Clarke.

I have no objection to your printing a thousand or two of the account of Mrs. Hutton's death. It may be of use for you to visit Manchester again, when opportunity serves. Only do everything in full concurrence with the Assistant.

I am, dear Joseph,

Yours affectionately.

CCCCLXXIX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 8, 1777.*

UNDOUBTEDLY Bishop Newton's book on the Prophecies is well written. And he is certainly a man of sense, and of considerable learning. This he has shown in what he writes on the Revelation. But with regard to the passage you mention, I cannot agree with him at all. I believe the Romish antichrist is already so fallen, that he will not again lift up his head in any considerable degree. The Bishop of Rome has little more power now, than any other of the Italian Princes. I therefore concur with you in believing his tyranny is past never to return.

But there is no comparison, either as to sense, learning, or piety, between Bishop Newton and Bengelius. The

former is a mere child to the latter. I advise you to give another serious and careful reading to that extract from his Comment on the Revelation, which concludes the Notes. There you have one uniform consistent [view], far beyond any I ever saw. And I verily believe, the more deeply you consider it, the more you will admire it.

Does any one deny that a kite is bigger than a lark ; or that Ogilvie has written a larger book than Virgil? And certainly there are larger Magazines than ours : But it does not follow that they are better. Ours is reduced to half the price, and will contain forty-eight pages, which is the usual number for sixpence.

We are called to propagate Bible religion through the land ; that is, faith working by love ; holy tempers and holy lives. Let us do it with our might !

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCCLXXX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *December 26, 1780*

YOU have great reason to be thankful to God ; for he has dealt mercifully with you : And as long as you improve these outward blessings to the end for which they were given, so long they will be continued. But you have great need to be jealous over yourself, and to keep your heart with all diligence. You need all the power of God to preserve you from loving the creature more than the Creator.

Dr. Edwards is a dry, unpleasing writer : And probably his main design was, to justify God in damning all the Heathens as not having a spark of virtue among them. Peace be with you and yours !

I am

Yours affectionately.

CCCCCLXXXI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

MANCHESTER, *April 2, 1781.*

ALTHOUGH our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we walk in simplicity and godly sincerity, this no way contradicts, " God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of Christ." In all, and after all,

His passion alone, The foundation we own ;
 And pardon we claim,
 And eternal redemption in Jesus's name.

How admirably pardon and holiness are comprised in that one word, "grace!" Mercy and strength! So are our justification and sanctification woven together.

I hope your sermons will do good. But why do not you publish your poems? I think you can make verses as fast as John Murlin; yea, indeed, if need were, *stans pede in uno*.* I commend sister Benson for her care of her mother. One can never do too much for a parent.

I am, dear Joseph,
 Your affectionate brother.

CCCCCLXXXII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH, WARRINGTON, *May* 21, 1781.

As I have not leisure myself, I am exceeding glad that you have entered into the lists with Mr. A—. And I am in hopes you will "reply at large" to all his cavils and objections. If he cites anything from me, you should answer simply, "I never undertook to defend every sentiment of Mr. W—'s. He does not expect or desire it. He wishes me and every man to think for himself."

If you remember, I do not insist on the term "impression." I say again, I will thank any one that will find a better; be it "discovery," "manifestation," "deep sense," or whatever it may. That some consciousness of our being in favour with God, is joined with Christian faith, I cannot doubt; but it is not the essence of it. A consciousness of pardon cannot be the condition of pardon.

But I am still more glad, that you have some thoughts of answering that pernicious book of poor Mr. Madan. Analyze it first with the postscript; then overturn it thoroughly, from the beginning to the end. You may steer between the extremes of too much roughness, and too much smoothness. And see that you are plain enough for women and pretty gentlemen. I allow you a hundred pages.

I am, dear Joseph,
 Your affectionate friend and brother.

* This quotation from Horace, and part of the sentence with which it is connected, are thus translated by Smart: "He would often, as a great feat, dictate two hundred verses in an hour, standing in the same position."—EDIT.

CCCCLXXXIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

LONDON, *February 22, 1782.*

WHO Mr. Tyndall is, I know not; but he is just as sound a Divine as Mr. Madan. I regard no authorities but those of the ante-Nicene Fathers; nor any of them, in opposition to Scripture. And I totally deny that (supposed) matter of fact, that polygamy was allowed among the primitive Christians; or, that the converts "who had many wives were not required to put any of them away." I have not yet time to read over the MS.: When I do, I must read it all in a breath.

Having talked with my friends, I judge it will be expedient to visit the north this year. I expect to be at Manchester on Wednesday, the 10th of April; and in Yorkshire in the beginning of May.

I have no objection to your printing a few copies of those two sermons, to oblige your friends in the neighbourhood. I doubt we are not explicit enough, in speaking on full sanctification, either in public or private.

I am, with kind love to sister Benson,

Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXXXIV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

Near LONDON, *August 3, 1782.*

Do not you know that all the Preachers cannot leave a Circuit at once? Therefore, if you left it, brother Hopper could not. Perhaps, likewise, I can depend upon your judgment more than that of another man.

Two or three years ago, when the kingdom was in imminent danger, I made an offer to the Government of raising some men. The Secretary of War (by the King's order) wrote me word, that "it was not necessary; but if it ever should be necessary, His Majesty would let me know." I never renewed the offer, and never intended it. But Captain Webb, without my knowing anything of the matter, went to Colonel B—, the new Secretary of War, and renewed that offer. The Colonel (I verily believe, to avoid his importunity) asked him how many men we could raise. But the Colonel is out of place. So the thing is at an end.

I read over both the sermons ; but I did not see anything materially wrong in either.

I am, with love to sister Benson,

Your affectionate brother.

We will consider what you propose.

CCCCCLXXXV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JOSEPH,

BRISTOL, *September 17, 1788.*

I AM glad you have determined to correct Mr. Fletcher's Letters. You will observe, that it is "dangerous, on such subjects, to depart from Scripture, either as to language or sentiment ;" and I believe, that "most of the controversies which have disturbed the church, have arisen from people's wanting to be wise above what is written, not contented with what God has plainly revealed there." What have you or I to do with that "difficulty?" I dare not, will not, reason about it for a moment. I believe just what is revealed, and no more ; but I do not pretend to account for it, or to solve the difficulties that may attend it. Let angels do this, if they can ; but I think they cannot. I think even these

Would find no end, in wandering mazes lost.

Some years since, I read about fifty pages of Dr. Watts's ingenious treatise upon the "Glorified Humanity of Christ." But it so confounded my intellects, and plunged me into such unprofitable reasonings, yea, dangerous ones, that I would not have read it through for five hundred pounds. It led him into Arianism. Take care that similar tracts (all of which I abhor) have not the same effect upon you.

I like your thoughts upon Materialism ; as I doubt not I should, those on the separate existence of the soul. It will be best to print at Hull or York, if you can print almost as cheap, and have as good paper. Should there not be a thousand copies ? Then you will reserve a hundred of them for yourself.

I am, with love to sister Benson,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCLXXXVI.—*To Mrs. Benson.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

WARRINGTON, *May 21, 1781.*

As you are now one of my family, and indeed by a nearer tie than when you were only a member of the society, I rejoice in doing you any service, or giving you any satisfaction that I can. I therefore take the first opportunity of acquainting you, that I will appoint Mr. Benson for Leeds the ensuing year. I trust he will be more useful there than ever, and I doubt not but you will strengthen his hands in God. If you desire anything of me that is in my power, you may be assured it will not be refused by,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

P.S. I am now going to Whitehaven.

CCCCLXXXVII.—*To Mr. Walter Churchey, of Brecon.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1771.*

I AM glad Mr. Benson and you had an opportunity of conversing freely with Mr. Fletcher, and that he has dealt so faithfully with my Lady. Perhaps it may have a good effect. At least, he has delivered his own soul, whether she will hear, or whether she will forbear.

Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God. The Refiner's fire purges out all that is contrary to love, and that many times by a pleasing smart. Leave all this to Him that does all things well, and that loves you better than you do yourself.

I am, with love to brother Thomas,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCLXXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 23, 1773.*

YOU and I love one another; therefore, we speak freely. 1. "They have thrown themselves on Providence." Not at all. From a very low state, most of them had thrown themselves into plenty and honour. 2. "It is possible they may do good." True; but it is probable they may do

harm. They have everywhere done our societies all the harm they could. 3. "The place they now have is a cold place." I see no good of their having any at Hay. The land is wide enough. 4. They have no inclination to peace. 5. "Our neighbours will see our professions true." I do not profess any coalition with Calvinism. I see the mischievousness of it more and more. 6. "Their preaching would not lessen the number of our hearers." Indeed it would, if the people minded what they say. And besides, it would puzzle and perplex those that still hear us; and probably set many a one's sword against his brother. 7. "They do not intend Antinomianism." But they preach it continually. 8. "And our people will not hear Calvinists." Indeed they will, if they play with the fire. You forget my brother's verses:—

What my soul does as hell-fire reject,
A Pope, a Count, a Leader of a sect.

I am of no sect, but the Church of England.

If James Barry or Stephen Proctor is faulty in the article you mention, tell them of it, and, I am persuaded, they will mend. You will do well to remind them, in particular, of teaching the children, and visiting the sick. I believe they will take it kindly.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCCLXXXIX.—*To the Same.*

Near LONDON, February 25, 1774.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THE deliverance of our two fellow-travellers should certainly be matter of thankfulness, to grace prevailing over nature. And should it not be a means of stirring up those that remain to greater zeal and diligence in serving Him who will be our Guide even unto death? Should not you labour to convince and stir up others, that they may supply the place of those that are called away? And let us lose no time. Work while it is day: The night cometh, wherein no man can work.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXC.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

GLASGOW, *May 15, 1774.*

I CANNOT but agree with you entirely, in respect of John Prickard. Unless he has a clearer call than I apprehend, he ought not to go to America. The reason is plain: There is a greater call for him in Wales, than in the province of New-York, or Pennsylvania; and there is no call at all in the northern or southern provinces. To go thither is stark staring madness. But if John has a mind, he may come to the Conference at Bristol, and talk with me about it.

T. Judson, at No. 11, in Carey-court, Gray's Inn, is a Christian attorney. I ordered the third epistle to be sent to your sister, and I suppose it was. Your friend Joseph Benson sits at my elbow, and is much at your service.

I am, with love to sister Churchey,

Your affectionate brother.

P.S. I have seen an exceeding well wrote book, an "Introduction to the Study of the Law," published eleven or twelve years ago, I think, by one Simpson. It is a thin octavo. You should have it, if you have it not already.

The Conference begins the second week in August. Immediately after it, I hope to see you at Brecon.

CCCCXCI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 21, 1775.*

A FEW days ago, my brother gave me a letter of yours, dated November 24. I am surprised that one who has passed a winter in Scotland should complain of cold in Wales. It is not a good sign. I advise no one above twenty to think of learning Greek or Latin: He may employ his time abundantly better. But if John Broadbent has a turn for learning languages, by all means let him learn Welsh. This will turn to good account. And now is his time: You can direct and assist him herein. Meantime, persuade him to refrain from screaming, and he will do well.

I may speak in confidence to you; take care it do not transpire. Put no confidence either in T—, or his wife. I stand in doubt of them both.

The printer is hastening on with the History; yet still I think him slow.

I am, with love to S. Churchey,
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

June 25, 1777.

At present I am very safe; for I am a good many pounds, if not scores of pounds, worse than nothing. In my Will I bequeath no money but what may happen to be in my pocket when I die.

It is my religion which obliges me "to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers." Loyalty is with me an essential branch of religion, and which I am sorry any Methodist should forget. There is the closest connexion, therefore, between my religious and my political conduct; the selfsame authority enjoining me to "fear God," and to "honour the King."

Dr. Coke promises fair, and gives us reason to hope, that he will bring forth not only blossoms, but fruit. He has hitherto behaved exceeding well, and seems to be aware of his grand enemy, applause. He will likewise be in danger from offence. If you are acquainted with him, a friendly letter might be of use, and would be taken kindly. He now stands on slippery ground, and is in need of every help.

I expect to be at Monmouth (coming from Worcester) on Wednesday, July the ninth, and at Brecon on the tenth.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, October 18, 1777.

You see how "good wits jump." We agree that no politics shall have a place in the Arminian Magazine. But poetry will; only my brother and I are the judges what pieces shall be admitted. It may be, some will think us too nice in our choice; but that we cannot help. As to a review of religious books, it might be well; but I have two objections: 1. I scruple my own sufficiency for the work:

2. I would not, at any price, be bound to read over all the present religious productions of the press.

Peace be with you and yours, young and old !

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCIV.—*To the Same.*

Near LONDON, November 21, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

YOU have indeed had a sea of troubles. But I have not heard any one say, it was your own fault : Which I wonder at ; because it is the way of the world still, (as it was in the days of Job,) always to construe misfortune into sin. But you and I know that there is a God in the world ; and that He has more to do in it, than most men are aware of. So little do they advert to that great truth, " Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

One thing only I have heard of you, which, if it be true, I should not commend : I mean, that you have wholly forsaken the poor Methodists, and do not so much as attend the public preaching.* One was mentioning this a few days ago, when I was saying something in favour of you ; and it stopped my mouth ; nay, supposing it true, I do not know what to say yet. For surely, when affliction presses upon us, we need every possible help. Commending you to Him that careth for you,

I am

Your affectionate brother.

P.S. My kind love to S. Churchey.

CCCCXCV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

WHITBY, June 14, 1788.

YOURS of May 24th overtook me here this morning : But I have not received the parcel which you say was sent by the coach ; and probably I shall not receive it, unless it pleases God to bring me back to London.

Health is wonderfully continued. Only I am in the fashion : I have a little of the rheumatism.

The case of that old woman was very remarkable. It is a true saying, " None are ruined while they are out of hell."

* This was a misrepresentation.—W. C.

One would be sorry for the death of George Jarvis, only that we know, God does all things well. If Mr. Holmes has any money of mine in his hands, I desire he would give you a guinea for the widow. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

YORK, *June 26, 1788.*

I ANSWERED your last: By what means my letter miscarried, I cannot tell. About half of that paragraph (which has travelled over most of the kingdom) is very true: The other half is a blunder. What I spoke was a citation from Bengelius, who thought, not that the world would end, but that the Millennium would begin, about the year 1836. Not that I affirmed this myself, nor ever did. I do not determine any of these things: They are too high for me. I only desire to creep on in the vale of humble love. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *December 6, 1788.*

I AM glad you wrote to poor Mr. Henderson; for certainly he stands in great need of comfort; and he must now needs seek it in God, for all other streams are cut off.

I cannot learn anything concerning the manner of John Henderson's death, whether it was with or without hope; as I cannot find that any of his religious friends were near him at that important season.

The Methodists in general have very little taste for any poems but those of a religious or a moral kind; and my brother has amply provided them with these. Besides those that are already printed, I have six volumes of his poems in manuscript. However, if you furnish me with the proposals, I will do you what little service I can. I should be glad to see or hear from Mr. Cowper: But I have no means of access to him at all.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCCXCVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

DUBLIN, June 20, 1789.

MICHAEL — is an original. He tells lies innumerable, many of them plausible enough. But many talk full as plausibly as he; and they that can believe him, may. I do not doubt, but some part of your verse, as well as prose, will reach the hearts of some of the rich.

Dr. Coke made two or three little alterations in the Prayer-Book without my knowledge. I took particular care throughout, to alter nothing merely for altering' sake. In religion, I am for as few innovations as possible. I love the old wine best. And if it were only on this account, I prefer "*which*" before "*who* art in heaven."

Mr. Howard is really an extraordinary man. God has raised him up to be a blessing to many nations. I do not doubt, but there has been something more than natural in his preservation hitherto, and should not wonder if the providence of God should hereafter be still more conspicuous in his favour.

About three weeks hence, I expect to embark for England. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXCIX.—*To the Same.*

1789.

I HAVE now revised the five volumes of my brother's Hymns on the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. He had himself revised them no less than seven times in the space of twenty years. Many of them are little or nothing inferior to the best of them that have been printed. Those of them that savour a little of mysticism I have rather corrected or expunged; but I have no thought or design at all of printing them. I have other work to do which is of more immediate importance. Besides that, I have not two or three hundred pounds to spare. I will order my printer to strike off some of your proposals, which I will then occasionally recommend to my friends. Some of them I know will subscribe; and it may be, God will incline the hearts of more than I am aware of. But with whom do you agree for paper and printing? Proceed warily,

or you may get into much trouble. That God may bless you and yours, and be your Guide in this and in all things, is the prayer of

Your affectionate brother.*

D.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, BRISTOL, *September 20, —.*

At length Jenny has broke through, and given me the satisfaction of exchanging a few words with her. You send us strange news that the lions of Wales are become lambs! I really think a spirit of humanity and benevolence is gone forth upon the earth, perhaps intimating, that the time is drawing near when men shall not know war any more. Mr. Wrigley has been detained here by a sore face, ever since the Conference; but is now also on the mending hand; though he is not yet able to go abroad. I am glad to hear that Dr. Powell, of Brecon, continues in the good way. He seems to be of a frank, open temper; and to be skilful in his profession. I am rather gaining than losing ground as to my health.

I think Mr. Cowper has done as much as is possible to be done with his lamentable story. I can only wish he had a better subject. Peace be with you and yours!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

I set out for London on Monday.

DI.—*To a Young Disciple.*

LONDON, *February 25, 1769.*

You have no need to take thought for the morrow: As your day, so your strength will be. With regard to little compliances, I should be of —'s mind; only, if we begin, we know not where we shall stop. If you plead your conscience for not complying with anything, you must use the most mild and respectful expressions you possibly can, and God will order all things well. You will want no help which is in the power of

Yours affectionately.

* Mr. Churchey was now about to publish his large volume of poems, which Mr. Wesley permitted him to print at his own press.—EDIT.

DII.—*To the Same.**January 25, 1771.*

As you desire a few directions with regard to the improvement of your mind, I will set down just what occur to me at present. Only as my business is great, and my time is short, I cannot stay to explain them at large.

All the knowledge you want is comprised in one book,—the Bible. When you understand this, you will know enough. I advise you, therefore, to begin every day (before or after private prayer) with reading a portion, more or less, of the Old or New Testament, or of both, if you have time, together with the Notes, which may lead you by the hand into suitable meditation. After breakfast, you may read, in order, the volumes of Sermons, and the other practical books which we have published; more or less at a time, (as other business permits,) with meditation and prayer. Young, Milton, and the Moral and Sacred Poems, you may read chiefly in the afternoons. Whatever you write, you should write in the forenoons. Take care never to read or write too long at a time. That is not conducive either to bodily or spiritual health. If I can be of use to you in anything else, tell me; you know you may speak freely to

Yours affectionately.

DIII.—*To the Same.**DUBLIN, March 30, 1771.*

So poor, tempted, disconsolate — was sent to London for your sake also! She was sent to you among others, to quicken your expectation of the great salvation. And what is it our Lord calls you to now? Whereunto thou hast attained, hold fast! You may undoubtedly lose what God has given; but you never need. Is not his grace sufficient for you? Is not his strength made perfect in weakness? Indeed you shall pass through the fire; but lean upon Him, and the flames shall not kindle upon you. You shall go through the waters; but keep hold on Him, and the floods shall not run over you. Suffer all, and conquer all.

In every temptation, He keeps you to prove
His utmost salvation, His fulness of love!

Be exceeding wary in your conversation, that it may be worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Let not the liveliness of

your spirit lead you into levity : Cheerful seriousness is the point you are to aim at. And be willing to suffer with Him, that you may reign with Him. Deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Him !

I am

Yours affectionately.

DIV.—*To the Same.*

BANDON, *May 2, 1771.*

THERE is no fear I should forget you, especially at this time, when all the powers of hell are engaged against you ; but let them come about you like bees, they shall be extinct as the fire among the thorns. Tempted you are, and will be ; otherwise, you could not know your own weakness, and the strength of your Master. But all temptations will “work together for good ;” all are for your profit, that you may be partaker of his holiness. You may always have an evidence both of God’s love to you, and of yours to him. And, at some times, the former may be more clear ; at other times, the latter. It is enough if, in one case or the other, you simply stay your soul upon Him. S. Harper’s is the ordinary experience of those who are renewed in love. S. Jackson’s experience is quite extraordinary, and what very few of them have yet attained.

There is a danger of every believer’s mistaking the voice of the enemy, or of their own imagination, for the voice of God. And you can distinguish one from the other, not by any written rule, but only by the unction of the Holy One. This only teaches Christian prudence, consistent with simplicity and godly sincerity. The four volumes of Sermons, the Appeals, the Notes, and the Extracts from Mr. Law’s Works, and from Dr. Young, might best suit you now : Meddle with nothing that does not suit your present temper. Meet with them that meet on a Friday, and speak in God’s name, without fear or shame. The general rule, “not to correspond but with those who have both grace and understanding,” admits of several exceptions, in favour of a few who want one of them, or the other, or both. Be not afraid of writing too long letters to me. The longer, the more agreeable to,

My dear —,

Yours affectionately.

DV.—*To the Same.*GALWAY, *May 20, 1771.*

YOUR concern is with the present moment: Your business is, to live to-day. In every sense, let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. It is true, the full assurance of hope excludes all doubt of our final salvation; but it does not, and cannot, continue any longer than we walk closely with God. And it does not include any assurance of our future behaviour; neither do I know any word in all the Bible which gives us any authority to look for a testimony of this kind. But just so far you may certainly go, with regard to the present moment,—

“I want the witness, Lord,
That all I do is right,
According to thy will and word,
Well-pleasing in thy sight.”

Seriously and steadily, my dear maid, aim at this; and you will not be disappointed of your hope. With regard to the impression you speak of, I am in doubt whether it be not a temptation from the enemy. It may occasion many wrong tempers; it may feed both pride and uncharitableness. And the Bible gives us no authority to think ill of any one, but from plain, undeniable, overt acts.

Rollin was a pious man, and a fine historian. If you read one volume, you would feel whether it enlivened or deadened your soul. The same trial you may make, as to serious poetry. Very probably this would enliven your soul; and certainly the volumes of Philosophy may, as Galen entitles his description of the human body, “A Hymn to the Creator.” Temporal business need not interrupt your communion with God, though it varies the manner of it. It is certain every promise has a condition; yet that does not make the promise of none effect; but by the promise you are encouraged and enabled to fulfil the condition. You might like it better, were there no condition; but that would not answer the design of Him that makes it. It is certain, there are times of nearer access to God, and that it nearly imports us to improve those precious seasons. But we may find plausible objections against this; and, indeed, against

anything. The more free you are with me, the more you oblige,

My dear —,

Yours affectionately.

DVI.—*To the Same.*

DUBLIN, *July 13, 1771.*

TRUTH and falsehood, and so right and wrong tempers, are often divided by an almost imperceptible line. It is the more difficult to distinguish right and wrong tempers, or passions, because, in several instances, the same motion of the blood and animal spirits will attend both one and the other. Therefore, in many cases, we cannot distinguish them, but by the unction of the Holy One. In the case you mention, all self-complacency or self-approbation is not pride. Certainly there may be self-approbation, which is not sin, though it must occasion a degree of pleasure. "This is our rejoicing, even the testimony of our conscience toward God." And this joy is neither better nor worse, for being accompanied with a natural motion of the blood and spirits. Equally natural, and equally innocent, is the joy which we receive from being approved by those we love. But, in all these instances, there is need of the utmost care, lest we slide from innocent joy, or self-approbation, into that which is not innocent, into pride, (thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think,) or vanity, a desire of praise.

For thin partitions do their bounds divide.

Be all in earnest; and always speak without reserve to

Yours, &c.

DVII.—*To the Same.*

THE HAY, *August 24, 1771.*

If you find any comfort or help thereby, write on, without any reasoning about the matter. The various thoughts and suggestions you mention are just such as any person of a lively imagination may expect. Satan, too, very well knows whereof we are made, and always attacks us on the weak side. But these, and a thousand clouds passing over your mind, prove nothing as to the state of your heart: See that this be devoted to Him, and it is enough.

You have given it Him: Stand to your gift. However, then, your imagination may be affected, you will have the testimony of a good conscience toward God. Not but that you may plead that promise, "The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." As the former word takes in all your passions, so does the latter all the workings of your reason and imagination. Pray, therefore, and look for the answer of your prayer. It shall come, and not tarry!

DVIII.—*To the Same.*

KINGSWOOD, *September 13, 1771.*

YOUR present weakness will, I hope, be an unspeakable blessing. You were in danger of having more sail than ballast, more liveliness of imagination than solid wisdom. But it seems God is correcting this defect, and giving you more steadiness of mind. You now see and feel what is the real value of this poor perishable world, and how little real happiness is to be found in all things under the sun.

It is right to pour out our whole soul before Him that careth for us. But it is good, likewise, to unbosom ourselves to a friend, in whom we can confide. This also is an appointed means which it generally pleases God to bless. Whenever, therefore, you have opportunity, speak all that is in your heart to

Your affectionate brother.

DIX.—*To the Same.*

WITNEY, *October 16, 1771.*

IT is no fault to be grieved at the unkindness of those we love: Only it may go to an excess; so that we have need to watch in this, as in all things, seeing the life of man is a temptation upon earth. And it is no fault not to grieve for the censure we must often meet with for following our own conscience. Of those little ones you cannot be too tender, or too careful; and as you are frequently alone, you may teach them many important lessons, as they are able to bear them. But it requires immense patience; for you must tell them the same thing ten times over, or you do nothing.

A higher degree of that peace which may well be said to pass all understanding will keep, not only your heart, but

all the workings of your mind, (as the word properly signifies,) both of your reason and imagination, from all irregular sallies. This peace will increase as your faith increases: One always keeps pace with the other. So that on this account also your continual prayer should be, "Lord, increase my faith!" A continual desire is a continual prayer; that is, in a low sense of the word; for there is a far higher sense,—such an open intercourse with God, such a close, uninterrupted communion with him, as G. Lopez experienced, and not a few of our brethren now alive. This you also should aspire after; as you know, He with whom we have to do is no respecter of persons.

DX.—*To the Same.*

January 5, 1772.

It is not always a defect to mind one thing at a time. And an aptness so to do, to employ the whole vigour of the mind on the thing in hand, may answer excellent purposes. Only you have need to be exceeding wary, lest the thing you pursue be wrong. First, be well assured not only that it is good, but that it is the best thing for you at that time; and then, whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might. But you have all things in one, the whole of religion contracted to a point, in that word, "Walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us." All is contained in humble, gentle, patient love. Is not this, so to speak, a divine contrivance to assist the narrowness of our minds, the scantiness of our understandings? Every right temper, and then all right words and actions, naturally branch out of love. In effect, therefore, you want nothing but this,—to be filled with the faith that worketh by love.

DXI.—*To the Same.*

LEITH, May 13, 1772.

To set the state of perfection too high, is the surest way to drive it out of the world. The substance of that test, I believe, I have seen; and I judge it not consistent with humanity; I mean with the state of a human soul, as long as it is united to a corruptible body. Do not puzzle yourself any more with these nice inquiries; but, in order to re-settle your judgment, give another deliberate reading to the "Farther Thoughts," or the "Plain Account of

Christian Perfection." He that long ago gave you to taste of his pardoning love, gave you afterwards a taste of His pure love. Whereunto you have attained, hold fast; never cast it away through a voluntary humility. But see that you do not rest there. Comparatively, forget the things that are behind. Reach forward! This one thing do: Press on to the prize of your high calling.

DXII.—*To the Same.*

WHITBY, June 20, 1772.

It is of admirable use to bear the weaknesses, nay, and even the faults, of the real children of God. And the temptations to anger which arise herefrom are often more profitable than any other. Yet surely, for the present, they are not joyous, but grievous: Afterwards comes the peaceable fruit. You shall have exactly as much pain and as much disappointment as will be most for your profit, and just sufficient to

Keep you dead to all below,
Only Christ resolved to know.

Never make it matter of reasoning that you have not either a larger or a smaller share of suffering. You shall have exactly what is best, both as to kind, degree, and time. O what a blessing is it to be in His hand who "doeth all things well!"

Of all gossiping, religious gossiping is the worst: It adds hypocrisy to uncharitableness, and effectually does the work of the devil in the name of the Lord. The Leaders, in every society, may do much towards driving it out from among the Methodists. Let them, in the band or class, observe, 1. "Now we are to talk of no absent person, but simply of God and our own souls." 2. "The rule of our conversation here is to be the rule of all our conversation. Let us observe it (unless in some necessarily exempt cases) at all times and in all places." If this be frequently inculcated, it will have an excellent effect.

Instead of giving a caution once, as to a grown person, you must give it to a child ten times. By this means you may keep a sensible child from an improper familiarity with servants. Cautions should also be given frequently and earnestly to the servants themselves; and they will not always be thrown away, if they have either grace or sense.

DXIII.—*To the Same.*BRISTOL, *August 31, 1772.*

NONE are or can be saved but those who are by faith made inwardly and outwardly holy. But this holy faith is the gift of God; and he is never straitened for time. He can as easily give this faith in a moment as in a thousand years. He frequently does give it on a death-bed, in answer to the prayer of believers, but rarely, if ever, to those who had continued unholy, upon the presumption that He would save them at last. But, if He did, what unspeakable losers must they be! Could grief be in heaven, they would grieve to eternity, seeing every one there shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.

And *he* will perplex you more than enough, if you listen to his sallies of imagination: "Every one has some pursuit; therefore a man cannot be always in communion with God." I deny the consequence. While Mr. De Renty was serving the poor, he was in constant communion with God. So was Gregory Lopez, while he was writing books. "At first, indeed," as Lopez observed, "large manifestations from God were apt to suspend the exercise of his senses, as well as of his understanding. But, after some time, they made no difference at all, but left him the full exercise of his understanding and senses." I remember a much later instance of the same kind: An old Clergyman told me, some years since, "I asked Mr. Böehm, (Chaplain to Prince George of Denmark,) 'Sir, when you are in such an hurry of business, surrounded with a crowd of people, hearing one, and dictating to another, at the same time, does it not interrupt your mental prayer?' He answered immediately, 'All that hurry no more hinders my communion with God, than if I was all the time sitting alone in my study, or kneeling at the altar.'" No business, therefore, of any kind, no conversation, need hinder one that is strong in faith, from rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks. Follow after this, and you will surely attain it.

DXIV.—*To the Same.**March 23, 1773.*

If useless words or thoughts spring from evil tempers, they are properly evil; otherwise, not; but still they are contrary to the Adamic law: Yet not to the law of love; therefore there is no condemnation for them, but they are matter of humiliation before God. So are those (seemingly) unbelieving thoughts, although they are not your own, and you may boldly say, "Go, go, thou unclean spirit; thou shalt answer for these, and not I."

Your affections were apt to be too impetuous, and sometimes uneven too; but nature yields to healing grace, which I trust has made you both more calm and more steady: And what will it not make you, if you persevere? All that is amiable, holy, and happy! Already He that loves you, gives you a taste of what he has prepared for you. Let patience have its perfect work; and you shall be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. See that you make the best of life! The time is short!

DXV.—*To the Same.**July 23, 1773.*

At many times our advances in the race that is set before us are clear and perceptible; at other times they are no more perceptible (at least to ourselves) than the growth of a tree. At any time you may pray,—

"Strength and comfort from thy word,
Imperceptibly supply."

And when you perceive nothing, it does not follow that the work of God stands still in your soul; especially while your desire is unto Him, and while you choose Him for your portion. He does not leave you to yourself, though it may seem so to your apprehension. The difference between temptation and sin is generally plain enough to all that are simple of heart; but in some exempt cases it is not plain: There we want the unction of the Holy One. Voluntary humility, calling every defect a sin, is not well pleasing to God. Sin, properly speaking, is neither more nor less than "a voluntary transgression of a known law of God."

There are a thousand instances wherein it is not possible literally to make restitution. All that we can advise in the

case you mention is, 1. Let him that stole, steal no more; let him be from this hour rigorously just. 2. Let him be a faithful steward of the mammon of unrighteousness, restoring all he can to God, in the poor.

DXVI.—*To the Same.*

August 20, 1773

I OFTEN heard my own mother make the same complaint with you. She did not *feel* near so much as my father did; but she *did* ten times more than he did. You must labour to do so much the more, and pray that God would supply whatever is wanting. One degree of forgiveness is due to every one, though impenitent; still I love him as I love all men. But the other degree, whereby I should again receive him as a friend, is only due to one who says, "I repent;" that is, convinces me that he does really repent, and is entirely changed.

It is certain God has given you a talent, and I still think it ought to be used. I grant indeed, to be hid and to be still is more agreeable to flesh and blood; but is it more agreeable to Him "who hath left us an example, that we might tread in his steps?"

One cannot be saved from evil tempers, without being devoted to God; neither can a soul be all devoted to God, without being saved from sin: But it is often exceeding hard to judge of others, whether they are saved from all evil tempers, and whether they are all devoted to God, or not; yea, it is hard to judge of ourselves; nay, we cannot do it, without the anointing of the Holy One given for that very purpose. Out of darkness, God will command light to shine. Be plain and open to all; then, whether they are sincere or insincere, you will have a conscience void of offence. You find all things work together for good. They must, while the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Yours affectionately.

DXVII.—*To the Same.*

BRISTOL, September 8, 1773.

WE have the clearest proof, when we have to do with children, that "the help which is done upon earth, God doeth it himself." All our wisdom will not even make them understand, much less feel, the things of God. The

"Instructions for Children" contain the best matter that we can possibly teach them. But nothing less than the finger of God can write it on their hearts. On Saturday night, he sent another shower of grace upon our children at Kingswood. Sixteen of them were deeply affected; and, I think, thirteen found peace with God. Four or five of them were some of the smallest we had, not above seven or eight years old.

Although there may be some use in teaching very young children to "say their prayers daily;" yet I judge it to be utterly impossible to teach any to "practise prayer," till they are awakened. For, what is prayer, but the desire of the soul expressed in words to God, either inwardly or outwardly? How then will you teach them to express a desire who feel no desire at all? When, therefore, Madame Guion talks in that manner, it often makes me afraid, that both she and her teacher, Archbishop Fenelon, talked by rote of the things they knew not. Both of them had an amazing genius, but, I doubt, full little experience. It is exceeding certain, neither his nor her writings are likely to do us any solid service. We have all the gold that is in them, without the dross; which is often not only useless, but dangerous. Let you and I keep the good old way:—

In doing and bearing The will of our Lord,
We still are preparing To meet our reward.

Go on steadily in this path: There is none better. By patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. You shall reap, if you faint not.

DXVIII.—*To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *September 29, 1773.*

YOUR own experience may give an answer to your question. You did yourself enjoy a foretaste of that constant communion with God, though it did not continue long. And you know it was given you in a moment. It was the same case with all those whom I have known, that are now enabled to pray without ceasing. To every one of them that blessing was given in an instant. So it will be given to you again; although, probably, you will find a strong hope first, which will incite you to cry out,

"Big with earnest expectation,
See me sit At thy feet,
Longing for salvation."

Grace in one sense will make all things new. And I have sometimes known this done to such a degree, that there has been no trace of the natural temper remaining. But generally the innocent natural temper does remain; only refined, softened, and cast into the mould of love.

DXIX.—*To the Same.*

LEWISHAM, *December 3, 1773.*

You are yourself a living witness of this religion. But it is only in a low degree. I grant you are only just beginning to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is an unspeakable blessing, that he shows you this, in so clear and strong a light. And undoubtedly he is able to make you completely serious; and yet this is consistent with much cheerfulness. You shall have more or less of reproach, as he chooses. Your part is, to leave all in His hands, who orders all things well. Go straight forward, and you shall be all a Christian! I expect that you will be more and more a comfort to,

My dear,

Yours affectionately.

DXX.—*To Mr. John Mason.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

PEMBROKE, *August 6, 1768.*

I WOULD advise to make a longer trial of Kinsale. I am still in hope that good will be done there. And there has been considerable good done at Bandon; and will be more, if the Preachers do not coop themselves up in the house. But no great good will be done at any place without field-preaching. I hope you labour to keep the bands regular in every place, which cannot be done without a good deal of care and pains. Take pains, likewise, with the children, and in visiting from house to house; else you will see little fruit of your labour. I believe it will be best to change the Preachers more frequently.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.