

people are farther removed from the din of war, they may be more susceptible of the Gospel of peace.

A paper was sent to me lately, occasioned by the troubles in America; but it would not do good. It is abundantly too tart; and nothing of that kind will be of service now. All parties are already too much sharpened against each other: We must pour water, not oil, into the flame. I had written a little tract upon the subject before I knew the American ports were shut up. I think there is not one sharp word therein; I did not design there should. However, many are excessively angry; and would willingly burn me and it together. Indeed it is provoking: I suppose above forty thousand of them have been printed in three weeks, and still the demand for them is as great as ever.

I was glad to receive yours by Captain Crawford. I am entirely of your mind. I am persuaded love and tender measures will do far more than violence. And if I should have an interview with a great man, (which seems to be not unlikely,) I will, by the grace of God, tell him so, without any circumlocution. Our time is in God's hands: Let us stand ready for all things!

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCXXIII.—*To Mr. James Dempster.*

DEAR JEMMY,

BALLINROBE, *May 19, 1775.*

THAT one point I earnestly recommend, both to brother Rankin, and you, and all our Preachers,—by prayer, by exhortation, and by every possible means, to oppose a party spirit. This has always, so far as it prevailed, been the bane of all true religion; more especially when a country was in such a situation as America is now. None but the God of almighty love can extricate the poor people out of the snare. O what need have you to besiege His throne with all the power of prayer!

I am, dear Jemmy,

Yours affectionately.

CCCXXIV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR JEMMY,

*Near LEEDS, July 28, 1775.*

LAST month I was at the gates of death. But it pleased God just then to rebuke the fever, so that my pulse began to beat again, after it had totally ceased. Since that time I have been gradually recovering strength, and am now nearly as well as ever. Let us use the short residue of life to the glory of Him that gave it!

I am

Yours affectionately.

CCCXXV.—*To Mr. John King.\**

MY DEAR BROTHER,

*Near LEEDS, July 28, 1775.*

ALWAYS take advice or reproof as a favour: It is the surest mark of love.

I advised you once, and you took it as an affront: Nevertheless I will do it once more.

Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me, whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can; but do not scream. Speak with all your heart; but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, "He shall not *cry*:" The word properly means, He shall not *scream*. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud; often vehemently; but I never scream; I never strain myself. I dare not: I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. Perhaps one reason why that good man, Thomas Walsh, yea, and John Manners too, were in such grievous darkness before they died, was, because they shortened their own lives.

O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper! By nature you are very far from it: You are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others, surely you might take it from

Your affectionate brother.

\* One of the Preachers in America.—EDIT.



CCCXXVI.—*To Mr. John King.\***Near LONDON, February 16, 1787.*

I GENERALLY write to all that desire it, though not often in many words. What I have to say may be confined in a narrow compass. It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the perfect love of God; and one great means of retaining it is, frankly to declare what God has given you, and earnestly to exhort all the believers you meet with to follow after full salvation.

CCCXXVII.—*To the Same.**Near BRISTOL, April 21, 1787.*

IF you have a desire to go and labour with brother Clarke in the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey, you may, after the Conference. By that time I expect they will have both work and food for another labourer.

With what is past, or what is to come, we have little to do. Now is the day of salvation. The great salvation is at hand, if you will receive it as the free gift of God. What you have already attained, hold fast. Whatever you want, it is ready to be given. Reason not about it, but believe. His word is, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." There is a wonderful work of God in several parts of this kingdom; and it increases more and more.

CCCXXVIII.—*To the Same.**MY DEAR BROTHER, Near LONDON, October 31, 1787.*

BOTH in Jersey, Alderney, and Guernsey, the fields are white to the harvest. Hitherto there is an open door into many places, without any considerable opposition. And I am not sorry we were detained there, by contrary winds, longer than we intended.

There is no need at all that Thirsk Circuit should ever be in debt. You have several persons there that are of considerable ability, and that love the cause of God. Represent things to them in a proper manner, and nothing will be wanting.

If any of the Class-Leaders teaches strange doctrine, he

\* One of the English Preachers. He was a different person from the Preacher to whom the preceding letter was addressed.—EDIT.

can have no more place among us. Only lovingly admonish him first.

I am

Yours affectionately.

CCCXXIX.—*To Mrs. A. F.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*October 12, 1764.*

THAT great truth, "that we are saved by faith," will never be worn out; and that sanctifying as well as justifying faith is the free gift of God. Now, with God one day is as a thousand years. It plainly follows, that the quantity of time is nothing to Him: Centuries, years, months, days, hours, and moments are exactly the same. Consequently, he can as well sanctify in a day after we are justified, as a hundred years. There is no difference at all, unless we suppose Him to be such a one as ourselves. Accordingly we see, in fact, that some of the most unquestionable witnesses of sanctifying grace were sanctified within a few days after they were justified. I have seldom known so devoted a soul as S—— H——, at Macclesfield, who was sanctified within nine days after she was convinced of sin. She was then twelve years old, and I believe was never afterwards heard to speak an improper word, or known to do an improper thing. Her look struck an awe into all that saw her. She is now in Abraham's bosom.

Although, therefore, it usually pleases God to interpose some time between justification and sanctification, yet, as it is expressly observed in the "Farther Thoughts," we must not fancy this to be an invariable rule. All who think this, must think we are sanctified by works, or, which comes to the same, by sufferings: For, otherwise, what is time necessary for? It must be either to do or to suffer. Whereas, if nothing be required but simple faith, a moment is as good as an age.

The truth is, we are continually forming general rules from our own particular experience. Thus S— R—, having gone about and about herself, which took up a considerable time, might very naturally suppose, all who are sanctified must stay for it near as long a time as she did. Again: If God has so rooted and grounded her in love (which I neither affirm nor deny) that she cannot now fall from Him, she very



naturally thinks this is the case with all that are sanctified. Formerly S— C— drew the same inference from her own experience, and was as positive that she could not fall from that state, or sin, as S— R— can be now.

But “none can be sanctified without a deep knowledge of themselves, and of the devices of Satan.” They may, without the latter; which God will give them in due time. And the former He can give in a moment; and frequently does, of which we have fresh instances almost every day.

In the “Thoughts on Perfection,” it is observed, that, before any can be assured they are saved from sin, they must not only feel no sin, but “have a direct witness” of that salvation. And this several have had as clear as S— R— has, who afterwards fell from that salvation: Although S— R—, to be consistent with her scheme, must deny they ever had it; yea, and must affirm, that witness was either from nature or from the devil. If it was really from God, is he well-pleased with this?

I know not how to reconcile speaking sharply or roughly, or even a seeming want of meekness, with perfection. And yet I am fearful of condemning whom God has not condemned. What I cannot understand, I leave to Him.

How is it that you make me write longer letters to you than I do almost to any one else? I know not how, I find a greater concern for your welfare. I want you to be exactly right. This occasions my not thinking much of any pains that may give you help or satisfaction. The Lord touch your heart now, that all your tempers, thoughts, words, and works may be holiness unto our God.

I am yours, &c.

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CCCXXX.—*To Lady Maxwell.*

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *June 20, 1764.*

WILL it be agreeable to my dear Lady Maxwell, that I trouble her with a letter so soon? and that I write with so little ceremony? that I use no compliment, but all plainness of speech? If it be not, you must tell me so, and I shall know better how to speak for the time to come. Indeed, it would be displeasing to me to use reserve: The regard I feel for you strongly inclines me to “think aloud,” to tell you every thought which rises in my heart. I think God

has taken unusual pains, so to speak, to make you a Christian; a Christian indeed, not in name, worshipping God in spirit and in truth; having in you the mind that was in Christ, and walking as Christ also walked. He has given you affliction upon affliction; he has used every possible means to unhinge your soul from things of earth, that it might fix on him alone. How far the design of his love has succeeded, I could not well judge from a short conversation. Your Ladyship will therefore give me leave to inquire, Is the heaviness you frequently feel merely owing to weakness of body, and the loss of near relations? I will hope it is not. It might, indeed, at first spring from these outward pressures. But did not the gracious Spirit of God strike in, and take occasion from these to convince you of sin, of unbelief, of the want of Christ? And is not the sense of this one great cause, if not the greatest, of your present distress? If so, the greatest danger is, either that you should stifle that conviction, not suffering yourself to be convinced that you are all sin, the chief of sinners; or, that you should heal the wound slightly, that you should rest before you know Christ is yours, before his Spirit witnesses with your spirit, that you are a child of God. My dear Lady, be not afraid to know yourself; yea, to know yourself as you are known. How soon, then, will you know your Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous! And why not this day? Why not this hour? If you feel your want, I beseech the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to look upon you now! O give thy servant power to believe! to see and feel how thou hast loved her! Now let her sink down into the arms of thy love; and say unto her soul, "I am thy salvation."

With regard to particular advices, I know not how far your Ladyship would have me to proceed. I would not be backward to do anything in my power; and yet I would not obtrude. But in any respect you may command,

My dear Lady,

Your Ladyship's affectionate servant.

CCCXXXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

MANCHESTER, *July 10, 1764.*

TILL I had the pleasure of receiving yours, I was almost in doubt, whether you would think it worth you,



while to write or not. So much the more I rejoiced when that doubt was removed, and removed in so agreeable a manner. I cannot but think of you often : I seem to see you just by me, panting after God, under the heavy pressure of bodily weakness and faintness, bereaved of your dearest relatives, convinced that you are a sinner, a debtor that has nothing to pay, and just ready to cry out,

“ Jesu, now I have lost my all,  
Let me upon thy bosom fall.”

Amen, Lord Jesus ! Speak, for thy servant heareth ! Speak thyself into her heart ! Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. Let her see thee full of grace and truth, and make her glad with the light of thy countenance.

Do not stop, my dear Lady, one moment, “ because you have not felt sorrow enough.” Your Friend above has felt enough of it for you.

O Lamb of God, was ever pain,  
Was ever love like thine !

Look, look unto him, and be thou saved ! He is not a God afar off ; he is now hovering over you with eyes of tenderness and love ! Only believe ! Then he turns your heaviness into joy. Do not think you are not humble enough, not contrite enough, not earnest enough. You are nothing ; but Christ is all, and he is yours. The Lord God write it upon your heart, and take you for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

O that you may be ever as dead to the world as you are now ! I apprehend the greatest danger from that quarter. If you should be induced to seek happiness out of Christ, how soon would your good desires vanish ! Especially, if you should give way to the temptation to which your person, your youth, and your fortune, will not fail to expose you. If you escape this snare, I trust you will be a real Christian, having the power, as well as the form, of religion. I expect you will then have likewise better health and spirits ; perhaps to-morrow. But, O ! take Christ to-day ! I long to have you happy in him ! Surely, few have a more earnest desire of your happiness than,

My very dear Lady,

Your Ladyship's most affectionate servant.

CCCXXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

*September 22, 1764.*

YOU need be under no manner of apprehension of writing too often to me. The more frequent your letters are, the more welcome they will be. When I have not heard from you for some time, I begin to be full of fears; I am afraid, either that your bodily weakness increases, or that your desires after God grow cold. I consider, you are at present but a tender, sickly plant, easily hurt by any rough blast. But I trust this will not be so long; for you have a strong Helper. And the Lord, whom you serve, though feebly and imperfectly, will suddenly come to his temple. When, Lord? Are all things ready now? Here is the sinner; one whose mouth is stopped; who has nothing to pay; who pleads neither her own harmlessness, nor works, nor good desires, nor sincerity; but can adopt that strange word,—

“I give up every plea beside,  
Lord, I am damn’d; but thou hast died.”

He has died; therefore, you shall live. O do not reason against him! Let him take you now! Let him take you just as you are, and make you what is acceptable in his sight.

It gives me pleasure, indeed, to hear that God has given you resolution to join the society. Undoubtedly you will suffer reproach on the account; but it is the reproach of Christ. And you will have large amends, when the Spirit of glory and of God shall rest upon you. Yet I foresee a danger: At first you will be inclined to think that all the members of the society are in earnest. And when you find that some are otherwise, (which will always be the case in so large a body of people,) then prejudice may easily steal in, and exceedingly weaken your soul. O beware of this rock of offence! When you see anything amiss, (upon hearsay you will not readily receive it,) remember our Lord’s word, “What is that to thee? Follow thou me.” And I entreat you, do not regard the half-Methodists,—if we must use the name. Do not mind them who endeavour to hold Christ in one hand, and the world in the other. I want you to be all a Christian; such a Christian as the Marquis de Renty,



or Gregory Lopez, was. Such a one as that saint of God, Jane Cooper ; all sweetness, all gentleness, all love. Methinks you are just what she was when I saw her first. I shrink at the thought of seeing you what she was when I saw her last. But why should I ? What is all the pain of one that is glorifying God in the fires, with, " Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit ? "

May I not take upon me to give you one advice more ? Be very wary how you contract new acquaintance. All, even sincere people, will not profit you. I should be pained at your conversing frequently with any but those who are of a deeply serious spirit, and who speak closely to the point. You need not condemn them, and yet you may say, " This will not do for me. "

May He that loves you richly supply all your wants, and answer your enlarged desires ! So prays,

My very dear Lady,

Your affectionate servant.

CCCXXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDONDERRY, *May 25, 1765.*

It is not easy for me to express the satisfaction I received in the few hours I lately spent with you. Before I saw you, I had many fears concerning you, lest your concern for the one thing should be abated, lest your desires should be cooled, or your mind a little hurt, by any of the things which have lately occurred. So much the greater was my joy, when all those fears were removed ; when I found the same openness and sweetness as before, both in your spirit and conversation, and the same earnestness of desire after the only thing which deserves the whole strength of our affection. I believe tenderness and steadiness are seldom planted by nature in one spirit. But what is too hard for almighty grace ? This can give strength and softness together. This is able to fill your soul with all firmness, as well as with all gentleness. And hereunto are you called ; for nothing less than all the mind which was in Christ Jesus.

It was with great pleasure that I observed your fixed resolution not to rest in anything short of this. I know not why you should ; why you should be content with being half a Christian, devoted partly to God, and partly to the

world, or more properly to the devil. Nay, but let us be all for God. He has created the whole, our whole body, soul, and spirit. He that bought us hath redeemed the whole; and let him take the purchase of his blood. Let him sanctify the whole, that all we have and are may be a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving!

I am not afraid of your being satisfied with less than this; but I am afraid of your seeking it the wrong way. Here is the danger, that you should seek it, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. See how exactly the Apostle speaks: You do not seek it directly, but as it were by works. I fear, lest this should be your case, which might retard your receiving the blessing. Christ has died for you; he has bought pardon for you. Why should not you receive it now? while you have this paper in your hand? Because you have not done thus or thus? See your own works. Because you are not thus and thus? more contrite? more earnest? more sincere? See your own righteousness. O let it all go! None but Christ! None but Christ! And if he alone is sufficient; if what he has suffered and done, if his blood and righteousness are enough, they are nigh thee! in thy mouth, and in thy heart! See, all things are ready! Do not wait for this or that preparation! for something to bring to God! Bring Christ! Rather, let him bring you; bring you home to God! Lord Jesus, take her! Take her and all her sins! Take her as she is! Take her now! Arise, why tarriest thou? Wash away her sins! Sprinkle her with thy blood! Let her sink down into the arms of thy love, and cry out, "My Lord and my God!"

Let me hear from you as soon as you can. You do not know how great a satisfaction this is to,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

Be pleased to direct to the New Room, in Dublin.

CCCXXXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

KILKENNY, *July 5, 1765.*

As yours was sent from Dublin to Cork, and then back again hither, I did not receive it till yesterday. I am now setting my face again towards England; but I expect to be in Dublin till the beginning of next month, and then



to cross over, so as to be at Manchester (if it please God) about the middle of August. Either at Dublin, or at Manchester, I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you. This is indeed a pleasure, as it is to write to you; though sometimes I do this with fear; a fear, lest I should give you any pain, as I know the tenderness of your spirit. I wish I could be of some service to you; that I could encourage you to cast yourself on Him that loves you; that is now waiting to pour his peace into your heart, to give you an entrance into the holiest by his blood. See him, see him! full of grace and truth! full of grace and truth for thee! I do not doubt but he is gradually working in you; but I want you to experience, likewise, an instantaneous work. Then shall the gradual go on swiftly. Lord, speak! Thy servant heareth! Say thou, "Let there be light;" and there shall be light. Now let it spring up in your heart!

It may be, He that does all things well has wise reasons, though not apparent to us, for working more gradually in you, than he has done of late years in most others. It may please him to give you the consciousness of his favour, the conviction that you are accepted through the Beloved, by almost insensible degrees, like the dawning of the day. And it is all one, how it began, so you do but walk in the light. Be this given in an instant, or by degrees, hold it fast. Christ is yours; He hath loved you; He hath given himself for you. Therefore, you shall be holy as He is holy, both in heart, and in all manner of conversation.

Give me leave, my dear friend, to add a word, likewise, concerning your bodily health. You should in anywise give yourself all the air and exercise that you can. And I should advise you (even though long custom made it difficult, if that were the case) to sleep as early as possible; never later than ten, in order to rise as early as health will permit. The having good spirits, so called, or the contrary, very much depends on this. I believe medicines will do you little service: You need only proper diet, exact regularity, and constant exercise, with the blessing of God.

Your speaking or writing was never tedious to me yet; and I am persuaded never will be. Your letters are more and more agreeable to,

My very dear Lady,

Your most affectionate servant.

CCCXXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *December 1, 1765.*

PERHAPS there is scarce any child of man that is not, at some time, a little touched by prejudice, so far, at least, as to be troubled, though not wounded. But it does not hurt, unless it fixes upon the mind. It is not strength of understanding which can prevent this. The heart, which otherwise suffers most by it, makes the resistance which only is effectual. I cannot easily be prejudiced against any person whom I tenderly love, till that love declines. So long, therefore, as our affection is preserved by watchfulness and prayer to Him that gave it, prejudice must stand at a distance. Another excellent defence against it is openness. I admire you upon this account. You dare (in spite of that strange reserve which so prevails in North Britain) speak the naked sentiments of your heart. I hope my dear friend will never do otherwise. In simplicity and godly sincerity, the very reverse of worldly wisdom, have all your conversation in the world.

Have you received a gleam of light from above, a spark of faith? O let it not go! Hold fast, by His grace, that token of His love, that earnest of your inheritance. Come just as you are, and come boldly to the throne of grace. You need not delay! Even now the bowels of Jesus Christ yearn over you. What have you to do with to-morrow? I love you to-day. And how much more does He love you! He

Pities still his wand'ring sheep,  
Longs to bring you to his fold!

To-day hear His voice; the voice of Him that speaks as never man spake; the voice that raises the dead, that calls the things which are not as though they were. Hark! What says He now? "Fear not; only believe! Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee! Go in peace; thy faith hath made thee whole." Indeed

I am, my dear Lady,  
Your ever affectionate servant.



CCCXXXVI.—*To the Same.*NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *May 6, 1766.*

MY DEAR LADY,

It was well that I did not hear anything of a trial you lately had till it was past. You have great reason to bless God that this did not turn you out of the way. You might easily have inferred from it, that "all these people are alike;" and thence have given way to a thousand reasonings, which would have brought you into utter darkness. But it is plain you are not left to your own weakness. You have a strong Helper. The Lord stands on your right hand; therefore you are not moved. And I make no doubt but he will continue to help, till his arm brings you salvation. But, in the mean time, you have need of patience; and the more so, because you have a weak body. This, one may expect, will frequently press down the soul; especially till you are strong in faith. But how soon may that be, seeing it is the gift, yea, and the free gift, of God! Therefore, it is never far off. The word is nigh thee! "Only believe!" Look unto Jesus! Be thou saved! Receive, out of his fulness, grace upon grace; mercy, and grace to keep mercy.

On the 24th instant I hope to be at Edinburgh, with my wife and daughter. But perhaps you will see the salvation of God, before you see,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

NORWICH, *February 23, 1767.*

FOR a considerable time, I was under apprehensions that you were in a state of temptation. And as I had no other way of helping you, this put me upon commending you the more frequently to Him that is able to save you. Your last, therefore, was doubly acceptable to me, as it relieved me from my fears concerning you, and gave me the occasion of rejoicing over one, for whom I have the most sincere and tender affection. Sure it is, that the grace of God is sufficient for you in this, and in every trying hour. So you have happily experienced it to be already; and so I trust you will experience to the end. But you must not

imagine that you are yet out of the reach of temptation: Thoughts will be suggested again and again; so that you have still need to be

For ever standing on your guard,  
And watching unto prayer.

And let my dear friend keep at the utmost distance from temptation, and carefully shun all occasions of evil. O it is a good though painful fight! You find you are not sent a warfare at your own cost. You have Him with you, who can have compassion on your infirmities; who remembers you are but dust; and who, at the same time, has all power in heaven and earth, and so is able to save you to the uttermost. Exercise, especially as the spring comes on, will be of greater service to your health than a hundred medicines; and I know not whether it will not be restored in a larger measure than for many years, when the peace of God fixes in your heart. Is it far off? Do not think so. His ear is not heavy; he now hears the cry of your heart. And will he not answer? Why not to-day? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Your openness obliges me to be more than ever,

My dear Lady,  
Your affectionate friend and servant.

CCCXXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

CORK, June 4, 1767.

MY belief is, that a journey to England might be of great service to your health. And it is not improbable, you might receive much benefit from the water of the Hot-Wells near Bristol. In August I hope to be at Bristol; and again in the latter end of September. My chaise and horses are at Bristol, which, you would oblige me much, if you would please to use as your own, (if you do not bring any with you,) during your stay there; for you should, if possible, ride out daily. My wife, who is at Newcastle, will be exceeding glad to wait upon you there. And if you choose to rest a few days, I should be happy if you would make use of the Orphan-House. You would be pleased with the Miss Dales, and they with you: You and they have drank into one Spirit. Miss Peggy is one of the holiest young women that I have any knowledge of: Indeed



I think both the sisters have no desire, but to glorify God with their body and with their spirit. You will be so kind as to let me know when you expect to be at Newcastle; and possibly I may meet you there. As you were providentially called to the place where you now are, I cannot doubt but you will be preserved. But you have need of much prayer and continual watching, or you may insensibly lose what God has given. I am jealous over you: I cannot but be interested in whatever concerns you. I know your tender spirit; your desire to please all for their good; your unwillingness to give pain. And even these amiable dispositions may prove a snare; for how easily may they be carried too far! If you find anything hurts you, or draws your soul from God, I conjure you, flee for your life! In that case, you must not stand upon ceremony; you must escape without delay. But I hope better things: I hope you are sent to Brisbane, not to receive hurt, but to do good; to grow in grace, to find a deeper communion than ever with Him that gave himself for you; and to fulfil the joy of,

My dear Lady,

Your most affectionate friend.

CCCXXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *March 3, 1769.*

To be incapable of sympathizing with the distressed is not a desirable state. Nor would one wish to extirpate either sorrow or any other of our natural passions. And yet it is both possible and highly desirable to attain the same experience with the Marquis de Renty, who, on occasion of his lady's illness, told those who inquired how he could bear it, "I cannot say but my nature is deeply affected with the apprehension of so great a loss. And yet I feel such a full acquiescence in the will of God, that, were it proper, I could dance and sing."

I have heard my mother say, "I have frequently been as fully assured that my father's spirit was with me, as if I had seen him with my eyes." But she did not explain herself any further. I have myself many times found on a sudden so lively an apprehension of a deceased friend, that I have sometimes turned about to look: At the same time I have felt an uncommon affection for them. But I never

had anything of this kind with regard to any but those that died in faith. In dreams, I have had exceeding lively conversations with them; and I doubt not but they were then very near.

It gives me pleasure to hear, that you did not neglect our own preaching, in order to attend any other. The hearing Mr. F. at other times, I do not know that any could blame; unless you found it unsettled your mind, or weakened your expectation of an entire deliverance from sin. And this, I apprehend, it did not.

You never "take up too much of my time." To converse with you, even in this imperfect way, is both agreeable and useful to me. I love your spirit, and it does me good. I trust, God will still give you that hunger and thirst after righteousness, till you are satisfied therewith. And who knows how soon?

I am, my dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXL.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDONDERRY, *April 29, 1769.*

AWHILE ago I was concerned at hearing from Edinburgh, that you were unwell; although I could not doubt, but it was ordered well by an unerring Providence, as a means of keeping you dead to all below, and of quickening your affections to things above. And indeed this is the rule whereby the inhabitants of a better world judge of good and evil. Whatever raises the mind to God is good; and in the same proportion as it does this. Whatever draws the heart from its centre is evil; and more or less so, as it has more or less of this effect. You have accordingly found pain, sickness, bodily weakness, to be real goods; as bringing you nearer and nearer to the fountain of all happiness and holiness. And yet, it is certain, nature shrinks from pain, and that without any blame. Only in the same moment that we say, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," the heart should add, like our great Pattern, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Lady Baird I did not see before I left London; and Lady K. B. I did not understand. She was exceedingly civil, and I think affectionate; but perfectly shut up; so that I knew



no more of her state of mind than if I had never seen her.

I am, my dear Lady,  
Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *February 17, 1770.*

To us it may seem, that uninterrupted health would be a greater help to us than pain or sickness. But herein we certainly are mistaken : We are not such good judges in our own cause. You may truly say, "Health I shall have, if health be best." But in this and all things, you may trust Him that loves you. Indeed, nervous disorders are, of all others, as one observes, enemies to the joy of faith. But the essence of it, that confidence in a loving, pardoning God, they can neither destroy nor impair. Nay, as they keep you dead to all below, they may forward you therein ; and they may increase your earnestness after that pure love which turns earth into paradise.

It will be by much pains and patience that you will keep one in high life steadfast in the plain, old way. I should wish you to converse with her as frequently as possible. Then, I trust, God will use you to keep alive the fire which He has kindled. I am in great hopes that chapel will be of use ; but it will not be easy to procure a converted Clergyman. A Schoolmaster will be more easily found ; although many here are frighted at the name of Scotland. A diligent master may manage twenty or perhaps thirty children. If one whom I lately saw is willing to come, I believe he will answer your design.

I have some thoughts of going to America ; but the way is not yet plain. I wait till Providence shall speak more clearly, on one side or the other. In April I hope to reach Inverness, and to take Edinburgh in my way back to England. But let us live to-day ! What a blessing may you receive now !

Now let your heart with love o'erflow,  
And all your life his glory show !

I am, my dear Lady,  
Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY, LONDON, *January 24, 1771.*

ALTHOUGH Mr. M'Nab\* is quite clear as to justification by faith, and is in general a sound and good Preacher, yet I fear he is not clear of blame in this. He is too warm and impatient of contradiction; otherwise he must be lost to all common sense, to preach against final perseverance in Scotland. From the first hour that I entered the kingdom, it was a sacred rule with me, never to preach on any controverted point,—at least not in a controversial way. Any one may see, that this is only to put a sword into our enemies' hands. It is the direct way to increase all their prejudices, and to make all our labours fruitless. You will shortly have a trial of another kind. Mr. De Courcy purposes to set out for Edinburgh in a few days. He was from a child a member of one of our societies in the south of Ireland. There he received remission of sins, and was for some time groaning for full redemption. But when he came to Dublin, the Philistines were upon him, and soon prevailed over him. Quickly he was convinced, that "there is no perfection;" and that "all things depend on absolute, unchangeable decrees." At first he was exceedingly warm upon these heads: Now he is far more calm. His natural temper, I think, is good: He is open, friendly, and generous. He has also a good understanding, and is not unacquainted with learning, though not deeply versed therein. He has no disagreeable person, a pleasing address, and is a lively, as well as a sensible, Preacher. Now, when you add to this, that he is quite new, and very young, you may judge how he will be admired and caressed! "Surely such a Preacher as this never was in Edinburgh before! Mr. Whitefield himself was not to compare with him! What an angel of a man!" Now, how will a raw, inexperienced youth be able to encounter this? If there be not the greatest of miracles to preserve him, will it not turn his brain? And may he not then do far more hurt than either Mr. W—— or Mr. T—— did? Will he not prevent your friend from "going on to perfection," or thinking of any such thing? Nay, may he not shake you also? He would; but that the God

\* The Preacher then stationed in the Edinburgh Circuit.—*EDIT.*



whom you serve is able to deliver you. At present, indeed, he is in an exceedingly loving spirit. But will that continue long? There will be danger on the one hand if it does; there will be danger on the other if it does not. It does not appear that any great change has been wrought in our neighbours by Mr. Wh——'s death. He had fixed the prejudice so deep, that even he himself was not able to remove it; yet our congregations have increased exceedingly, and the work of God increases on every side. I am glad you use more exercise. It is good for both body and soul. As soon as Mr. De Courcy is come, I shall be glad to hear how the prospect opens. You will then need a larger share of the wisdom from above; and I trust you will write with all openness to,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

*February 26, 1771.*

I CANNOT but think the chief reason of the little good done by our Preachers at Edinburgh, is the opposition which has been made by the Ministers of Edinburgh, as well as by the false brethren from England. These steeled the hearts of the people against all the good impressions which might otherwise have been made, so that the same Preachers by whom God has constantly wrought, not only in various parts of England, but likewise in the northern parts of Scotland, were in Edinburgh only not useless. They felt a damp upon their own spirits; they had not their usual liberty of speech; and the word they spoke seemed to rebound upon them, and not to sink into the hearts of the hearers. At my first coming I usually find something of this myself; but the second or third time of preaching, it is gone; and I feel, greater is He that is with us, than all the powers of earth and hell.

If any one could show you, by plain Scripture and reason, a more excellent way than that you have received, you certainly would do well to receive it; and, I trust, I should do the same. But I think it will not be easy for any one to show us, either that Christ did not die for all, or that he is not willing as well as able to cleanse from all sin, even in the present world. If your steady adherence to these great

truths be termed bigotry, yet you have no need to be ashamed. You are reproached for Christ's sake, and the Spirit of glory and of Christ shall rest upon you. Perhaps our Lord may use you to soften some of the harsh spirits, and to preserve Lady G——, or Mr. De Courcy, from being hurt by them. I hope to hear from you (on whom I can depend) a frequent account of what is done near you. After you have suffered awhile, may God stablish, strengthen, settle you!

I am, my dear Lady,  
Your very affectionate servant.

CCCXLIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY, LONDON, *February 8, 1772.*

I COMMEND you for meddling with points of controversy as little as possible. It is abundantly easier to lose our love in that rough field, than to find truth. This consideration has made me exceedingly thankful to God for giving me a respite from polemical labours. I am glad he has given to others both the power and the will to answer them that trouble me; so that I may not always be forced to hold my weapons in one hand, while I am building with the other. I rejoice, likewise, not only in the abilities, but in the temper, of Mr. Fletcher. He writes as he lives: I cannot say that I know such another Clergyman in England or Ireland. He is all fire; but it is the fire of love. His writings, like his constant conversation, breathe nothing else, to those who read him with an impartial eye. And although Mr. Shirley scruples not to charge him with using subtilty and metaphysical distinctions, yet he abundantly clears himself of this charge, in the "Second Check to Antinomianism." Such the last letters are styled, and with great propriety; for such they have really been. They have given a considerable check to those, who were everywhere making void the law through faith; setting "the righteousness of Christ" in opposition to the law of Christ, and teaching that "without holiness any man may see the Lord."

Notwithstanding both outward and inward trials, I trust you are still on the borders of perfect love. For the Lord is nigh!



See the Lord thy Keeper stand  
 Omnipotently near !  
 Lo ! he holds thee by thy hand,  
 And banishes thy fear !

You have no need of fear. Hope unto the end ! Are not all things possible to him that believeth ? Dare to believe ! Seize a blessing now ! The Lord increase your faith ! In this prayer I know you join with,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

NEWCASTLE, *May 3, 1777.*

THE new chapel which we are now building in London requires much of my attendance there, so that I cannot conveniently be absent more than two Sundays together. Accordingly, when I set out, I fixed Saturday, the 19th instant, for my return; and ordered notice to be given of my design to meet the classes the week following. I cannot therefore have the pleasure of seeing you now; which, if it could be, I should greatly desire. I love your spirit; I love your conversation; I love your correspondence; I have often received both profit and pleasure thereby. I frequently find a want of more light: But I want heat more than light. And you have frequently been an instrument of conveying this to my soul; of animating me to run the glorious race. I trust you find no decay in your own soul, but a still increasing vigour. Some time since, you enjoyed a measure of that great salvation, deliverance from inbred sin. Do you hold fast whereunto you had attained, and still press forward, to be filled with all the fulness of God? There is the prize before you! Look up, believe, and take all you want!

Wishing you the whole Gospel blessing,

I remain, my dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

I hear sister Gow is gone hence. Did she go in triumph, or only in peace?

CCCXLVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

DUBLIN, *July 4, 1787.*

OUR correspondence, I hope, will never be broken off, till one of us be removed into a better world. It is true, I have often wondered that you were not weary of so useless a correspondent: For I am very sensible the writing of letters is my brother's talent, rather than mine. Yet I really love to write to you, as I love to think of you. And sometimes it may please Him, who sends by whom He will send, to give you some assistance by me. And your letters have frequently been an encouragement and a comfort to me. Let them never, my dear friend, be intermitted, during the few days I have to stay below. After Miss Roe first, and then Miss Ritchie, had given me so particular an account of that branch of their experience, I examined, one by one, the members of the select society in London on that head. But I found very few, not above nine or ten, who had any conception of it. I think there are three or four in Dublin, who likewise speak clearly and scripturally of having had such a manifestation of the several Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity. Formerly I thought this was the experience of all those that were perfected in love; but I am now clearly convinced that it is not. Only a few of these are favoured with it. It was indeed a wonderful instance of divine mercy, that, at a time when you were so encumbered with the affairs of this world, you should have so much larger a taste of the powers of the world to come. It reminds me of brother Laurence's words: "When I was charged with the affairs of the convent at Burgundy, I did not understand them; and yet, I know not how, all was well done!" I doubt not you will find the very same experience, in everything which God calls you to: His word will be more and more eminently fulfilled, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths." I rejoice to be,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.



CCCXLVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *August 8, 1788.*

IT is certain, many persons both in Scotland and England would be well pleased to have the same Preachers always. But we cannot forsake the plan of acting which we have followed from the beginning. For fifty years God has been pleased to bless the itinerant plan; the last year most of all: It must not be altered, till I am removed; and I hope will remain till our Lord comes to reign upon earth.

I do not know (unless it unfits us for the duties of life) that we can have too great a sensibility of human pain. Methinks I should be afraid of losing any degree of this sensibility. I had a son-in-law (now in Abraham's bosom) who quitted his profession, that of a Surgeon, for that very reason; because he said it made him less sensible of human pain. And I have known exceeding few persons who have carried this tenderness of spirit to excess. I recollect but one who was constrained to leave off, in a great measure, visiting the sick, because he could not see any one in pain without fainting away. Mr. Charles Perronet was the first person I was acquainted with who was favoured with the same experience as the Marquis de Renty, with regard to the ever-blessed Trinity; Miss Ritchie was the second; Miss Roe (now Mrs. Rogers) the third. I have as yet found but a few instances; so that this is not, as I was at first apt to suppose, the common privilege of all that are "perfect in love."

Pardon me, my dear friend, for my heart is tenderly concerned for you, if I mention one fear I have concerning you, lest, on conversing with some, you should be in any degree warped from Christian simplicity. O do not wish to hide that you are a Methodist! Surely it is best to appear just what you are. I believe you will receive this as a proof of the sincerity with which I am,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

CCCXLVIII.—*To Mrs. Crosby.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

June 14, 1757.

I WAS concerned at not hearing from you for so long a time, whereas I would not willingly pass a fortnight without it. Whenever you have leisure, write; whether any one else does or not. I shall be here near three weeks, and then at York. It comforts me to hear that your love does not decrease: I want it to increase daily. Is there not height and depth in Him with whom you have to do, for your love to rise infinitely higher, and to sink infinitely deeper, into Him than ever it has done yet? Are you fully employed for Him; and yet so as to have some time daily for reading and other private exercises? If you should grow cold, it would afflict me much. Rather let me always rejoice over you. As for me, I seem only to be just beginning to aim feebly at God; though I have found more liberty in the respects you mention lately, than of a long season. Dear Sally, never forget to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXLIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, February 14, 1761.

MISS ——— gave me yours on Wednesday night. Hitherto, I think you have not gone too far. You could not well do less. I apprehend all you can do more is, when you meet again, to tell them simply, "You lay me under a great difficulty. The Methodists do not allow of women Preachers: Neither do I take upon me any such character. But I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart." This will, in a great measure, obviate the grand objection, and prepare for J. Hampson's coming. I do not see that you have broken any law. Go on calmly and steadily. If you have time, you may read to them the Notes on any chapter before you speak a few words; or one of the most awakening sermons, as other women have done long ago.

The work of God goes on mightily here, both in conviction and conversion. This morning I have spoken with four or five who seem to have been set at liberty within this month. I believe, within five weeks, six in one class have received



remission of sins, and five in one band received a second blessing. Peace be with you all!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCL.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

KINGSWOOD, *October 5, 1765.*

YOU oblige me much by speaking so freely. What an admirable teacher is experience! You have great reason to praise God for what He has taught you hereby, and to expect that he will teach you all things. But, whatever you find now, beware you do not deny what you had once received: I do not say, "a divine assurance that you should never sin, or sustain any spiritual loss." I know not that ever you received this. But you certainly were saved from sin; and that as clearly, and in as high a degree, as ever Sally Ryan was. And if you have sustained any loss in this, believe, and be made whole.

I never doubted but ——— would recover her strength, though she has long walked in a thorny way.

A general temptation now is, the denying what God had wrought. Guard all whom you converse with from this; and from fancying great grace can be preserved without great watchfulness and self-denial.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

SLIGO, *May 2, 1766.*

IT is a long time since I heard either of you, or from you. I hope you think of me oftener than you write to me. Let us but continue in prayer,

And mountains rise, and oceans roll,  
To sever us, in vain.

I frequently find profit in thinking of you, and should be glad if we had more opportunities of conversing together. If a contrary thought arises, take knowledge from whom it comes: You may judge by the fruit of it; for it weakens your hands, and slackens you from being instant in prayer. I am inclined to think I found the effect of your prayer at my very entrance into this kingdom. And here, especially,

we have need of every help; for snares are on every side. Who would not, if it could be done with a clear conscience, run out of the world; wherein the very gifts of God, the work of God, yea, his grace itself, in some sense, are all the occasion of temptation?

I hope your little family remains in peace and love, and that your own soul prospers. I doubt only whether you are so useful as you might be. But herein look to the anointing which you have of God, being willing to follow wherever he leads, and it shall teach you of all things.

There is an amazing increase of the work of God within these few months in the north of Ireland. And no wonder; for the five Preachers who have laboured there, are all men devoted to God; men of a single eye, whose whole heart is in the work, and who

Constantly trample on pleasure and pain.

Do they gain ground in London? I am afraid [Christian] perfection should be forgotten. Encourage Richard Blackwell and Mr. Colley to speak plainly, and to press believers to the constant pursuit, and earnest expectation, of it. A general faintness, in this respect, is fallen upon this whole kingdom. Sometimes I seem almost weary of striving against the stream both of Preachers and people. See that you all strengthen the hands of,

My dear sisters,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CHESTER, *March 18, 1769.*

THE westerly winds detain me here, I care not how long: Good is the will of the Lord. When I am in Ireland, you have only to direct to Dublin, and the letter will find me.

I advise you, as I did Grace Walton formerly, 1. Pray in private or public, as much as you can. 2. Even in public, you may properly enough intermix short exhortations with prayer; but keep as far from what is called preaching as you can: Therefore never take a text; never speak in a continued discourse, without some break, above four or five minutes. Tell the people, "We shall have another prayer-meeting at such a time and place." If Hannah Harrison



had followed these few directions, she might have been as useful now as ever.

As soon as you have time, write more particularly and circumstantially; and let S. Bosanquet do the same. There is now no hinderance in the way; nothing to hinder your speaking as freely as you please to,

Dear Sally,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDONDERRY, *June 13, 1771.*

I THINK the strength of the cause rests there; on your having an extraordinary call. So I am persuaded has every one of our lay Preachers: Otherwise, I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me, that the whole work of God termed Methodism is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore, I do not wonder if several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was, "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation." Yet, in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions; at Corinth in particular.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NEWCASTLE, *May 11.*

NEITHER must the witness supersede the fruit, nor the fruit the witness, of the Spirit. Let other men talk this way, or that, the word of the Lord shall stand.

I believe your spending a little time at P. may be of use. Probably it will remove their prejudice against [Christian] perfection. But if Mr. T. has a mind to marry our friend, I think neither you nor I shall forward it. She is far happier, since she is free, so to abide.

Do you never find any tendency to pride? Do you find nothing like anger? Is your mind never ruffled; put out of tune? Do you never feel any useless desire? any desire of pleasure, of ease, of approbation, or increase of fortune? Do you find no stubbornness, sloth, or self-will? no unbelief?

Certainly the more freely you speak to me, the better.

I found what you said in your last, helpful. It is of great use to have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance, even of the things which we know already. I speak of myself very little to any one, were it only for fear of hurting them. I have found exceeding few that could bear it. So I am constrained to repress my natural openness. I find scarcely any temptation from anything in the world: My danger is from persons.

O for a heart to praise my God,  
A heart from sin set free !

Dear Sally, adieu !

CCCLV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 7, 1784.*

To those who know the world, hardly anything that is wrong or foolish in it appears strange. Otherwise, we should have thought it strange, that so good a woman should take such a step. One would not have expected her to marry at all; at least none but an eminent Christian. I am more and more inclined to think, that there are none living so established in grace, but that they may possibly fall.

The case of Hetty Rogers was widely different. I know more of it, beginning, middle, and ending, than most people in England. And I am clear, that, first to last, she acted in all good conscience toward God and man. As things stood, it was not a sin for her to marry, but a duty; and to marry when she did. And never was any one woman so owned of God in Dublin as she has been already.

T. Briscoe, I am persuaded, will do some good. But his wife will do much more, if you encourage her, and strengthen her hands. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLVI.—*To Miss A——.*

DEAR MISS A——,

LONDON, *August 21, 1766.*

YOUR letters will always be agreeable to me; and the more largely and freely you write, the better. I am deeply



concerned for your happiness; and a measure of happiness you may enjoy, as long as you feel any love in your heart to God, though it be but in a small degree. Be thankful for what you have; and in peace and love wait for the whole promise. God has not only promised, but confirmed that promise by an oath, that, "being delivered from all your enemies, you shall serve Him in righteousness and holiness all the days of your life." By what art can this be made to mean the last day, or the last moment, of your life? Look for it now! To-day hear His voice. Do not reason against God, against yourself. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

I advise you, 1. Get all the opportunities you can of hearing the preaching, and conversing with the children of God. 2. Avoid disputing with your might. 3. Spend some time every day in private prayer, in meditation, and in reading the Notes on the New Testament, the first volume of Sermons, and the Appeals. 4. When you may be free, use it rather. Peace be with your spirit.

I am, &c.

CCCLVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR MISS A——,

LONDON, *January 15, 1767.*

TIME changes thought, especially in youth, and amidst variety of company. So that it would be nothing strange, if you should forget those for whom you once had a regard; but you need not. Every reasonable affection is intended to last to eternity. And the true affection for our friends is, as Milton says,

A scale

Whereby to heavenly love thou mayest ascend.

For the present, you seem to be in your place, the place which the wisdom of God has assigned you; and the crosses you now meet with, as they are not of your own choosing, will surely work together for good. Your want of more public opportunities may, in a good measure, be supplied by private exercises. Let no day pass without more or less private prayer, reading, and meditation. And does not God see in secret? Does he not now read your heart, and see if it pants for His pure love? If so, are not all

things ready? May you not now find what you never did before? Ask Him that loves you; whose nature and whose name is Love!

I am, &c.

CCCLVIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

LONDONDERRY, *April 20, 1767.*

CERTAINLY the point we should always have in view is, What is best for eternity? And I believe it would be best for you to change your condition, if a proper person offers. But I should scruple doing this without a parent's consent. If your mother is willing, I see no objection to your marrying one that fears God, and is seeking salvation through Christ. Such a one is not an unbeliever, in the sense wherein that word is taken in 2 Cor. vi. 14.

I love to think of you and hear from you. I want you to be always holy and happy. And why not? You have a strong Helper; and shall not His strength be made perfect in your weakness? Why then should you stop short of His whole promise?—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Hold Him to his word, and let not your hope be weakened by the subtle reasonings of men. Still let the language of your heart be,

"Big with earnest expectation,  
Let me sit—at thy feet,  
Longing for salvation!"

As long as you are in this spirit you will not forget

Yours, &c.

CCCLIX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

NEWCASTLE, *August 8, 1767.*

WE have many instances of this: Persons cold and dull, and scarce knowing how to believe their own words, have asserted, as they could, the truths of the Gospel, and enforced them upon others, and at that very time God has caused light and love to spring up in their own hearts. Therefore, however you feel it in your own breast, speak as well as you can for God. Many times you will see some fruit upon others: If not, you shall have a recompense in your own bosom. In one sense, you do believe, that God is both able and willing to cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and to do it now; but not in that sense, wherein



all things are possible to him that believeth. But what, if He should give you this faith also? yea, while you have this paper in your hand! To-day hear His voice! O listen! and heaven springs up in your heart.

Among the hearers of Mr. Madan and Mr. Romaine (much more among those of Mr. Whitefield) there are many gracious souls, and some who have deep experience of the ways of God. Yet, the hearing them would not profit you: It would be apt to lead you into unprofitable reasonings, which would probably end in your giving up all hope of a full salvation from sin in this life. Therefore, I advise you, check all curiosity of this kind, and keep quite out of the way of danger.

Hannah Harrison is a blessed woman. I am glad you had an opportunity of conversing with her. And why should not you enjoy the same blessing? The Lord is at hand.

I am, &c.

CCCLX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

October 14, 1767.

At length I get a little time (after having been some weeks almost in a perpetual motion) to write a few lines to one I sincerely love. Grow in grace every hour; the more the better. Use now all the grace you have; this is certainly right; but also now expect all the grace you want! This is the secret of heart religion; at the present moment to work, and to believe. Here is Christ your Lord; the lover of your soul. Give yourself up to Him without delay; and, as you can, without reserve. And simply tell Him all you desire, and all you want. What situation is it that hurries you? Is it not determined whether you shall change your condition or no? Be it either way, God sitteth on the throne, and ruleth all things well.

I am, &c.

CCCLXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, November 2, 1767.

IN the way of life you are entering upon, you will have need of great resolution and steadiness. It will be your wisdom to set out with two rules, and invariably adhere to them. 1. "I will do everything I can to oblige you, except what I cannot do with a clear conscience." 2. "I will

refrain from everything I can, that would displease you, except what I cannot refrain from with a clear conscience." Keep to this, on both sides, from the hour you meet, and your meeting will be a blessing. You will do well likewise, constantly to pray with, as well as for, one another.

Now, Nancy, put on, by the grace of God, the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left! Beware of foolish desires! Beware of inordinate affections! Beware of worldly cares! But, above all, I think, you should beware of wasting time in what is called innocent trifling. And watch against unprofitable conversation, particularly between yourselves. Then your union may be (as it ought) a type of the union between Christ and his church; and you may, in the end, present each other before Him, holy and unblamable at His coming.

I am, &c.

CCCLXII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 20, 1767.*

YOUR letter was exceeding acceptable to me; and the more so, because I was almost afraid you had forgotten me. I am glad to find you have not forgotten the blessing which God gave you when at Newcastle, and the resolutions which you formed there; and I trust you never will, till God gives you the full enjoyment of the glorious liberty which you then tasted. Do not imagine that this is afar off; or, that you must do and suffer a great deal before you attain it;—I dare not affirm that. Has not Christ done and suffered enough for you? The purchase is made; the price is paid already; you have only to believe, and enter into rest; to take the purchased possession; all is ready; and to-day is the day of salvation! Why should you not now be all love? all devoted to Him that loves you? Is it not the language of your heart?—

"Henceforth may no profane delight  
Divide this consecrated soul;  
Possess it Thou, who hast the right,  
As Lord and Master of the whole."

You are to obey your parent in the Lord only, not in opposition to Him. If, therefore, any means should offer whereby you might enjoy that full liberty of conscience which every creature has a right to, I judge it would be not



only lawful, but your bounden duty, to accept of such an offer.

Mrs. Wilberforce's charity is a good omen: What is it God will not do if we can trust Him? Only cast your whole care upon Him, and He will do all things well: He will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good. O let Him have all your heart!

I am, dear sister, &c.

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CCCLXIII.—*To Lady M——.*

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *August 17, 1764.*

SINCE I had the pleasure of yours, I have hardly had an hour that I could call my own; otherwise I should not have delayed writing so long, as I have a very tender regard for you, and an earnest desire that you should be altogether a Christian. I cannot be content with your being ever so harmless or regular in your behaviour, or even exemplary in all externals: Nay, more than all this you have received already; for you have the fear of God. But shall you stop here? God forbid. This is only the beginning of wisdom. You are not to end here: Fear shall ripen into love. You shall know (perhaps very soon) that love of God which passeth knowledge. You shall witness the kingdom of God within you; even righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

It is no small instance of the goodness of God towards you, that you are conscious of your want; your want of living faith. And His goodness herein is more remarkable, because almost all your neighbours would set you down for a right good believer. O beware of those flatterers! Hold fast the conviction which God hath given you! Faith, living, conquering, loving faith, is undoubtedly the thing you want. And of this you have frequently a taste to encourage you in pressing forward: Such is the tender mercy of Him that loves you; such His desire that you should receive all His precious promises! Do not think they are afar off. Do not imagine you must stay long (years or months) before you receive them. Do not put them off a day, an hour! Why not now? Why should you not look up this instant, and see, as it were, Jesus

Christ set forth, evidently set forth, crucified before your eyes? O hear his voice! "Daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee!" "Say not in thy heart, Who shall go up into heaven, or who shall go down into the deep?" No; "the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart." "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief."

Joy in the Holy Ghost is a precious gift of God, but yet tenderness of conscience is still greater; and all this is for you. Just ready,—

The speechless awe which dares not move,  
And all the silent heaven of love.

I am no great friend to solitary Christianity; nevertheless, in so peculiar a case as yours, I think an exception may be admitted. It does seem most expedient for you to retire out of the city, at least for a season, till God has increased your strength. For the company of those who know not God, who are strangers to the religion of the heart, especially if they are sensible, agreeable people, might quite damp the grace of God in your soul.

You cannot oblige me more than by fully opening your mind to me: There is no danger of your tiring me. I do not often write such long letters; but when I write to you, I am full of matter. I seem to see you just before me, a poor, feeble, helpless creature, but just upon the point of salvation; upright of heart, (in a measure,) full of real desires for God, and emerging into light. The Lord take you wholly! So prays,

My dear Lady,  
Your affectionate servant.

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CCCLXIV.—*To Miss Pywell.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

KILKENNY, *April 23, 1771.*

I HARDLY knew whether you were dead or alive, having not heard from you for so long a season. Yesterday I received yours of March 28th, and am glad to hear you are not moved from your steadfastness. Certainly it is not the will of our Lord that you should: His gifts are without repentance. Do you find no decay in faith? Do you as clearly as ever see Him who is invisible? Is your hope as



lively as at first? Do you still taste of the powers of the world to come? And can you say, in as strong a sense as ever,

“I nothing want beneath, above,  
Happy in a Saviour’s love?”

Do you feel no anger at any time? no pride? no will but what is subordinate to the will of God? And have you the witness in yourself that all your ways please Him? Then expect to see greater things than these, for there is no end of His goodness; and do not forget,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 22, 1772.*

You have given me clear and satisfactory answers to the questions which I proposed, and I rejoice over you for the grace of God which is in you. May He increase it more and more! How should I rejoice to see you, and to talk with you more particularly on these subjects! I hope that may be in the spring; but before then you can tell me whether you are always sensible of the presence of God. Is that sense never interrupted by company, or by hurry of business? Is your heart lifted up to God, whatever your hands are employed in? Do you rejoice evermore? Are you always happy? always more or less enjoying God? Do you never fret; never so grieve at anything as to interrupt your happiness? Do you never find lowness of spirits? Are you enabled in everything to give thanks?

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 19, 1773.*

It is plain the wisdom and power of God order all things well: He has brought you to the right place, and you have no need to be careful for anything, but only in everything to make your requests known unto Him with thanksgiving. I am glad to hear that Mrs. K—y’s love does not grow cold. One part of your work is to stir up all who have believed, to go on to perfection, and every moment to

expect the full salvation which is received by simple faith. I am persuaded your being where you are will be for good. Speak to all about you, and spare not. God will bear witness to his own truth.

I am, my dear sister,  
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 29, 1774.*

I AM glad you parted from our honest friend C—ne upon so good terms. All the trials you suffered while you were there, are now passed away like a dream. So are all the afflictions we endured yesterday; but they are noted in God's book, and the happy fruit of them may remain when heaven and earth are passed away. Trials you are likewise to expect where you are now; for you are still in the body, and wrestle, if not with flesh and blood, yet with "principalities, and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with wicked spirits in high places;" and it is good for you that every grain of your faith should be tried; afterwards you shall come forth as gold. See that you never be weary or faint in your mind; account all these things for your profit, that you may be a full partaker of His holiness, and

Brighter in all His image shine.

I am, my dear sister,  
Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXVIII.—*To the Rev. Mr. F——.*

DEAR SIR,

ST. IVES, *September 15, 1762.*

*Spectatum satis, ac donatum jam rude quæris,  
Mæcenas, iterum antiquo me includere ludo?  
Non eadem est ætas, non mens.\**

I have entirely lost my taste for controversy. I have lost my readiness in disputing; and I take this to be a provi-

\* This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Francis:—

"Wherefore, Mæcenas, would you thus engage  
Your bard, dismiss'd with honour from the stage,  
Again to venture in the lists of fame,  
His youth, his genius, now no more the same?"—*EDIT.*



dential discharge from it. All I can now do with a clear conscience is, not to enter into a formal controversy about the new birth, or justification by faith, any more than Christian perfection, but simply to declare my judgment; and to explain myself as clearly as I can upon any difficulty that may arise concerning it.

So far I can go with you, but no farther. I still say, and without any self-contradiction, I know no persons living who are so deeply conscious of their needing Christ both as Prophet, Priest, and King, as those who believe themselves, and whom I believe, to be cleansed from all sin; I mean, from all pride, anger, evil desire, idolatry, and unbelief. These very persons feel more than ever their own ignorance, littleness of grace, coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their Divine Pattern; are more convinced of the insufficiency of all they are, have, or do, to bear the eye of God without a Mediator; are more penetrated with the sense of the want of Him than ever they were before.

If Mr. M— or you say, “that coming short is sin,” be it so; I contend not. But still I say, “These are they whom I believe to be scripturally perfect. And yet these never felt their want of Christ so deeply and strongly as they do now.” If in saying this I have “fully given up the point,” what would you have more? Is it not enough that I leave you to “boast your superior power against the little, weak shifts of baffled error?” “Canst thou not be content,” as the Quaker said, “to lay J. W. on his back, but thou must tread his guts out?”

Here are persons exceeding holy and happy; rejoicing evermore, praying always, and in everything giving thanks; feeling the love of God and man every moment; feeling no pride, or other evil temper. If these are not perfect, that scriptural word has no meaning. Stop! you must not cavil at that word: You are not wiser than the Holy Ghost. But if you are not, see that you teach perfection too. “But are they not sinners?” Explain the term one way, and I say, Yes; another, and I say, No. “Are they cleansed from all sin?” I believe they are; meaning from all sinful tempers. “But have they then need of Christ?” I believe they have, in the sense, and for the reasons above

mentioned. Now, be this true or false, it is no contradiction; it is consistent with itself; and, I think, consistent with right reason, and the whole oracles of God.

O let you and I go on to perfection! God grant we may so run as to attain!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

CCCLXIX.—*To the Rev. Mr. ———.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

1775.

I HAVE obligations to you on many accounts, from the time I first saw you; particularly for the kind concern you showed when I was ill at Tanderagee. These have increased upon me every time that I have since had the pleasure of waiting upon you. Permit me, Sir, to speak without reserve. Esteem was added to my affectionate regard when I saw the uncommon pains you took with the flock committed to your care; as also, when I observed the remarkably serious manner wherein you read prayers in your family. Many years have passed since that time; many more than I am likely to see under the sun. But before I go hence, I would fain give you one instance of my sincere regard; the rather, because I can scarce expect to see you again till we meet in a better world. But it is difficult for me to do it, as I feel myself inferior to you in so many respects. Yet permit me to ask a strange question: Is your soul as much alive to God as it was once? Have you not suffered loss from your relations or acquaintance, that are sensible and agreeable men, but not encumbered with religion? Some of them, perhaps, as free from the very form, as from the power, of it. O Sir, if you lose any of the things which you have wrought, who can make you amends for that loss? If you do not receive a full reward, what equivalent can you gain? I was pained, even at your hospitable table, in the midst of those I loved so well. We did not begin and close the meal in the same manner you did ten years ago! You was then, contrary to almost universal custom, unfashionably serious in asking a blessing and returning thanks. I know many would blame you for it: But surely the Lord said,



“Servant of God, well done!” Wishing you and your lovely family every blessing,

I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate brother and servant.

CCCLXX.—*To Lady* —.

MY DEAR LADY,

LONDON, *June* 19, 1771.

MANY years since I saw that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way how to attain this; namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, “We are saved from sin, we are made holy, by faith.” This I testified in private, in public, in print; and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. I have continued to declare this for above thirty years; and God hath continued to confirm the word of his grace. But during this time well nigh all the religious world hath set themselves in array against me, and, among the rest, many of my own children, following the example of one of my eldest sons, Mr. W. Their general cry has been, “He is unsound in the faith; he preaches another Gospel!” I answer, Whether it be the same which they preach or not, it is the same which I have preached for above thirty years. This may easily appear from what I have published during that whole term. I instance only in three sermons: That on Salvation by Faith, printed in the year 1738; that on the Lord our Righteousness, printed a few years since; and that on Mr. Whitefield’s funeral, printed only some months ago. But it is said, “O but you printed ten lines in August last, which contradict all your other writings!” Be not so sure of this. It is probable, at least, that I understand my own meaning as well as you do; and that meaning I have yet again declared in the sermon last referred to. By that interpret those ten lines, and you will understand them better: Although I should think that any one might see, even without this help, that the lines in question do not refer to the condition of obtaining, but of continuing in, the favour of God. But whether the sentiment contained in those

lines be right or wrong, and whether it be well or ill expressed, the Gospel which I now preach, God does still confirm by new witnesses in every place; perhaps never so much in this kingdom as within these last three months. Now, I argue from glaring, undeniable fact; God cannot bear witness to a lie. The Gospel therefore which he confirms, must be true in substance. There may be opinions maintained at the same time which are not exactly true; and who can be secure from these? Perhaps I thought myself so once: When I was much younger than I am now, I thought myself almost infallible; but, I bless God, I know myself better now.

To be short: Such as I am, I love you well. You have one of the first places in my esteem and affection. And you once had some regard for me. But it cannot continue, if it depends upon my seeing with your eyes, or on my being in no mistake. What, if I was in as many as Mr. Law himself? If you were, I should love you still, provided your heart was still right with God. My dear friend, you seem not to have well learned yet the meaning of those words, which I desire to have continually written on my heart, "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

I am, my dear Lady,  
Your affectionate.

CCCLXXI.—*To Miss Jane Hilton, afterwards Mrs. Barton, of Beverley.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YORK, July 22, 1766.

SEE that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free. You need never more be entangled either with pride, or anger, or desire of any creature. Christ is yours; all is yours. O be all His, and admit no rival into your heart! But above all, beware of unbelief. Beware of the reasoning devil. In every cloud, or shadow of doubt, look up; and help, while yet you ask, is given. All you want is ready! Only believe!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

I hope your health is better.

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CCCLXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YORK, *June 25, 1768.*

YOUR conversation gave me much satisfaction. I rejoiced to find that you were sensible of your loss, and determined, by the grace of God, never to rest till you had recovered all which you once enjoyed. Nay, and you will recover it with increase; you will find a deeper communion with God, and a more full self-devotion than ever. An earnest of this was given you the other day. Hold that fast, and continually expect the rest. How did you find yourself on Thursday morning? Had you not again a taste of the great salvation? And how have you been since? Are you still happy in God; and resolved not to rest, till you are all devoted to Him? See that you do not fall again into evil reasonings! Be simple before God. Continue instant in prayer; and watch against whatever you know, by experience, to be a weight upon your mind. How soon may you then have your whole desire! How soon may your heart be all love! Why not now? All things are ready: Only believe! And speak freely to

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

GUISELEY, *July 1, 1768.*

YOU must now expect temptations. Perhaps they will assault you on every side; for all the powers of hell are enraged at you, and will use every art to move you from your steadfastness. But He that is for you is greater than all that are against you: Only beware of evil reasoning! Hang simply on Him that loves you, and whom you love; just as a little helpless child. Christ is yours, all yours: That is enough. Lean your whole soul upon Him! Do you find a witness in yourself, that He has cleansed your heart? Do you feel this always? And have you a constant sense of the loving presence of God? You never need lose anything that God has given, so you keep close to Him. Be little and mean in your own eyes, glorying only in the Lord. And do not cease to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

You may direct to me at Epworth, near Thorne, Yorkshire.

It is a pity but you should now read the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," (I suppose you may get it at Hull,) and the First Epistle of St. John.

CCCLXXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

EPWORTH, *July 13, 1768.*

COMING here this afternoon, I found your welcome letter. I would have you write as often as you can. For you have need of every possible help; inasmuch as your grace is as yet young and tender, and all the powers of darkness are at work to move you from your steadfastness. But it is enough that Christ is yours: And He is wiser and stronger than all the powers of hell. Hang upon Him, and you are safe: Lean on Him with the whole weight of your soul. Do you find now as clear an evidence of the invisible as of the visible world? And are your thoughts continually fixed on the God of your salvation? Do you pray without ceasing? Does He preserve you even in your dreams? Hold fast what you have, and look for more: For there is no end of his goodness.

Mr. Robertshaw is to stay with you another year; and doubt not, the Lord will stay with you for ever. Think always of Him; and think sometimes of

Your affectionate brother.

To-morrow I go hence: But I expect to be here again next week, and to stay here till Monday se'nnight.

CCCLXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 20, 1768.*

I WRITE often, because I know you are yet weak and tender, and in need of every help. I am not sorry that you have trials: They are intended to show you your own helplessness; and to give you a fuller confidence in Him who has all power in heaven and earth. You have reason to cast all your care upon Him; for He has dealt bountifully with you. When any trial comes, see that you do not look to the thing itself; but immediately look unto Jesus. Reason not upon it, but believe. See the hand of God in Shimei's tongue. If you want advice in any point, write to me without delay. And, mean time, stay your whole soul upon Him who will never leave you nor forsake you. Tell Him simply all you fear, all you feel, all you want.



Pour out your soul into His bosom. Do you feel no pride, no anger, no desire? You will feel temptations to all: And the old deceiver will tell you again and again, "That is pride, that is anger!" But regard him not. And cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Your affectionate brother.

I am to spend a month or two in and near Bristol.

CCCLXXVI.—*To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *September 30, 1768.*

You, as it were, ask my advice. But I know nothing of the matter: You should have spoken to me when I saw you. Is the person a believer? Is he a Methodist? Is he a member of our society? Is he clear with regard to the doctrine of perfection? Is he athirst for it? If he fails in any of these particulars, I fear he would be a hindrance to you, rather than a help. Was not inordinate affection for him one cause of your losing the pure love of God before? If it was, you have a great reason to be afraid lest it should again rob you of that pearl. Has it not already? Have you all the life you had two months ago? Is your soul still all love? Speak freely to

Your affectionate brother

CCCLXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *October 8, 1768.*

You need never be afraid "of wearying my patience," unless it be by your silence. There is no danger of your writing too often. I can easily believe, the description you give is just: Therefore, there are only two particulars remaining: First, Have you both the consent of your parents? Without this, there is seldom a blessing. Secondly, Is he able to keep you? I mean, in such a manner as you have lived hitherto. Otherwise, remember! "When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window."

Do you find as much as ever of the spirit of prayer, and of continual watchfulness? Are you always sensible of the presence of God? in the greatest hurry of business? Have you power over wandering thoughts?

Your affectionate brother,

CCCLXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *November 26, 1768.*

THERE seems to have been a particular providence in Hannah Harrison's coming to Beverley, especially at that very time when a peace-maker was so much wanting: And it was a pledge that God will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.

The words of our Lord himself show us, what we are to expect from "those of our own household." But all this, likewise, shall be for good. "It is given to you to suffer" for Him: And all will turn to your profit, that you may be more largely a partaker of his holiness.

Do you feel, when you are tried in a tender point, no temper contrary to love? Grief there may be: But is there no resentment or anger? Do you feel invariable calmness of spirit? Do you perceive nothing but pity and tender good-will, both at the time and afterwards?

Write to me of the trials you meet with. You may always direct to London, and the letter will come safe. Expect more faith and love daily.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *March 1, 1769.*

I REJOICE that I have confidence in you in all things. I believe you do not willingly lose any opportunity of speaking for a good Master. I apprehend you should particularly encourage the believers to give up all to God; and to expect the power whereby they will be enabled so to do, every day, and every moment. I hope none of your Preachers speak against this; but rather press all the people forward.

Do you now feel anything like anger, or pride, or self-will, or any remains of the carnal mind? Was your second deliverance wrought while I was at Beverley? at the time of the sermon, or after it? You did not tell me, in what manner you found the change; and whether it has continued without any intermission from that moment. Certainly there never need be any decay: There never will, if you continue watching unto prayer. Continue to pray for

Your affectionate brother.



CCCLXXX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LISBURN, *April 9, 1769.*

I THANK brother Barton for his letter. Both of you have now more need than ever continually to watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. There will be a great danger of so cleaving to each other, as to forget God; or of being so taken up with a creature, as to abate your hunger and thirst after righteousness. There will be a danger likewise of whiling away time; of not improving it to the uttermost; of spending more of it than needs, in good sort of *talk* with each other, which yet does not quicken your souls. If you should once get into a habit of this, it will be exceeding hard to break it off. Therefore you should now attend to every step you take, that you may begin as you hope to hold on to the end. And beware you are not entangled with worldly care, any more than worldly desire. Be careful for nothing; but in everything make your request known to God, with thanksgiving.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 9, 1769.*

NOW I understand you well; but I did not understand you before: I thought you meant, that you had not now the love that you had once. I am glad to find that I was mistaken; and that you still retain that precious gift of God. Undoubtedly, you may retain it always; yea, and with a continual increase. You may have a deeper and deeper fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. You may have more and more of the mind which was in him, and be more fully renewed in His likeness. You should send me word, from time to time, what your present experience and your present trials are. Peace be with your spirits!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, *November 1, 1769.*

HAVE you been tried with bodily weakness, or with outward afflictions? If with the latter, have you found a

deliverance from them? It is certain, in every temptation He will make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. When you are tempted, it is an unspeakable blessing that there is nothing in your heart which joins with the temptation. And there never need be more: The enemy is thrust out, and cannot re-enter, if you continue to watch and pray. Continue likewise to be useful in your generation: As you have time, do good to all men. Snatch all the opportunities you can of speaking a word to any of your neighbours. Comfort the afflicted; support the weak; exhort the believers to go on unto perfection. Never be weary in well-doing: In due time you shall reap, if you faint not.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *December 24, 1769.*

SOME of the trials which you must frequently have are of a delicate nature. You will need much of the wisdom from above, or you would suffer loss under them. Those who are very near to you, were (and probably are still) prejudiced against William Fallowfield beyond all sense and reason. And how extremely difficult it is for you, not to drink in a *little* of their spirit! Only, what is ill-will in them, may in you be a simple error of judgment. Yet there is danger lest it should weaken your soul, and insensibly lead you to some wrong temper.

I believe you may speak without reserve to brother Howard. He is a cool, thinking man. But does he preach Christian perfection clearly and explicitly? Which of your other Preachers does?

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, TEWKESBURY, *March 15, 1770.*

I REJOICE to hear that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and the more, because, although many taste of that heavenly gift, deliverance from inbred sin, yet so few, so exceeding few, retain it one year; hardly one in ten; nay, one in thirty. Many hundreds in London were made partakers of it, within



sixteen or eighteen months: But I doubt whether twenty of them are now as holy and as happy as they were. And hence, others had doubted whether God *intended that salvation* to be enjoyed long. That many *have* it for a season, that they allow; but are not satisfied that any *retain* it always. Shall not you, for one? You will, if you watch and pray, and continue hanging upon Him. Then you will always give matter of rejoicing to

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

May 8, 1770.

Two things are certain: The one, that it is possible to lose even the pure love of God; the other, that it is not necessary, it is not unavoidable; it may be lost, but it may be kept. Accordingly, we have some, in every part of the kingdom, who have never been moved from their steadfastness. And from this moment you need never be moved: His grace is sufficient for you. But you must continue to grow, if you continue to stand; for no one can stand still. And is it not your Lord's will concerning you, that you should daily receive a fresh increase of love? And see that you labour so much the more, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to confirm the wavering, and recover them that are out of the way. In June I hope to see you. Peace be with your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCLXXXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

NORWICH, November 5, 1770.

FOR many years I had a kind of scruple with regard to praying for temporal things. But three or four years ago I was thoroughly persuaded that scruple was unnecessary. Being then straitened much, I made it matter of prayer; and I had an immediate answer. It is true, we can only ask outward blessings with reserve: "If this is best; if it be thy will:" And in this manner we may certainly plead the promise,—“All these things shall be added unto you.”

I hope the little debates which were some time since in the society at Beverley are at an end; and that you all now continue in love, and bear one another's burdens. You

had, for a long time, a hard part to act between the contending parties : But as God preserved you from anger and from a party-spirit, you suffered no loss thereby. Beware of suffering loss from another quarter, from worldly care. This is a dangerous enemy. You had need steadily to cast your care on Him that careth for you. To Him I commit you and yours; and am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 21, 1772.*

I BELIEVE you will never willingly give me pain. You will give me pleasure as long as you are pressing on to the mark; ready to do, and patient to suffer, the whole will of God. You cannot be separated from the people till you are removed into Abraham's bosom. In order to make your continuance with them the easier, I hope Mr. Thompson has now fixed the class as I directed. He is a good Preacher, and a good man; though liable to mistake, or he would be more than man.

Can you still give God your whole heart? Is He always present with you? Have these trials weakened or strengthened your faith? Have you a clear evidence that you are saved from sin? See that you strengthen each other's hands, and press on to the mark together!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCLXXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*December 18, 1772.*

It is a little thing to trust God as far as we can see Him; so far as the way lies open before us. But to trust in Him when we are hedged in on every side, and can see no way to escape, this is good and acceptable with God. This is the faith of Abraham our father; and, by the grace of God, this is your faith!

I am

Your affectionate brother.



CCCLXXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*January 21, 1773.*

CONSULT with some experienced and sensible person upon every step you take. Concerning removing to Hull, you would do well to consult Thomas Snowdon, or some one that lives there. It would be expedient, too, to take good advice before you enter upon any new business. Everything now is full of uncertainty and danger, during the amazing dearness of provisions. Hence, most people have just money to buy food, and have nothing more to lay out. Yet the promise stands sure, "Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you." Yea, surely the Lord will sooner make windows in heaven, than suffer his truth to fail. Peace be with your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXC.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*BRISTOL, October 8, 1774.*

IT is exceeding certain that God did give you the second blessing, properly so called. He delivered you from the root of bitterness, from inbred, as well as actual, sin. And at that time you were enabled to give Him all your heart; to rejoice evermore, and to pray without ceasing. Afterwards, He permitted his work to be tried; and sometimes as by fire. For a while you were not moved; but could say in all things, "Good is the will of the Lord." But it seems you gave way, by little and little, till you were in some measure shorn of your strength. What have brother Barton and you to do, but to arise at once, and shake yourselves from the dust? Stir up the gift of God that is in you! Look unto Him that is mighty to save! Is He not able, in every sense, to turn your captivity? He has not forgotten to be gracious; neither will He shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure. He is a God nigh at hand. Only believe; and help, while yet you ask, is given! Trust in Him, and conquer all.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 30, 1774.*

ONE observes well, that, in order to judge of the grace which God has given us, we must likewise consider what our temptations are; because a little grace will balance little temptations; but to conquer great temptations, much grace is requisite. Formerly, you had comparatively little temptation: And through His grace, you could rejoice with joy unspeakable. At present, you do not find that joy. No; for you have the temptations which you had not then. You have little children; you have worldly care; and, frequently, a weak body. Therefore, you may have far more grace than you had before, though you have not so much joy; nay, though you should for a time have no joy at all, but sorrow and heaviness; yea, though you should say, with your Master, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." O what a gainer are you by this! when you are enabled to say in the midst of all, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" See how He loveth whom he chasteneth! And what is at the end? An eternal weight of glory! It is laid up for you both. Taste of it now.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *February 19, 1777.*

I AM glad to hear that your little society prospers. If they increase in grace, they will increase in number; of which I can have no doubt, if you watch against all jealousies, and continue open and loving to each other. There will be nothing wanting, I am persuaded, on the part of the Preachers. Whenever they speak, they will speak as the oracles of God; with sound speech, which cannot be reprov'd. And, what is more, the whole tenor of their life is agreeable to their doctrine. Whatever they preach, you will experience. What you have received is a pledge of what you will receive. For He that loves you will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.

I am

Your affectionate brother.



CCCXCIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, BRISTOL, *July 29, 1777.*

IT is well that you have learned to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." Your child is gone but a little before you. How soon shall we overtake her! It is noway inconsistent with Christian resignation, to ask conditionally, "Let this cup pass from me;" only with the addition, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Rapturous joy, such as is frequently given in the beginning of justification, or of entire sanctification, is a great blessing; but it seldom continues long before it subsides into calm, peaceful love. I believe if Miss H—— were to spend a little time with you, it might be of great use to many.

I am, with love to brother Barton,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *November 13, 1778.*

I AM glad sister Crosby has been at Beverley, and that you had an opportunity of hearing her. She is useful wheresoever she goes; particularly in exciting believers to go on to perfection.

There is frequently something very mysterious in the ways of divine Providence. A little of them we may understand; but much more is beyond our comprehension; and we must be content to say, "What thou doest I know not now; but I shall know hereafter." At present it is sufficient for me to know, that all His ways are mercy and truth to them that love Him.

Even in these troublous times, there is a very considerable increase of the work of God. Cleave to Him with your whole heart, and you will have more and more reason to praise Him.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *February 11, 1779.*

THIS is our comfort, that we know our Lord has all power in heaven and in earth; and that whensoever He

willeth to deliver, to do is present with Him. He did indeed very remarkably interpose in your behalf, by raising up those friends in time of need. You have reason to praise Him; and you have reason to trust Him. He will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.

I am glad to hear that at length there is likely to be a day of visitation even for poor Beverley. If you have two or three that are strong in faith, they will wrestle with God in mighty prayer, and bring down a blessing on all that are round about them.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 9, 1779.*

IF you continue earnest to save your souls, both of you must expect temptations; and those of various sorts. Sometimes you will be tried by friends, or enemies: Sometimes by one another; at some times perhaps you will be quite out of conceit with each other, and all things will appear wrong. Then beware of anger; of fretfulness, or peevishness, which maketh the grasshopper a burden. But from all this, the God whom you serve is able to deliver you; yea, and He will deliver you. Trust Him, and praise Him.

I am

Yours affectionately.

CCCXCVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

EDINBURGH, *May 19, 1780.*

IT is no burden to me to hear from you. Indeed, I had rather, when Providence permits, see you; but that cannot be very often. This summer, after visiting a few places which I have not seen for many years, I must contrive, if it be possible, to spend a little time in London, Bath, and Bristol, before the Conference; so that I do not attempt, in this broken, irregular year, to visit many of the societies. I believe I shall not come any nearer Beverley than York. I am glad to hear so good an account of your Preachers. John Furz is fairly worn out; he is hardly able to preach at all. If he lives till next year, I expect he will be a Supernumerary. As God begins to visit poor



Beverley, you have reason to hope you shall see better days than ever. But you have had as yet little more than the earnest of a shower. But who knows how soon you will see the general blessing?

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 9, 1780.*

GOD knoweth the way wherein you go; and when you have been tried, you shall come forth as gold. I believe, if you drank nettle-tea, (five or six leaves,) instead of common tea, it would swiftly restore your strength. If a proper application be made to the Magistrates, undoubtedly they will secure the peace. Persecution is more and more out of fashion since King George came to the throne. But, in the mean time, let prayer be made continually.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCXCIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *November 6, 1781.*

I AM always well pleased to hear from you, especially when you tell me that God has dealt well with you. I trust He has yet greater blessings in store for you, and for the little flock at Beverley. I was glad of the little time we had together, and hoped it would not be in vain. I found love to your two little maidens. There is good seed sown in their hearts, which, if it be carefully watered, will probably bring forth fruit to your comfort, and the glory of God. Let your husband and you go on hand in hand, stirring up the gift of God that is in you, and running with resignation and patience the race that is set before you. You have met, and undoubtedly will meet, with manifold temptations: But you have had full proof that God is faithful, who will never suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. O tarry, then, the Lord's leisure! Be strong, and He shall comfort thy heart. And put thou thy trust in the Lord.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCC.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *April 23, 1783.*

IT has pleased God, for many years, to lead you in a rough and thorny way. But He knoweth the way wherein you go; and when you have been tried, you shall come forth as gold. Every proof you have had of God's care over you is a reason for trusting him with your children. He will take care of them, whether you are alive or dead; so that you have no need to be careful in this matter. You have only, by prayer and supplication, to make your requests known to God; and whenever He sees it will be best for you, He will deliver you out of your captivity. In two or three weeks I hope to be in England again: But it is all one where we are, so we are doing the will of our Lord.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *July 5, 1783.*

LAST month I made a little journey to Holland; from whence I returned yesterday. There is a blessed work at the Hague, Amsterdam, Utrecht, and many other of the principal cities; and in their simplicity of spirit, and plainness of dress, the believers vie with the old English Methodists. In affection they are not inferior to any. It was with the utmost difficulty we could break from them.

I am glad to hear so good an account of my two little maids. I found much love to them when I was at Beverley. Now is the time for them to choose that better part which shall never be taken from them. Now is the time for them to choose whether they will seek happiness in God or in the world. The world never made any one happy; and it is certain it never will. But God will. He says,—

“Love shall from me returns of love obtain;  
And none that seek me early seek in vain.”

I am, with love to brother Barton,

Your affectionate brother.



CCCCII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, June 11, 1788.

YOU have indeed had a series of trials, one upon the back of another. It is well you know in whom you have believed; otherwise you would have been weary and faint in your mind. For it is not an easy thing always to remember, (then especially when we have most need of it,) that "the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Who could believe it, if He had not told us so himself? It is well that He never fails to give us strength according to our day; and that we know these "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

I am

Your affectionate brother

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CCCCIII.—*To the Stewards of the Foundery.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN, PEMBROKE, August 6, 1768.

THE thing you mention is of no small concern, and ought not to be determined hastily. Indeed, it would be easy to answer, if we considered only how to save money: But we are to consider also how to save souls. Now, I doubt whether we should act wisely in this respect were we to give up the chapel in Spitalfields. We have no other preaching-place in or near that populous quarter of the town; and a quarter which, upon one account, I prefer before almost any other; namely, that the people in general are more simple, and less confused by any other Preachers. I think, therefore, it would not be well to give up this, if we could gain a thousand pounds thereby. I should look upon it as selling the souls of men for money; which God will give us in due time without this. That many who live near the Foundery would be glad of it, I allow, because it would save them trouble. But neither can I put the saving of trouble in competition with the saving of souls.

I am, my dear brethren,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCIV.—*To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, of Limerick.*MY DEAR SISTER, PEMBROKE, *August 23, 1763.*

YOU did well to write; this is one of the means which God generally uses to convey either light or comfort: Even while you are writing you will often find relief; frequently, while we propose a doubt, it is removed.

There is no doubt but what you at first experienced was a real foretaste of the blessing, although you were not properly possessed of it till the Whitsunday following. But it is very possible to cast away the gift of God, or to lose it by little and little; though I trust this is not the case with you: And yet you may frequently be in heaviness, and may find your love to God not near so warm at some times as it is at others. Many wanderings, likewise, and many deficiencies, are consistent with pure love; but the thing you mean is, the abiding witness of the Spirit touching this very thing. And this you may boldly claim, on the warrant of that word, "We have received the Spirit that is of God; that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God."

I am, my dear sister,  
Your affectionate brother.

CCCCV.—*To the Same.*MY DEAR SISTER, MANCHESTER, *March 29, 1766.*

ONE of our Preachers has lately advanced a new position among us,—that there is no direct or immediate witness of sanctification, but only a perception or consciousness that we are changed, filled with love, and cleansed from sin. But, if I understand you right, you find a direct testimony that you are a child of God.

Now, certainly, if God has given you this light, he did not intend that you should hide it under a bushel. "It is good to conceal the secrets of a King; but it is good to tell the loving-kindness of the Lord." Every one ought to declare what God has done for his soul, and that with all simplicity: Only care is to be taken to declare to several persons that part of our experience which they are severally able to bear; and some parts of it, to such alone as are upright and simple of heart.

One reason why those who are saved from sin should



freely declare it to believers is, because nothing is a stronger incitement to them to seek after the same blessing. And we ought, by every possible means, to press every serious believer to forget the things which are behind, and with all earnestness go on to perfection. Indeed, if they are not thirsting after this, it is scarce possible to keep what they have: They can hardly retain any power of faith, if they are not panting after holiness.

A thousand infirmities are consistent even with the highest degree of holiness; which is no other than pure love, an heart devoted to God; one design and one desire. Then, whatever is done, either in word or deed, may be done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Press after all the residue of the promises.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEEDS, *August 14, 1766.*

ALTHOUGH I am at present exceedingly hurried with various business, yet love constrains me to write a few lines. Your letters are always welcome to me, as the picture of an honest and affectionate heart.

What you say concerning the witness of the Spirit is agreeable to all sound experience. We may, in some measure, be satisfied without it, in the time of broad sunshine; but it is absolutely necessary in the time of clouds, and heaviness, and temptation; otherwise it would be hardly possible to hold fast your confidence.

Beware of voluntary humility: Even this may create a snare. In the "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," and in the "Farther Thoughts," you have the genuine experience of the adult children of God. Oppose that authority to the authority of any that contradict, (if reason and Scripture are disregarded,) and look daily for a deeper and fuller communion with God. O what is it to walk in the light, as He is in the light!

Do not cease to pray for

Your truly affectionate brother.

CCCCVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER BENNIS,

DUBLIN, *July 25, 1767.*

WHEN you write to me, you have only to "think aloud," just to open the window in your breast. When we love one another, there is no need of either disguise or reserve. I love you, and I verily believe you love me: So you have only to write just what you feel.

The essential part of Christian holiness is giving the heart wholly to God; and certainly we need not lose any degree of that light and love which at first attend this: It is our own infirmity, if we do; it is not the will of the Lord concerning us. Your present business is, not to reason whether you should call your experience thus or thus; but to go straight to Him that loves you, with all your wants, how great or how many soever they are. Then all things are ready; help, while you ask, is given. You have only to receive it by simple faith. Nevertheless, you will still be encompassed with numberless infirmities; for you live in a house of clay, and therefore this corruptible body will, more or less, press down the soul, yet not so as to prevent your rejoicing evermore, and having a witness that your heart is all His. You may claim this: It is yours; for Christ is yours. Believe, and feel him near.

My dear sister, adieu.

Yours affectionately.

CCCCVIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

CORK, *May 30, 1769.*

SOME years since, I was inclined to think that none who had once enjoyed and then lost the pure love of God must ever look to enjoy it again till they were just stepping into eternity. But experience has taught us better things: We have at present numerous instances of those who had cast away that unspeakable blessing, and now enjoy it in a larger measure than ever. And why should not this be your case? Because you are unworthy? So were they. Because you have been an unfaithful steward? So had they been also; yet God healed them freely: And so he will you, only do not reason against him. Look for nothing in yourself but sin and unworthiness. Forget yourself.



Worthy is the Lamb, and he has prevailed for you. You shall not die, but live; live all the life of heaven on earth. You need nothing in order to this but faith; and who gives this? He that standeth at the door.

I hope to see you at Limerick on Monday next; and I pray, let there never more be any reserve between you and  
Your truly affectionate, &c.

CCCCIX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *July 24, 1769.*

IF the reading over your papers has no other effect, this it certainly has, it makes me love you abundantly better than I did before: I have now a more intimate knowledge of you; I enter more into your spirit, your tempers, and hopes, and fears, and desires; all which tends to endear you to me. It is plain, one of your constant enemies, and the most dangerous of all, is evil reasoning. Accordingly, the thing which you chiefly want is Christian simplicity. Brother Bourke and you should carefully watch over each other in that respect, and let each deal faithfully with the other; let there be no reserve between you; encourage one another, also, to pray for and expect the continual and direct witness of the Spirit. My dear friend, remember

Yours affectionately, &c.

CCCCX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 18, 1769.*

I WROTE a longer letter to you than I usually do, before I set out from Dublin: Where or how it stopped, I cannot imagine. I think of you every day; indeed, I do not know that I ever loved you so well as since I was at Limerick last. The more we are acquainted with each other, the more we ought to love one another.

I hope brother Bourke and you faithfully endeavour to help each other on. Is your own soul all alive; all devoted to God? Do you find again what you found once? And are you active for God? Remember, you have work to do in your Lord's vineyard; and the more you help others, the more your soul will prosper.

I am, my dear sister,

Yours affectionately, &c.

CCCCXI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

WHITEHAVEN, *April 12, 1770.*

IF two or three letters have miscarried, all will not ; so I am determined to write again. How does the work of God go on at Limerick ? Does the select society meet constantly ? And do you speak freely to each other ? What Preachers are with you now ? Do you converse frankly and openly with them, without any shyness or reserve ? Do you find your own soul prosper ? Do you hold fast what God has given you ? Do you give Him all your heart ? And do you find the witness of this abiding with you ? One who is now in the house with me has not lost that witness one moment for these ten years. Why should you lose it any more ? Are not the gifts of God without repentance ? Is He not willing to give always what he gives once ? Lay hold, lay hold on all the promises.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YARM, *June 13, 1770.*

JUST now we have many persons all over England that are exactly in the state you describe. They were some time since renewed in love, and did then rejoice evermore ; but after a few years, months, or weeks, they were moved from their steadfastness : Yet several of these have within a few months recovered all they had lost, and some with increase ; being far more established than ever they were before. And why may it not be so with you ? The rather, because you do not deny or doubt of the work which God did work in you ; and that by simple faith. Surely you should be every day expecting the same free gift ; and He will not deceive your hope.

If you can guard brother S. against pride, and the applause of well-meaning people, he will be a happy man, and an useful labourer. I hope brother M. has not grown cold. Stir up the gift of God which is in you !

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.



CCCCXIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

ASHBY, *July 27, 1770.*

WILL you ever find in yourself anything but unfitness? Otherwise your salvation would be of works, not of grace. But you are frequently sick of a bad disease,—evil reasoning; which hinders both your holiness and happiness: You want the true Christian simplicity, which is indeed the highest wisdom. Nothing is more clear, according to the plain Bible account, than sanctification; pure love reigning in the heart and life. And nothing is more plain than the necessity of this, in order to feel happiness here and hereafter. Check all reasoning concerning these first principles, else you will exceedingly darken your soul; and go on denying yourself, and taking up your cross, until you

Sink into perfection's height,  
The depth of humble love.

Still draw near to the fountain by simple faith, and take all you want; but be not slothful in your Lord's vineyard.

My dear sister,

Yours affectionately.

CCCCXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LIMERICK, *May 15, 1771.*

WHENEVER there is a dependence, though frequently secret and unobserved, on any outward thing, it is the mercy of God which disappoints us of our hope, that we may be more sensibly convinced, "neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

From time to time you must find many difficulties and perplexities that none but God can clear. But can He clear them? That is enough. Then He surely will. This is the very use of that anointing which we have from God. It is to teach us of all things, to clear up a thousand doubts and perplexities which no human wisdom could do. This was given you in the case of your child; and when that came, temptation spake not again. This is never more needful than with regard to anger; because there is an anger which is not sinful, a disgust at sin which is often attended with much commotion of the animal spirits; and

I doubt whether we can well distinguish this from sinful anger, but by that light from heaven.

I really hope J. C. will do well: Within these two years he is improved exceedingly.

If our sisters miss you any more, there is but one way,—you must go or send after them. Be not idle; neither give way to voluntary humility. You were not sent to Waterford for nothing; but to “strengthen the things that remain.”

It would be a strange thing if I should pass a day without praying for you: By this means at least we may reach each other; and there may be a still increasing union between you and

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

DUBLIN, *July 20, 1771.*

I AM much pleased to hear so good an account of J. C. If I was resolved to understand all God's dispensations, I should embrace his opinion: Because it in a manner accounts for some things which otherwise are unaccountable. But this I do not expect: I am content to understand exceeding little, while I am in the body. What He does, I know not now: It is enough that I shall know hereafter. Our business now is to love and obey: Knowledge is reserved for eternity. My chief objection to Milton's doctrine of election is, that I cannot reconcile it to the words of St. Peter, which manifestly refer to the eternal state of men: “God is no respecter of persons.” Now, how can we allow this, if we believe he places one man, as it were, suspended between heaven and hell, while he fixes another, ere ever he is born, under an absolute impossibility of missing heaven?

I am well pleased you see some reason to hope well of Mr. T. Speak closely to him. He has a strong, cultivated understanding, and would make a shining Christian. If he continues serious, he will not long be pleased with his former company: They will grow tasteless, nay, irksome.

It is not material whether this or that infirmity or defect be consistent with this or that gift of God. Without reasoning about this, it is your part simply to spread all



your wants before Him who loves you; and He will richly supply them all!

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

RYE, October 28, 1771.

It is no wonder that finite cannot measure infinite; that man cannot comprehend the ways of God. There always will be something incomprehensible, something like Himself, in all his dispensations. We must therefore be content to be ignorant, until eternity opens our understanding; particularly with regard to the reasons of His acting thus or thus. These we shall be acquainted with when in Abraham's bosom.

As thinking is the act of an embodied spirit, playing upon a set of material keys, it is not strange that the soul can make but ill music when her instrument is out of tune. This is frequently the case with you; and the trouble and anxiety you then feel are a natural effect of the disordered machine, which proportionably disorders the mind. But this is not all: As long as you have to wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, wise as well as powerful, will they not serve themselves of every bodily weakness to increase the distress of the soul? But let them do as they may; let our frail bodies concur with subtle and malicious spirits; yet see that you cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Whereunto you have attained, hold fast; and when you feel the roughest and strongest assault, when the enemy comes in like a flood, do not reason, do not (in one sense) fight with him; but sink down in the presence of your Lord, and simply look up, telling him, "Lord, I cannot help myself; I have neither wisdom nor strength for this war; but I am thine, I am all thine: Undertake for me: Let none pluck me out of thine hands. Keep that safe which is committed to thee, and preserve it unto that day."

I am in great hopes, if we live until another Conference, J. C. will be useful as a Travelling Preacher: So would J. M. if he had courage to break through. However, I am pleased he exercises himself a little: Encourage him. I wish you would lend Mrs. Dawson the Appeals: Take them

from the Book-Room, and present them to her in my name. Go yourself: For I wish you to be acquainted with her. I believe they will satisfy her about the Church. She halts just as I did many years ago. Be not shy towards brother C.: He is an upright man. Sister L. is already doing good in Clonmell. Do you correspond with her?

Your affectionate.

CCCCXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, CANTERBURY, *December 3, 1771.*

I DID believe brother C. would be of use to you, and you may be of use to him: Speak to each other without reserve, and then you will seldom meet in vain. Thrust him out to visit the whole society, (not only those that can give him meat and drink,) from house to house, according to the plan laid down in the Minutes of Conference: Then he will soon see the fruit of his labour. I hope he is not ashamed to preach full salvation, receivable now by faith. This is the word which God will always bless, and which the devil peculiarly hates; therefore he is constantly stirring up both his own children and the weak children of God against it.

All that God has already given you, hold fast. But expect to see greater things than these.

Your affectionate.

CCCCXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LIVERPOOL, *March 31, 1772.*

YOU did well to break through and converse with Mrs. D—. There is no doubt but she has living faith; but, not having opportunity to converse with believers, she cannot express herself with that clearness that our friends do: Cultivate the acquaintance. Now, lay before her, by way of promise, the whole Christian salvation: She will quickly see the desirableness of it. You may then lend her the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." She will not be frightened, but rather encouraged, at hearing it is possible to attain what her heart longs for. While you are thus feeding God's lambs, he will lead you into rich pastures.

I do not wonder you should meet with trials: It is by these your faith is made perfect. You will find many things, both in your heart and in your life, contrary to the



perfection of the Adamic law ; but it does not follow that they are contrary to the law of love : Let this fill your heart, and it is enough. Still continue active for God. Remember, a talent is entrusted to you : See that you improve it : He does not like a slothful steward.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YARM, *June 16, 1772.*

As often as you can, I request you will converse personally or by letter with Mrs. D. : Her heart is much united to you ; and I believe you are particularly called to be useful to those whom the riches or the grandeur of this world keep at a distance from the pure word of God. When you are at Waterford, see that you be not idle there. You should gather up and meet a band immediately. If you would also meet a class or two, it would be so much the better : You know, the more labour the more blessing.

Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore, every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin ; and nothing else, if we speak properly. To strain the matter farther is only to make way for Calvinism. There may be ten thousand wandering thoughts, and forgetful intervals, without any breach of love, though not without transgressing the Adamic law. But Calvinists would fain confound these together. Let love fill your heart, and it is enough !

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1772.*

MY health is not worse, but rather better. Your account of the society in Waterford is pleasing. Continue to exercise your talent amongst them, and you will be a gainer by it. You need not dispute or reason about the name which belongs to the state you are in. You know what you have : Be thankful for it. You know what you want,—zeal, liveliness, stability, deliverance from wandering imaginations. Well then, ask, and they shall be given. The way into the holiest is open through the blood of Jesus. You have free access through Him.

To Him your every want  
In instant prayer display ;  
Pray always, pray and never faint,  
Pray, without ceasing pray !

See, help, while yet you ask, is given !

I am, dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER,

COLCHESTER, *November 3, 1772.*

YOUR time was well bestowed at Waterford: Many, I doubt not, will remember it with thankfulness. But why this want of discipline in Limerick? Whenever this is dropped, all is confusion: See that it be immediately restored. Captain Webb is now in Dublin: Invite him to visit Limerick: He is a man of fire, and the power of God constantly accompanies his word. Speak a little to as many as you can; go among them, to their houses; speak in love, and discord will vanish. It is hardly possible for you to comfort or strengthen others, without some comfort returning into your own bosom.

It is probable I shall visit Ireland in the spring, though I am almost a disabled soldier. I am forbid to ride, and am obliged to travel mostly in a carriage.

You have need to stir up the gift of God that is in you. Light will spring up. Why not now? Is not the Lord at hand?

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SISTER BENNIS,

SHOREHAM, *December 16, 1772.*

THE plan which you mention, I prefer to any other, and have written to put it in practice immediately.

I think you make most of your trials by unbelief and giving too much way to reasoning. Do not stoop to reason with the adversary, but flee to the Strong for more strength, which, by asking, you will receive. Be diligent in helping others. I hope you visit Mrs. D— frequently. Let not your talent rust, but see to gain a double interest. You work for a generous Master. Fight on, and conquer all! Joy you shall have, if joy be best. My dear sister, adieu.

Your affectionate brother.



CCCCXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*February 12, 1773.*

WHEN we draw near to God in his appointed ways, he will surely draw near to us. Pray remind Mr. G— of using the same means: Then he and you will find the same blessing. Write to Waterford to brother S—, and encourage him to do there as he did at Limerick.

I can observe, by Mrs. D—'s manner of writing, a very considerable change in her spirit; more acquaintance with God; more humility, and more artless, simple love. I am much pleased that you visit so frequently. Continue to lead the simple, and God will give you more wisdom.

As long as you trust, not in yourself, but in Him that has all power in heaven and in earth, you will find his grace sufficient for you, and his strength made perfect in your weakness. Look to him continually, and trust in him, that you may increase with all the increase of God.

I am, my dear sister,

Your ever affectionate brother.

CCCCXXIV.—*To the Same.**April 1, 1773.*

I FEAR you are too idle: This will certainly bring condemnation. Up and be doing! Do not loiter. See that your talent rust not: Rather let it gain ten more; and it will, if you use it.

You are permitted to be in heaviness, to humble and prove you yet more. Then you shall come forth as gold. If you love me, you will both write and speak freely to,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate.

CCCCXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*BRISTOL, September 10, 1773.*

WHEN two or three agree to seek God by fasting and prayer, it cannot be that their labour should be in vain. Especially if they add their endeavours to their prayers for the increase of the work of God. I hope you will encourage every Preacher to visit the whole society in order, from house to house: Dinner, or drinking tea, does not answer

the same intention. This may and ought to be done over and above.

I thought you had been in more danger of being hurt by worldly abundance than worldly care. But we cannot stand under either one or the other, unless we be endued with power from on high; and that continually, from hour to hour, or rather from moment to moment. Yet distress is not sin: We may be grieved, and still resigned. And this is acceptable with God. In all these cases, you should remember that observation, never to be let slip,—

“With even mind, thy course of duty run:  
God nothing does, or suffers to be done,  
But thou wouldst do thyself, if thou couldst see  
The end of all events, as well as He!”

My dear sister, adieu.

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

SHEERNESS, *December 1, 1773.*

SOME time since, when I heard brother Bennis had got very rich, I was in fear for you, lest the world should again find a way into your heart, and damp your noblest affections. I am not sorry that you have not that temptation. It is most desirable, to have neither poverty nor riches; but still you cannot be without temptation, unless you would go out of the world. How far that sudden emotion which you speak of is a preternatural dart from Satan, and how far it springs from your own heart, it is exceeding hard to judge. It is possible it may be neither one nor the other, but a mere effect of the natural mechanism of the body, which has no more of good or evil than blushing or turning pale. But whether it be natural or preternatural, it is grievous to one whose conscience is tender. We may therefore undoubtedly pray against it. And surely He can and will deliver us. Come therefore boldly to the throne of grace, and find grace to help in time of need.

You will find full employment in Waterford: I believe that society wants your exertions. See therefore that you be not weary of well-doing.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.



CCCCXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON; *January 18, 1774.*

A WILL steadily and uniformly devoted to God is essential to a state of sanctification ; but not a uniformity of joy, or peace, or happy communion with God. These may rise and fall in various degrees ; nay, and may be affected either by the body or by diabolical agency, in a manner which all our wisdom can neither understand nor prevent. As to wanderings, you would do right well to consider the sermon on Wandering Thoughts : You might likewise profit by Elizabeth Harper's Journal, whose experience much resembled yours, only she was more simple : And you may learn from her to go straight to God, as a little child, and tell him all your troubles, and hinderances, and doubts ; and desire him to turn them all to good. You are not sent to Waterford to be useless. Stir up the gift of God which is in you ; gather together those that have been scattered abroad, and make up a band, if not a class or two. Your best way would be to visit from house to house. By this means you can judge of their conduct and dispositions in domestic life, and may have opportunity to speak to the young of the family. By motion you will contract warmth ; by imparting life, you will increase it in yourself.

As to the circumstance mentioned in the postscript of your last, I should think you would do well to exert yourself in that matter as much as possible. It will be a cross : Take up that cross ; bear your cross, and it will bear you ; and if you do it with a single eye, it will be no loss to your soul.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

CCCCXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *March 1, 1774.*

ELIZABETH HARPER was frequently in clouds too ; and in that case it is the best way to stand still : You can do nothing but simply tell all your wants to Him that is both able and willing to supply them.

I enclose James Perfect's letter, on purpose that you may

talk with him. He has both an honest heart and a good understanding; but you entirely mistake his doctrine. He preaches salvation by faith in the same manner that my brother and I have done; and as Mr. Fletcher (one of the finest writers of the age) has beautifully explained it. None of us talk of being accepted for our works: That is the Calvinist slander. But we all maintain, we are not saved without works; that works are a condition (though not the meritorious cause) of final salvation. It is by faith in the righteousness and blood of Christ that we are enabled to do all good works; and it is for the sake of these that all who fear God and work righteousness are accepted of Him.

It is far better for our people not to hear Mr. Hawksworth. Calvinism will do them no good. As to the rest, I refer to my enclosure to Mr. M., with whom I wish you to have some conversation. Be not discouraged: I really believe God will visit poor Waterford in love. Do you go on. Bear up the hands that hang down; by faith and prayer support the tottering knee; reprove, encourage. Have you appointed any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace, and persevere therein, and mercy will come down.

I am

Yours, &c.

CCCCXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEEDS, *May 2, 1774.*

UNTIL Mr. Hill and his associates puzzled the cause, it was as plain as plain could be. The Methodists always held, and have declared a thousand times, the death of Christ is the meritorious cause of our salvation, that is, of pardon, holiness, and glory; loving, obedient faith is the condition of glory. This Mr. Fletcher has so illustrated and confirmed, as I think scarcely any one has done before since the Apostles.

When Mr. W. wrote me a vehement letter concerning the abuse he had received from the young men in Limerick, and his determination to put them all out of the society, if they did not acknowledge their fault; I much wondered what could be the matter, and only wrote him word, "I never put any out of our society for anything they say of



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

Your ever affectionate.

CCCCXXX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 21, 1776.*

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

It is devoutly to be wished for, that we may rejoice evermore; and it is certain, the inward kingdom of God implies not only righteousness and peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost. You have therefore reason to ask for, and expect, the whole Gospel blessing. Yet it cannot be denied that many times joy is 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