

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

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

DXIX.—*To the Same.*

LEWISHAM, *December 3, 1773.*

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

My dear,

Yours affectionately.

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DXX.—*To Mr. John Mason.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

PEMBROKE, *August 6, 1768.*

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

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *November 15, 1768.*

FOR one Preacher to stay long at one place is neither profitable for him nor for the people. If there is only one Preacher at Limerick, he must duly visit the country societies. As David Evans is now gone over to Waterford, brother Burke will be at liberty; so either he or you should go without delay, and relieve John Hilton at Londonderry. If any deny the witness of sanctification, and occasion disputing in the select society, let him or her meet therein no more. I hope the singing goes on well.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *January 26, 1772.*

TWO old members recovered I make more account of than three new ones. I love to see backsliders return. I was afraid there was no more place for us in Workington. Scarce any one came to hear. It is well the people are now of a better mind. You cannot expect to do good at Carlisle till you either procure a more comfortable place, or preach in the open air. For many years Cockermouth has been the same, and will be till you can preach abroad.

You will observe the letter which I desired brother Mather to write to you concerning the books; and make all the haste which the nature of the thing will admit. I shall endeavour to see you in summer; and am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *January 10, 1774.*

IT is nothing strange that those who love the world should not love to continue with us. Our road is too strait.

Down the stream of nature driven,  
They seek a broader path to heaven,

However, let us keep in the good old way; and we know it will bring us peace at the last.

If you press all the believers to go on to perfection, and to expect deliverance from sin every moment, they will grow

in grace. But if ever they lose that expectation, they will grow flat and cold.

Last week I was under the Surgeon's hands; but am now, blessed be God, better than I have been for some years.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother

DXXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

*November 21, 1776.*

ONE of Mr. Fletcher's Checks considers at large the Calvinistic supposition, "that a natural man is as dead as a stone;" and shows the utter falseness and absurdity of it; seeing no man living is without some preventing grace; and every degree of grace is a degree of life.

That "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men" (all born into the world) "unto condemnation," is an undoubted truth; and affects every infant, as well as every adult person. But it is equally true, that, "by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men" (all born into the world, infant or adult) "unto justification." Therefore no infant ever was, or ever will be, "sent to hell for the guilt of Adam's sin;" seeing it is cancelled by the righteousness of Christ, as soon as they are sent into the world.

Labour on, especially by visiting from house to house, and you will see the fruit of your labour.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

*November, 1779.*

AN Assistant at the last Conference said, "I will do as my predecessors have done: I will leave those as members that never met. They are as good members as I found them."

Whoever does this for the time to come, I will exclude from our Connexion without delay. To prevent this vile practice, I desire you will,

1. Take an exact plan of your Circuit at Christmas, and send it to me in January; and do the same every quarter.

2. If you live till August, leave for your successor an exact list of the societies in your Circuit.

I desire, likewise, that, at the next Quarterly Meeting, you would change at least one of the Stewards in every society where there are two.

One thing more I desire,—that you would read the proposals for the general Hymn-Book in every society, and procure as many subscribers as you can.

By your diligence and exactness in these particulars, I shall judge whether you are qualified to act as an Assistant or not.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

Pray send me word in January how many subscriptions you have procured in your Circuit.

DXXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near LONDON, November 3, 1784.*

YOU judge right. If the people were more alive to God, they would be more liberal. There is money enough, and particularly in Somersetshire; but they are straitened in their own bowels. When I complied with the desire of many, and divided the Circuit into two, we were not a jot better. You have one thing to point at,—the revival and increase of the work of God. Get as many as possible to meet in band. Be exact in every part of discipline, and give no ticket to any that does not meet his class weekly.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, *LONDON, January 24, 1787.*

I DO not wonder that the work of God should flourish at Trowbridge, where a few of our sisters are a pattern to the whole town. But it is exceeding strange that any considerable good should be done at poor, dead, quarrelsome Frome! We can only say, "The wind bloweth where it listeth!" Now avail yourself of the opportunity! It is equally strange that there should be such peace at Stallbridge. At Ditcheat I doubt not but you will overcome evil with good.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near OXFORD, October 27, 1789.*

WHEREVER the congregation increases, we have reason to hope the work of God will increase also. And it is certain, distress is one means whereby God awakens men out of sleep. You know famine is one of God's sore judgments; and the people should be strongly encouraged to improve by it. Suffer no Leader to whisper in his class; but to speak so that all who are present may hear; otherwise, how shall

Each his friendly aid afford,  
And feel his brother's care?

Speak strong and home to all.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near LONDON, January 13, 1790.*

As long as I live, the people shall have no share in choosing either Stewards or Leaders among the Methodists. We have not, and never had, any such custom. We are no republicans, and never intend to be. It would be better for those that are so minded to go quietly away. I have been uniform both in doctrine and discipline for above these fifty years; and it is a little too late for me to turn into a new path now I am grey-headed. Neither good old brother Pascoe (God bless him!) expects it from me, nor brother Wood, nor brother Flamank. If you and I should be called hence this year, we may bless God that we have not lived in vain. Come, let us have a few more strokes at Satan's kingdom, and then we shall depart in peace!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

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 DXXX.—*To —.*

MY DEAR SISTER, *LONDON, November 16, 1770.*

To see even the superscription of a letter from you, always gives me pleasure. I am glad you are still waiting for the kingdom of God; although as yet you are rather in the state of a servant, than of a child. But it is a blessed

thing to be even a servant of God! You shall never have cause to be ashamed of his service. What I peculiarly advise is, that you will never omit private duties, whatever hurry you may be in, and however dull and dry your soul may be; still they shall not be without a blessing. And therein you will receive power against that temptation which, to your tender spirit, may be the most dangerous of any.

On Sunday I am to preach a funeral sermon for that blessed man, Mr. Whitefield, at the Tabernacle, and at Tottenham-Court chapel. If it is an help or comfort to you, write often to

Your brother.

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DXXXI.—*To Mr. Henry Eames, after his emigration to America.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LEEDS, *August 3, 1772.*

IT is a great blessing that God has looked upon you in a strange land, and given you food to eat, and raiment to put on; but a still greater, that he has given you to eat of that bread which the world knoweth not of. You have likewise the invaluable advantage of companions on the way. I suppose you gladly entered the society as soon as one was formed; and that you never willingly neglect any opportunity of meeting your brethren. Whatever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might. Beware of spiritual sloth; beware of carelessness and listlessness of spirit. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." See that you are one of those violent ones that "take it by force."

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DXXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

CHESTER, *July 15, 1789.*

AFTER the many proofs which you have already had, both of the power and goodness of God, particularly in giving you your heart's desire, in the change wrought in several of your children, you can have no reason to doubt but that He will give you your mother also, if you continue earnest in prayer. The great hinderance to the inward work of God is Antinomianism, wherever it breaks in. I am glad

you are aware of it. Show your faith by your works. Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. Peace be with you and yours.

I am

Yours affectionately.

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DXXXIII.—*To Mr. George Shadford.*

DEAR GEORGE,

1773.

THE time is arrived for you to embark for America. You must go down to Bristol, where you will meet with Thomas Rankin, Captain Webb, and his wife.

I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can.

I am, dear George,

Yours affectionately.

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DXXXIV.—*To Miss Ball, of High-Wycomb.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*Near INISKILLEN, May 23, 1773.*

I THANK you for your comfortable letter. Right "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Where there is any eminent instance of mercy in this kind, it is almost always a means of convincing and converting others. It is a season one would wish to improve to the uttermost; for then the windows of heaven are open.

It cannot be doubted but your heaviness was owing in part to diabolical agency. Nay, and Satan sometimes, by God's permission, weakens the body. Nevertheless, we are, even in that weakness, to use natural means, just as if it was owing to natural causes. I believe it would be of use, if you took a cup-full of the decoction of burdock (sweetened or unsweetened) both morning and evening. I never remember its having any ill effect on any person whatsoever.

Our point is, to improve by everything that occurs: By good or ill success, so called; by sickness or health; by ease or pain: And this we can do, through Christ strengthening us. We know chance is an empty sound: The Lord

sitteth on his throne, and ruleth all things well. Love him ;  
trust him ; praise him.

My dear sister,  
Your affectionate brother.

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DXXXV.—*To Mr. Alexander Hume, Peeltown, Isle of Man.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, BRISTOL, September 22, 1775.

I REJOICE to hear that God has made Mr. Crook's labour of love profitable to some of you, and cannot blame you for desiring to have him with you a little longer. I will write to Mr. Mason, the Assistant at Whitehaven, that Mr. Crook is coming to be a third Preacher in that Circuit. The three Preachers may then visit the Isle, month by month ; so that you will have Mr. Crook one month in three. They will all teach you, that religion is holy tempers and holy lives ; and that the sum of all is love.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

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DXXXVI.—*To the Rev. Peard Dickinson.*

DEAR SIR,

CORK, May 6, 1767.

I AM now come to my second station in Ireland : For here we expect to stay seven days ; only with a digression of two out of the seven, to Bandon and Kinsale. I know not that I shall spend two whole days in any other place before I return to Dublin. I am glad you are fairly discharged from Oxford ; although there is a little seed left there still. When we were there, we profited much by watching continually against "the lust of finishing ;" to mortify which, we broke off writing in the middle of a sentence, if not in the middle of a word ; especially, the moment we heard the chapel-bell ring, or a knock at our door. If nature reclaimed, we remembered the word of the Heathen : *Ejicienda est hæc mollities animi.\**

I am glad there is so good an understanding among the Preachers : A great deal depends upon it. But I hope you

\* This softness of mind must be cast away.—EDIT.

do not forget gentle T. O. May not you venture to give him a hint, that your Hints were incorrectly printed? If he says, "They were written so, I could hardly read them;" you can tell him, "I hope to write the next better."

Miss Briggs's spending so much of her time at Shoreham answers an excellent design. It, in a great measure, supplies the want both of Miss Perronet and of her father, whom I remember with sincere affection.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXXVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

LONDONDERRY, *June 5, 1787.*

THE Irish posts are not the quickest in the world; though I have known one travel full two miles in an hour. And they are not the most certain. Letters fail here more frequently than they do in England.

Mr. Heath has need of abundance of faith and patience. He is in a very displeasing situation. But this I am determined on; he shall not want, as long as I have either money or credit. He is a truly pious and a very amiable man: His wife and children are cast in the same mould. I am glad you all showed him, while he was in London, the respect which he well deserves.

As the work of God increases in so many parts both of England and Ireland, it would be strange if there were no increase of it in London; especially while all the Preachers are of one mind, and speak the same thing. Only do not forget strongly and explicitly to urge the believers to "go on to perfection." When this is constantly and earnestly done, the word is always clothed with power.

Truly I claim no thanks for loving and esteeming Betsy Briggs; for I cannot help it. And I shall be in danger of quarrelling with you, if you ever love her less than you do now. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXXXVIII.—*To Mr. Charles Perronet.*

DEAR CHARLES, LONDON, *December 28, 1774.*

CERTAINLY there is nothing amiss in the desire to do something for a good Master; only still adding, (in this, as in all things else,) "Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt."

If we could once bring all our Preachers, itinerant and local, uniformly and steadily to insist on those two points, "Christ dying for us," and "Christ reigning in us," we should shake the trembling gates of hell. I think most of them are now exceeding clear herein, and the rest come nearer and nearer; especially since they have read Mr. Fletcher's Checks, which have removed many difficulties out of the way.

I expect more good from Mrs. B.'s medicine than from a heap of others. Remember Hezekiah's figs.

I am, dear Charles,  
Ever yours.

DXXXIX.—*To Miss Perronet.*

MY DEAR SISTER, *Near LEEDS, August 6, 1775.*

I BELIEVE my late illness has already answered many wise ends of Providence. It has been a blessing to me and to many others,—a fresh proof that God doeth all things well.

I doubt not but brother Wood and his fellow-labourer will be still zealous and active for God; and, if so, his work will surely increase at Sevenoaks and the Wells, as well as other places. Nay, I do not despair of poor Canterbury: It is not out of God's reach.

I dreamed last night that the Spaniards were come, and were searching all houses, and putting men to the torture. But on a sudden they were vanished out of the land, I could not tell how. My Betsy should not think that I am ever so busy as not to have leisure to read and answer her letters. I think Philothea too, since I am alive again, should have written to me, either in verse or prose.

I am, my dear sister,  
Your affectionate brother.

DXL.—*To Miss Briggs.*

MY DEAR BETSY, CHESTER, *March 17, 1771*

YOU have great reason to praise Him who has done great things for you already. What you now want is, to come boldly to the throne of grace, that the hunger and thirst after His full image, which God has given you, may be satisfied. Full salvation is nigh, even at the door. Only believe, and it is yours. It is a great blessing that, at your years, you are preserved from seeking happiness in any creature. You need not, seeing Christ is yours! O cleave to Him with your whole heart!

I am, my dear Betsy,  
Yours affectionately

DXLI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BETSY, ATHLONE, *April 14, 1771.*

YOU may be assured that I am always well pleased to hear from you; and that I shall never think your letters too long. Always tell me whatever is in your heart; and the more freely the better. Otherwise, it would be hardly possible to give you the advice you may want from time to time. As soon as you had your armour on, it was fit that it should be proved: So God prepared for you the occasions of fighting, that you might conquer, and might know both your own weakness and His strength. Each day will bring just temptation enough, and power enough to conquer it; and, as one says, "temptations, with distinct deliverances from them, avail much." The unction of the Holy One is given to believers for this very end,—to enable them to distinguish (which otherwise would be impossible) between sin and temptation. And this you will do, not by any general rule, but by listening to Him on all particular occasions, and by your consulting with those that have experience in the ways of God. Undoubtedly both you, and Philothea, and my dear Miss Perronet, are now more particularly called to speak for God. In so doing you must expect to meet with many things which are not pleasing to flesh and blood. But all is well. So much the more will you be conformed to the death of Christ. Go on in his name, and in the power of his might. Suffer and conquer all things.

I am, my dear Betsy,  
Yours affectionately.

DXLII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BETSY, CASTLEBAR, *May 31, 1771.*

You judge exceeding right : As yet you are but a little child, just a babe in the pure love of Christ. As a little child, hang upon him, and simply expect a supply of all your wants. In this respect reasoning profits you nothing : Indeed, it is just opposite to believing, whereby you hearken to the inward voice, which says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Undoubtedly it would be a cross to declare what God has done for your soul : Nay, and afterwards Satan would accuse you on the account, telling you, "You did it out of pride." Yea, and some of your sisters would blame you, and perhaps put the same construction upon it. Nevertheless, if you do it with a single eye, it will be well pleasing to God.

Your letters will be always agreeable to,  
My dear Betsy,  
 Yours affectionately.

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DXLIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BETSY, *December 28, 1774.*

You have done what you could in this matter ; and "angels can do no more." I am glad you tried : By and by she may see more clearly. I am always glad to hear from you, whether you have time to write accurately or not. And I love that you should tell me both what you feel, and what you do ; for I take part in all. I doubted not but you would find a blessing at this solemn season : See that you strengthen each other's hands in God. I should be glad to see both, or either of you, when it is convenient.

I am, my dear Betsy,  
 Yours affectionately.

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DXLIV.—*To Lady Huntingdon.*

MY DEAR LADY, *September 14, 1772.*

WHEN I received the former letter from your Ladyship, I did not know how to answer ; and I judged, not only that silence would be the best answer, but also that with

which your Ladyship would be best pleased. When I received your Ladyship's of the 2d instant, I immediately saw that it required an answer; only I waited till the hurry of the Conference was over, that I might do nothing rashly. I know your Ladyship would not "servilely deny the truth." I think, neither would I; especially that great truth,—justification by faith; which Mr. Law indeed flatly denies, (and yet Mr. Law was a child of God,) but for which I have given up all my worldly hopes, my friends, my reputation; yea, for which I have so often hazarded my life, and, by the grace of God, will do again. The principles established in the Minutes, I apprehend to be no way contrary to this, or to that faith, that consistent plan of doctrine, which was "once delivered to the saints." I believe, whoever calmly considers Mr. Fletcher's Letters will be convinced of this. I fear therefore, "zeal against those principles" is no less than zeal against the truth, and against the honour of our Lord. The preservation of His honour appears so sacred to me, and has done for above these forty years, that I have counted, and do count, all things loss in comparison of it. But till Mr. Fletcher's printed letters are answered, I must think everything spoken against those Minutes is totally destructive of His honour, and a palpable affront to Him, both as our Prophet and Priest, but more especially as the King of his people. Those letters, which therefore could not be suppressed without betraying the honour of our Lord, largely prove that the Minutes lay no other foundation than that which is laid in Scripture, and which I have been laying, and teaching others to lay, for between thirty and forty years. Indeed, it would be amazing, that God should at this day prosper my labours as much if not more than ever, by convincing as well as converting sinners, if I was "establishing another foundation, repugnant to the whole plan of man's salvation under the covenant of grace, as well as the clear meaning of our established Church, and all other Protestant churches." This is a charge indeed! But I plead, Not guilty. And till it is proved upon me, I must subscribe myself,

My dear Lady,

Your Ladyship's affectionate but much injured servant.

DXLV.—*To the Rev. Dean D—.*

REV. SIR,

WHEN Dr. Bentley published his Greek Testament, one remarked, "Pity but he would publish the Old; then we should have two New Testaments!" It is done. Those who receive Mr. Hutchinson's emendations certainly have two New Testaments! But I stumble at the threshold. Can we believe that God left his whole church so ignorant of the Scripture till yesterday? And if He was pleased to reveal the sense of it now, to whom may we suppose He would reveal it? "All Scripture," says Kempis, "must be understood by the same Spirit whereby it was written." And a greater than he says, "Them that are meek will he guide in judgment, and them that are gentle will He learn his way." But was Mr. Hutchinson eminently meek and gentle?

However, in order to learn all I could from his Works, after first consulting them, I carefully read over Mr. Spearman, Mr. Jones's ingenious book, and the Glasgow Abridgment. I read the last with Mr. Thomas Walsh, the best Hebræan I ever knew. I never asked him the meaning of an Hebrew word but he would immediately tell me how often it occurred in the Bible, and what it meant in each place! We then both observed that Mr. Hutchinson's whole scheme is built upon etymologies; the most uncertain foundation in the world, and the least to be depended upon. We observed, secondly, that if the points be allowed, all his building sinks at once; and, thirdly, that, setting them aside, many of his etymologies are forced and unnatural. He frequently, to find the etymology of one word, squeezes two radices together; a liberty never to be taken, where a word may fairly be derived from a single radix.

But may I hazard a few words on the points? Mr. H. affirms they were invented by the Masorites, only thirteen or fourteen hundred years ago, in order to destroy the sense of Scripture. I doubt this: Who can prove it? Who can prove they were not as old as Ezra, if not co-eval with the language? Let any one give a fair reading only to what Dr. Cornelius Bayley has offered in the preface to his Hebrew Grammar, and he will be as sick of reading without points as I am; at least, till he can answer the

Doctor's arguments, he will not be so positive upon the question.

As to his theology, I first stumble at his profuse encomiums on the Hebrew language. But, it may be said, Is it not the language which God himself used? And is not Greek too the language which God himself used? And did He not use it in delivering to man a far more perfect dispensation than that which He delivered in Hebrew? Who can deny it? And does not even this consideration give us reason at least to suspect that the Greek language is as far superior to the Hebrew, as the New Testament is to the Old? And indeed if we set prejudice aside, and consider both with attention and candour, can we help seeing that the Greek excels the Hebrew as much in beauty and strength as it does in copiousness? I suppose no one from the beginning of the world wrote better Hebrew than Moses. But does not the language of St. Paul excel the language of Moses, as much as the knowledge of St. Paul excelled his?

I speak this, even on supposition that you read the Hebrew, as I believe Ezra, if not Moses, did, with points; for if we read it in the modern way, without points, I appeal to every competent judge, whether it be not the most equivocal.

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DXLVI.—*To the Assistant Preachers.*  
(Circular.)

MY DEAR BROTHER,

ABOUT March you may begin to make the subscription for the new chapel. Till then I will beg you, with all possible diligence, to procure subscriptions for the Philosophy. Spare no pains. It will be the most complete thing in its kind of any in the English tongue. But it is well if I procure as many subscribers as will pay the expense of the edition.

I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DXLVII.—*To the Members and Friends of the Methodist Societies. (Circular.)*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

October 18, 1776.

THE society at London have given assistance to their brethren in various parts of England. They have done this for upwards of thirty years; they have done it cheerfully and liberally. The first year of the subscription for the general debt they subscribed above nine hundred pounds, the next, about three hundred; and not much less, every one of the ensuing years.

They now stand in need of assistance themselves. They are under a necessity of building; as the Foundery, with all the adjoining houses, is shortly to be pulled down: And the city of London has granted ground to build on; but on condition of covering it, and with large houses in front; which, together with the new chapel, will, at a very moderate computation, cost upward of six thousand pounds. I must therefore beg the assistance of all our brethren. Now help the parent society, which has helped others for so many years, so willingly and so largely. Now help me, who account this as a kindness done to myself; perhaps the last of this sort which I shall ask of you. Subscribe what you conveniently can, to be paid either now, or at Christmas, or at Lady-day next.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

The Trustees are, John Duplex, Charles Greenwood, Richard Kemp, Samuel Chancellor, Charles Wheeler, William Cowland, John Folgham.

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DXLVIII.—*To Mr. Richard Tompson.\**

June 28, 1755.

SOME days since, I received your favour of the 22d instant, which came exceeding seasonably; for I was just

\* This person was a member of the Methodist society at an early period after its formation. He afterwards separated himself from his old friends, and questioned the truth of some of their religious tenets; especially the witness of the Spirit, and Christian perfection. He addressed several letters to Mr. Wesley, under the assumed name of P. V.; and these called forth the replies now before

revising my Notes on the fifth chapter to the Romans: One of which I found, upon a closer inspection, seemed to assert such an imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, as might make way for the "horrible decree." I therefore struck it out immediately; as I would willingly do whatsoever should appear to be anyway inconsistent with that grand principle, "The Lord is loving to every man; and his mercy is over all his works."

If you have observed anything in any of the tracts I have published, which you think is not agreeable to Scripture and reason, you will oblige me by pointing it out, and by communicating to me any remarks you have occasionally made. I seek two things in this world,—truth and love. Whoever assists me in this search is a friend indeed, whether personally known or unknown to,

Sir,

Your humble servant.

DXLIX.—*To the Same.*

SIR,

*July 25, 1755.*

It would be a pleasure to me to write more largely than my time will now permit. Of all the disputants I have known, you are the most likely to convince me of any mistakes I may be in; because you have found out the great secret of speaking the truth in love. When it is thus proposed, it must surely win its way into every heart, which is not purposely shut against it.

That you may clearly see wherein we agree, or wherein we differ, I have sent you the Minutes of some of our late Conferences. Several concessions are made therein, both with regard to assurance and Christian perfection; some difficulties cleared, and a few arguments proposed, though very nakedly and briefly. When you have read these, you may come directly to any point of controversy which may still remain: And if you can show me that any farther

the reader. In his last letter, Mr. Tompson disclosed his real name. The entire correspondence was published with Mr. Wesley's consent, in the year 1760, in an octavo pamphlet, with the following title:—"Original Letters between the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, and Mr. Richard Tompson, respecting the Doctrine of Assurance, as held by the former: Wherein that Tenet is fully examined; with some Strictures on Christian Perfection." From this pamphlet, the subjoined letters have been copied.—EDIT.

concessions are needful, I shall make them with great pleasure.

On the subject of your last, I can but just observe, first, with regard to the assurance of faith, I apprehend that the whole Christian church in the first centuries enjoyed it. For though we have few points of doctrine explicitly taught in the small remains of the ante-Nicene Fathers; yet, I think, none that carefully reads Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Polycarp, Origen, or any other of them, can doubt whether either the writer himself possessed it, or all whom he mentions as real Christians. And I really conceive, both from the "*Harmonia Confessionum*," and whatever else I have occasionally read, that all the Reformed churches in Europe did once believe, "Every true Christian has the divine evidence of his being in favour with God."

So much for authority. The point of experience is touched upon in the Conferences.

As to the nature of the thing, I think a divine conviction of pardon is directly implied in the evidence, or conviction, of things unseen. But if not, it is no absurdity to suppose, that, when God pardons a mourning, broken-hearted sinner, His mercy obliges him to another act,—to witness to his spirit, that He has pardoned him.

I know that I am accepted: And yet that knowledge is sometimes shaken, though not destroyed, by doubt or fear. If that knowledge were destroyed, or wholly withdrawn, I could not then say I had Christian faith. To me it appears the same thing, to say, "I know God has accepted me;" or, "I have a sure trust that God has accepted me."

I agree with you, that justifying faith cannot be a conviction that I am justified; and that a man who is not assured that his sins are forgiven may yet have a kind or degree of faith, which distinguishes him, not only from a devil, but also from a Heathen; and on which I may admit him to the Lord's supper. But still I believe the proper Christian faith, which purifies the heart, implies such a conviction.

I am, Sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake.

DL.—*To the Same.*

SIR,

*February 5, 1756.*

I WAS in Cornwall when your last was brought to the Foundery, and delivered to my brother. When I returned, it was mislaid, and could not be found; so that I did not receive it till some months after the date.

You judge right with regard to the tract enclosed to you. It was sent to you by mistake, for another that bears the same name.

Christian perfection, we agree, may stand aside for the present. The point now to be considered is Christian faith. This, I apprehend, implies a divine evidence, or conviction, of our acceptance. You apprehend it does not.

In debating this (or indeed any) point with you, I lie under a great disadvantage. First, You know me; whereas, I do not know you. Secondly, I am a very slow, you seem to be a very swift, writer. Thirdly, My time is so taken up, from day to day, and from week to week, that I can spare very little from my stated employments: So that I can neither write so largely, nor so accurately, as I might otherwise do. All, therefore, which you can expect from me is, not a close-wrought chain of connected arguments, but a short sketch of what I should deduce more at large, if I had more leisure.

I believe the ancient Fathers are far from being silent on our question; though none, that I know, have treated it professedly. But I have not leisure to wade through that sea. Only to the argument from the baptism of heretics, I reply, If any had averred, during that warm controversy, "I received a sense of pardon when I was baptized by such a heretic;" those on the other side would in no wise have believed him; so that the dispute would have remained as warm as ever. I know this from plain fact. Many have received a sense of pardon when I baptized them. But who will believe them when they assert it? Who will put any dispute on this issue?

I know likewise, that Luther, Melancthon, and many other (if not all) of the Reformers, frequently and strongly assert, that every believer is conscious of his own acceptance with God; and that by a supernatural evidence, which if any choose to term immediate revelation he may. But

neither have I leisure to re-examine this cloud of witnesses. Nor, indeed, as you justly observe, would the testimony of them all together be sufficient to establish an unscriptural doctrine. Therefore, after all, we must be determined by higher evidence. And herein we are clearly agreed: We both appeal "to the law and to the testimony." May God enable us to understand it aright!

But, first, that you may not beat the air, by disproving what I never intended to prove, I will show you, as distinctly as I can, what my sentiments are upon the question; and the rather, because I plainly perceive you do not yet understand them. You seem to think I allow no degrees in grace; and that I make no distinction between the full assurance of faith, and a low or common measure of it.

Several years ago, some Clergymen, and other gentlemen, with whom we had a free conversation, proposed the following questions to my brother and me, to which we gave the answers subjoined:—

" June 25, 1744.

" QUESTION. What is faith?

" ANSWER. Faith, in general, is a divine, supernatural  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\chi\omicron\varsigma$ \* of things not seen; that is, of past, future, or spiritual. It is a spiritual sight of God, and the things of God. Justifying faith is a divine  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\chi\omicron\varsigma$ , that Christ loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*.

" Q. Have all Christians this faith? And may not a man have it, and not know it?

" A. That all Christians have such a faith as implies a consciousness of God's love, appears from Rom. viii. 15; Eph. iv. 32; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Heb. viii. 10; 1 John iv. 10; v. 1, &c. And that no man can have it, and not know that he has, appears from the nature of the thing. For faith, after repentance, is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from its immediate fruits; which are, peace, joy, love, and power over sin.

" Q. Does any one believe any longer than he sees, loves, obeys God?

" A. We apprehend not: 'Seeing God' being the very essence of faith; love and obedience, the inseparable properties of it."

\* Evidence or conviction.—EDIT.

“August 2, 1745.

“QUESTION. Is an assurance of God’s pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favour? Or may there possibly be some exempt cases?

“ANSWER. We dare not positively say there are not.

“Q. Is it necessary to final salvation, in those (as Papists) who never heard it preached?

“A. We know not how far invincible ignorance may excuse. ‘Love hopeth all things.’

“Q. But what, if one who does hear it preached should die without it?

“A. We determine nothing. We leave his soul in the hands of Him that made it.

“Q. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

“A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be very many degrees of seeing God; even as many as are between seeing the sun with the eyelids closed, and with the eyes open.”

The doctrine which I espouse, till I receive farther light, being thus explained and limited, I observe,—

First. A divine conviction of my being reconciled to God is, I think, directly implied (not in a divine evidence, or conviction, of something else, but) in a divine conviction that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me; and still more clearly in the Spirit’s bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God.

Secondly. I see no reason either to retract or soften the expression, “God’s mercy, in some cases, obliges him to act thus and thus.” Certainly, as his own nature obliges him (in a very clear and sound sense) to act according to truth and justice in all things; so, in some sense, his love obliged him to give his only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, might not perish. So much for the phrase. My meaning is, The same compassion which moves God to pardon a mourning, broken-hearted sinner, moves Him to comfort that mourner, by witnessing to his spirit, that his sins are pardoned.

Thirdly. You think, “full assurance excludes all doubt.” I think so too. But there may be faith without full assurance. And these lower degrees of faith do not exclude doubts, which frequently mingle therewith, more or less.

But this you cannot allow. You say, it cannot be shaken without being overthrown; and trust I shall be "convinced upon reflection, that the distinction between 'shaken' and 'destroyed' is absolutely without a difference." Hark! The wind rises: The house *shakes*; but it is not *overthrown*. It *totters*; but it is not *destroyed*.

You add, "Assurance is quite a distinct thing from faith. Neither does it depend upon the same agent. Faith is an act of my mind; assurance an act of the Holy Ghost." I answer, first, The assurance in question is no other than the full assurance of faith: Therefore it cannot be a distinct thing from faith; but only so high a degree of faith as excludes all doubt and fear. Secondly, This *plerophory*, or full assurance, is doubtless wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. But so is every degree of true faith; yet the mind of man is the subject of both. I believe feebly: I believe without all doubt.

Your next remark is, "The Spirit's witnessing that we are accepted, cannot be the faith whereby we are accepted." I allow it. A conviction that we are justified, cannot be implied in justifying faith.

You subjoin, "A sure trust that God hath accepted me is not the same thing with knowing that God has accepted me." I think it is the same thing with some degree of that knowledge. But it matters not whether it be so, or no. I will not contend for a term. I contend only for this,—that every true Christian believer has "a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, he is reconciled to God;" and that, in consequence of this, he is able to say, "The life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

It is a very little thing to excuse a warm expression, (if you need any such excuse,) while I am convinced of your real good-will to,

Sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake.

DLI.—*To the Same.*

SIR,

*February 18, 1756.*

You ask, "Can a man who has not a clear assurance that his sins are forgiven, be in a state of justification?"

I believe there are some instances of it.

2. "Can a person be in a state of justification, who, being asked, 'Do you know your sins are forgiven?' answers, 'I am not certainly sure; but I do not entertain the least doubt of it?'"

I believe he may.

3. "Can he who answers, 'I trust they are?'"

It is very possible he may be in that state.

4. "Can any one know that his sins are forgiven while he doubts thereof?"

Not at that instant when he doubts of it. But he may generally know it, though he doubts at some particular time.

I answer as plainly and simply as I can, that if I am in a mistake, I may the more easily be convinced of it.

DLII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

*March 16, 1756.*

MY belief, in general, is this,—that every Christian believer has a divine conviction of his reconciliation with God. The sum of those concessions is, "I am inclined to think, there may be some exceptions."

Faith implies both the perceptive faculty itself, and the act of perceiving God and the things of God. And the expression, "seeing God," may include both; the act, and the faculty, of seeing him.

Bishop Pearson's definition is abundantly too wide for the faith of which we are speaking. Neither does he give that definition, either of justifying or saving faith. But if he did, I should prefer the definition of Bishop Paul.

A clear conviction of the love of God cannot remain in any who do not walk closely with God. And I know no one person who has lost this without some voluntary defect in his conduct: Though perhaps at the time he was not conscious of it; but upon prayer it was revealed to him.

Your reasons for concealing your name were good. We cannot too carefully guard against prejudice. You have no need of any excuse at all: For you have done no wrong, but rather a pleasure, to

Your affectionate brother.

DLIII.—*To the Same.**August 22, 1759.*

I AM afraid you would hardly save yourself harmless by the publication of those letters. However, if you are inclined to run the hazard, I do not object. Only it would be needful to advertise the readers, that what I wrote was in haste, just as I could snatch a little time, now and then, to answer the private letter of a private friend, without any thought of its going any farther.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLIV.—*To Samuel Sparrow, Esq.\**

SIR,

*February 26, 1772.*

I HAVE read with pleasure your ingenious book, which contains many just and noble sentiments, expressed in easy and proper language. I observe only two points in which we do not quite think alike. One of these is expressly treated of in that Tract which reduces us to that clear dilemma: "Either Jesus Christ was God, or he was not an honest man." The other is largely considered in the book † of which I now desire your acceptance. Wishing you all happiness in this life, and in a better,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

*Near LEEDS, July 2, 1772.*

I HAVE delayed answering your favour from time to time, hoping for leisure to answer it at large. But when that leisure will come, I cannot tell; for, in the summer months,

\* Author of "Family Prayers, and Moral Essays in Verse and Prose." He presented a copy of this work to Mr. Wesley, which occasioned their correspondence. A sermon on the occasion of his death, by Dr. Kippis, and selections from his papers, were published in 1782, in a small octavo volume, printed at Chesterfield. From this volume these letters of Mr. Wesley have been copied.—EDIT.

† Mr. Wesley's Answer to Dr. Taylor, on Original Sin.—EDIT.

I am almost continually in motion. So I will delay no longer, but write a little as I can, though not as I would.

I incline to think, that when you engaged in business, though you had no leisure for reading polemical writers, you had leisure to converse with those who ridiculed the doctrines which you till then believed, and perhaps of hearing a Preacher who disbelieved them, and talked largely against human authority, bodies of divinity, systems of doctrine, and compiling of creeds. These declamations would certainly make an impression upon an unexperienced mind; especially when confirmed by frequent descants upon the errors of translators; although I really believe our English translation, with all its faults, is the best translation of the Bible now in the world. When you had heard a good deal of this kind, then was the time to offer you such arguments as the cause afforded; which, to a mind so prepared, would naturally appear as so many demonstrations. And it is no wonder at all, that by lending you a few books, and properly commenting upon them, those new apostles should confirm you in the sentiments which they had so artfully infused.

To the questions which you propose, I answer, 1. I really think, that if an hundred, or an hundred thousand, sincere, honest (I add, humble, modest, self-diffident) men were, with attention and care, to read over the New Testament, uninfluenced by any but the Holy Spirit, nine in ten of them, at least, if not every one, would discover that the Son of God was "adorable," and one God with the Father; and would be immediately led to "honour Him, even as they honoured the Father;" which would be gross, undeniable idolatry, unless He and the Father are one.

2. The doctrine of original sin is surely more humbling to man than the opposite: And I know not what honour we can pay to God, if we think man came out of His hands in the condition wherein he is now. I beg of you, Sir, to consider the fact. Give a fair, impartial reading to that account of mankind in their present state, which is contained in the book on Original Sin. It is no play of imagination, but plain, clear fact. We see it with our eyes, and hear it with our ears, daily. Heathens, Turks, Jews, Christians, of every nation, are such men as are there

described. Such are the tempers, such the manners, of Lords, gentlemen, clergymen, in England, as well as of tradesmen and the low vulgar. No man in his senses can deny it; and none can account for it, but upon the supposition of original sin.

O Sir, how important a thing is this! Can you refuse to worship Him whom "all the angels of God worship?" But if you do worship one that is not the supreme God, you are an idolater! Commending you and yours to His care,

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLVI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

WINDMILL-HILL, *October 9, 1773.*

ON Scripture and common sense I build all my principles. Just so far as it agrees with these, I regard human authority.

God could not command me to worship a creature without contradicting Himself: Therefore, if a voice from heaven bade me honour a creature as I honour the Creator, I should know, This is the voice of Satan, not of God.

The Father and the Son are not "two beings," but "one." As he is man, the Father is doubtless "greater than the Son;" who, as such, "can do nothing of himself," and is no more omniscient than omnipresent. And, as man, he might well say, "I ascend to my Father and your Father," and pray to his Father and his God. He bids his disciples also to pray to him, but never forbids their praying to himself. I take this to be the plain, obvious, easy meaning of our Lord's words; and the only one wherein they are reconcilable with a hundred passages both of the Old and New Testament.

With regard to original sin, (I mean the proneness to evil which is found in every child of man,) you have supposed it in the Essays with which you favoured me, almost from the beginning to the end: And you have frequently asserted it; although you could not assert it in plainer terms than the honest, unbiassed Heathens have done: *Vitiis nemo sine nascitur.\** Hence, *Omnes naturá proclives ad libi-*

\* This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Smart: "No one is born without vices."—EDIT.

*dinem.\** Hence, *Dociles imitandis turpibus et pravis omnes sumus.†*

But I believe nothing can set this point in a more clear and strong light than the tract which I beg you to accept of.‡ Accept, likewise, the best wishes of,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

DLVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SIR,

December 28, 1773.

UPON the head of authority we are quite agreed. Our guides are Scripture and reason. We agree, too, that Preachers who “relax our obligation to moral virtues, who decry holiness as filthy rags, who teach men that easy, palatable way to heaven, of faith without works,” cannot easily fail of having a multitude of hearers; and that, therefore, it is no wonder if vast numbers crowd Blackfriars church, and the chapel at the Lock.

There is also too “just a ground for charging the Preachers both there and at the Tabernacle with grievous want of charity.” For most of them flatly maintain, all who do not believe as they believe, are in a state of damnation; all who do not believe that absolute decree of election, which necessarily infers absolute reprobation.

But none were induced to hear my brother and me, or those connected with us, by any such means as these: Just the reverse. We set out upon two principles: 1. None go to heaven without holiness of heart and life: 2. Whosoever follows after this (whatever his opinions be) is my “brother, and sister, and mother:” And we have not swerved an hair’s breadth from either one or the other of these to this day.

Thus it was, that two young men, without a name, without friends, without either power or fortune, “set out from College with principles totally different from those of the

\* This quotation from Terence is thus rendered by Colman:—

—————“The mind

Falls easily from labour to delight.”—EDIT.

† This quotation from Juvenal is thus translated by Gifford:—

“For youth is facile, and its yielding will

Receives, with fatal ease, the’ imprint of ill.”—EDIT.

‡ Mr. Fletcher’s “Appeal.”—EDIT.

common people," to oppose all the world, learned and unlearned; to "combat popular prejudices" of every kind. Our first principle directly attacked all the wickedness, our second, all the bigotry, in the world. Thus they attempted a reformation, not of opinions, (feathers, trifles not worth the naming,) but of men's tempers and lives; of vice in every kind; of everything contrary to justice, mercy, or truth. And for this it was, that they carried their lives in their hands,—that both the great vulgar and the small looked upon them as mad dogs, and treated them as such; sometimes saying in terms, "Will nobody knock that mad dog on the head?"

Let every one, then, speak as he finds: As for me, I cannot admire either the wisdom, or virtue, or happiness of mankind. Wherever I have been, I have found the bulk of mankind, Christian as well as Heathen, deplorably ignorant, vicious, and miserable. I am sure they are so in London and Westminster. Sin and pain are on every side. And who can account for this, but on the supposition that we are in a fallen state? I have proved at large, it can no otherwise be accounted for. Yet none need perish; for we have an almighty Saviour; one who is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant.

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DLVIII.—*To Miss Bolton.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BANDON, *May 2, 1771.*

I WANTED much to know how your soul prospered. I could not doubt but the god of this world, the enemy of all righteousness, would use every means to move you from your steadfastness. Blessed be God, you are not moved! that all his labour has been in vain! Hitherto hath God helped you; and, fear not, he will help you to the end. He gives you health as a token for good: He can trust you with it, while you give him your heart. And O stand fast in the glorious liberty wherewith he has made you free! You are not called to desire suffering. Innocent nature is averse from pain; only, as soon as his will appears, yours is

to sink down before it. Hark! what does he say to you now? "Lovest thou me more than these?" more than these,—

Wealth, honour, pleasure, or what else  
This short-enduring world can give?

Then, "feed my lambs;" carry the little ones in thy bosom; gently lead those that are great with young.

Be not weary of well-doing: In due time thou shalt reap, if thou faint not, &c., &c.

Yours most affectionately.

DLIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *June 15, 1771.*

A LETTER from you is always welcome; but never more so than now; as this is the time wherein it seems good to our Lord to try you as by fire. Fear nothing; only believe. He is with you in the fire, so that the flames shall not kindle upon you. O how will you praise him by and by, for his wise and gracious visitation! He is purging away all your dross, that you may be a vessel meet for the Master's use. Happy are they that do his will; and happier still, they that suffer it. But, whatever you suffer, cast not away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward. In order to keep it, do not reason, but simply look up to Him that loves you. Tell him, as a little child, all your wants. Look up, and your suit is made: He hears the cry of your heart. And tell all that troubles you to

Yours affectionately.

DLX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LYNN, *November 7, 1771.*

AT length I have snatched an hour to repeat to you in writing the advices which I gave you before. 1. Keep that safe which God has given you: Never let slip any blessing which you have received. Regard none who tell you, "You must lose it." No; you never need lose one degree of love. 2. You never will, provided you are a careful steward of the manifold gifts of God. To him that hath, that is, useth what he hath, it shall be given still, and that more abundantly. Therefore, 3. Use your every grace. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Be zealous! Be active! Spare no one. Speak for God, wherever you are.

But, meantime, 4. Be humble : Let all that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. And be clothed with humility. Pray that you may always feel that you are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. In this spirit speak and do everything, giving all the glory to Him that lives and rules in your heart by faith.

Last night I was reading some advices of a French author, part of which may be of use to you. Only observe, he is writing to one that had living faith, but was not perfected in love.

“ How can I distinguish pride from temptation to pride ? ”  
 “ It is extremely difficult to distinguish these, and still more so to lay down rules for doing it. Our eyes cannot penetrate the ground of our hearts. Pride and vanity are natural to us ; and, for that reason, nothing is more constantly at hand, nothing less observed, than their effects. The grand rule is, to sound sincerely the ground of our hearts, when we are not in the hurry of temptation. For if, on inquiry, we find that it loves obscurity and silence ; that it dreads applause and distinction ; that it esteems the virtue of others, and excuses their faults with mildness ; that it easily pardons injuries ; that it fears contempt less and less ; that it sees a falsehood and baseness in pride, and a true nobleness and greatness in humility ; that it knows and reveres the inestimable riches of the cross, and the humiliations of Jesus Christ ; that it fears the lustre of those virtues which are admired by men, and loves those that are more secret ; that it draws more comfort even from its own defects, through the abasement which they occasion ; and that it prefers any degree of compunction before all the light in the world : Then you may trust that all the motions you feel tending to pride or vanity, whether they are sudden or are thrust against you for some time, are not sin, but temptation. And then it may be the best to turn from and despise them, instead of giving them weight, by fixing your attention upon them.”

I want a particular account both of your inward and outward health. Tell me how you are, and what you are doing : Withhold nothing from

Your affectionate friend and brother,

DLXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *December 5, 1772.*

I KNOW not that ever you asked me a question which I did not readily answer. I never heard any one mention anything concerning you on that account; but I myself was jealous over you. Perhaps I shall find faults in you that others do not; for I survey you on every side. I mark your every motion and temper; because I long for you to be without spot or blemish.

What I have seen in London occasioned the first caution I gave you. George Bell, William Green, and many others, then full of love, were favoured with extraordinary revelations and manifestations from God. But by this very thing Satan beguiled them from the simplicity that is in Christ. By insensible degrees they were led to value these extraordinary gifts more than the ordinary grace of God; and I could not convince them that a grain of humble love was better than all these gifts put together. This, my dear friend, was what made me fear for you. This makes me remind you again and again. Faith and hope are glorious gifts, and so is every ray of eternity let into the soul. But still these are but means: The end of all, and the greatest of all, is love. May the Lord just now pour it into your heart as he never has done before.

By all means spend an hour every other day in the labour of love, even though you cannot help them as you would. Commending you to Him who is able to make you perfect in every good word and work,

I am

Yours affectionately.

DLXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *July 18, 1773.*

YOUR late conversation was exceeding pleasant to me. I had sometimes been almost inclined to think that your affection was lessened; but I now believe it is not. I trust your love is not grown cold. This gave me much satisfaction, though I could not but be concerned at seeing you so encumbered with worldly business. Surely it will not be so always. But God's time is best! Two or three of those little things I have sent you:—

WITH peaceful mind thy race of duty run :  
 God nothing does, or suffers to be done,  
 But what thou wouldst thyself, if thou couldst see  
 Through all events of things as well as He.

Let thy repentance be without delay :  
 If thou defer it to another day,  
 Thou must repent for a day more of sin,  
 While a day less remains to do it in.

Nor steel nor flint alone produces fire,  
 Nor spark arises till they both conspire :  
 Nor faith alone, nor works without, is right ;  
 Salvation rises when they both unite.

If gold be offer'd thee, thou dost not say,  
 "To-morrow I will take it, not to-day :"  
 Salvation offer'd, why art thou so cool  
 To let thyself become to-morrow's fool ?

PRAYER and thanksgiving is the vital breath  
 That keeps the spirit of a man from death :  
 For prayer attracts into the living soul  
 The life that fills the universal whole ;  
 And giving thanks is breathing forth again  
 The praise of Him who is the life of men.

Two different painters, artists in their way,  
 Have drawn religion in her full display.  
 To both she sat : One gazed at her all o'er ;  
 The other fix'd upon her features more.  
 Hervey has figured her with every grace  
 That dress could give ; but Law has hit her face.

The specious sermons of a learned man  
 Are little else than flashes in the pan.  
 The mere haranguing upon what they call  
 Morality, is powder without ball :  
 But he who preaches with a Christian grace  
 Fires at your vices, and the shot takes place.

Faith, Hope, and Love, were question'd what they thought  
 Of future glory, which Religion taught.  
 Now Faith believed it firmly to be true,  
 And Hope expected so to find it too :  
 Love answer'd, smiling with a conscious glow,  
 "Believe ! expect ! I know it to be so."

Go on in this humble, gentle love ; that you may abound  
 therein more and more. Aim at nothing higher than this :  
 And may the God of love still possess you whole, and guide  
 your every thought, and word, and work. Continue to pray for

Your affectionate brother.

DLXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 8, 1773.*

It gives me much pleasure to observe that you do not lose your simplicity. You seem not only to retain simplicity of spirit, (the great thing,) but likewise of sentiment and language. God has indeed dealt very graciously with you from the beginning hitherto. He has led you tenderly by the hand from grace to grace, and from faith to faith: And you may well say,

“The mercy I feel To others I show;  
I set to my seal That Jesus is true.”

Go on in His name, and earnestly exhort all that know Him to press forward to the mark. Encourage them to aspire after full salvation, salvation into the whole image of God. Beware you do not decline in your zeal for this: Let no prudence hinder you. Let prudence “guide, not cool, its fires.”

Still let it for His glory burn,  
With unextinguishable blaze:  
And trembling to its source return,  
In flames of love, and joy, and praise.

But I had forgotten that I am in haste. I hope Mr. S. will be a blessing to many. He is alive to God. This day I set out for Bristol, and thence to Cornwall; but I hope to be at Bristol again on the 28th instant. Life is short! We have need to improve every moment!

Adieu!

DLXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *September 27, 1777.*

UNDOUBTEDLY Satan, who well understands the manner how the mind is influenced by the body, can, by means of those parts in the animal machine which are more immediately subservient to thinking, raise a thousand perceptions and emotions in the mind, so far as God is pleased to permit. I doubt not but he was the chief agent in your late painful exercises. And you gave him advantage by reasoning with him, that is, fighting him with his own weapons; instead of simply looking up, and saying, “Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God.” You undoubtedly want more thankfulness; and you want more simplicity; that grace, Cambray says, “which cuts the soul off from all

unnecessary reflections upon itself." You are encompassed with ten thousand mercies ; and the greatest of all is,

Christ in a pure and spotless heart.

Beware of ever admitting any doubt or reasoning concerning this! Whereunto you have attained, hold fast ; and use all the grace you have received. Warn every one, and exhort every one, and especially those who groan after full salvation.

I cannot, on any account, pass a whole day without commending you to God in prayer.

I thank you for writing to me so soon. Continue to love and pray for

Yours most affectionately.

DLXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 2, 1781.*

It is a great step towards Christian resignation, to be thoroughly convinced of that great truth, that there is no such thing as chance in the world ; that fortune is only another name for Providence ; only it is covered Providence. An event, the cause of which does not appear, we commonly say, comes by chance. O no ; it is guided by an unerring hand ; it is the result of infinite wisdom and goodness. Such are all the afflictive circumstances that have followed you in a constant succession, almost from your childhood. He that made the Captain of your salvation perfect through sufferings has called you to walk in the same path, and for the same end ; namely, that you may learn obedience, more full, inward obedience, a more perfect conformity to His death, by the things that you suffer. A little while, and "He will wipe all tears from your eyes ; and there shall be no more sorrow or crying ; neither shall there be any more pain !" but you shall hear the great voice out of heaven, saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men ; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God !" Still love and pray for

Your ever affectionate brother.

DLXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1784.*

MANY years ago, Mr. Hall, then strong in faith, believed God called him to marry my youngest sister. He

told her so. She fully believed him, and none could convince one or the other to the contrary. I talked with her about it; but she had "so often made it matter of prayer, that she could not be deceived." In a week he dropped her, courted her elder sister, and, as soon as was convenient, married her. The disappointed one then found exactly the same temptations that you do now. But neither did she keep the devil's counsel. She told me all that was in her heart; and the consequence was, that, by the grace of God, she gained a complete victory. So will you. And you will be the better enabled, by your own experience, to guard all, especially young persons, from laying stress upon anything but the written word of God. Guard them against reasoning in that dangerous manner, "If I was deceived in this, then I was deceived in thinking myself justified." Not at all; although nature, or Satan in the latter case, admirably well mimicked the works of God. By mighty prayer repel all those suggestions, and afterwards your faith will be so much the more strengthened; and you will be more than conqueror through Him that loveth you. Whenever you find yourself pressed above measure, you must make another little excursion. While you help others, God will help you. This may be one end of this uncommon dispensation. You must not bury your talent in the earth. Wishing you more and more of that

Lovely, lasting peace of mind,

I am

Yours most affectionately.

DLXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

WEDNESBURY, *March 28, 1785.*

YOU are in danger of falling into both extremes; of making light of, as well as fainting under, His chastening. This you do whenever you look at any circumstance, without seeing the hand of God in it; without seeing at the same instant, This unkindness, this reproach, this returning evil for good, as well as this faintness, this weariness, this pain, is the cup which my Father hath given me. And shall I not drink it? Why does He give it me? Only for my profit, that I "may be a partaker of his holiness."

I have often found an aptness both in myself and others, to connect events that have no real relation to each other.

So one says, "I am as sure this is the will of God, as that I am justified." Another says, "God as surely spake this to my heart as ever he spoke to me at all." This is an exceedingly dangerous way of thinking or speaking. We know not what it may lead us to. It may sap the very foundation of our religion. It may insensibly draw us into Deism or Atheism. My dear Nancy, my sister, my friend, beware of this! The grace of God is sufficient for you! And whatever clouds may interpose between, his banner over you is love. Look to yourself that you lose not the things that you have gained; but that you may receive a full reward.

Adieu!

DLXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *January 9, 1789.*

"SIR, you are troubled," said Mr. Law to me, "because you do not understand how God is dealing with you. Perhaps if you did, it would not so well answer his design. He is teaching you to trust Him farther than you can see Him." He is now teaching you the same lesson. Hitherto you cannot understand his ways. But they are all mercy and truth. And though you do not know now what He does, you shall know hereafter.

I am acquainted with several persons whom I believed to be saved from sin. But there is great variety in the manner wherein God is pleased to lead them. Some of them are called to act much for God; some to rejoice much; some to suffer much. All of these shall receive their crown. But when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, the brightest crown will be given to the sufferers. Look up, thou blessed one! the time is at hand!

I am

Ever yours.

DLXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEEDS, *August 1, 1789.*

I THANK you for sending me so particular an account of your sister's death. "Right precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints!" It is well you have learned to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" And you can say it even.

When loss of friends ordain'd to know,—  
Next pain and guilt, the sorest ill below.

But why does our Lord inflict this upon us? Not merely for his pleasure, but that we may be partakers of his holiness. It is true, one grand means of grace is the doing the will of our Lord. But the suffering it is usually a quicker means, and sinks us deeper into the abyss of love. It hath pleased God to lead you in the way of suffering, from your youth up until now. For the present this is not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, it has yielded peaceable fruit. Your soul is still as a watered garden, as a field which the Lord hath blessed. Cleave to Him still with full purpose of heart. To His tender care I commend you; and am

Yours affectionately.

DLXX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, HIGH-WYCOMB, *November 4, 1790.*

THE more I consider your case, the more I am convinced that you are in the school of God, and that the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. From the time you omitted meeting your class or band, you grieved the Holy Spirit of God, and he gave a commission to Satan to buffet you: Nor will that commission ever be revoked, till you begin to meet again. Why were you not a mother in Israel?—a repairer of the waste places?—a guide to the blind?—a healer of the sick?—a lifter up of the hands which hung down? Wherever you came, God was with you, and shone upon your path. Many daughters had done virtuously; but thou excellest them all. Woman, remember the faith! In the name of God, set out again, and do the first works! I exhort you, for my sake, (who tenderly love you,) for God's sake, for the sake of your own soul, begin again without delay. The day after you receive this, go and meet a class or a band. Sick or well, go! If you cannot speak a word, go; and God will go with you. You sink under the sin of omission! My friend, my sister, go! Go, whether you can, or not. Break through! Take up your cross. I say again, do the first works; and God will restore your first love! and you will be a comfort, not a grief, to

Yours most affectionately.

DLXXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, LONDON, *December 15, 1790.*

THERE can be no possible reason to doubt concerning the happiness of that child. He did fear God, and, according to his circumstances, work righteousness. This is the essence of religion, according to St. Peter. His soul, therefore, was "darkly safe with God," although he was only under the Jewish dispensation.

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and assign every man his own reward, that reward will undoubtedly be proportioned, 1. To our inward holiness, our likeness to God: 2. To our works: And, 3. To our sufferings. Therefore, whatever you suffer in time, you will be an unspeakable gainer in eternity. Many of your sufferings, perhaps the greatest part, are now past. But your joy is to come! Look up, my dear friend, look up! and see your crown before you! A little longer, and you shall drink of the rivers of pleasure that flow at God's right hand for evermore.

Adieu!

DLXXII.—*To Mr. John Valton.*

LONDON, *June 30, 1764.*

It is certainly right, with all possible care, to abstain from all outward occasions of evil. But this profits only a little: The inward change is the one thing needful for you. You must be born again, or you will never gain a uniform and lasting liberty.

Your whole soul is diseased, or rather dead,—dead to God,—dead in sin. Awake then, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. To seek for a particular deliverance from one sin only is mere lost labour. If it could be attained, it would be of little worth; for another would rise in its place;—but indeed it cannot, before there is a general deliverance from the guilt and power of all sin. This is the thing which you want, and which you should be continually seeking for. You want to be freely justified from all things, through the redemption that is in Jesus. It might be of use if you would read over the first volume of Sermons, seriously, and with prayer. Indeed nothing

will avail without prayer. Pray, whether you can or not: When you are cheerful, when you are heavy, pray; with many or few words, or none at all. You will surely find an answer of peace. And why not now?

I am

Your servant for Christ's sake.

DLXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, DUBLIN, *March 23, 1769.*

CERTAINLY the Lord is preparing you for a more extensive work, and showing, that he can and will give you a mouth. Take care you do not cleave to any person or thing! God is a jealous God. And stay where you are as long as you can stay; but do not resist, when he thrusts you out into his harvest. That God has called you to a more extensive work, I cannot doubt in the least. He has given you an earnest of it at Stroud; and your weakness of soul or body is no bar to Him. Leave Him to remove that, when and as it pleases Him. But I doubt concerning the time: It does not seem to be fully come. At present you are to do all you can where you are, and to be always hearkening to his voice, and waiting till he makes plain the way before your face.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *November 21, 1769.*

IT is a great thing to be open to the call of God. It really seems as if he were now calling you. When I wrote last, you was not willing to go out; and, probably, he is now thrusting you out into his harvest. If so, take care you be not disobedient to the heavenly calling. Otherwise, you may be permitted to fall lower than you imagine.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *December 2, 1769.*

CERTAINLY you are not called to go out now. I believe you will be by and by. Your inabilities are no bar;

for, when you are sent, you will not be sent a warfare at your own cost. Now improve the present hour where you are.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DLXXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *October 29, 1786.*

Do not cast water upon a drowning man: And take care of receiving anything upon Joseph ——'s testimony. Speaking is not the thing, but revealing what is spoken in band, had it been true. Unless S.Y.—be convinced of this sin, I will expel her the society, the first time I come to Bath. I must do justice, if the sky falls. I am the last resort. A word to the wise! I am sure Michael Griffith is good enough for the place, if he is not too good. I hope Mr. Jones is set out for Brecon. See that Michael have fair play.

DLXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *December 22, 1786.*

I CANNOT hope for the recovery of your health and strength, unless you intermit preaching. I therefore positively require you, for a month from the date of this, not to preach more than twice in a week; and if you preach less, I will not blame you. But you should, at all hazards, ride an hour every day; only wrapping yourself up very close. Take care not to lodge in too close a room, and not to draw your curtains close. As we are just entering upon the affair of the poor in London, I want to know what has been done at Bristol. A particular account of the steps which have been taken there may both animate and instruct our friends here.

It is amazing that we cannot find in the three kingdoms a fit master for Kingswood school! Talk largely with Michael Griffith, then pray with him and for him; and God will give him gifts.

Your affectionate friend and brother.

Pray do as much as you can, and do not attempt to do more, or you will very soon do nothing.

DLXXVIII.—*To Mr. Francis Wolfe.*

DEAR FRANCIS, LONDON, *November 22, 1772.*

AT what place are the fifty-four pounds, (old debt,) and at what places the three hundred and sixty-three?

You should speak plainly to brother A. Before his illness I am afraid he had lost much ground. He should receive this stroke as a call from God, and, for the time to come, live as he did when he travelled first.

Let both of you strongly exhort the believers everywhere to "go on to perfection;" otherwise, they cannot keep what they have.

I am, with love to sister W.,  
Your affectionate friend and brother.

DLXXIX.—*To the Same.*

BRISTOL, *September 15, 1773.*

FRANKY, are you out of your wits? Why are you not at Bristol?\*

DLXXX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *December 26, 1775.*

So the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away! He hath done all things well. What a word was that of M. de Renty on a like occasion!—"I cannot say but my soul is greatly moved at the sense of so great a loss. Nevertheless, I am so well satisfied that the will of the Lord, rather than that of a vile sinner, is done, that, were it not for offending others, I could shout and sing."

Now, give yourself up more entirely and unreservedly to God. You have nothing else to care for, but the things of the Lord, how you may please the Lord.

I am  
Your affectionate brother.

DLXXXI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, YORK, *July 30, 1781.*

To allow money for the keeping of children is not the business of the Conference, but of the Circuit wherein a Preacher labours. So it is expressly appointed in the

\* This is the whole of the letter. Mr. Wolfe was appointed that year for the Bristol Circuit.—EDIT.

Minutes. I do not judge it is expedient for you to remain any longer in the west of England. I am glad to hear that your spirit revives. You need not "let Him go except He bless you."

I am, dear Franky,  
Yours, &c.

DLXXXII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *January 24, 1782.*

YOU have much reason to bless God, both on your own account, and on account of the people. Now, see that you adorn in all things the doctrine of God our Saviour. See that your conversation be in grace, always seasoned with salt, and meet to minister grace to the hearers; and let none of your Preachers touch any spirituous liquors upon any account! I am sorry for poor Joseph B—. The loss of that excellent woman will be a loss indeed! But there is One who is able to turn all to good.

I am, dear Franky, &c.

DLXXXIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER, LONDON, *August 6, 1782.*

NECESSITY has no law. Till your strength is restored, do all the good you can as a Local Preacher.\*

DLXXXIV.—*To Miss Fuller.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

YOU did well in giving me a plain and circumstantial account of the manner wherein God has dealt with your soul. Your part is now to stand fast in the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. There is no need that

\* We subjoin the following letter to the same individual from Mr. Charles Wesley.—EDIT.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

LONDON, *July 2, 1774.*

GO on in the narrow way of the cross, praying, trusting, and labouring more abundantly. I shall always be glad to hear of your success. The first point is, "Take heed to thyself;" and then "to the doctrine." Personal holiness we should above all things labour after, that we may be a pattern to the flock. My wife joins in love to your partner, &c., &c., with,

My dear brother,

Your sincerely affectionate friend.

you should ever be entangled again in the bondage of pride, or anger, or desire. God is willing to give always what he grants once. Temptations, indeed, you are to expect. But you may tread them all under your feet: His grace is sufficient for you. And the God of all grace, after you have suffered a while, shall establish, strengthen, and settle you.

I am, my dear sister,  
Yours affectionately.

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DLXXXV.—*To Miss H*—.

WITHOUT doubt it seems to you, that yours is a peculiar case. You think there is none like you in the world. Indeed there are. It may be, ten thousand persons are now in the same state of mind as you. I myself was so a few years ago. I felt the wrath of God abiding on me. I was afraid every hour of dropping into hell. I knew myself to be the chief of sinners. Though I had been very innocent, in the account of others, I saw my heart to be all sin and corruption. I was without the knowledge and the love of God, and therefore an abomination in his sight.

But I had an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And so have you. He died for your sins; and he is now pleading for you at the right hand of God. O look unto Him, and be saved! He loves you freely, without any merit of yours. He has atoned for all your sins.

See all your sins on Jesus laid!

His blood has paid for all. Fear nothing; only believe. His mercy embraces you: It holds you in on every side. Surely you shall not depart hence, till your eyes have seen his salvation.

I am, Madam,  
Your affectionate brother

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DLXXXVI.—*To Mrs. Marston, of Worcester.*

MY DEAR SISTER,      BROAD-MARSTON, *March 16, 1770.*

I WANT to ask you several questions. At what time, and in what manner, was you justified? Did you from

that time find a constant witness of it? When and how was you convinced of the necessity of sanctification? When did you receive it, and in what manner? Did you then find the witness of it? Has it been clear ever since? Have you not found any decay since that time? Do you now find as much life as ever you did? Can you give God your whole heart? In what sense do you "pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks?" Do you find a testimony in yourself, that all your words and actions please Him?

You have no need to be nice or curious in answering these questions. You have no occasion to set your words in order; but speak to me, just as you would do to one of your sisters. The language of love is the best of all. One truly says,—

"There is in love a sweetness ready penn'd:  
Copy out only that, and save expense."

You have love in your heart: Let that teach you words. Out of the abundance of the heart let your mouth speak. I shall know better how to advise you. I have a great concern for you, and a desire that you should never lose anything which God has wrought, but should receive a full reward. Stand fast in the name of the Lord, and in the power of his might!

I am

Your affectionate brother.

You may direct to me, at the preaching-house in Manchester.

DLXXXVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CHESTER, *April 1, 1770.*

As I had not time to converse with you as I would at Worcester, I was exceedingly glad to see you at Wednesbury. It was the very thing I desired. And surely our Lord will withhold from us no manner of thing that is good. I am glad that you can both speak and write to me freely: It may often be of service to you; especially if God should suffer you to be assaulted by strong and uncommon temptations. I should not wonder if this were to be the case: Though, perhaps, it never will; especially if you continue simple; if, when you are assaulted by that wicked one, you do not reason with him, but just look up for help,

hanging upon Him that has washed you in his own blood. Do you now find power to "rejoice evermore?" Can you "pray without ceasing?" Is your heart to Him, though without a voice? And do you "in everything give thanks?" Is your whole desire to Him? And do you still find an inward witness that He has cleansed your heart? Stand fast, then, in that glorious liberty, wherewith Christ has made you free!

I am, dear Molly,

Your affectionate brother.

I expect to be in Glasgow about the 17th of this month.

DLXXXVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*August 11, 1770.*

I THOUGHT it long since I heard from you, and wanted to know how your soul prospered. Undoubtedly, as long as you are in the body, you will come short of what you would be; and you will see more and more of your numberless defects, and the imperfection of your best actions and tempers. Yet all this need not hinder your rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks. Heaviness you may sometimes feel; but you never need come into darkness. Beware of supposing darkness, that is, unbelief, to be better than the light of faith. To suppose this is one of the gross errors of Popery. "He that followeth me," says our Lord, "shall not walk in darkness." That you are tempted a thousand ways will do you no hurt. In all these things you shall be more than conqueror. I hope the select society meets constantly, and that you speak freely to each other. Go on humbly and steadily, denying yourselves, and taking up your cross daily. Walk in the light as He is in the light, in lowliness, in meekness, in resignation. Then He will surely sanctify you throughout, in spirit, soul, and body. To hear from you is always a pleasure to,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

I am going to Bristol.

DLXXXIX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

ST. IVES, *August 26, 1770.*

YOUR last gave me a particular satisfaction; because I was jealous over you. I was afraid lest you, like some

others, should have received that dangerous opinion, that we must sometimes be in darkness. Wherever you are, oppose this, and encourage all who now walk in the light to expect, not only the continuance, but the increase, of it, unto the perfect day. Certain it is, that unless we grieve the Holy Spirit, He will never take away what He has given. On the contrary, He will add to it continually, till we come to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

I am glad the select society meets constantly. See that you speak freely to each other. And do not speak of your joys and comforts only; this is well-pleasing to flesh and blood: But speak also of your sorrows, and weaknesses, and temptations; this is well-pleasing to God, and will be a means of knitting you together by a bond that shall never be broken.

I hope you lose no opportunity of speaking a word for God, either to them that know Him, or them that do not. Why should you lose any time? Time is short. Work your work betimes! To-day receive more grace, and use it! Peace be with your spirit!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DXC.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

*December 14, 1770.*

IF I live till spring, and should have a clear, pressing call, I am as ready to embark for America, as for Ireland. All places are alike to me: I am attached to none in particular. Wherever the work of our Lord is to be carried on, that is my place for to-day. And we live only for to-day: It is not our part to take thought for to-morrow.

You expect to fight your way through. But I think the Preachers understand you, and can receive your report: And so do most of your sisters. What forces then can Satan raise up against you? You can speak to me without reserve; for you know I love you much.

Abundance of deficiencies must remain, as long as the soul remains in this house of clay. So long the corruptible body will more or less darken and press down the soul. But still your heart may be all love; and love is the fulfilling of our law. Still you may rejoice evermore; you may

pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. Peace be multiplied unto you!

I am, dear Molly,  
Your affectionate brother.

DXCI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

CORK, *May 6, 1771.*

I AM always pleased to hear from you, and expect to hear nothing but good. Conflicts and various exercises of soul are permitted: These also are for good. If Satan has desired to have you to sift you as wheat, this likewise is for your profit: You will be purified in the fire, not consumed, and strengthened unto all long-suffering with joyfulness. Does Mr. Clough, or any other of the Preachers, speak against perfection, or give occasion to them that trouble you? You would do well to speak to any one that does, that you may come to a better understanding. So far as in you lies, let not the good that is in you be evil spoken of. But beware, lest the unkind usage of your brethren betray you into any kind of guile or false prudence. Still let all your conversation be in simplicity and godly sincerity. Be plain, open, downright, without disguise. Do you always see God, and feel his love? Do you pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks? I hope you do not forget to pray for,

My dear Molly,  
Your affectionate brother

DXCII.—*To Mrs. Mary Savage, of Worcester.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

BRISTOL, *August 31, 1771.*

RIGHT precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints! And I believe many of the blessings which we receive are in answer to their dying prayers. It is well if the great change be wrought in a soul even a little before it leaves the body. But how much more desirable it is that it should be wrought long before, that we may long glorify Him with our body and with our spirit! O exhort all whom you have access to, not to delay the time of embracing all the great and precious promises! Frankly tell all those

that are simple of heart, what He has done for your soul;  
and then urge,

“May not every sinner find  
The grace which found out me?”

If Mr. Fletcher has time to call upon you, he will surely bring a blessing with him. He is a man full of faith. Be free with S. Briscoe, who brings this.

My dear sister, adieu!

DXCIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, BRISTOL, *September 19, 1771.*

A REPORT was spread abroad of my coming to Broad-Marston, and several other places; but I know not what was the occasion of it. I am now expected in the southern parts of the kingdom, and my course has been for several years as fixed as that of the sun.

Mr. Ellis is a steady, experienced man, and a sound Preacher. Wherever he is, the work of our Lord prospers in his hand; and the more so, as he is a lover of discipline, without which the best preaching is of little use. I advise you to speak to him as freely as possible, and he will be made profitable to your soul. Your late trials were intended to give you a deeper sense of your poverty and helplessness. But see that you cast not away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward. Cleave to Him with your whole heart, and all is well.

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DXCIV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER, GRIMSBY, *July 22, 1772.*

IT is easy to see the difference between those two things, sinfulness and helplessness. The former you need feel no more; the latter you will feel as long as you live. And indeed the nearer you draw to God, the more sensible of it you will be. But beware this does not bring you into the least doubt of what God has done for your soul. And beware it does not make you a jot the less forward to speak of it with all simplicity. Do you still feel an entire deliverance from pride, anger, and every desire that does not centre in God? Do you trust Him both with soul and body? Have you learned to cast all your care upon him? Are

you always happy in Him? In what sense do you pray without ceasing? Expect all the promises!

I am, my dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

In about a fortnight, I am to be at Mr. Glynne's, Shrewsbury.

DXCV.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *June 30, 1773.*

I REJOICE to hear that the work of God does not decrease among you, and that you find an increase of it in your own soul. Perhaps the best way to examine your own growth is, first, to consider whether your faith remains unshaken. Do you continually see Him that is invisible? Have you as clear an evidence of the spiritual as of the invisible world? Are you always conscious of the presence of God, and of his love to your soul? In what sense do you pray without ceasing? Are you never in a hurry, so as to dim the eye of your soul, or make you inattentive to the voice of God? Next, consider your hope. Do you thereby taste of the powers of the world to come? Do you sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus? Do you never shrink at death? Do you steadily desire to depart, and to be with Christ? Do you always feel that this is far better? Can you in pain and trouble rejoice in hope of the glory of God? You may answer me at your leisure. I hope to see you in March; and am,

Dear Molly,

Yours affectionately.

DCXVI.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LEWISHAM, *July 31, 1773*

I DID receive a letter from you while I was in Ireland; but whether I answered it or no I cannot tell. It gives me pleasure to hear that you still stand fast in the liberty where-with Christ hath made you free; and that his blessed work still continues to widen and deepen among you. It will do so, as long as you walk in love, and strive together for the hope of the Gospel. As God has made Mr. Wolfe an instrument of promoting this among you, I think it will be well for him to stay another year.

When I was at Worcester, a young woman had just

joined the society, who had her fortune in her own hands. Is she with you still? And is she married or single? I have a particular reason for asking. How has Mr. Seed behaved? Is he serious, zealous, active? And has God prospered his word?

I am, my dear sister,  
Your affectionate brother.

DXCVII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *December 11, 1773.*

WHATEVER was reported concerning brother Wolfe, it did not come to my ears. I never heard anything of him but good; nor do I know of anything laid to his charge. I advise you to speak very freely to Mr. Collins. He has much experience in the things of God; and has likewise seen so much of trouble and temptation, that he knows how to sympathize with those that are tempted.

By stirring up the gift of God that is in you, you will find a constant increase of inward life. Labour to be more and more active, more and more devoted to Him. Be ready to do and suffer His whole will; then will He

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

I am, dear Molly,  
Your affectionate brother.

DXCVIII.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

WHITEHAVEN, *May 6, 1774.*

YOU send me an agreeable account of the work of God in Worcester. I expected that he would give a blessing to the zeal and activity of your present Preachers, and of Mr. Collins in particular, who is everywhere of use to those that are simple of heart. But much also depends upon the spirit and behaviour of those who are united together. If their love does not grow cold; if they continue walking in the Spirit, using the grace they have already received, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour, and going on to perfection; their light, shining before men, will incite many to glorify our Father which is in heaven. I am glad to hear that Billy Savage and you are still pressing toward the mark. Indeed, God will permit all the grace you have to

be tried: He prepares occasions of fighting, that you may conquer; yea, in all these things, you shall be more than conquerors through Him that loveth you. To His tender care I commit you; and am,

My dear sister,

Your affectionate brother.

DXCIX.—*To Mr. Samuel Bardsley.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *November 24, 1771.*

IT is a great blessing that your fellow-labourers and you are all of one mind. When that is so, the work of the Lord will prosper in your hands. It will go on widening, as well as deepening, while you draw in one yoke. If you desire it should deepen in believers, continually exhort them to go on unto perfection; steadily to use all the grace they have received, and every moment to expect full salvation. The "Plain Account of Christian Perfection" you should read yourself, more than once, and recommend it to all that are groaning for full redemption.

I am

Your affectionate brother.

DC.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *January 29, 1773.*

IF David Evans is satisfied, all is well. You will not want work, nor a blessing upon it, if you are zealous and active. John Hallam is a good man, but a queer one: I am in hopes he will do good. There is a surprising willingness in almost every one that has answered the Circular Letter, which I hope is a token for good. Some of our Preachers have asked, "Why will you refuse the help of the poorer members?" I answer, I do not refuse; though neither do I require it, for fear of distressing any. The little draught on the other side is for your mother.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY, NORWICH, *November 27, 1775.*

WHENEVER you want anything, you should tell me without delay. If Tommy Colbeck will give you two guineas, it may be deducted out of the book-money. I am glad you go again to Skipton, and hope to see it myself, if I live till summer. At present I am better than I was before my fever; only it has stripped me of my hair. The more pains you take, the more blessing you will find; especially in preaching full salvation, receivable now, by faith.

I am, dear Sammy,  
Yours affectionately.

DCII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY, LONDON, *October 25, 1776.*

I LIKE your proposal well, of desiring help from your acquaintance in the neighbouring Circuits; and the sooner it is put in execution, the better, that it may not interfere with the subscription we must shortly make for the New Foundery. Whatever you do, temporal or spiritual, do it with your might!

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

DCIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY, LONDON, *February 14, 1777.*

IT is uncertain yet, where I shall be this summer. If we do not build, I shall go to Ireland: If we do, I must reside chiefly in London. Only I would endeavour to make a little excursion into the north. I have not promised to open the House at Halifax in April or May, although it is probable I shall in my journey to or from Newcastle. But my time will be very short; because I can never be absent from the building but about two or three weeks at a time. I am glad you have found a way to Lancaster. Be zealous, be active, and conquer all things!

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

DCIV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *February 14, 1778.*

So your mother is at rest! We shall go to her; though she will not return to us. I am glad you are so agreeably situated, and that you already see some fruit of your labour. About the 27th of March I expect to be at Chester. If a ship be ready at Parkgate, I purpose to embark directly; if not, I shall pay you a visit at Liverpool. I fix upon nothing: Let the Lord do as seemeth him good.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCV.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

BRISTOL, *March 7, 1779.*

I AM now just set out on my great journey: Probably I shall not reach Inverness till June. It will be in July, if I am spared so long, that I shall visit Derby and Nottingham. My journey is longer this time, than it was the last. Let us work while the day is!

Exhort all the believers, strongly and explicitly, to go on to perfection; and to expect every blessing God has promised, not to-morrow, but to-day.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCVI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *January 30, 1780.*

I AM glad to hear that your people love one another: Then neither Mr. — nor Mr. — can hurt them. They may make a bustle and a noise for a season; but it will be only a nine days' wonder. If you take up your cross, and visit all the societies, whenever you have time, from house to house, their profiting will appear to all men; and none will be able to stand against you. Take a little pains likewise, both brother Shadford and you, in recommending the Magazine. Urge it from love to me, and to the Preachers; and whatever you do, do it with your might.

I am, dear Sammy,

Yours affectionately.

P.S. Everywhere exhort the believers to expect full salvation now by simple faith.

DCVII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

LONDON, *June 25, 1782.*

I AM glad you find no reason to complain of our northern brethren. Many of them are as sincere and affectionate as any in England; and the way to do them good is, to observe all our rules at Inverness, just as you would at Sheffield; yea, and to preach the whole Methodist doctrine there, as plainly and simply as you would in Yorkshire. But you have not sent me (neither you nor Peter Mill) any plan of the Circuit. This should be done without delay. See that you both do all you can for a good Master! Lose no time! Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

DCVIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

BIRMINGHAM, *March 25, 1787.*

YOU send me good news concerning the progress of the work of God in Colne Circuit. I should think brother Jackson or Sagar might set the heads of the people at Bacup right. Brother Jackson should advise brother Ridall, not to please the devil by preaching himself to death. I still think, when the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave them. Every year more and more of the Clergy are convinced of the truth, and grow well-affected towards us. It would be contrary to all common sense, as well as to good conscience, to make a separation now.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother

DCIX.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

CARLOW, *April 26, 1789.*

I AM glad to hear that the work of the Lord still prospers in your hands. But there needs great steadiness, or you will not be able to keep the good old Methodist discipline. Brother Rhodes is desirous to do this; and it will be right for you to strengthen his hands therein. Let the Preachers stand firm together, and then the people will be regular; but if any of you take their part against the

Preacher, all will be confusion. Since you desire it, you may come to the Conference.

I am, dear Sammy,  
Your affectionate brother.

DCX.—*To the Same.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

OTLEY.

I AM glad to hear so good an account of the work of God at Bideford. That town had held out long, and seemed to bid defiance to the Gospel. But if we are not weary of well-doing, we shall reap in due time. I should hardly have expected any increase of the work of God in Launceston: But probably it will be enlarged by your preaching in the Town-Hall; for many will come thither, who would not come to our preaching-house.

As long as you and your fellow-labourers converse freely together, and act by united counsels, the work of the Lord will prosper in your hands. And continue instant in prayer, particularly in your closet.

I am, dear Sammy,  
Your affectionate brother.

DCXI.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY, NORTHAMPTON, *November 25, 1789.*

YOURS of the 21st instant was sent to me hither. You have done exceedingly well, to take the upper room. If need be, we will help you out. Let us have no law, if it be possible to avoid it: That is the last and the worst remedy. Try every other remedy first. It is a good providence that the Mayor at Bideford is a friendly man. Prayer will avail much in all cases. Encourage our poor people to be instant in prayer. Take care of poor Michael; and do not forget,

Dear Sammy,  
Your affectionate brother.

DCXII.—*To the Same.*

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME, *March 27, 1790.*

DEAR SAMMY,

TAKE particular care that neither Michael Fenwick, nor any other, give any just offence; and especially, that

they offend not God: Then He will make your enemies be at peace with you.

If I remember well, I did write to the Mayor of Bideford; and I expect that makes him more quiet. By meekness, gentleness, and patience, with faith and prayer, you will prevail at Torrington also. You have only to go on calmly and steadily, and God will arise and maintain his own cause. Only let us labour to have a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

DCXIII.—*To the Same.*

DEAR SAMMY,

Near LONDON, *October 29, 1790.*

THE person that was appointed to come down to Bideford has been prevented from coming by want of health. And I believe it was well: It has confirmed me in a resolution which I had formed before,—not to send more Preachers into any Circuit than that Circuit can provide for. We are almost ruined by not observing this rule. I will observe it better for the time to come.

I am, dear Sammy,

Your affectionate brother.

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DCXIV.—*To Miss Penelope Newman.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

LONDON, *August 9, 1776.*

BEFORE I received yours, we had been speaking in the Conference on that very head,—the means of preventing spiritual religion from degenerating into formality. It is continually needful to guard against this, as it strikes at the root of the whole work of God. One means whereby God guards us against it is, temptation; and, indeed, crosses of every kind. By these he keeps us from sleeping, as do others, and stirs us up to watch unto prayer. So He is now stirring you up! Hear his voice; and you will feel more life than ever.

I am, dear Penny,

Yours affectionately.