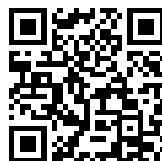
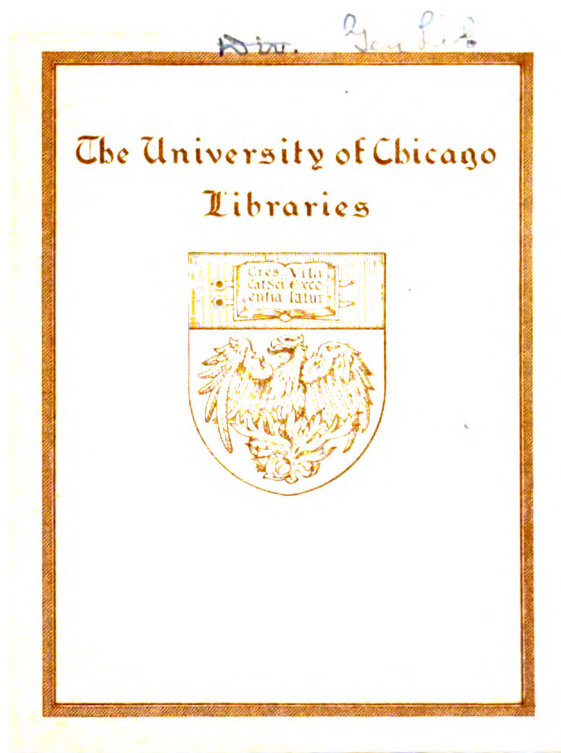
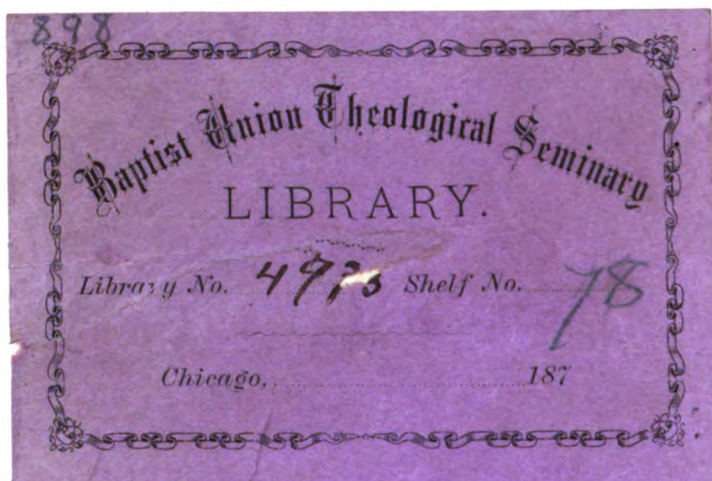

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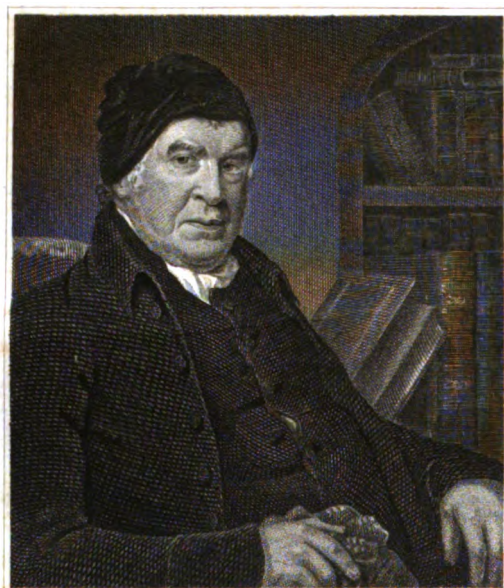
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OF

THE LIFE, MINISTRY, AND WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN FAWCETT, D. D.

WHO WAS

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL FIFTY-FOUR YEARS,

FIRST AT WAINSGATE, AND AFTERWARDS AT HEBDENBRIDGE, IN
THE PARISH OF HALIFAX;

COMPREHENDING MANY PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO

THE REVIVAL AND PROGRESS OF RELIGION

IN YORKSHIRE AND LANCASHIRE;

AND ILLUSTRATED BY

COPIOUS EXTRACTS

FROM THE DIARY OF THE DECEASED, FROM HIS EXTENSIVE
CORRESPONDENCE, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

Platt
"Remember them which have the rule over you,
who have spoken unto you the word of God:
whose faith follow, considering the end of their
conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday,
and to-day, and for ever." St. PAUL.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

JOHN FAWCETT, D.D.

IN perusing the lives of eminent men we shall, in some instances, find that they have been favoured by their birth, their connexions, and other exterior advantages, in their efforts to attain an elevation above the rest of mankind. Whilst the biographer has paid a tribute to their personal worth, he has had also to recount the deserts of their illustrious ancestors, and to show how these individuals supported the dignity of their families. In the success of such characters we see well-founded expectations realized, and we follow them in their prosperous and splendid career, with a pleasing complacency.

But among those whose names have lived, and whose memory continues to be venerated by posterity, there have been many in all ages who have emerged from obscurity, and instead of enjoying the gales of prosperity, have had, almost through the whole of their progress, to encounter difficulties and discouragements of an overwhelming nature, and such as nothing but the most persevering exertions would have been able to sur-

mount. That there is something in the lives of such men calculated to interest the mind, is too evident to need any illustration. The writer of fiction finds it necessary to keep up the attention of his readers by representing his hero as contending against a variety of obstacles, in order that he may exhibit his excellencies, as not unworthy of that success which at length crowns his efforts. In *real life* it is of great importance, that instances of this kind should be attentively observed, not only as showing the power and efficacy of the principles by which the individuals themselves were actuated, the first traces of that mental progress which afterwards became so conspicuous, the means by which their minds were gradually formed, but more especially that they may be held forth as examples to others, so as to afford incentives to similar exertions.

In reading the Divine Word, we shall find that many of the most distinguished saints, in the early stages of their lives more particularly, passed through the shades of adversity. Abraham, the father of the faithful, and the friend of God, was a stranger in that land which was destined for his posterity. Little would have been recorded of his faith, but for the severe trials with which he was exercised. By these the Almighty *made known* to all succeeding generations his eminence, in this respect. Those worthies mentioned in Heb. xi. wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented; they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth. David, the man after God's own heart, was taken from the sheepfolds, where for a considerable period he followed the humble occupation of a shepherd, displaying his

natural courage in defence of his flock. His brethren despised his youth, discouraged and reproved him for what they considered as presumption, and an improper attempt to rise above his humble sphere, when the native energies of his mind stimulated him to nobler pursuits and enterprizes; but it was the will of God, that he should 'feed his people Israel,' though, for a long time after he was anointed by the prophet, his life was a chequered scene, full of troubles and disappointments.

Elijah, that most eminent restorer of the worship of God, who was the bold reprover and terror of a wicked race of kings, when first introduced to our notice, is merely described as the Tishbite. The same remarks will apply to the prophets in general, under the former dispensation, and to those persons who were the instruments chosen by the Son of God himself to make known his name to Jews and Gentiles. The apostle Paul, though he had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, laboured for his subsistence as a tent maker, and was often exposed to the greatest difficulties, ignominy, and persecution. 'These hands,' says he, 'have ministered to my necessities, and to those that were with me.' Not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, that no man should glory in his presence. Nor need we to wonder that Sovereign wisdom thus ordains, when we reflect, that the Author and Finisher of our faith was himself *made perfect* through sufferings. Having laid aside his glory, and assumed human nature, he took upon him 'the form of a servant,' he was brought up in poverty and obscurity, in the house of a carpenter, himself following the same occupation; and even after the

commencement of his public ministrations, he declared, that while 'the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, the Son of Man had not where to lay his head.'

If the life of the Christian is uniformly represented as a state of trial, and if the promises of the gospel are peculiarly adapted to such a state, we ought not to think it strange that adversity has been the lot of good men in almost every age. The Almighty not only *chooses* them in the furnace of affliction, but he often permits them, for wise ends, to *continue* there for a considerable time, to humble them, to prove them, and to know what is in their hearts. In this respect, as well as in many others, it is good for a man 'to bear the yoke in his youth.'

Some of these desultory remarks are, in a measure, applicable to many periods in the life of him to whose memory these pages are dedicated. During his long life, he passed through many changes; he knew both how to 'be abased and suffer need, and how to abound;' but his path, though often strait and difficult, was the right way for the exercise of Christian graces and dispositions, and as a preparation for a better and brighter world.

He was earnestly solicited by his family and by many of his friends to write some account of his life, as connected with the changes that took place in the moral and religious world, so far as they came under his observation, and in the circle in which he moved. Every individual is certainly best able to judge of, and describe the successive operations of his own mind, the train of his feelings, opinions, and habits, and the influence which particular events have had in determining

his course of life. On these, as well as on many other accounts, such a memorial was desirable, and might have usefully employed his pen in the later periods of life, had not his modesty induced him to decline the task.

The first part of this narrative has been collected partly from hints dropped in conversation, which were committed to writing at the time, and partly from a diary contained in several MS. volumes, with heads of sermons and fugitive pieces, written chiefly between the age of twenty and twenty-four. This diary was, in a great measure, discontinued after he entered upon his ministerial labours; the composition of sermons, preparatory reading, and other urgent engagements, engrossing almost the whole of his time and attention. It is to be regretted that many parts of the diary are written in a short hand, which cannot now be easily deciphered.

The associates of his early years have long been numbered with the dead. The partner of his joys and sorrows, whose recollection might have supplied many incidents, though spared to an advanced age, left this world several years before him. Of those who once formed his family circle, one only now remains, who looks back with a mournful kind of pleasure on a period of nearly fifty years, during which he enjoyed the society and endearing solicitude of so affectionate a parent. The intimate intercourse which subsisted between them certainly afforded him every opportunity of appreciating his character, his views, and sentiments. On account of the near relationship subsisting between himself and the deceased, he has often felt, and still continues to feel, great diffidence and hesitation as to the propriety of submitting these papers to the inspec-

tion of the public.—In other respects also he is conscious of being unequal to the undertaking ; but whatever imperfections may be observed, he will consider himself amply rewarded if the attempt to record past events may tend to lead the attention of his readers to those all-important truths which it was the great object of the deceased to inculcate by his preaching and writings, and to enforce by his example. If this should happily be the case, though now mouldering in the dust, he will yet speak, not only to those who were personally acquainted with him, but to others who were strangers to him.

“ Then in the history of my age
When men review my days,
They'll read thy love in every page,
In every line thy praise.”

JOHN FAWCETT was born January 6, (O. S.) 1739-40, at Lidget-Green, near Bradford, in Yorkshire. His father, Stephen Fawcett, whom he always mentioned with the most tender filial affection, died of a fever in the fiftieth year of his age, leaving a widow who long survived him, and a numerous family, to lament their loss. When this affecting breach took place, he was in his twelfth year. His grandfather was still living and resident in the family, but unable to take an active part in the management of it, being totally blind. On the day of the funeral this aged relative was, by his own particular request, led to the coffin, that he might take his leave of his departed son, by weeping over what he could not see, and placing his hands on his face.—This must have

been a moving scene to all present, and particularly to the widowed mother and her bereaved children. It certainly made a deep and lasting impression on the subject of this memoir, as he often mentioned it with much emotion, when speaking of his family. At that early age his mind was evidently under serious impressions; and no doubt such a sudden and affecting stroke, while it deprived him of the resources on which he depended for support, must have been an awful lesson to him of the uncertainty of all created good. For some time he was greatly agitated by fears respecting the final state of a parent he had loved so much. These painful apprehensions led him fervently to supplicate the Divine throne for relief and consolation. The melancholy subject not only engaged his waking but his sleeping thoughts; and he had, on one occasion, a dream, by which he fancied some intimation was conveyed to him that his fears respecting the state of his departed parent were groundless:—this greatly relieved his mind. How far such impressions ought to be regarded is not now the subject of inquiry. The incident is here simply stated; and if, at so tender an age, some degree of enthusiasm was mixed with a pious train of feeling, it is not to be wondered at, much less to be censured. It certainly shows how deeply he was affected, not only on account of the loss of his parent, but from an anxious solicitude about his eternal welfare, which prevailed to such a degree that he thought he never could have been happy again if some relief had not been afforded.

Having been early initiated in the common branches of learning, he soon showed a taste for books, and read with eagerness such as came in his way, particularly

Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." He often talked with his mother about it, and told her there was nothing he so much desired as to become a pilgrim. Such an idea as this might occur to a child who was merely entertained by the narration, but there is reason to believe he understood something of the spiritual meaning of many passages in that inimitable work. He also read Bunyan's "Heavenly Footman," Alleine's "Alarm," and Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted;" the last two are admirably calculated to excite earnest inquiry about the best things. The other books which he perused were chiefly in the legal strain: among others, "The Whole Duty of Man," which, from the number of editions through which it formerly passed, must have had a most extensive circulation. His oldest brother, for whom through life he retained the most sincere affection, encouraged and united with him in these inquiries after the one thing needful. They often retired into the barn together for prayer, whither their pious mother, pleased with these early appearances of serious concern, sometimes secretly followed them to listen to their artless and devout aspirations.

Soon after the death of his father, the family left the small farm at Lidget-reen, and the children were placed in different situations. At the age of thirteen, the subject of this narrative was put apprentice to a person at Bradford, with whom he remained to the expiration of his term, which was six years. He was there in an orderly family, and was encouraged both by precept and example in a regular attendance on public worship at church, to which indeed he had been trained up from his earliest years. For the Rev. Mr. Butler, who was many years lecturer at Bradford church, he

always retained great respect, both on account of the regularity of his deportment, and the fervour and seriousness with which he inculcated what he considered as of importance to his hearers. He strenuously recommended the necessity of holiness, though he enforced the practice of it rather by legal motives, than by those more noble and efficacious arguments which the gospel holds forth.

From this gentleman he received many marks of kindness, which he afterwards acknowledged with gratitude. The preacher was no doubt pleased to see in one so young a spirit of inquiry about the best things. He treated him with great condescension, and encouraged him both by the loan of books and occasional instruction in classical learning, for which he was well qualified, being head master of the Grammar School, which situation he filled for many years with high and deserved reputation.

During the continuance of his apprenticeship, his time was occupied in his master's service from six in the morning to eight at night, so that what time he had for reading was principally redeemed from sleep, or seized by stealth. The Sacred Book, whether he was in the house or by the way, whether engaged in work or at leisure, was his constant companion. Between the age of twelve and fourteen he had read it over repeatedly; and he thought himself enriched for ever when he had obtained possession of a *small pocket Bible*. Perhaps it would scarcely be proper to relate the different plans he adopted to elude the notice of the family, who had no idea of the enjoyment he found in reading and retirement, and the means he employed to rescue from sleep a little time for these purposes. Happily for his

turn of mind, he had a small lodging room to himself: a considerable part of his pocket money was employed in the purchase of candles. His master and mistress, with the domestics, retired at an early hour: he, among the rest, took his candle up stairs, and, to avoid suspicion, when he had been a little time in the room, hid the lighted candle under an earthen vessel till he supposed the family were all asleep; when he betook himself to his delightful employment for a considerable part of the night. Sometimes he tied a weight to his foot, and at others fastened his hand to the bed-post, that he might not sleep too long. These circumstances are not mentioned here to excite imitation, for he was himself afterwards sensible of their impropriety, in the injury which his health sustained; but they show the decided bent of his mind, which no obstacles, even of a prudential nature, could restrain. This notice of them may likewise lead those who are distinguished by privileges, and have every encouragement from their parents and other connexions, to value their opportunities, and to be more solicitous to improve them in a suitable manner. A considerable portion of the time thus redeemed from sleep was spent in earnest and fervent prayer.

During the former part of this period he knew nothing of the dissenters, and methodism was not much talked of; but he occasionally went on Sabbath evenings to the presbyterian chapel at Bradford, where, according to a custom which had long prevailed among the puritans, the sermons preached at the place were rehearsed from notes, which, in this instance, had been taken down by a gentleman of the name of Swain. The discourses were principally such as Mr. Swain had heard there in his younger days. The good man read

his MS. papers with great piety and affection, sometimes introducing a few remarks of his own. He was often melted into tears, both from a recollection of past days, and a painful conviction that there had been a considerable declension in religion since the time when these sermons were first preached. With this worthy gentleman he formed an acquaintance, which was of great service to him. His constant aim was to seek the society of those from whose judgment and experience he might derive advantage. He had indeed, as was often remarked by those who knew him, from the age of fifteen or sixteen, all the gravity and appearance of maturity; he soon 'put away childish things,' and associated with men.

Of all his acquaintances at this period, a Mr. David Pratt was the most intimate. This good man treated him with the kindness of a parent. He was a person of considerable literary attainments, and desirous of giving every encouragement to young persons of promising talents and dispositions. He not only lent him many valuable books, to the purchase of which his own finances were not adequate, but assisted him in the study of the Latin language, and in other branches of learning. They passed their evenings, and frequently their midnight hours, with each other. Among the Latin books for which he was indebted to his friend, he placed great value on one containing a short system of divinity, wherein the original story may be found, from which the poet Parnel took the idea of his "Hermit." Mr. Pratt was well versed in the system professed by the presbyterians, and took great pains in catechizing young persons. He was very fond of Mr. Flavel's writings, which he no doubt recom-

mended to his youthful associate; and we may, probably, from this period, date his attachment to the works of that excellent divine.

This valuable friend he lost at a time when his continuance with him was most desirable; and it does not appear, from the scanty documents remaining, that he became acquainted with any other person, during his residence at Bradford, from whom he received much advantage, in a literary point of view. His last interview with his friend was very affecting. He went to see him on the morning of the day on which he died, and had some interesting conversation with him; at the close of it, after inquiring the hour, and being informed it was six, he stretched himself on the bed, and instantly expired.

About the time when he was deprived of the aid of this kind and intelligent friend, his attention was irresistibly attracted by the ministry of those eminent men, the Rev. George Whitefield, Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, and Mr. Grimshaw, whose unwearied labours produced a most important change in the Christian church; the effects of which not only remain, but have been extending ever since that period. That we may be the better able to form an idea of what they, as instruments in the hand of God, effected, it may not be improper to take a cursory review of the state of the professing world previous to their appearance on the scene of action.

The ministers of our holy religion had been for a succession of years more distinguished by their learning than by that primitive simplicity and holy fervour which are no less necessary to a faithful discharge of the trust reposed on them, as dispensers of the oracles

of God. Avoiding every thing which they considered as bordering on intemperate zeal and enthusiasm, as puritanical, and as such obnoxious to the court party, their sermons became polished harangues on virtue, illustrated more frequently by quotations from heathen writers than by references to the only true standard of faith and practice. It is readily allowed that many of them were able defenders of the Protestant faith, against the assaults of infidelity and the errors of the church of Rome. They understood and judiciously stated those external arguments by which the attacks of the avowed enemies of Christianity might be repelled. On these accounts their writings are justly held in high estimation. They also explained and enforced the duties incumbent on man as a creature of God, and a member of civil society; but their preaching, in too many instances, degenerated into a cold system of morality, so that both ministers and people were 'at ease in Zion,' and, to use the language of the parable, the foolish and the wise virgins slumbered together. This declension was apparent both in the episcopal church and among the descendants of the old presbyterians. Moral essays delivered in a dull, uninteresting manner cannot be likely to produce a permanent impression on the minds of the hearers.. "Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum tibi ipsi."* Where

* We are here reminded of the answer given by a celebrated actor to a minister, who had expressed his surprise that theatrical performances excited so much attention and interest, though known to be mere effusions of fancy, while the truths delivered from the pulpit were heard with indifference: "*We*," says he, "exhibit fictions as though they were realities, while *you* utter realities as though they were fictions."

this strain of preaching prevails the grand, the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are glossed over, or lightly touched upon; its glory is obscured, and it is scarcely distinguishable from a system of mere ethics. It is evident that sermons of the above description could not be calculated to alarm the conscience; the necessity of an atonement was in a great measure kept out of sight, and a kind of intermediate system held forth, concealing the dreadful, the fatal disease, and lulling the mind into security under the idea that *imperfect services* would be accepted, and that in performing them, as far as the frailty of human nature would permit, there would be no doubt of their ensuring the Divine favour, and making their peace with God. This kind of preaching was adapted to the taste of the fashionable world; it did not run counter to their prejudices and proud imaginations; so that the *offence of the cross ceased*.—With respect to the lower classes, they either could not comprehend what was advanced, or, if they paid any attention, their feelings and passions were not interested, so that what they heard passed away like a ‘tale that is told.’ In how many instances, alas! is this the case still, where the same method is continued, both within and without the pale of the church! What a contrast do we observe in them to the apostolical labours of a Whitefield, a Wesley, a Grimshaw, and a Venn! What zeal, what steady perseverance, did these men evidence in promoting the all-important objects they had in view, being willing to spend and be spent for the sake of Christ! It is acknowledged that, on some occasions, their zeal bordered too much on enthusiasm; that they sometimes used expressions which were neither justifiable nor prudent, of which

they themselves afterwards with regret saw the impropriety; but allowance must be made for the times in which they lived, with the difficulties and opposition they had to encounter; and the same objections are equally applicable to their venerable precursors in calling the attention of mankind to personal, vital Christianity—the intrepid Luther on the Continent, with Latimer, Knox, and others, in our own country.

The impression made by the preaching of Whitefield on the mind of him who is the subject of this narrative was indescribably great, and remained unabated to the close of life. He preserved his portrait in his study, and the very mention of his name inspired the warmest emotions of grateful remembrance. For natural, unaffected eloquence, he considered him as superior to any person he ever heard. His whole soul was in the work; his words fell from his lips with majesty and power; and he had such command over the passions of his audience, that thousands were melted into tears at once. His voice was amazingly powerful, so as to be heard distinctly to a great distance; it was, notwithstanding, full of harmony and grace. It was customary with him to introduce his discourses by some striking passage from the energetic writings of the prophets, or from some part of our Saviour's discourses. He often roused the attention of his audience by such expressions as the following: 'O earth, earth, earth! hear the word of the Lord!'—'If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.'

The first time our young disciple saw and heard this eminent man of God was at Bradford, in an open part of the town, near the water-side. No place of worship could contain the concourse of people assembled on that

occasion. The text was John iii. 14. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,' &c. His own language will best describe what his sensations were on that interesting occasion: "As long as life remains, I shall remember both the text and the sermon." He admired, he was astonished with almost every sentence, both in the devotional exercises and the sermon.

Though he had read much, and been regular in his attendance on public ordinances, yet from early prepossession, and the general strain of the sermons he heard, he was far from having clear conceptions as to the ground of a sinner's acceptance with God: 'he saw men as trees walking;' but this Apollos, who was 'mighty in the Scriptures,' even by one sermon showed him the 'way of God more perfectly' than he had ever seen it before. The glimpses he had before enjoyed suddenly became clearer, and gospel light beamed upon his soul with resplendent rays. The mode of address was quite *new* to him, and brighter scenes were disclosed to view—a God reconciled through the atonement of a suffering Saviour, with the free and gracious proclamations exhibited from the Divine Word, at once dispelled his unbelieving fears, and filled him with 'joy unspeakable' and 'full of glory.'

Mr. Whitefield preaching again in the evening, he requested leave of his master to go and hear him, which was granted, though with some hesitation. He evinced a degree of displeasure at his eagerness, and inquired who had put it into his mind to follow this strange preacher; to which he replied, that he believed it was the Almighty. At the evening service the same truths were held forth which he had heard in the morning, from that striking passage, 'For this pur-

pose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The preacher showed what those works of the devil were,—some evident before the eyes of man in the idolatry and profaneness which prevailed in the world; others in the minds even of those who were more regular; namely, prejudices against the truth, self-righteousness, &c.; and he then proceeded to set forth the ability of Christ to destroy these works, and the manner in which he effects it.

It appears by the following extract from his diary that he had then entered upon his sixteenth year. "In the sixteenth year of my age, it pleased God graciously, and more particularly than ever before, to work upon my mind, and to give me a deeper sense of my lost condition by nature. I think it was about the month of September, 1755." This corresponds with the time of Mr. Whitefield's journey into the north, as related in his journal, about the end of August and the beginning of September, 1755, when he visited Northampton, Liverpool, Bolton, Manchester, Leeds, and Bradford,

From this time he began to make a more public profession of religion, and connected himself with those who were known by the general denomination of Methodists, a term at first by no means exclusively appropriated, as at present in these parts, to the followers of the Rev. John Wesley, but common to all who were earnest in their inquiries respecting the salvation of their souls, who imbibed this *new doctrine*, as it was considered by their opponents, and who were strict in their deportment. He attended their private meetings as often as he was allowed: these were sometimes protracted to an unseasonable hour, so that being too late to gain admittance into his master's house, who was in

the habit of retiring early to rest, he not unfrequently spent the remainder of the night in the open fields or under sheds.

Whenever Mr. Whitefield came into the North he eagerly embraced the opportunity of attending his ministry. His next visit to Bradford was in the year following. Mr. Whitefield, in one of his letters, dated August 24, 1756, says, "It is now a fortnight since I came to Leeds, in and about which I preached eight days successively, three times almost every day, to thronged and affected auditors. On Sunday last, at Bradford, in the morning the audience consisted of above ten thousand; at noon, and in the evening, at Birstall, of nearly double that number. Though hoarse, I was able to speak so that they all heard." These religious opportunities were often mentioned by the subject of this memoir, as having produced an uncommon and lasting effect upon his mind. After having heard him at Bradford in the morning, he followed him to Birstall, where a platform was erected at the foot of a hill adjoining the town, whence Mr. Whitefield had to address an immense concourse of people, not fewer, as was supposed, than twenty thousand, who were ranged before him on the declivity of a hill in the form of an amphitheatre. Much as he was in the habit of public speaking and preaching to large and promiscuous multitudes, when he cast his eyes around him on the vast assemblage, and was about to mount the temporary stage, he expressed to his surrounding friends a considerable degree of intimidation; but when he began to speak, an unusual solemnity pervaded the assembly, and thousands in the course of the sermon, as was often the case, vented their emotions by

tears and groans. Fools who came to mock, began to pray, and to cry out, "What must we do to be saved."

Haworth was another of the places which he occasionally visited. He was there received with the greatest cordiality by the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, while the pulpits in many parts were shut against him; but that had little or no tendency to interrupt his labours, for, had they been offered, the churches could not possibly have contained the crowds that followed him from all parts. When he was at Haworth, the Lord's Supper was frequently administered, not only to the stated communicants, but to hundreds from other quarters, who resorted thither on these solemn occasions, esteeming them, in a peculiar sense, as 'days of the Son of Man,' such in many respects as had never been witnessed since the first promulgation of Christianity, when the spirit was, in so eminent a degree, 'poured out from on high.' For these occasional itinerant visits Mr. Whitefield's talents were admirably adapted. His manner, his voice, his action, as before described, and above all, his solemnity and fervour, commanded and riveted the attention beyond any thing that modern times have exhibited. He frequently preached in the church-yard at Haworth. On one occasion, while addressing the congregation, he expressed a hope that the greater part of those who had been induced to come from far, and who, by following him from place to place, showed so much interest, were Christians and Israelites indeed. Mr. Grimshaw, who was standing near him, in the warmth of his heart, and from a sudden impulse, rose up to contradict what he apprehended to be a mistaken idea, and urged him to deal plainly and faithfully with them, as perishing sinners.

In the commencement of that revival of religion, which it is part of our plan to relate, there were, if the writer's information is correct, but two clergymen resident in this part of the kingdom who avowedly embraced, and preached the sentiments generally termed evangelical; namely, the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, and the Rev. Mr. Venn, of Huddersfield. The memory of these men of God will ever be held in veneration; and as they will be frequently mentioned in the course of the ensuing narrative, it may not be improper here to give a brief statement of the leading events in their lives, and of their ministerial labours. Mr. Grimshaw was admirably suited for the sphere in which he moved; placed in a mountainous region among people remarkably rough and uncivilized, he adapted his habits of life and his mode of address to them. Like a Boanerges, he thundered against them the awful threatenings of the law, and explained the absolute necessity of repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He reproved them sharply for their vices, followed them to their haunts of dissipation, and used every method he could devise to induce them to come under the sound of the gospel. He was instant in season and out of season; without much previous study or preparation, except such as habitual devotion and intercourse with God furnished, he frequently preached from twenty to thirty times in a week. He also visited his flock from house to house. It was his regular practice to call upon the poorest as well as those that were in more easy circumstances, and after having relieved their temporal wants, in which he regularly expended a considerable part of his income, so as to be often in straits himself, he talked with them in the most affectionate, familiar

manner, and having desired them to put aside their implements of industry for a few moments, he prayed with them, gave them a short exhortation, and then proceeded without delay to other places. His language in the pulpit was sometimes coarse and undigested, such as would be offensive to the more refined taste of the present day, but he was an instrument of great good in his day; an industrious, enterprising pioneer, who was raised up to prepare the way for other persons, who afterwards entered into his labours.

This excellent man was born at Brindle, near Preston in Lancashire, in the year 1708. After having received the rudiments of his education at Blackburn and Heskin, in the same county, he was admitted a member of Christ's College, Cambridge, in his eighteenth year. During his continuance there some early and transient impressions which he had when a school boy, began to wear off; nor, even after he assumed the clerical office, did he evidence any serious regard for the interests of religion until some time subsequent to his settlement at Todmorden, a chapelry in the parish of Rochdale. So far was he from reproving the vices and sinful courses of his hearers, that he became, in the worst sense of the word, a 'partaker of their sins.' But in the year 1734 it pleased God to bring him to a serious concern about his own salvation, and consequently about the welfare of those whom, as he now saw, he had awfully neglected. For many years after this he remained a stranger to those eminent men, who were so useful in the revival of religion; but God was teaching him by his Holy Spirit, and he met with a few books, particularly one by Dr. Owen, which proved of great service to him. The writer of these pages has

recently looked over part of Mr. Grimshaw's library ; and from the dates, in his own hand writing, it appears that most of those which he had in his possession before this time were in the legal strain. Some of them were presented to him by the Rev. Dr. Dunster, vicar of Rochdale. Several early specimens of Mr. Grimshaw's composition show that he was a good scholar, and had a taste for polite learning, particularly for poetry ; but his whole soul seemed, after the change above referred to, to be swallowed up in the service of his Divine Master.

In the month of May, 1742, he removed to Haworth, near Bradford, which, as has already been related, was the principal sphere or centre of his public ministrations.

The circuit which he took on week days extended to many miles from his own habitation. Among other places he frequently went over the hills to Ewood, in the parish of Halifax, where his son resided. He often preached there in the barn, and other out-buildings. On one occasion he was accompanied by Mr. Whitefield to this place. Intelligence of their coming having been announced in the neighbourhood, an immense concourse was assembled. A temporary booth was erected in a field, near the house, for Mr. Whitefield and the other ministers. Not only the field, but the woody land above it, covered with crowds collected from different parts. An unusual solemnity pervaded this vast multitude ; and at the close of the service the 100th Psalm was sung, and concluded with Mr. Grimshaw's favourite doxology, " Praise God from whom all blessings flow," &c. The volume of sound produced by the united voices of thousands, while it

re-echoed through the vale below, is said to have had such an effect as no language can describe.

The animosities and differences which prevailed among professing Christians often distressed his feeling mind; and he was so far from encouraging a party spirit among Christians, that it was the great business of his life to bring them into close contact, and to lead them to drink deeper into the love of God. He used to say, "I love Christians, true Christians of all parties; I do love them, I will love them, and none shall make me do otherwise." He died of a fever, April 7, 1763, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-first of extensive usefulness in the church of God.

By his own desire his remains were brought to Ewood, the farm-house before mentioned, and from thence they were followed to Luddenden chapel, near Halifax, by great numbers, who with intermingled sighs and tears sang, at his dying request, all the way from the house to the chapel. They lie near the communion table, without any monumental record, except his name, &c. on the stone which covers his grave. The Rev. Mr. Venn, and the Rev. Mr. Romaine, preached funeral sermons on the occasion of his decease; the former in the church-yard at Luddenden, the church itself not being sufficiently large to hold the congregation; the latter in London. They both fixed upon a text which had been peculiarly precious to him, and of which his life had been a bright illustration. 'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

Though their religious sentiments did not, in some points of doctrine, exactly correspond with his, they entertained the highest opinion of him as a Christian, and as a minister. Mr. Romaine says, "He was the most

laborious and indefatigable minister of Christ I ever knew. For the good of souls, he rejected all hopes of affluent fortune; and for the love of Christ cheerfully underwent difficulties, dangers, and tribulation. When some of his friends pressed him to spare himself, he replied, "Let me labour now, I shall have rest by-and-by; I cannot do enough for Christ, who has done so much for me." He was also no less eminent for his humility than for his zeal and fervour. He caught the malignant fever, of which he died by visiting the poor of his flock. His last words were, "Here goes an unprofitable servant."

The Rev. Mr. Venn was born at Barnes, near Richmond, Surry, in the year 1725. His father was a clergyman of considerable eminence; and the son being at an early age intended for the same profession, he went through his academic studies with great reputation, and was elected fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge. Some time after his ordination he met with Law's "Serious Call," which he read with great attention. The effect produced on his mind by this writer's arguments in favour of a holy life, was strong and lasting. He eagerly perused his other publications, but found in them a degree of mysticism and obscurity relative to some of the important truths of Christianity, which by no means afforded him equal satisfaction.

Removing from a retired situation to Clapham, near London, he became acquainted with many religious characters, from whose society, and from perusing the writings of the Rev. Mr. Walker of Truro, he derived great advantage. With the more enlarged views he now had of the gospel system, his zeal and assiduity increased; so that his labours, while curate of Clapham,

were blessed to many. Through the interest of Lord Dartmouth, or of the munificent John Thornton, Esq. the vicarage of Huddersfield was presented to Mr. Venn, about the year 1759.* The situation in which

* A short time after Mr. Venn's removal to Huddersfield, namely, July 2, 1760, he preached a sermon at the Visitation of the Clergy held at Wakefield, on the duty of a parish priest, from Col. iv. 17: 'And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry,' &c. At the request of many of the hearers, he published this sermon, and prefixed a dedication to the people of his charge at Huddersfield. The following passages occur in the dedication. "It is needful for us as ministers to show our people that we are not at liberty to consult our natural inclinations, with regard either to preaching or practice, but must do the work of God diligently in the way he has appointed.—With a view therefore to teach you what I am to do for your souls, I have been prevailed upon to make this sermon public. Besides, I was willing to put into your hands a testimony of this kind, that I myself for fear of being condemned by my own open acknowledgment may be excited to an increasing concern for your immortal interests. But as all our most solemn engagements, like the zealous protestations of Peter, will soon be falsified, unless power is continually given us from above, let me intreat your prayers, both for myself and all who are ordained to our holy function, that we may find an everlasting spring within, which may make us always fruitful and abundant in the work of the Lord, that whilst we live we may be serviceable to God's glory and the good of souls: that no discouragements may make us faint, nor our own corruptions prevail over us: that when our work is done we may be able to give up our accounts as stewards, who with conscience and integrity have served the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."

Every part of this publication shows the principles on which Mr. Venn entered upon his labours at Huddersfield, which he publicly and boldly declared in the presence both of friends and opponents. Keeping in mind the grand original design of visitation sermons, he considers, 1. What is essential to the fulfilling of the ministry: 2. The obligations to be found always thus employed: 3. The incomparable happiness of a life devoted to this work. On each of these heads he enlarges with great earnestness, showing the infinite

he was now placed, was in almost every respect a contrast to that he had left. To use the expression of a highly respected minister, who was not only an eye witness of what then passed, but was one of the happy subjects of the change produced, "When Mr. Venn came to his parish he found it, and all the country round, in worse than Egyptian darkness, dead in trespasses and sins; yet the difficulties he had to encounter were so far from restraining his exertions, that they inspired him with renewed ardour and zeal. His language and address were dignified, masculine, and energetic.—He prophesied over the dry bones with the solemnity of a messenger from heaven. His preaching was exceedingly alarming;—hundreds, and I may even say thousands, flocked to hear. Many were pricked to the heart, and were constrained by the power of Divine grace to flee from the wrath to come: so great a change in a short time was perhaps never witnessed in modern times. The minister laboured day and night, in season and out of season, redeeming every opportunity for sowing the blessed seed of the word among his hearers:—he indeed 'travailed as in birth to have Christ formed in them.' It is impossible for me

importance of preaching Christ, and of being instant in season and out of season, to declare the whole counsel of God. He observes, "The world well knows what our holy profession requires from us, and the eye of libertinism itself can see our guilt when we do not fulfil our ministry." Even a Dryden could thus reproach the slothful clergyman:

"The province of the soul is large enough
To fill up every cranny of thy time,
And leave thee much to answer for,
If but *one* wretch is damn'd through thy neglect."

while I retain my memory ever to forget, and by any language half to express, what I have seen and felt under his commanding voice. His exhibitions of the purity, spirituality, and extent of the Divine law; the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the glories of the person; the boundless fulness and unsearchable riches of Jesus the Saviour; the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart; and the methods of grace in perfecting the saints unto glory; were striking and impressive beyond description. During the space of more than four years, I had the privilege to hear him expatiate on these and other subjects with increasing delight. He was the means of introducing many valuable clergymen into his parish and neighbourhood, among whom may be mentioned the late Rev. Mr. Burnett, Mr. Powley, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Ryland, who were all successively curates in his parish, though most of them afterwards removed to other important situations."—During Mr. Venn's continuance at Huddersfield, he published a volume of sermons which he dedicated to the worthy gentlemen at Clapham, to whom he felt himself under great obligations. But the most popular and useful of his publications was "The Complete Duty of Man." This work greatly contributed to the diffusion of Divine truth through every part of the kingdom, and, in a great measure, superseded the circulation of one under a similar title, inculcating very different doctrine, and which, as before observed, had formed a part of almost every library.

Mr. Venn remained for about eleven years at Huddersfield; but his incessant labours produced such an effect upon his bodily health, perceptible not only to himself but to his friends, that he thought it advisable, when in the height of his usefulness and popularity,

(though to the regret of thousands), to quit the important station for one more retired, and better suited to his declining years. This was in the year 1770, when he removed to Yelling in Huntingdonshire.

Perhaps no parish minister was ever honoured with greater success than Mr. Venn, during his residence at Huddersfield.—He might without impropriety be termed the apostle of the extensive sphere in which he moved. The aged who yet survive speak of him with rapture; and while they consider him as their spiritual father, they are waiting for the period when they hope to meet him again, as the children whom God hath given him.

Mr. Venn, like his friend Mr. Grimshaw, appeared to have one great object in view, to make men Christians; ‘to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.’ He was eminently distinguished by a catholic spirit, with respect to other denominations of professing Christians. The image of Christ and the spirit of Christianity were dear to him, wherever he saw the traces of them. It is well known that by the recommendation he prefixed to the “Reign of Grace,” he was the means of bringing Mr. Abraham Booth, the writer of it, till then in an obscure situation, to public notice. After his removal to Yelling, he occasionally visited his late charge; and he could not witness with indifference the efforts they made to perpetuate the good work he had begun, and their determination to hear elsewhere, when they could not do it to their satisfaction from the pulpit he once occupied, that blessed Gospel which had been the power of God to the salvation of their souls.*

* In a letter still preserved, which he addressed to them some time after his removal, he gives them, as professing Christians, ad-

Great numbers of young persons were among the fruits of Mr. Venn's ministry ; and of these at least thirteen, many of whom went through a course of preparatory studies with the Rev. Mr. Scott of Heckmondwike, near Wakefield, became useful, and some of them very eminent ministers, chiefly in the independent connexion—several of them yet survive.

Mr. Venn's residence and ministry at Huddersfield were not only productive of important results in a religious point of view, but in promoting civilization and laudable exertions for the temporal welfare of the neighbourhood. The truth of Scripture has in all ages been verified : ' Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.' ' Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' True religion while it purifies the soul, elevates the mind above degrading, licentious indulgencies, and directs its energies into an useful channel. To all human appearance the parish of Huddersfield, even in a commercial point of view, would never have been what it is, but for the spirit of

vice and direction with the greatest candour and faithfulness. " I am mindful," he says, " every day of the spiritual relation which subsists between us. You, I have every reason to believe, are living members of Christ ; I am the unworthy instrument who was sent from far to preach to you the glad tidings of great joy. Never can I forget, whilst my recollection remains, our many solemn meetings, when light, life, and power from God, made the place of his feet glorious. I am persuaded you are still under the influence of principles truly religious. It is your high value for the sum and substance of the Christian faith as it has been taught you by us, and the efficacy of which you have experienced, which stimulates your exertions, and as such you have reason to expect the presence of God amongst you."

inquiry which was excited at the period now referred to:—for though our holy religion principally directs the attention to those things which are not seen and eternal, it inculcates principles which are the best bond of civil society, and enjoins such an *use of* the world, as will lead to every proper exertion for our own temporal good, and the welfare of all around us.

THE writer of these pages has considered some account of these two distinguished characters as essentially necessary to form an idea of the state of religion in this part of the kingdom at the period now referred to. Every inquiry which he has been able to make has produced increasing evidence of the success which attended their own personal labours, and the happy consequences which flowed from their exertions in stirring up others in their respective spheres. The subject of this narrative had the highest respect for Mr. Venn, though on account of the distance he could not have many opportunities of hearing him, or of personal intercourse with him. From the subsequent part of this account it will appear that he was, when he became a minister, intimately connected with many who received their first religious impressions under Mr. Venn's ministry.

He had frequent opportunities, along with his religious companions, of hearing Mr. Grimshaw at Haworth—the distance from Bradford is about ten miles:—so long as he continued in society with the Methodists, which was about two years, he generally re-

paired to Haworth Church on those Sabbaths when the Lord's supper was administered.

The time was now approaching when he was induced, by a variety of circumstances, to withdraw from that church in which he had been brought up from his earliest years. He, however, through life retained a sincere veneration for it,* and was happy in maintaining a friendly and cordial correspondence with many of its members. There is no reason to conclude, either from his MS. papers, or from any thing he suggested in conversation, that he was at that early period much conversant with the controversies which have agitated the Protestant church, respecting forms of worship or modes of discipline. The prevailing motive by which he appears to have been actuated was a desire to attend where he could hear those truths which were dearer to him than life itself; his opinions on matters of minor importance were afterwards gradually formed by a close and diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures. The decided opposition which Mr. Whitefield and other evangelical ministers met with from the great body of the clergy must have had a tendency to weaken his early attachments. It may likewise be remarked that, so long as Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley acted in concert, their respective followers, who were united in society together, considered themselves still as members of the Church

* As evidential of this, it will no doubt be recollected by many who attended his public ministry, that he was in the frequent practice of introducing in the devotional exercises and in his sermons, passages from the church service, which were familiarized to him by early associations, and endeared by their own intrinsic excellence.

of England ; but some discussions having taken place respecting the points controverted between Calvinists and Arminians, both among the preachers and people, those who were particularly attached to Mr. Whitefield, and embraced the former system, discontinued their connexion with Mr. Wesley's societies, and, of course, were no longer subject to the rules established by him, which positively enjoined an adherence to the Church of England. Mr. Wesley directed a considerable part of his attention to the organization of his plans, so as to secure their permanency and extension ; but Mr. Whitefield's talents lay more in preaching the gospel than in making arrangements for perpetuating the great work which he had been so wonderfully instrumental in commencing. ' To preach Christ and him crucified,' was his grand object. Disregarding the distinctions which prevail in the Christian church, he laboured to promote a revival, not only in the establishment, but among the presbyterians in Scotland and America, and among the different denominations in South Britain, imitating the example of the Apostle Paul, ' To the Jews I became a Jew ; to them that were without law as without law ; I became all things to all men that I might gain some.' Wherever he met with those who loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, he embraced them as brethren, though in some respects they followed not with him.

Several large places under the denomination of tabernacles were erected in the south of England for the accommodation of Mr. Whitefield's followers, some of them under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, who expended nearly the whole of her income in building places of worship, and the support of ministers. Mr. Whitefield himself preached in these tabernacles as often

as his other itinerant engagements permitted, and during his absence they were supplied, and are still supplied, by ministers who had received episcopal ordination, or by popular preachers from among the dissenters. As Mr. Whitefield* was cut off in the midst of his labours, these plans were never carried into effect in the more distant parts of the kingdom, where his occasional ministrations had been so acceptable and successful. Many who received their first religious impressions under his sermons were as 'sheep without a shepherd;' and while they retained the greatest veneration for him, they were led by necessity, as well as by conscience and duty, to connect themselves with the dissenters of different denominations, among whom the same truths were preached.

That mighty impulse which Mr. Whitefield and his coadjutors had given to the professing world, was the means of exciting a general spirit of inquiry on religious subjects, and of bringing forward to notice talents which might otherwise have lain dormant. Considerable numbers of those who were afterwards the most distinguished pastors of dissenting churches, dated their conversion from attending the ministry, or perusing the writings, of these apostolic men; and to this revival many of those congregations, which have continued to flourish and increase to the present day, owe their rise. The mantle of Elijah dropped upon many Elishas; and a portion of that spirit which actuated Mr. Whitefield not only rested upon his immediate followers, but, blessed be God, the sweet savour of it still remains. By this spirit the

* Mr. W. was born in the year 1714, and died in America in the year 1771.

Protestant church in Great Britain is distinguished from the professors of the same faith on the European continent, who have long been in a declining state. Notwithstanding the awful judgments with which God has lately visited them, many, alas! yet remain in an awful state of stupor, 'having left their first love,' and lost the zeal and fervour of their ancestors. This spirit has been the life and soul of those missionary exertions which have so much distinguished modern times, and we have reason to believe that it will spread and prevail till that glorious period, 'when all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.'

From the whole of this account, what powerful arguments may be drawn for mutual forbearance among professing Christians! It is evident that, in the dispensation of his special favours, the Almighty is 'no respecter of persons,' or of the denominations by which the professors of Christianity are known among men. The page of ecclesiastical history, if attentively read, will be an antidote to all those high pretensions which our vanity and self-sufficiency may lead us to indulge. It clearly shows that revivals in religion, which are the result of Divine influence, have not been confined to any particular religious societies. They have sometimes commenced in one denomination, and have extended their most beneficial effects to others unconnected with them. The candlestick is removed from one part of the church militant to another. There has been in all ages, and will continue to be, a diversity of sentiments on matters of inferior importance, among the professors of Christianity. This, though a partial evil, may be an universal good: it affords exercise for

Christian graces, particularly that 'charity which is the bond of perfectness.' Its tendency is to promote inquiry after Divine truth, to humble the pride of man, and to check that self-conceit which would lead us to say, 'We are the men, and wisdom shall die with us.' There is, however, one kind of uniformity which good men cannot too strenuously seek after, namely, the 'unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' They are all partakers of the 'same heavenly calling,' speak the same language, have the same difficulties to encounter, pursue the same objects, are supported by the same promises, and animated by the same prospects. Hence we need not wonder, that a Leighton and a Henry, a Hervey and a Watts, were kindred souls, however different as to outward matters, and in the eyes of men.

The letter which is here subjoined may serve strikingly to illustrate these remarks. It was written by the Rev. Mr. Whitefield to the subject of this narrative. He placed great value upon it, on account of its intrinsic excellence, and as coming from one for whom he had so much regard. The date shows that it was not received till some years after the events we are now relating; but as a more suitable opportunity for introducing it may not occur, it is hoped the reader will excuse its insertion here.

" DEAR SIR,

" London, Sept. 1, 1766.

" I have been so often imposed upon by letters from strangers that it is high time to be a little more cautious; besides, bodily weakness prevents my writing as formerly; but your letters seem to evidence simplicity of heart. If truly called to the glorious work of the mi-

nistry, of which I can be no judge at this distance, I wish you much prosperity in the name of the Lord. The language of my soul is, 'Would to God that all the Lord's servants were prophets!' A clear head, and an honest, upright, disinterested, warm heart, with a good elocution, and a moderate degree of learning, will carry you through all, and enable you to do wonders. You will not fail to pray for a decayed, but, thanks be to God, not a disbanded soldier. Oh that the last glimmerings of an expiring taper may be blessed to guide some wandering souls to Jesus Christ! As yet 'the shout of a king is heard amongst us.' Whether I shall ever visit Yorkshire again, is only known to him 'who holdeth the stars in his right hand.' Kind remembrances to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Brethren, pray for us. I retain my old name, 'Less than the least of all saints,' but for Jesus Christ's sake,

"Yours in our common Lord,

"G. WHITEFIELD."

It has frequently been remarked that many of those who had been particularly attached to Mr. Whitefield, afterwards joined the Independents, before that time comparatively a small body, though now so numerous and respectable. This was the plan which numbers at Bradford, who, for the reasons already assigned, had left Mr. Wesley's connexion, proposed to adopt; and with them the subject of this memoir united himself. They frequently went to Leeds on Lord's days to hear the Rev. Mr. Edwards,* of

* This valuable minister, for whose memory Mr. F. had a very sincere respect to the latest period of life, was born at

Whitechapel, and the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, minister of Call Lane, whose ministerial labours were very edifying to them. A design was formed to establish an interest of the same kind at Bradford, both on account of the distance from Leeds, and for the advantage of the neighbourhood. A young man, whose name was Hales, preached frequently among them with great acceptance. He lived at that time at Wakefield, where he was apprenticed to business, but was bought off, with a view to his engaging in the ministry. He was a good speaker, and his education had been liberal. In many respects, if the account given of him be correct, he bore a great resemblance to the much lamented Spencer of Liverpool. He won their hearts, both by his address in the pulpit and by his general behaviour; and he gave them encouragement to hope that he would

Shrewsbury; and was first convinced of the great importance of religion by hearing Mr. Whitefield when in Ireland. Few particulars are known of the early part of his life. For several years he preached among the Methodists; but having removed to Leeds in 1755, he left that body of people, and, with the concurrence and assistance of some friends, began to build a chapel. Mr. Whitefield, who was personally acquainted with him, at first expressed his disapprobation, and in passing by gave his opinion, that *Ichabod*, 'the glory is departed,' would soon be written upon it. Being some time after informed of the success of Mr. Edwards's labours in this place, he, with great modesty and humility, replied, "It is not the first time I have spoken like a *man*, implying an acknowledgment of his own mistakes and ignorance of the ways of God.

Mr. Edwards was a person of unaffected, warm piety; his views of Divine truths were clear, and his manner of explaining them forcible and eloquent. He died Feb. 17, 1785, aged 71. It is scarcely necessary here to relate the rapid extension of that cause in the town of Leeds, which he was the honoured instrument in establishing. 'Zion has indeed here lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes.'

remain with them. But, to their great disappointment, a sudden change afterwards took place in his views; he told them he thought himself too young to assume the pastoral office, and that it was his desire to spend some time in preparatory study. They were still, however, unwilling to give up the idea of his settling among them. He left Bradford to pay a visit to his relations at Liverpool: as he continued there longer than they expected, being anxiously desirous to know his final determination, they deputed Mr. John Smith, and another person of their number, to wait upon him there. To their deep regret, they found that his affections were growing more and more cool towards them. His relations, being rather gay, persuaded him to abandon all thoughts of engaging in the ministry, so that he never returned. Several ministers of the same denomination preached occasionally among them. Of these, Mr. Thorpe was one of the most acceptable; but the circumstance just related threw such a damp over their spirits, that the plan of erecting a place of worship was relinquished, and not resumed during the life-time of many who then took so active a part.

The transient acquaintance which the subject of this memoir had with Mr. Hales, was of permanent advantage to him, as he was the means of directing his attention to the writings of the Rev. James Hervey, of which Mr. Hales himself was remarkably fond.

From those invaluable works, in the future periods of his life, he acknowledged himself to have received great advantage, both as a private Christian, and a minister. He imbibed the spirit and taste of his favourite author, both in admiring the beauties of na-

ture and the still more resplendent glories displayed in the wonders of redemption and grace. The acquisition of Mr. Hervey's writings, at a time when but few opportunities offered of hearing from the pulpit those truths which Whitefield and his coadjutors preached, must have been of incalculable value to him, in fixing his principles, and establishing his mind. Mr. Hervey was of a feeble constitution, and not able to bear itinerant exertions. He lived and died in a situation comparatively obscure; but by his numerous publications he vindicated and elucidated those evangelical principles which had been so widely diffused by means of Whitefield's preaching. If Whitefield was the Paul who *planted*, Hervey was the Apollos who *watered*; or to come down to later times, if Whitefield was the Luther, Hervey was the Melancthon of his age, whom he resembled particularly in the suavity of his temper and disposition. Mr. Whitefield was not allowed, even by his warmest friends, to shine as a writer; but this deficiency, if so it may be called, in one whose time was otherwise most usefully occupied, was well supplied by Mr. Hervey, whose works had at that period, and for many years after, a most extensive circulation, and were greatly instrumental in diffusing the knowledge of Divine truth, and a spirit of fervent devotion, both among multitudes in the lower walks of life and in the higher circles. He was not only the divine, but the gentleman, the scholar, and the philosopher. So exquisite was his taste for the beauties of creation, connected with the most exalted piety, that no one can read his "Meditations" with attention without being charmed and profited by them. In his "Theron and Aspasio," he may have confined himself too exclu-

sively to one part of the evangelical system ; he may have been succeeded by theological writers who have treated the same subjects with more discrimination and caution ; and his style may in some parts be objectionable, as being too flowery ; yet surely that taste must be extremely fastidious which would consign them to neglect, on account of these venial blemishes. Similar objections have been made to Dr. Young's " Night Thoughts," a work which Hervey's recommendation tended to bring into notice ; but the feelings of that person are certainly not to be envied who can, with the asperity of Zoilus, dwell upon these imperfections, and overlook the sublime passages which must arrest the attention of every candid reader. How much these publications were valued by the deceased, will be evident from the extracts from his diary which will hereafter be given. They were his constant, his most endeared companions. He not only perused them diligently, and transcribed such parts as particularly affected his mind, but he committed many passages to memory.

Though the design of establishing an Independent interest at Bradford was relinquished, the Baptists were not discouraged from making some similar attempts ; and probably the failure of the one tended to strengthen the hands of the other. Several persons resided at Bradford who were members of the churches of that denomination at Haworth and Rawden. They invited their own ministers and others from more distant stations, particularly the minister at Bacup, and Mr. Smith of Wainsgate, to preach, when opportunity offered, in their houses. Mr. William Crabtree, then a young man, member of the church at Wainsgate,

supplied once a month ; and, after some hesitation, complied with their invitation to remove and settle amongst them. For some time he preached in a hired room ; but the congregation increasing rapidly, a suitable place of worship was at length erected. Among other persons, the subject of this memoir, and a few of his friends, went to hear this stranger ; and, as he relates in his diary, he soon began to feel a growing attachment to him :

“ Finding his sermons upon the closest examination, according to the light and knowledge I had, to be agreeable to the ‘law and to the testimony,’ after a long struggle and fluctuation of mind, I resolved that if I could find that what is commonly termed believer’s baptism is revealed in Scripture, as the duty of Christ’s followers, I would comply with it, and join myself to the Lord’s people of that denomination. Accordingly I searched the Scriptures, so far as I know, impartially and without prejudice ; the result was a persuasion that it was my duty to ‘arise and be baptized’.

On the 26th of February, 1758, being then just entered on his 19th year, he came before the society at Bradford, as a candidate for baptism and church fellowship. Having given great satisfaction to those who were present, he was baptized March the 11th following, and soon after admitted a member of the church.

The time of his continuance with his master (whom he always mentioned with respect), though not yet expired, was now drawing to a close ; so that he began to have serious thoughts respecting his future situation in life. His habits, at that youthful age, were distinguished by sobriety and manly steadiness ; quite opposite to the volatility which too often appears among young persons, even of more advanced years. Being

fond of retirement, and having no other prospect of a comfortable home, he formed the design of entering into the married state. In judging of early or late marriages, circumstances materially alter the case. It was a measure which his friends advised; and though he was in general reluctant to mention the age at which he became a husband, considering it as too early for a precedent to others, he never saw reason to repent of the steps he had himself taken. The person on whom he fixed his choice was Susannah, the eldest daughter of John Skirrow, of Bingley. She was more than five years older than himself: she lived, when their acquaintance commenced, at Bradford, and was a member of the Baptist church there. She proved, in the best sense of the word, 'a helpmate' to him, both as to temporal and spiritual matters. The simplicity and piety with which the day of their marriage was observed were worthy of a patriarchal age. Their pastor and a few select friends were invited on the occasion. He gave them, by way of sermon, a solemn exhortation on the duties which their new relationship required, from the language of inspiration: Gen. xxiv. 67: 'And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife,' &c.

Their united finances were very limited; but their desires and wants were circumscribed; and they were not soon encumbered with the cares of a young family, having no child till several years after their removal from Bradford. In some respects this early entrance on life must have been a bar to mental improvement. The exertion necessary to provide for his little domestic establishment intrenched upon the time which

would otherwise have been appropriated to reading and study; but his habits of early rising, and catching the moments in their flight, enabled him, though surrounded with difficulties, to accomplish what many fail to do, though placed in the most favourable circumstances. Had he presaged what his future destination was to be, it is probable he would have remained single, at least for some time longer; but it does not appear from his diary, or any other papers, that his views were at all directed to the ministry till some time after his marriage. He had no prospect but of settling in that humble, retired sphere of life in which Providence first placed him,—discharging the duties of a private member of a Christian society, and cultivating intercourse with God and his own heart: “the world forgetting; by the world forgot.” Along “the cool, sequestered vale of life” he passed for some years; and during his remaining days expected to pass the “noiseless tenor of his way.”

The “Life of Matthew Henry,” by Mr. Tong, was at that period one of his favourite books; and he through life perused Mr. Henry’s own excellent writings, particularly his “Exposition,” with great pleasure and advantage. It is not improbable that the plans Mr. Henry adopted for the improvement of his mind, might have suggested to him similar expedients, and particularly keeping a diary, which he did, with occasional interruptions, for some years. His fondness for books was such as to intrench considerably upon his limited income, and sometimes to involve him in temporary difficulties, as appears from the following extract in the commencement of his diary. . “In my worldly circumstances I am at present a little in debt, which I have principally

occasioned by laying out money in books." (An acknowledgment which many a student has made before him, and for which such will best know how to make an apology.)

Other extracts from the diary are here subjoined.

" March 20, 1760.—This day I have been reviewing my past life. By the good hand of God upon me, I have been brought through many difficulties. I can reflect upon little in my conduct with satisfaction. I have often been disobedient, and rebelled against God. O Lord! thou knowest all my weaknesses!—Pardon what is past, and remember not the sins and offences of my youth. Give me strength and grace to begin my life anew. Subdue the power of sin in my heart, and enable me to walk more holily and more uprightly.

" My soul now flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

" In the evening I spent some hours in building a wall before my window, where I intend to plant a few herbs. While making this little improvement, I had many pleasing meditations concerning Christ as being the *foundation*, the *corner stone*, &c. My evening exercises were not performed with much animation. I had reason to complain of dulness, which might partly be owing to fatigue."

" Friday, March 21.—This morning I rose at half past five; attended to private and family worship; read two Psalms, and a page or two in the "Night Thoughts," which were a means of warming my affections, and preparing me for the duties of the day."

" Lord's Day, March 23.—Mr. Crabtree being indisposed, I went to Howarth to hear Mr. Hartley.

In the morning he paraphrased, in a very profitable manner, on Rom. xii. 9—13: ‘Let love be without dissimulation,’ &c. I endeavoured to take down some short hints of what he delivered, and also of the sermon in the afternoon, from Luke i. 74, 75. After the public services were over, I and my companion Mr. William Roe, were much gratified, and I hope edified, by conversation with Mr. Hartley.

“March 24, 1760. *Ætatis* 20.—A COVENANT WITH GOD.—Incomprehensible Being! ‘who searchest the heart, and triest the reins of the children of men’: thou knowest my sincerity,—my thoughts are all unveiled to thee: I am surrounded by thine immensity: thou art a present though invisible witness of what I am now engaged in;—I am ‘taking hold of thy strength that I may be at peace with thee.’

“I here bind myself, O Lord, to be thine, by a sacred and everlasting obligation; I devote myself to be thy servant, to perform the work which thou assignest to me; I renounce the glories and vanities of this present evil world, and choose thee as the source of my happiness, my supreme felicity, and everlasting portion. This is my deliberate, my free and sincere determination,—a determination, which by thy grace, I will never retract.

“Oh! thou, by whose power alone I shall be able to stand, put thy fear in my heart that I may never depart from thee.—Let not the world with all its flatteries, nor death, nor hell with all its terrors, induce me to violate this sacred judgment. Oh! let me never live to abandon thee, nor draw the impious breath that would deny thee.

“ And now, let surrounding angels witness, ye saints witness, that I solemnly devote the powers and faculties of my soul to the service of God; and should I presumptuously employ any of the advantages thou hast given me to thy dishonour, or forsake thee, let them testify against me, and let my own words condemn me.

“ JOHN FAWCETT.

“ Thus have I subscribed myself to be the Lord's. God is my Father and Friend. Christ is my all-sufficient Saviour; and the Spirit of God will, I trust, be my Sanctifier and my Comforter.

“ God is my all-sufficient good,
My portion and my choice;
In him my vast desires are fill'd,
And all my powers rejoice.”

Such were the solemn vows which he took upon him at this period; and whatever reasons he might afterwards have to complain of his inconstancy, the subsequent periods of his life show that they were not vain resolves, but the result of the most deliberate choice and determination.

He chose the Lord to be his God, and joined himself unto him in a perpetual covenant never to be forgotten: His views, as a private Christian, perfectly coincided with those by which he was actuated, when called to the work of the sanctuary; and more particularly devoted as a minister to the service of his Divine Master.

" Friday, March 28.—This morning I rose in good health between five and six. I found my mind attracted heaven-wards. In private and family devotion I had some humblings of heart, and earnestly implored that God would be merciful to me, and pardon my iniquity. Through the day my mind was composed, though I was admonished, and not without some cause, for neglecting my business, and devoting an undue portion of my time to books. At night I read a little in Babbington's "Notes on the Bible," after which I spent some time in private prayer, but had no great enlargement. The remainder of the evening I employed in perusing the "History of New England," by Cotton Mather. I was much interested by the account of Mr. Cotton and Mr. Norton. Oh that I could learn to follow them!"

" Saturday, March 29.—I endeavoured when I rose to employ my thoughts on Divine subjects, but had to complain of levity of mind. I had some pleasure in my devotional exercises, both in retirement and in my family. Read Psalm li.

" In the former part of the day, when engaged in my employment, I was infested by vain thoughts, but at noon was refreshed in prayer and reading a portion of Scripture. At night I was not so composed in my mind as I could have wished to be."

" Lord's Day, March 30.—This morning I did not rise till nearly seven. I was criminal in neglecting to fix my thoughts upon Divine subjects: I also indulged in a light and trifling frame of mind, which I have always found to be prejudicial. About noon I retired, and endeavoured to pour out my supplications before the Lord. In this work I was not al-

together unaffected. I had some earnest breathings and warm desires for the pardon of all my offences, for a sanctified heart, for strength against sin, for a Divine blessing upon me this day, for the presence of God in his ordinances, and that this day may be a preparation for the duties of following days.

“In family worship I found some satisfaction, especially in singing Psalm v.

“ Long as I live I'll bless thy name,
My King, my God of love,
My work and joy shall be the same
In the bright world above.

“ Let me this day, O my God ‘sit under thy shadow with great delight, and let thy fruit be sweet to my taste!’ Make me this day ‘to drink of the rivers of thy pleasure.’ Thou art the centre of all my happiness. ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee? Whom have I in the earth that I desire in comparison of thee?’ I’ll bid adieu to all other refuges, and take shelter in thee, ‘my shield, and my exceeding great reward.’”

“ Monday, March 31.

“ Lord teach me how to watch and pray,
To keep my heart both night and day,
To try each motion of the mind,
And check the rising lusts I find.

“ Do thou my sensual heart renew,
And pardon my transgressions too ;
Give strength to walk in duty’s road,
That narrow path which leads to God.

“ This morning I rose in good health, at my usual time. I had much pleasure in private prayer, but was

discomposed in family worship. I was distressed by sinful thoughts in the afternoon. I am now brought to the close of this month. O Lord, my God, look upon me; and as my days and months roll on, may I increase in grace and usefulness!"

The following is supposed to have been one of his earliest attempts at poetry; it occurs in the diary, April 1, 1760.

“ RETURN OF SPRING.

- “ Welcome bless'd season of the year,
My heart is glad at thy return
April proclaims the summer near;
Rejoice, ye swains, no longer mourn.
- “ The stormy winter now is o'er,
The nipping frosts begin to cease;
Awake, my heart, adore the Power
That forms creation as he please.
- “ He bids the northern breezes blow;
The piercing wind obeys the Lord:
His hand bestrews the falling snow,
And nature trembles at his word.
- “ Again he rolls the seasons round;
Once more the blooming spring appears;
A thousand beauties clothe the ground,
And earth her brightest garment wears.
- “ Once more my wishful eyes shall see
Nature put on her gay attire;
The grassy mead, the budding tree,
I'll view with transport, and admire.

E

" Oft wakeful with the rising dawn,
I'll watch fair Phœbus gently rise;
My feet shall tread the flowery lawn,
With inward pleasure and surprise.

" I'll join the songsters of the grove;
The lark shall teach my matin song;
Of her I'll learn to mount above,
And praise my God with thankful tongue.

" I'll strive more grateful thanks to pay;
With all the winged tribe I'll vie;
' Your Lord for me took human clay,
To live for me, for me to die.'

" Thus my enraptur'd soul shall sing,
Creating and redeeming grace;
And thus improve the cheerful spring
With songs of gratitude and praise.

" This morning I did not rise till nearly six. After my usual devotions, I entered upon the labours of the day, during which I composed the foregoing meditation. At noon I was too prodigal of my time; in the afternoon I was not so comfortable as in the former part of the day. In the evening I went to the meeting; Mr. Crabtree was there; he talked very closely to one of our number, who seems to be too much taken up with the things of this present evil world."

" Wednesday, April 2.—I this day composed the following verses, to be subjoined to the former.

" The blossoms that adorn each bough
Shall teach my song a nobler lay;
Thus may my warm devotion grow,
And yield more grateful smell than they.

“ The flowers that deck the humble vale,
Expanded wide by Phœbus shine ;
Their fragrance shall my sense regale,
And teach me lessons all Divine.”

“ Monday, April 7.—This evening it pleased God of his abundant mercy to visit my soul, to enkindle fresh ardour in my breast, and to draw my heart out after him. I found much pleasure in social converse with a friend from Idle, and afterwards in reading.”

“ Wednesday, April 9.—I was enabled to go through my duties of a temporal and spiritual nature with some degree of pleasure. In the evening and part of the following day we were favoured with the company of Mr. Hartley. He lodged at our house. The conversation which I and my companion in life, who had been exercised with some indisposition and gloominess of mind, had with him, was truly edifying. He prayed affectionately with us. I cannot but admire his abilities, and esteem his acquaintance a great privilege.

“ O Lord to thee I lift mine eye ;
Attend unto my humble cry ;
Let thy kind hand some gift bestow,
And make me useful here below.”

“ Saturday, April 12.—Gracious God, look upon me this morning ; in tender mercy forgive my sins, sanctify my heart, and grant that I may be found to thy praise both in life and death ! We are this day refreshed by the company of some of our friends from Sheffield, who are come to spend the Sabbath, and partake of the Lord's Supper. Two of them lodge at our house. We had much profitable conversation with them.”

“ Lord’s Day, April 13.—This morning I had some more discourse with the two persons before mentioned ; but did not find my mind impressed as I wished to do in my morning devotion.—Quicken me, O Lord !

“ Mr. Crabtree preached A. M. from 1 Thess. i. 10 :
‘ And to wait for his Son from heaven.’

“ O Lord, enable me to improve by the solemn truths I have heard, so that I may double my diligence, and be found at thy coming ready to meet thee ! Prepare me to come to thy table, and partake of thy holy Supper. Pardon my unfitness for that sacred feast, and make me a worthy partaker of it.

“ In attending to the ordinance at the close of the afternoon service, my natural passions were affected, but, alas ! my heart was at too great a distance from God ; O Lord help me, for Jesus’ sake !”

“ Tuesday, April 15.—This day I composed some verses, applicable to the present state of our church ; intended to be sung at our meeting to-morrow morning.

“ Lord we are met to seek thy face,
With fasting and with prayer ;
Consider all our sad distress,
And lend a gracious ear.

“ Hast thou not been our hope and trust,
Our shield and our defence ;
When wilt thou raise us from the dust,
And drive our sorrows hence ?

“ Look down in mercy, gracious Lord,
Heal every bleeding wound ;
Let former favours be restored,
And ancient joys abound.

“ 'Tis for our sins thy face is hid,
Thou God of truth and grace,
Help us to search as Israel did,
And try our hearts and ways.

“ Hast thou not promised in thy Word
To hear thy children's cry?
O turn us to thee, glorious Lord,
And help us ere we die.

“ Shall thy afflicted Zion mourn,
And seek her God in vain?
Wilt thou not to thy church return,
And build her walls again?”

“ Wednesday, April 16.—This morning was appointed by our little society to be kept in fasting and prayer, which I hope was attended to in a suitable manner by many; though I felt, as to myself, much reason to lament, on account of slothfulness and indifference.”

“ April 30.—In the morning I read some account of the life of Mr. John Draper. He was a very eminent Christian. He lived a life of strict holiness, and died when about my age. O that I may follow his steps, and like him live and die!

“ Another month is come to a close; I have the same complaints to make as at the beginning. I have been chargeable with many sins of the heart, and many also in word and action. I have made but little progress in the ways of holiness, and gained but little advantage over the evil propensities of my heart. I have indeed formed many resolutions to walk more circumspectly, to be more constant and fervent in the private and public exercises of religion; but I have failed in the performance, and fallen into lukewarmness and indif-

ference. I have been of but little use in my family, in the world, or in the church of God. My life has been one continued scene of imperfection and sin. If I had done all that the law of God requires, I should still have been 'an unprofitable servant.' What then shall I say of myself, since I have come so very far short of its righteous demands in every particular? I am a sinner, but—blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

“ O Lord, I confess
To thee my distress,
And acknowledge my folly and sin;
How prone I'm to stray
From thy righteous way,
How imperfect my actions have been.”

The hymn of which the above verse is a part was composed at this time, and was many years after inserted in the volume of original hymns which he published.

In some of the subsequent parts of the diary, which extends to three MS. volumes, the plan is changed. The mercies received are first enumerated, among which bodily health and food convenient, as *temporal* blessings (too often, alas! overlooked and undervalued) are frequently mentioned, and *spiritual* privileges and enjoyments particularly acknowledged; afterwards a confession of sins, failings, and omissions of duty, private and more public, is subjoined. This shows, in a striking light, the tenderness of his conscience—as an instance of which the following extract may be noticed:

“ May 1, 1760.—I have been but little this day in prayer and meditation.

“ I have found pride and ambition working in my heart.

“ I have reason to fear that I have sought my own praise more than the glory of God in writing the foregoing verses.

“ I have been very cold in my evening devotions.”

“ Lord’s Day, May 4.—O Lord God of heaven and earth ! I come to thee this morning conscious of guilt—I desire to acknowledge my transgressions;—I have been wasteful of my precious time ; have neglected to examine myself ; and have been chargeable with the omission of many other duties. ‘ O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner ! ’

“ I have this day been hearing what ‘ the desire of the righteous ’ is, and, ‘ that it shall be granted. ’—Proverbs, x. 24. Let this be verified in my experience ; and in order to this, may my desires be always such as thou dost approve. Set a watch before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips ! Grant that, from this time, my mouth may be as a well of life, and that a stream of righteousness may flow from my lips into whatsoever company I am cast, and may my conduct preach righteousness to all with whom I have to do.

“ Mr. Crabtree delivered his discourse with much energy and animation—but I have still reason to complain of the hardness of my heart. I must take up the lamentation ‘ My leanness, my leanness, woe is me ! How can it be that I have an interest in these benefits, and yet be so unaffected with a sense of it ? If it be so, ‘ why am I thus ? ’ O Lord, who searchest all hearts, thou knowest that I would not deceive myself ; I.

would not pretend to be brought nigh to that from which I am still at the greatest distance.—Thou knowest that my soul longs above all things after what thy servant has this day dwelt upon.”

“ Lord’s Day, May 11.—

“ The earth resplendent Phœbus cheers,
And bright the morning light appears;
The fruitful ground, refresh’d with showers,
Unbosoms now the fairest flowers :
Far otherwise, alas! my mind,
To good averse, to ill inclined.”

“ May 12, 1760.—We have this day been removing our goods to a house in Barker End, more airy and healthy than our former situation:—I desire to be thankful that he who fixes the bounds of our habitations has now brought me to the place where I desired to be. It has been a day of much hurry and toil, so that I have had but little thought about God and heavenly things.”

“ May 13.—This day I was much fatigued in body, but something better in mind than the day before. As I have now got a new house, my desire and prayer is that, being possessed of a new heart, I may be enabled, through grace, to perform new obedience. I had much pleasure in family prayer in the evening.

“ A house of prayer my house shall be,
A temple for my God ;
Nor shall allow’d iniquity
Have place in my abode.

“ Lord help me to perform this resolution!”

“ May 14.—This morning was set apart for fasting and prayer, on account of the present distresses of our

Zion. We met in the vestry a little after five in the morning, and continued our meeting till nearly eight."

Among the sins which he often laments is the want of a more lively concern for the good of his fellow Christians.

" O Lord! to thee I here confess
My folly, sin, and wretchedness :
O! may my few remaining days
Be all devoted to thy praise!

Thy statutes may I keep in mind,
Thy law upon my memory bind ;
These truths may every heart embrace,
And praise thee for thy *richer grace*."

In these last lines the sermons which Mr. Crabtree preached the Sabbath before are referred to, from 1 Cor. ix. 21 : ' Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.' In these sermons he judiciously and satisfactorily proved the obligation of Christians to regard the moral law as a rule of life.

" May 25.—This day six persons were added to our number, five of whom came from Leeds. In the evening, we established a meeting at our house. May the Lord prosper our undertaking!"

" May 26.—My sins have this day been many and great.—I have to complain of wandering thoughts and negligence in private prayer ; unreasonable anger, and too much levity.

" In the evening I had much pleasure in reading Clarke's Bible, and was blessed with some desires after God and holiness."

" Tuesday, May 27.—I was affected in convers-

ing with a friend about the distresses with which our church is at present oppressed. The love of many waxeth cold, and some have said they will come no more amongst us. Deliver me, O Lord, from such a spirit!—May I dwell in thy house to the end of my days! And may it be my constant aim, by every means in my power, to restore and confirm my lukewarm brethren; and while I look upon these things as chastisements for sin, may I endeavour for myself to set about a reformation.”

“ Friday, June 13.—While engaged in the labours of this day, my thoughts have been employed on what relates to my soul and my brethren in the church of God. I was much delighted in considering myself and them as *pilgrims* travelling towards the Heavenly Jerusalem—O that my conduct may always show that I am seeking a better country than that in which I now dwell !”

“ Monday, June 16.—About four in the morning I was called up to pray with a female apparently near her end—afterwards I went to visit a Christian friend about three miles out of the town, accompanied by two of our brethren. We found him in a feeble state, but comfortable. He spoke of the goodness of God, and seems to have a firm faith in him. We all engaged in prayer, and committed him to God. When I returned home, I had an opportunity of conversing with Mr. Crabtree, Mr. Hartley, and Mr. Smith. Their discourse was very pleasing and edifying. We spent some time at Ed. Watson’s, and afterwards went to John Firth’s.

“ Several important subjects were discussed with great seriousness and ability; and Mr. Smith concluded

with earnest prayer to God. When I am in the company of these persons, I am ready to think I have scarcely begun to act the part of a rational creature, much less that of a Christian. O that I might now begin to live agreeably to what I profess !”

“ Lord’s Day, June 22.—When I rose this morning I found myself in better health than for some time; but was criminal in not taking the first opportunity for private prayer. I found my heart drawn out in gratitude at breakfast; the good creatures of God were very nourishing to my body. O that my soul may thus be fed with the bread of life, and the new wine of the heavenly kingdom, this day! After this I spent a little time in meditation, and then engaged in family worship: I read Psalm cxlv. which was very precious to me. There are several exhortations to men in general to praise God, and to good men in particular.—Several encouraging promises are given to the latter, as ‘that the Lord is near them,’ and ‘will hear their prayer.’ At nine I went into my parlour, and endeavoured to pour out my soul before God; after which I went to the house of God, weak in body, but pretty comfortable in mind.”

“ June 23.—

“ O Lord ! be thou my strength and guide,
And keep me ever near thy side ;
Restore my soul whene’er I stray,
And lead me in the perfect way ;
Cleanse me from sin, increase my faith,
And help me both in life and death.”

“ Tuesday, June 24.—This morning I was, as I have been for some time, afflicted with a pain at my stomach. I engaged in my work, and was

helped in the forenoon to redeem my time, in some degree, although I found it very difficult, on account of bodily indisposition. My thoughts were much occupied with the subject of death. There is only one thing that seems to distress my mind in the prospect of it, which is my present situation as to worldly circumstances. In the afternoon I was much the same, though rather worse towards evening, so that I could not go to the meeting, and found it difficult to perform family and private duties. On retiring to rest, I took some medicine, and slept pretty well."

"Wednesday, June 25.—This morning I found myself a little better, and felt a degree of thankfulness for it. I rose soon after six, my pains being a little removed. My desire is that the Lord would do me good by this affliction, so that it may tend to purge me from sin, bring me nearer to God, make me partaker of his holiness, and thereby yield the 'peaceable fruits of righteousness.' In order to this, I would now examine what sins I have indulged, and what duties neglected. 'Search me, O God, and try my reins,' and heart! I am conscious that I am chargeable with mispending my precious time and neglecting my business. I have also been deficient in private prayer and Divine meditation. O Lord, pardon my hypocrisy and formality!

"June 26.—When I rose this morning I found myself much better in my outward man:—at noon I read some very affecting passages in the "History of New England:—in the evening, a lecture was preached by Mr. Oulton of Liverpool, from 1 Tim. iv. 8. He delivered many important and glorious truths. After the meeting, I had some conversation with a brother who

had for some time withdrawn from us, but was made sensible of his fault, and desirous to return. I was well satisfied with what he said, and told him I could embrace him in the arms of Christian love, and had no hard thoughts of him."

" Friday, June 27.—This morning I rose about six, in pretty good health; but instead of composing my thoughts, and offering unto God the first fruits of the day, I spent some time in a trifling manner, and afterwards found it more difficult to bring my mind to devotional exercises. In the afternoon, I spent one precious hour in idleness, which I found to be prejudicial and painful, on reflection. Oh! let not that sin have so much dominion over me! In the evening I found myself weak and indisposed."

" Monday, June 30. This morning I rose about six, being faint in body, and still worse in mind. I found great backwardness to prayer and every thing that is good. I did indeed retire as usual, but had no spirit of supplication.—I fear the Lord has a controversy with me and that the Holy Spirit is grieved. About nine I kneeled down and prayed, and was more engaged in the work. I then resolved with myself to begin anew to seek the Lord. I thought on my ways with earnest desires to turn my feet unto his testimonies. In the evening I took a walk to Farsley; where I had some Christian conversation with a few friends on the temptations to which young persons are exposed. It was a pleasing and profitable interview."

" July 1, 1760.—I now enter upon a new month and a new half-year. O Lord, help me to use this portion of my time in a proper manner!

" After attending to the usual devotions and labours

of the day, I went in the evening to the meeting. I had reason to complain of unwatchfulness and wandering thoughts, but found my mind a little warmed by our pastor's prayer at the close of the meeting. On my return home, my temper was not as it ought to have been; the consequence of which was, family and private devotions were but irregularly performed."

" July 4.—In the afternoon the preparation meeting was held, at which I attended. Mr. Crabtree first gave a few words of exhortation. The case of one who was desirous to unite with us again was considered: he had absented himself for a considerable time; but the church, being satisfied with his concessions, and the spirit he now manifested, was willing to receive him again. Our brethren at Halifax sent a letter, which was read, desiring their dismissal, that they might embody themselves together under the pastoral care of Mr. Joshua Wood: their dismissal was granted:—the meeting continued from about one till seven in the evening. Though not very well either in body or mind, it was on the whole an edifying season to me. After I returned home I did not properly improve my time, but neglected to offer my evening oblation, till I was incapable of doing it in a becoming manner.—O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great!"

" Saturday, July 5.—In family worship I read a chapter in Proverbs, and afterwards some passages in Henry's "Life," which were very interesting; I also wrote a little.—Lord! help me to redeem my time, so that I may have a proper portion of it for every good work. In the business of the day I had some pleasing meditations, but in general my heart was not so with God as it ought to have been. At noon, I spent some time in

reading "Theron and Aspasio."—We retired to rest a little before twelve, but had not slept above an hour when my partner was awakened out of sleep, by what appeared to her a real and frightful noise; I rose, though reluctantly at first, but I reflected that nothing could hurt me in the least without my Father's permission, which idea enabled me to overcome my slavish fears.—I thought of the saying of Job, vii. 14: 'Thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.' It was some time before we could sleep again; but I was enabled to look unto the Lord, humbly praying, that, whether it was real or merely imaginary, it might lead us to seek after an actual state of preparation for that more awful midnight cry when the last trumpet shall sound!—O that we may then be found ready!"

"July 6.—This being the ordinance day, though but weak and feeble in my outward man, I endeavoured in the morning, along with my partner in life, who was also indisposed, to pour out my supplications to the Lord, beseeching him to have compassion on me, to heal my wounded soul, and prepare me to come to his table with true brokenness of heart and penitential sorrow. O that we may come thirsting for God as the hart thirsteth for the cooling brooks! The sermons to-day were intended as a funeral discourse, occasioned by the death of J. Shackleton: Psalm xcii. 15: 'He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.'

"At noon, I had some conversation with a brother respecting some rather unfavourable reports as to his character; but from his explanation, I concluded that his conduct had been misrepresented. I can truly say that I was induced to speak to him from love to him, as

well as for the satisfaction of my own mind ; but I am afraid what I said was not well received. I found my mind uneasy on the subject in the afternoon service, and at the Lord's table, especially during the former part of the time. Towards the close I was more composed, and was enabled to look to a crucified Saviour, in the exercise of faith, though not without some doubts intermixed. I formed new resolutions to walk in the ways of God : may he give me strength to perform the vows I have made !—If I remember right, this is the twentieth time that I have sat down at the Lord's table with my brethren,—perhaps I have not often to join with them in this world at this sacred feast ; this may be the last opportunity. O that I may 'drink the wine new in the kingdom of my Father!'

" In the evening we had a meeting at our house, at which many of our neighbours attended : J. Ross came to our assistance. I read my imperfect notes of the sermons, and found my heart enlarged in prayer."

" July 7.—This day the word of God was precious to my soul, and I loved it, as the Psalmist says, for its *pu-rity*: Psalm cxix. I cannot forbear reflecting upon myself for being so negligent in the improving, though sometimes painful, work of meditation. What do I lose for want of this ! I may well be lean and meagre in myself, and of little use to others, so long as I feel so reluctant to this duty.

" In the evening I met with some of my Christian friends ; and at their request, went to prayer ; I was afterwards pained in my mind with the thought that I had acted the hypocrite, and pretended to be more religious than I really was.—O Lord, search me !"

" Tuesday, July 8.—Read in the morning some of

the Proverbs of Solomon, and was delighted with many of his excellent sayings, but had not so clear an understanding of some of them as I could have wished. Being indisposed to-day, it was with difficulty I struggled through the work I had to do. In the afternoon I spent some time in the study of grammar. O that I may acknowledge God in my searchings after knowledge!"

"Wednesday, July 9.—This morning I rose at half-past five, and went to our morning meeting, appointed to be held for the revival of religion among us. We continued together about two hours, and had some encouraging hopes that the Lord will regard our poor prayers. I have again devoted a portion of my time to grammar, and other branches of science. O that I may be freed from all ambitious aims, and not seek my own praise, but the glory of God!"

"Friday, July 11.—I was unhappy in the morning, under an idea that my present employment contributes to my indisposition, and is unfavourable to my constitution. Be this as it may, I ought to 'commit my way unto the Lord, and trust in him:' Psalm xxxvii. 5. Instead of that, I have been anxiously concerned about to-morrow, so that I am now filled with distress and unbecoming fears. O Lord, help me to look unto thee, and to trust in thy mercy! Thou didst give me my being; I hope thou hast made me a partaker of thy grace; and therefore thou canst not but care for thy feeble dust, the few days he has to remain in this vale of tears. O Lord, give me faith to depend on thy unchangeable promise! Hebrews, xiii. 5: 'Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content

with such things as you have; for he hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'

"Lord's Day, July 13.—This day Mr. Crabtree preached from Ephesians, iv. 26: 'Be ye angry, and sin not.' This discourse was very seasonable to me. In many things I felt condemned, and especially when the minister was speaking respecting being angry at the *providence of God*. I have for two or three days been troubled with fears respecting temporal things, which have had a very unhappy effect upon me, so as to harden my heart and distress my mind. I have found an evil heart of unbelief, in 'departing from the living God.' Hebrews, iii. 12.

"After the morning service I had an interview with a friend; and found some relief under my burthens in opening my mind to him. He told me that his feelings had often been the same as mine; and mentioned, for my encouragement, those passages in Matthew, vi. 25, &c. I went to prayer, and was a little better."

"Monday, July 14.—The weather is now extremely hot, which occasions some degree of languor, but I am better in health than I expected to be; thanks be to God for it!—He is better to me than all my fears. My prayer is,

"Open my eyes, thou God of love!
And make me know thy mind;
Send thy bless'd Spirit from above,
That I the truth may find!"

The following extract contains the first intimation to be found in any of his papers of his having any views to the ministerial office.

"Wednesday, July 16.—In the afternoon I met

with Mr. Hartley, as he was going to Leeds; I had some conversation with him; and he left me a letter, in answer to a question which I proposed to him respecting my desire to be employed in the work of the ministry.

“The letter contains these observations, in connection with some others.

“Without doubt, a desire to be engaged in this work is not only lawful, but needful to all those who ‘enter into the Lord’s vineyard.’ 1 Tim. iii. 1. ‘We should bear this office willingly.’ 1 Cor. ix. 17: but then it is very necessary that we seriously examine what ends we have in view. If we are influenced by other principles than love to God and love to men, and if we have any other end in view, or at least any more prevailing end in view, than the glory of God, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of man, our hearts are not right in the sight of God. The principle is best tried by the motives by which it is influenced: yet, as through the corruption of nature, we do nothing for God, but some degree of self-pride and vain glory attends us therein; so even in proposing or intending so great a work as this, some motions from such principles may appear to those who will carefully examine their own hearts. What you have therefore to do in this case is, not to see that you are entirely exempt from these improper feelings, (which is scarcely possible in this present imperfect state), but to inquire what is the *predominant* desire of your soul, or what is the highest end you have in view: if the motives I have mentioned, namely, the glory of God, and the benefit of mankind, you may then in his strength undertake the work, not doubting but he who has

called you to it will enable you to encounter and repel the difficulties you will have to meet with."

" Friday, July 18.—[The diary for this day and the preceding contains two beautiful passages from Hervey's "Meditations," and Milton's "Paradise Lost," Book VIII.] In the evening (he subjoins), I attended the funeral of Mrs. Pickard. Mr. Crabtree gave an exhortation from Rev. xiv. 13: 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,' &c. It was a very affecting season. During the solemnity, I was impressed with the idea that perhaps I was the next that might be taken out of our little community. My constitution is extremely weak; and, as far as I can judge, I am in a declining state. O that I may be every moment in actual readiness for that great change which has now passed upon our deceased sister! Four or five days ago she was in a better state of health than I am at present, and now she is gone. Her body is committed to the dust, and her spirit ascended to God that gave it."

" Monday, July 21, four o'clock, p. m.—I have just read over the second epistle of Timothy, which is an excellent form of sound words, both with respect to faith and practice. I desire to attend to it with application to myself, and endeavour to improve by it. O that I may walk in the steps of young Timothy!

" In the evening, after family prayer, I spent some time with my friend, John Pratt, and found considerable advantage from reading Henry's "Exposition" on the 14th chap. of Hosea, and from the conversation I had with him."

" July 22.—I had this day an interview with

Mr. Smith, of Wainsgate. I opened to him the state of my mind. The advice he gave me was to apply with diligence to the study of the Scriptures, to attend to my secular employment as far as my health would permit, and to wait till the Lord, by his providence, should show me more clearly what he would have me do. I told him it was my desire to take his advice, in order that I might be useful in the work of the ministry ; but I found such a mixture of improper feelings of mind, and particularly of pride, in the thoughts of it, that I was afraid it could not be of God : he, however, still advised me to take that course. O Lord, thou knowest my weakness, the pride of my heart, and my utter inability for so awful a work."

"Wednesday, July 23.—This day my mind has been closely engaged in meditating upon God's Word, in which I was very comfortable, and also in my devotional exercises. I felt a humble submission and reconciliation to the Lord's will, whatever it might be. My prayer to the Almighty was, that he would qualify me for whatsoever he might be pleased to call me to.

"O Lord, I know not what to do, but 'my eyes are upon thee.' 'Thy thoughts are not as our thoughts;' but, if in thy wise counsel thou hast fixed upon me to be a chosen vessel to bear thy name to Gentile sinners, I earnestly implore that thou wouldst give me a right spirit, and bestow upon me every needful qualification for that most difficult and important work. If thou dost not call me to it, O Father, 'not my will, but thine be done!' Here I desire to rest, and beg that my unruly passions may never get the ascendancy, so as to draw me aside from thee and from the path of duty."

“ Friday, July 25.—In the forenoon I was happy in my mind, though but poorly in body. I had some sweet meditations when engaged in business.

“ In the evening we had a meeting in the vestry. I delivered my thoughts on Prov. ii. 3, 4, 5: ‘ If thou criest after knowledge,’ &c.; but was much contracted in my ideas, and had not freedom of utterance. I have learnt that *utterance*, as well as knowledge, is the gift of God: 1 Cor. i. 5.”

“ Saturday, July 27.—I was in the morning weak and poorly in body; but, blessed be God, not destitute of comfort. In reading Job i. in Clarke’s Bible, I was much interested, and found much matter for useful meditation. Mr. Crabtree preached a funeral sermon for Mrs. Sarah Pickard, with which I was deeply affected. The text was, Ezek. xxiv. 16: ‘ Son of man,’ &c.”

“ Tuesday, July 29.—This morning I rose early; I found my heart drawn towards the Lord, though still poorly in body. I have an inward persuasion that the Lord will at some period impart to me abilities for public work; and yet I am conscious that there must be a great change wrought in me, before I can be a proper person to labour in the *word* and *doctrine*. The Lord gave David encouragement that he would make him king of his people Israel; and yet how much had he to press through before he attained that honour! Thus it was with Joseph, and with the children of Israel; and so I am inclined to think it may be with me. May the Lord give me strength, and help me on so that I may see that all things are working together for my good!”

“ August 1. *Ætatis* 21.—O Lord God, I desire

this day to avouch thee for my only Lord and everlasting portion. I confess I have sinned and dishonoured thy name; but I now supplicate forgiveness at thy hand, through a precious Saviour's blood. According to thy promise, do thou heal my backslidings, and cleanse me from pollution. My whole soul and body I this day devote to thee, and subscribe with my hand that I am thine. Jonah, ii. 8: 'They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies.'

"Lord's Day, August 10.—Rising early this morning, I took a walk into the fields to meditate. I read a few pages in the Night Thoughts with pleasure, and, I trust, profit. I was also much edified by reading "Theron and Aspasio," Dial. xiii. Aspasio, enlarging upon the doctrine of original sin, explains and proves it in a striking manner. Mr. Crabtree's text to-day was Psalm xxxiv. 13."

"Monday, April 20, 1761.—I had been for some time much indisposed, but was something better on Saturday. Yesterday, being Lord's Day, I went to the public meeting, not without some apprehension of taking cold, which I believe was the case; for in the afternoon I felt extremely ill, and was overwhelmed with sickness. The sorrows, and, as I thought, the pains of death, appeared to take hold upon me. I was ready to conclude that my useless life was drawing towards an end, and that the Lord was about to cut me off in the midst of my days. I had a deep sense of my past sins, which are many and grievous. I saw myself deserving of the Divine displeasure, and that if I am ever saved, it must be through the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ. Many of my Christian friends discovered great sympathy with me. I could not for-

bear shedding tears at the sight of them. Having taken something to drink, after one of my brethren had offered up to God a fervent and suitable prayer, I attempted to walk home, and reached, after a little time, by the assistance of some kind friends. Having perspired a little during the night, I found myself this morning much relieved, for which I desire to bless God with all my heart, and would earnestly implore that he would sanctify this affliction to the benefit of my soul. Psalm cxix. 74: 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.'

" I think it is good for me,

" 1st.—Because I now see more into the emptiness and vanity of all earthly enjoyments, and into the frailty and uncertainty of life.

" 2dly.—Because I have had a discovery of, and I hope some genuine sorrow for, my unfruitfulness, unwatchfulness, and many other sins of which I never repented as I ought to have done before. 'Before I was afflicted I went astray;' but now *may* I keep thy word! Psalm cxix. 67.

" 3dly.—I see great reason to be importunate with the Lord for the pardon of my sins, and strength and grace to enable me to keep the way of the Lord more perfectly."

" April 21.—I had a comfortable night's rest, and found myself much better this morning; I have reason to be thankful that I have been kept, during my indisposition, from murmuring and discontented thoughts. I have been reading several useful authors, and particularly Mr. T. Rowe's life, and some passages in "Caryl on Job," which has unexpectedly been put into my hands. I hope it will be of great service to me.

“ ‘O Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortest me.’ ”

“ Friday, April 23.—I read this morning the prophecies of Amos, and had much satisfaction and comfort in meditation; but have reason to complain on account of the pride of my heart, and backwardness to prayer. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy loving-kindness !”

“ Saturday, April 24.—Being extremely weak and sickly, I was much refreshed about noon with the good creatures of God, of which I have known no want. Blessed be the Lord for this mercy! Thou hast remembered thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou didst cause me to hope: ‘They that seek the Lord shall want no good thing.’

“ In the afternoon I thought I had not sufficiently felt and lamented the discouraging situation of our society. O Lord, I confess my sin to thee; for though thy hand has been lifted up, I have not seen nor considered it so as to grieve, as I ought to have done, for the afflictions of our church.”

“ April 25, Lord’s Day.—The sermon this morning from Psalm xc. 12, was peculiarly adapted to my case, and deeply affected my mind. Grant, O Lord, that it may have a lasting effect, that hereafter I may ‘truly apply my heart unto wisdom.’

“ Cleanse me, O Lord, from all my sin,
And purify my soul within; .
That I may now begin anew
The paths of wisdom to pursue !”

“ Lord’s Day, June 14.—This day we were prevented

sitting down at the Lord's table by our pastor's indisposition. If the Lord should take him from us by this affliction, what a stroke would it be! During the public service, I had reason to complain of wandering thoughts. The text was, 'A wise son heareth his father's instruction.' To *hear* instruction includes in it an earnest desire to profit by what we hear; diligent attention to it, and a desire to reduce it to practice. Blessed are they that hear the word of God so as to keep it!"

" June 15.—The Lord supplies my wants, and fills my heart with joy and gladness. There is, indeed, every prospect of plenty. We have reason to apply to our present circumstances, Psalm lxxv. verse 9, to the end. For beauty of comparison and harmony, as well as grandeur of expression, it is inimitable."

" Tuesday, June 16.—I have been this day deficient in the work of solemn prayer. It ought to be performed frequently; by occasional ejaculations, and at stated and appointed seasons. It should be attended to with fervency and earnestness in faith, humility, and with watchfulness: agreeably to the Divine direction, 'Continue in prayer, and watch in the same,'"

" June 18.—In the afternoon I was present at the funeral of a child. Mr. Crabtree, being a little recovered, spoke something very suitable to the occasion from Mark vii. 37: 'He hath done all things well.' He first showed, that whatever God does must, from his nature and character, be right in itself; and then instanced, in several particulars, some of the Divine dispensations towards us; in which we are brought to see, however contrary they may be to carnal reason, that the Lord hath done well. One instance I remember

was this, 'It is well done of the Lord when he denies us some things that we passionately breathe for.' I think I have had some experience of this, and I wish I may often keep it in mind."

"Lord's Day, June 25.—Our dear pastor being recovered, I have this day had the privilege to hear him, and to sit down with my brethren at the Lord's table. I have been entertained at that 'feast of fat things which the Lord hath prepared in his holy mountain:' Ps. xxv. 6. In this mountain his hand shall rest, namely, the hand of his power to protect and preserve us, and his goodness to provide for us. The Lord blessed the provision of his table to me. I was led to see more of my unworthiness, so that I could esteem any one of my brethren better than myself. 'O Lord, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe!'"

"Monday, June 29.—This morning I lost some precious time in sleep.

"Dull sleep, alas! confines my powers,
And robs me of my morning hours;
The saints of old, before 'twas day,
Would often meditate and pray:
Assist me, Lord! like them to rise.
And pay my morning sacrifice.

"In the holy exercise of meditation, I have this day found great delight. I hope I can say as David did, Ps. cxix. 103: 'How sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.' The company of religious friends also afforded me much satisfaction. I am happy in possessing many companions who fear God and keep his precepts. But a particular detail of all God's benefits towards me in providence and grace

is impossible : it will be my delightful employ to recount them through the endless ages of eternity. 'Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus !'

" Tuesday, June 30.—I indulged too much in murmurings and discontent about noon. But it is only the meek, as the Divine Word says, that shall inherit the earth, that is, so much as is really good for them ; and they enjoy that sweetness and satisfaction in the little that Providence allows them, with which others are unacquainted. A discontented, uneasy man inherits nothing, because he is never satisfied with it ; but the meek person has such a conviction of his own unworthiness, that he thinks any thing that he enjoys better than he deserves."

" Friday, July 10.—I have been much edified in reading a page or two of Mr. Henry's life. O that I may follow him as he followed Christ !"

" Monday, July 13.—

" All bountiful King,
Thy name I adore ;
And joyfully sing
Thy wisdom and power.

" Thy sovereign mercy
Through Jesus thy Son,
To one that's unworthy
Is daily made known."

" Wednesday, July 15.—This day I have had the opportunity of hearing a sermon preached at Bradford by Mr. John Wesley, from Rom. xiii. 11, 12: ' It is high time to awake,' &c. He spoke many important truths. He described that sleep which often overtakes the Christian, into which I have reason to lament that

I have fallen many times. When I went to hear, my mind was in a drowsy state; but I trust the Lord blessed what I heard to revive me a little. May my conduct for time to come show that this is really the case!"

"Tuesday, July 21.—I have been deeply affected in considering myself as a creature possessed of an immortal soul that must exist for ever, either in happiness or misery. May I be diligent in 'making my calling and election sure,' and solicitous every day to make some advances in knowledge and holiness!"

"July 25.—I have spent the greatest part of my vacant time this week in reading the seventh volume of the Spectator; it is a very ingenious work, though it does not contain much Scriptural divinity. The authors have 'sought out and set in order' (as the wise man says) many excellent moral instructions.

"I was much affected this day in conversing with my brother in the ties of nature, and no less so in the bonds of Christian love. I have some hope that my youngest sister is also begun to be serious."

"Lord's Day, Oct. 11.—This day some of our dear friends from Rawdon came to worship with us. At sight of them my soul was much revived, and my heart warmed. My delight is in the saints that are in the earth, for they truly are excellent. I spent the evening with them in religious conversation. Christian society is one of the greatest privileges I enjoy from the hand of God: but who can recount all his mercies?"

"O for a heart to praise his name
Who such kind favour shows!"

"Oct. 16.—'Mercy and goodness have followed me'

this day, as well as all other days. Of all persons, I have surely reason to say, 'The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.' When I think of my daily conduct on the one hand, and of the goodness and tender mercy of God on the other, I am lost in wonder and surprise. It is with great propriety that we are called 'vessels of mercy' in whom the Lord makes known the 'riches of his glory:' Rom. ix. 23. Upon such a reflection as this, who can forbear crying out with the excellent Mr. Hervey, who once, like us, did but drink of the streams of this mercy, but is now solacing himself at the fountain head, 'O goodness infinite! goodness immense, and love that passeth knowledge,' &c."

"Wednesday, Oct. 21.—This morning I had reason to complain of hardness of heart, and to lament an absent God; but I was enabled to look again towards his holy temple. I see great need of Divine strength to preserve me from falling into those nets and snares which I meet with by the way. Alas! how prone am I to be led away by the corrupt inclinations of my own vicious heart! Lead thou me, O God, by thy Spirit, and let me not wander from thy commandments!"

"November, 1761.—I now make a fresh dedication of myself to the Lord, to serve him in the work of the ministry, if it be his will to engage me and furnish me with qualifications for it. I have for a considerable time found my heart inclined to serve the Lord under this character; but have questioned much with myself, whether such a desire in so mean and unworthy a person as I am be lawful, and whether I ought to labour after the attainment of those gifts which are necessary

to one employed in that great work ; but of late I have been in some measure satisfied as to these two things, and have devoted the little time I can spare to reading and meditation, crying after wisdom, and lifting up my voice for understanding, ‘ seeking for her as silver, and searching for her as for hid treasure.’ I have been, among other things, studying the languages in which the Holy Scriptures were originally written. I have been taught, according to the Greek proverb, that ‘ there is nothing impossible to industry,’ especially when it is attended by the blessing of Heaven, which is what I desire to seek at all times. The Lord has favoured me with three things which afford me matter of encouragement :—a good degree of bodily health ; more leisure than usual ; and the choice of necessary books.”

“ Lord’s Day, Jan. 17, 1762.—My birth day.

“ Once more I’ve lived to see the day
When first I drew this mortal breath ;
Another year has roll’d away,
And yet I’m saved from threatening death.

“ Great God, into my heart convey
Thy grace which can my soul renew ;
Now take my loads of guilt away,
Now make me yield obedience new.

“ A fruitless branch I long have been,
O purge me now, and make me thrive,
That I may flourish fresh and green
The days which yet I have to live !”

“ Feb. 10.—I think the Lord has been bringing me lately to a more humble, lowly frame of spirit. I some-

times fear I have been presumptuous in aspiring after things for which I am not at all fit."

" March 28.—By desire of a few friends, I addressed those who were present at a meeting at Little Horton, from Rom. xiii. 11. I had some degree of freedom and courage. Several persons expressed their satisfaction in what they heard."

" July 7.—This day the Lord has caused a refreshing shower to water the earth, after about ten weeks' drought; I found my heart filled with gratitude for so great a mercy. The bloody sword has cut off multitudes, and we have been threatened with a scarcity of provisions; but few have seen in these dispensations the hand of God lifted up. Oh! that Divine goodness may shame us out of our ingratitude and forgetfulness, and lead us to repentance."

" Sept. 5.—We had a meeting at Little Horton at six in the evening. I attempted to speak a little from Ps. iv. 3. Before I entered upon the work I was dark and confused, but had more liberty than I expected."

" Sept. 6.—In reading Henry's life, and an account of two other eminent saints, I felt quite condemned. I am ready to think I have yet to begin to live to God's glory. O Lord, quicken me, and grant that I may not be slothful, but 'a follower of them who do now through faith and patience inherit the promises!'"

" Sept. 8.—To my great joy, I have this day procured a neat Hebrew Bible; this acquisition has stimulated me to greater diligence in my studies."

" March 15, 1763.—During the last winter, I have been exercised with various afflictions, yet I need not say with one of old, 'Wherefore contendest thou with me?' for I am sensible of many things in which I offend.

In particular my conscience accuses me of much deadness, coldness, and hypocrisy, in my religious duties. O that the fire of affliction may be the means of enkindling the flame of devotion !”

Perhaps it may appear to some, and especially to such whose views were not congenial with those of the deceased, that the preceding extracts are too copious; and it may be further objected, that there is no particular display of talent in them; but it must add to their importance, as constituting part of a biographical account, when we consider that here we have the genuine, undisguised feelings of the mind, unbiassed by external influence.—To those, therefore, for whose use this work is principally intended, they cannot fail to be interesting. The man of God here speaks for himself; we are admitted into the inmost recesses of the soul; we see his “hold on heaven,” while

“He bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.”

The true character is developed without any of those glosses which conjecture might cast upon it. We see, as it were, in embryo, those views which afterwards expanded in his own mind, and diffused their happy influence through the circle in which he moved. It is evident from these extracts that in a private and humble situation, when he had no prospect of entering upon the ministry, religion was the principal business of his life; and would have been so, had he never engaged in that work. It was the growing influence of Divine truth upon his own mind that excited the wish to proclaim to

others 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' What he had by happy experience seen and tasted of the Word of life he longed to declare to others. When the closing part of this diary was written, he was on the eve of commencing a course of public labours, which continued with little interruption, and increasing activity, for more than fifty years; and it is edifying to observe the progress of his mind—bright, encouraging glimpses of hope, soon succeeded by gloominess and despondency. Amidst many indications of the modesty of his character, not wishing to push himself on the scene of action, yet willing to go if called upon, we meet with many expressions of a soul grasping after higher attainments and extended usefulness, at some period which faith and hope alone could realize.

'The hidden life of a Christian' is here set forth unto us, different in almost every respect from what the world can conceive. His hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows, are peculiar to himself. He finds a perpetual struggle between holiness and sin; between carnal and spiritual affections,—and this keeps the mind in constant exercise. As a 'stranger and pilgrim on the earth,' he is often in 'heaviness through manifold temptations;' yet, amidst all, he derives consolation from the stability of the Divine promises and the prospects before him.—How different this from the disposition of the formalist, resting merely on external duties; or of the hypocrite, attempting to deceive others, and, what is worst of all, attempting to deceive himself; flattering himself in a way that is not good, and thinking he is something while he is nothing!

We may likewise learn from these private memorials the importance of being *in earnest* about religion, and

fervent in spirit, aspiring after elevated piety, dissatisfied with present attainments, and yet maintaining a humble sense of inability to perform that which is good, without Divine assistance. Thus it was with the great Apostle Paul; for while on some occasions we find him saying, 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I press towards the mark for the prize of my high calling:' on others he acknowledges himself insufficient for 'every good work:' 'When I am weak, then am I strong.' Such feelings and sentiments have formed a leading trait in the characters of the most eminent saints in all ages. This holy zeal often shows itself in those short, yet emphatic ejaculations, which we so often meet with in Sacred Writ, particularly in the Psalms of David, the writings of the prophets, and in many parts of the New Testament. How much is comprehended in such sentences as these: 'Quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word!' 'Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe!' The sententious, earnest petitions of the poor publican; of the blind man who followed Christ; of the thief upon the cross; and the language of the Philippian jailor, might here be referred to, with others which frequently occur in the preceding extracts. We have in them the experience of one who was following hard after God, whose great objects were to enjoy communion with him, and to gain a proper knowledge and government of his own heart.

We see here also what improvement an observant mind may make of the common incidents of life, whether prosperous or adverse: like the bee sucking honey from every opening flower, and in a confined sphere

collecting food for the mind, where others would never suspect it could be found.

The difference in common life between a close observer of the beauties of nature and one who has no eyes to see them, is daily remarked; and it is no less perceptible in the Christian's life, with respect to those objects which faith realizes, and those prospects which open before him in passing through this world. The great means of improvement are *closet devotions, meditation, reading the Scriptures, Christian communion, and the ordinances of public worship*. It is unnecessary to say, even after a slight perusal of the diary, how much the writer was engaged in these exercises.— It was his regular practice, after the example of the Psalmist David, to retire three times a day for the purpose of private prayer, besides conducting the devotions of his family. His life at that period was eminently a life of prayer, and there certainly can be no better preparative for future and important services; if we consider the source whence all supplies of grace and strength flow, and if our Saviour himself continued *whole nights* together, praying to his Father in the prospect of his great work, how much more incumbent is it on his followers to be 'instant in prayer.' The preceding pages evidence that some of the most painful sensations and bitter complaints which the deceased experienced and expressed, were occasioned by the want of more fervency and earnestness in this holy exercise.

Meditation and self-examination appear to have formed prominent features in his character at that early period. These two exercises of the mind are most intimately connected together. In attending to them (to

which there is indeed a strong aversion in the human heart) the mind turns inward; and what otherwise would be mere speculation, is appropriated by the soul, and becomes its richest food. To a due performance of these important duties retirement seems indispensably necessary. The glare of the world, the busy scenes and gaieties of life, fascinate and delude the mind; but when these objects are withdrawn, and while walking through the silent and solitary valley of humiliation, contemplation has her fill; troubles and reliefs, inward joys and despondencies, are experienced, which 'a stranger intermeddleth not with.'

There have been many intervals in the lives of those who have afterwards distinguished themselves, of which little is known. Superficial observers may look upon these parts of their existence as mere blanks; whereas they *might be*, and in all probability *were*, essential to the formation of the man, as he afterwards appeared to the world. The blossom was then budding, from which the fruit was afterwards to proceed; the seeds were then sowing and beginning to vegetate, which afterwards grew up to full maturity.

Eager curiosity may lead us to inquire how Moses spent his time while an exile, for forty long years, in the land of Midian; at a great distance from that people who so much needed his presence, and whose deliverer he was afterwards to be. To an eye of sense the sequestered life of a shepherd must appear a singular kind of preparation for the arduous station which he was afterwards called to occupy—but 'God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways.'

Among the other advantages which Moses must have derived from this long state of exile, one of the great-

est undoubtedly was, its tendency to wean him from courtly attachments, and to promote the disposition of which we are now speaking. Indeed of such importance is a contemplative mind, in forming the Christian character, that without it the greatest external advantages will be of little avail; and in the exercise of it many, though surrounded with difficulties, have attained to the highest excellence in the Christian life.—Thus it is that more steady and fixed principles of action are acquired; the mind is not liable to be carried about with ‘every wind of doctrine,’ as is the case with the superficial observer; and the truths of Christianity become the life and support of the soul.

These general observations were strikingly exemplified in the subject of these pages. While many, it is to be feared, attempt to teach others what they know but imperfectly, either in theory or from experience, his Divine Master, by a course of discipline, often severe but salutary, taught him out of his law. By remaining for some time in retirement as a private Christian he was enabled to enter more into the views and feelings of Christians in common, and to speak a ‘word in season to him that was weary; to comfort the feeble-minded; to support the weak;’ and to administer consolation to the fainting soul.

He was in the habitual practice of noticing in a particular manner not only the yearly and monthly, but the *daily* lapse of time:—this is of great importance to the due improvement of it. He who in examining the transactions of the day, seriously inquiring what report they have borne to heaven; comparing time past with what may be yet to come, and lamenting his past fol-

lies, is led to exclaim; with bitter regret, "I have lost a day;" must feel his energies called into exercise, and increasing desires that his mind may not be harassed by the same painful sensations.—The "knell of his departing hours" will rouse him to exertion, and summon him with renewed diligence to 'work while it is called to-day,' knowing that 'the night cometh when no man can work.' In this respect, such a record of passing events, as is contained in a diary, becomes of inestimable value to the writer. In revising it, he in some sort measures back his way; and while he retraces his past footsteps, and reviews his errors and deliverances, his purposes and resolutions for holiness are confirmed. The 119th Psalm, perhaps the most ancient and beautiful model of this kind, affords an admirable illustration. After recounting his backslidings, and the instances of restoring mercy, the Psalmist exclaims, 'O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!' 'Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy commandments.'

His habits of early rising were still continued, and he appeared dissatisfied with himself if every portion of his time was not spent in some useful employ. The dawn of the morning was occupied in meditation and prayer, being the season least exposed to interruption, and the leisure he was able to secure during the rest of the day was principally devoted to reading.—For poetry and many branches of polite learning he had a taste from his earliest years.—He did not confine himself to any particular class of books; he endeavoured to store his mind with general knowledge; yet the BIBLE, and those books which were subsidiary to the study of it, engaged his principal attention, and constituted the most essential part of his daily reading. The

pocket Bible which, when first acquired, he considered as the greatest treasure he ever possessed, never afterwards sunk in his estimation; it was his *vade-mecum*, and the foundation was then laid for that extensive acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures which distinguished his future life. Like Timothy 'he had known the Scriptures from a child,' and he considered the study of them as the most effectual means of being made 'wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' When employed in his manual labour, he was generally surrounded with his books, on which he glanced when opportunity offered; and having pens and paper by him, put down hastily, sometimes in prose, and at others in verse, such thoughts as occurred from reading or reflection.

But perhaps in no respect was this period of his life more distinguished than by the observance of the Sabbath and the public ordinances of God's house. He rejoiced on the return of the day, not merely as a period of rest, but more especially as 'one of the days of the Son of Man.' On this subject he entered into the feelings of the Psalmist David as expressed in Psalm cxxii. and many other parts of his writings. Those sabbaths on which the Lord's Supper was administered were particularly noticed by him. He had a high value for this ordinance, and kept an account of the number of times he had the privilege of attending to it. He showed the greatest solicitude to have his mind prepared for the work of the sanctuary, and that in public, as well as in private, his heart might be with God.—The hints frequently dropped in his diary evidence that he received with 'meekness and fear, the engrafted word which is able to save the soul.' There are no

traces of a captious, censorious, fastidious spirit, undervaluing the abilities, or dissatisfied with the qualifications of the preacher, but often, very often self-abasing expressions, on account of the misimprovement of privileges so great, and references to particular parts of the sermons, with self-application, endeavouring to derive from them instruction and consolation as the case required. He manifested all the simplicity of a babe in Christ, desiring the 'sincere milk of the word,' or, like Mary, he humbly sat at the feet of Jesus, to hear his Word.

The MS. volumes which he left behind him contain, besides a diary, the outlines of many sermons preached by his highly esteemed pastor, Mr. Crabtree, Mr. Smith of Wainsgate, Mr. Wood, then of Halifax, Mr. Nuttall of Goodshaw Chapel, Mr. Oulton of Rawden, and Mr. Hartley of Haworth;—some on public occasions; others when they paid friendly visits to Bradford, and officiated for Mr. Crabtree. These sermons he frequently refers to in his diary, and points particularly to those parts which struck him most forcibly in the delivery. He often read them in the private meeting, and enlarged upon them, after the example of his early friend Mr. Swain:—this must have been a great means of overcoming his natural timidity, and of initiating him in the composition of sermons. No doubt the discourses which he took so much pains in writing at the time of delivery, or afterwards from recollection, were such as particularly impressed his mind; and they are valuable, not only on account of the excellence of the matter, but as specimens of the mode of preaching which then prevailed. They were many of them evidently the result of close study. Like the old Puritan divines, the ministers sometimes dwelt on the same text from Sab]

bath to Sabbath. The numerous divisions and subdivisions, appear to a modern taste, dry and unnecessarily diffuse. Much time was taken up in considering the subject in all its different bearings: many *negative particulars* are dwelt upon, in some instances far-fetched, before the obvious and direct meaning of the passage is discussed. In treating upon personal and relative duties, the most minute directions are given, concerning dress, deportment, and civil transactions. This was often carried so far as to betray narrow and contracted views. The sermons contained in this collection preached by Mr. Smith are almost entirely practical. There are several valuable funeral sermons, and others on doctrinal and practical subjects, by Mr. Crabtree; but he evidently placed peculiar value on those delivered by Mr. Hartley, which are by far the most numerous. For his talents and character he retained, from the first of his acquaintance, the most sincere respect:—he consulted him as a friend in cases of difficulty; and so far as an idea may be formed from what remains of his writings, there was a striking similarity in their views, on most religious subjects.

This excellent man was born in the month of March, 1722: he gave early proofs of good natural abilities; but as his parents were poor, he had not many advantages of education. In the year 1744, he began to have serious impressions, and was for some time a hearer of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw of Haworth: he afterwards attended the ministry of Mr. Smith, and became a member of the church at Wainsgate.—His gifts and graces could not long be concealed. About the year 1748, he began to exercise his ministerial talents to the satisfaction and benefit of many. He was the means of rais-

ing the church at Haworth, and was ordained over it June 12, 1752. He studied the Holy Scriptures with unwearied diligence, and was admirably 'furnished unto all good works;' his method of discussing his subjects was clear and natural, his reasoning nervous and manly. He was an exception to the general observation that 'a prophet has no honour in his own country.' His congregation was not large, but very respectable.—His manner of speaking in the pulpit was slow and sedate; he did not affect popularity; but those who heard him with attention were constrained to exclaim: 'How forcible are right words!' Like those eminent men with whom he associated, he never relinquished the people of his charge, but lived and died with them. In private life he was kind and communicative, and, from the estimation in which his judgment was held, often consulted by his friends. His neighbour, the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, treated him with great affection and respect, as a fellow-labourer, and frequently made him a partaker of his liberality. On some occasions, he visited London; and the letters to him from Mr. Wallin and others, while they show the primitive simplicity and sterling piety which prevailed in those days, bear witness to the high respect entertained for him by his friends in the metropolis.

Among others of Mr. Hartley's sermons, there is one preached at the ordination of Mr. Wood, at Halifax, August 6, 1760. It was most probably copied from Mr. Hartley's original papers, and must have been at full length, as it extends to nearly sixty closely written pages. The following note is prefixed: "This discourse was delivered by the same judicious person as the two foregoing, and is, in my opinion, superior to any thing

of the kind I ever met with, either from the pulpit or the press."

The writer of these pages has himself been so much impressed with the same sentiments, as to its excellence, that he would have been tempted to insert it in this work, if publications of a similar kind had not so frequently appeared, as to render it scarcely necessary:—the text is 1 Tim. iv. 16: 'Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine.' Take heed: 1, To your conversation in the world at large; 2, To your conduct to the people of your charge; 3, Take heed to yourself in the closet; and, above all, Take heed to yourself, in reference to the life and power of religion. Take heed to thy *doctrine*:—that it be drawn from and founded on the Holy Scriptures; that Christ be the sum and substance of the doctrine you preach; that it be thoroughly examined and digested before you deliver it to others; that it include the 'whole counsel of God,' and be adapted to the persons with whom you have to do, so as to give to every one a 'portion of meat in due season, rightly dividing the word of truth.'

These are the leading topics of the charge; and they are illustrated and enforced in the most solemn and impressive manner. From many circumstances it is evident that the ordination here referred to, was a most interesting season.—The sermon preached by Mr. Crabtree, and addressed to the people, on the same occasion, is subjoined to the Memoir of him, published by the Rev. Mr. Mann.

The advice given by these servants of God to those who were entering upon the sacred office, was not mere common-place direction, but sanctioned by their own conduct, as Christians and ministers. They were men

of eminent piety ; and as there was, in many instances, something remarkable in their conversion and call to the ministry, the light they enjoyed was marvellous in their own eyes and in those of others. Their exterior appearance strongly indicated the gravity of their minds, and in some sort added weight to their instructions. According to the costume of the times, they generally wore large full-bottomed wigs, which, though now deemed an unnecessary, if not an unnatural appendage, were then considered as almost indispensable. Their minds were most deeply impressed with the importance of the work to which they were called ; and they were no less distinguished from the generality of their audience, by the peculiarity of their dress, than by their detachment from the world, and the superior sanctity of their lives, being examples to the flock over which they were appointed overseers.

During the period now referred to, a diversity of opinions and much controversy prevailed in the Christian church respecting some abstruse points of doctrine. A considerable number of the Baptist ministers and their people were what we now commonly term *High Calvinists*, though there were some exceptions ; among whom may be mentioned Mr. Alverly Jackson, who wrote on the subject, Mr. Parker, Mr. Wood, and a few others. The separation between Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley greatly tended to promote the discussion of these points among their respective adherents, which were sometimes carried on with intemperate zeal. Many of the dissenting ministers, as has been already observed, received their first impressions under these two great leaders. The agitation of these questions between men

whom they so highly revered naturally directed their attention to the same subjects; and those who separated from the Methodist societies carried the controversy with them to the respective denominations with which they united; some having correct, and others more confused ideas, of the Calvinistic system.

The Baptist cause being in its infancy in this part of the country, recourse was had to the churches of the same denomination in London and the vicinity, that their hands might be strengthened, and that by becoming better acquainted with the faith and order of those which were considered as sister churches, they might benefit by their direction and assistance. Mr. Brine, Dr. Gill, and Mr. Wallin, were considered as leading characters; and though as Dissenters they disclaimed all pretensions to dominion over the faith of others, yet it would have been difficult for them wholly to repel the charge of prescribing with too great minuteness, and in language not always authorized by Scripture, what ought to be the sentiments of those who connected themselves with these societies.

As divines they justly continue to stand in high estimation, and their memory will be revered to the latest period of time; but in their voluminous writings, an undue proportion of attention appears to have been paid to points confessedly beyond human comprehension. The questions respecting supralapsarianism and sublapsarianism, eternal justification, &c. are here particularly referred to.

The plan of publishing systematic treatises, or *bodies of divinity*, is now in a great measure laid aside; but at the period under consideration, and for a century

before, Protestant divines on the Continent, and in our own country, who had attained to any eminence, thought it incumbent upon them to lay their ideas before the public in this form. This undoubtedly, in some respects, had its advantages; but it is evident that God himself did not think proper to reveal his counsels to mankind in this way; and it seems almost like presumption to attempt to *new model* what he has made known, and to endeavour to give explanations, where Infinite Wisdom has judged it expedient to withhold them. Some of those who undertook these works were deeply versed in metaphysics and logical distinctions, and were too fond of introducing abstruse questions, attempting to explain what is never explained in Scripture. Many terms were consequently introduced, which, not being clearly understood and defined, and not authorized by the Word of God, tended to perpetuate contentions, to perplex and bewilder, rather than enlighten. As the intermixture of *Platonic* philosophy with Christianity, in the early ages of the church, tarnished its native beauty and simplicity, so the subtilties of *Scholastic* theology, in later times, have been so far from clearing up, that they have magnified and multiplied difficulties.

Enough is revealed of the economy of grace to excite our humble admiration of the harmony of the Divine attributes as herein displayed; but whatever systems human skill may devise, some things must remain inexplicable. It becomes us therefore, instead of implicitly adopting any one framed by man, to *study with impartiality the word of God*. If we read them, as we may do, with advantage, if our aims are right,

and our minds unbiassed, we should endeavour to bring *them* to the standard of God's word, 'to the law, and to the testimony, for whatever is not according to them, it is because there is no light in them.' Though the wisdom of God is revealed in the Bible, it is in such a manner that our *faith*, as well as our other graces, must be brought into *obedience*; and after all our researches such are the imperfections of our fallen nature, that we, seeing as 'through a glass darkly,' must not expect, in the present state, to enjoy more than glimpses of many things, which will never be clearly seen, till we arrive in a better and brighter world. 'Now I know in part, but *then* shall I know even as also I am known.'

If an inspired Apostle, after having considered the subject of the Divine conduct in the distribution of special favours, was led to say, 'Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?'—if, while he was proceeding in the investigation, he found himself at length getting into a fathomless abyss, where he exclaimed, 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!' 'How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!' how much more does it become us, whose attainments are so much inferior, to check those inquiries which would presume to scan the depths of infinite wisdom, and to be 'wise above that which is written?'

There is no truth more clearly revealed in Scripture than the helplessness and moral inability of man, as a fallen creature, and the absolute necessity of the grace of Christ, imparted by the Holy Spirit, without whom we can do nothing spiritually good. 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that

sheweth mercy,' yet those who 'neglect this great salvation' are left without excuse, and the guilt lies upon their own heads.

How far these general observations will apply to the works, published by the eminent men before mentioned, the writer of these pages will not presume to say. Mr. Brine wrote several treatises on the matters in dispute. In his views on many topics, he went *beyond* what Calvin ever taught. Dr. Gill published a large Body of Divinity, a work entitled the "Cause of God and Truth," entirely polemical, and a voluminous Exposition of the whole Bible. The possession of these elaborate performances was, in those days, considered as almost an essential part of the library, not only of ministers, but of private Christians of the Baptist denomination, who could afford to purchase them. They were read almost exclusively, to the neglect of other works on divinity. The consequence of which was, that not only the ministers, but many of their hearers, acquired a taste for *polemic* divinity, which was eventually found to be highly injurious to the peace and comfort of religious societies. Few works of an expository kind are better adapted for the use of ministers, who can read with discrimination, than Dr. Gill's Exposition, and many of his other works on divinity. They were highly esteemed, in this point of view, by the subject of this narrative; but they certainly are not so well calculated for the use of Christians in common. Not to mention his frequent references to the fanciful interpretations of the Jewish Rabbies, he very often introduces his fa-

favorite points, where the passage to be explained does not appear to have any direct reference to them. This is indeed generally the case with those who engage in controversy. The controverted subjects dwell too much upon the mind, assume an unnatural and undue importance, and give a tincture to the whole train of thinking. From the same cause there is also a proneness in the human mind to impute to our opponents meanings never intended by them, and equally abhorrent to them as to ourselves.

Connected with the influence which the extensive perusal of these works had, and the high and almost oracular authority which they maintained, may be mentioned the *plan of the associations* as then established, the model of which was probably derived from the same quarter. They greatly contributed to keep up the spirit of religious controversy, and could scarcely be considered as consistent with freedom of inquiry on religious subjects. No printed account of the proceedings appeared; but the secretary for the time being had the laborious task of transmitting in writing to each of the churches in connexion, an account of their transactions. Besides public preaching, and an inquiry into the state of the churches, questions on theological subjects were proposed, to which written answers were expected to be given at the next annual meeting of the association. Many of these questions were of a doctrinal nature, others relative to cases of conscience. These were read before the assembled ministers and elders; and as a diversity of opinions sometimes occurred in the answers given to the same question, it was found difficult to preserve peace and harmony, and to come to decisions which would not violate the independence of

Christian societies ; so that for this and other reasons the association was dissolved. Numbers of the queries, with the replies given by the respective ministers, are in the possession of the writer. Many of these display considerable ability and biblical knowledge ; but as the views of good men, and their manner of stating them, are diversified, it must have been next to impossible for such answers to be given as would, on controverted points, be satisfactory to all ; and which, as sanctioned by a body, whether passing by the name of association or synod, would not infringe upon the liberty wherewith ‘ Christ has made his people free.’

The *Church covenants*, which were in general minute and particular, being drawn up after the plan published by Dr. Gill, if subscribed *ex animo*, by those who were admitted as members of Christian churches, must have had a great tendency to lead the attention to controversial topics. Many things contained in this form of words, however excellent it may be in itself, must have been beyond the comprehension of ‘ babes in Christ,’ of those who were not able to bear strong food, but who required to be instructed in ‘ the first principles of the oracles of God.’

Conformity of sentiment among those who unite in church fellowship is certainly desirable ; but the confession which satisfied an Evangelist and an Apostle, if connected with a conversation which adorns such a confession, ought to be the model for our imitation, adopting the language of inspiration as much as possible. Every departure from this, by intermixing systems of human invention, tends to tarnish and obscure that ‘ simplicity which is in Christ,’ and has in all ages been productive of unpleasant consequences.

The reading of those long forms, on the admission of church members, has for many years been in a great measure omitted, and the attention of the candidates more particularly directed to the important duties incumbent on those who take upon themselves the Christian profession.

This fondness for systematic divinity, which has in some degree been accounted for by the preceding remarks, had too often an unhappy effect on the minds, both of preachers and hearers. While this was kept constantly in view, a barrier was set to expanded views, and enlarged ideas on Divine truth.* Disproportionate attention was paid to the points in dispute; and every attempt to diverge from them was considered as a departure from the truth, and an approach towards legal doctrine. Hence those cautions so often introduced in the sermons of that day, lest any thing suggested should be interpreted as inconsistent with their avowed sentiments on the disputed points. In the general strain of preaching many dwelt too much

* The following judicious remarks, extracted from a recent publication, are applicable to this subject.

"In developing the causes of those various errors and mistakes which have, more or less, abounded in every age of the Christian church, the source of many of them may be traced to that imperfect and prejudiced view which has too often been taken of the scheme of Christianity. Biassed in favour of some particular system of theology, its advocates have not compared spiritual things with spiritual, Scripture with Scripture. On the contrary, they have deduced their conclusions from insulated or broken passages of Holy Writ. But this is not dealing fairly with such a subject. As justly should we conceive the form of some ancient edifice, from surveying its detached and mutilated fragments, as we can determine what the temple of the Lord is, without examining and comparing every part of the sacred fabric."

on them. Whatever was the subject or text, it was a practice not uncommon to introduce the *whole system*, and to give their particular sentiments a prominent place in almost all their sermons. It is obvious that when this was done in a *disputatious* manner, it could not fail of producing an improper impression on the minds of their hearers, of promoting a party spirit and prejudices against those who differed from them. On some occasions public disputations were held; and in general, where this unhappy spirit prevailed, much greater solicitude was shown by the hearers to ascertain whether the preacher gave a correct statement of their preconceived sentiments and opinions, listening whether they could find in what was said the shibboleth of the party, whether he was a Calvinist of the right stamp, and forming a *judgment* of him accordingly, rather than endeavouring to profit by what they heard.* Hence the unguarded censures passed by too many, who would scarcely allow that any preached the Gospel who varied at all from their favourite phraseology.

* An anecdote, which too fully confirms these observations, is related of an old gentleman who professed the highest regard for a certain divine of high Calvinistic principles. Some of his friends noticing that he frequently slept under his ministry, while he was all attention when any stranger officiated for him, could not forbear expressing their surprise at what appeared to them so inconsistent. His reply was, that he was so well satisfied of the orthodoxy of his favourite preacher, who he well knew would advance nothing contrary to his views, that he did not see the necessity of such diligent attention; but that he *must listen to others* in order that he might be able to ascertain whether they were sound or not.—When this is the sole or the principal object in hearing the word, no wonder if there be little growth in grace, or of the true spirit of Christianity!

On the minds of others, to the inexpressible grief of their pious ministers, a still more unfavourable effect was produced. The ignorant, captious, and perverse, taking but a partial and incorrect view of the system, drank in the spirit of antinomianism, became lax in their sentiments, and, by their unholy conduct, occasioned great distress both to the ministers and the societies to which they had belonged. These excellent men took great pains to guard what they advanced in their pulpits from such misrepresentations and unhallowed abuses. They were far from approving the unqualified assertions contained in some parts of the writings of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Hussey, and entirely disclaimed the dangerous positions respecting moral obligation, which have been boldly maintained by some modern innovators, who have arrogated to themselves the exclusive denomination of preachers of the Gospel; and by their distorted representations of the doctrines of grace, have given occasion to the enemies of truth to speak evil of what they understand not. The reasoning of an inspired Apostle must convince every unbiassed mind that the law is not 'made void through faith,' but established on the firmest and most substantial basis.

The discussions here described were by no means confined exclusively to the Baptists; they prevailed more or less among other denominations, and extended to the Church of England, as must be evident to those who are conversant with the polemical writings of the Rev. Mr. Toplady, which had an extensive circulation, and were highly esteemed by those both in and out of the church who adopted his sentiments.

A controversy also existed at that period, which na-

turally arose from the high Calvinistic principles then prevalent, respecting what was termed the *Gospel call*. This was considered by some as inconsistent with those doctrines which they had embraced, and as having a tendency to Arminianism. It is truly painful to reflect how the minds of good men have been perplexed by this idea, as if the hidden purpose of God was ever intended to be the rule of our conduct, in addressing the consciences of men. Justly may it excite our astonishment that, with the Bible in their hands, containing the discourses not only of the Prophets, but of Christ himself and his Apostles, they should ever have felt any scruples of this kind. Did *they* take up their time in nice casuistical distinctions? No; their object was to ‘approve themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God,’ and to ‘be pure from the blood of all men.’ Whilst the Saviour explained to his disciples in private the mysteries of the kingdom, resolved their doubts, and answered their inquiries, he from time to time addressed himself to his hearers of all descriptions, and not merely to their outward ears, but to their hearts, calling them ‘to repent and believe’ the Gospel. The same commission he gave to his disciples, both before and after his ascension. Accordingly we find that Peter, in his first sermon after the day of Pentecost, being filled with the Holy Ghost, addressed himself to the rulers of the people and the elders of Israel, the very *murderers* of his risen and exalted Saviour. ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins.’ Such has been, in every age of the church, the spirit and conduct of those who have been most singularly instrumental in reviving and carrying on the work of God. The example of Christ and

of his Apostles have been their *authority* for so doing ; and here they have rested satisfied, whatever cavils human sophistry might raise against them.* Thus it

* The remarks made by the Rev. Mr. Newton, in his letter on ministerial address, are too appropriate to be omitted : " We should undoubtedly endeavour to maintain a consistency in our preaching ; but unless we keep the plan and manner of the Scripture constantly in view, and attend to every part of it,—a design of consistency, may fetter our sentiments, and greatly preclude our usefulness. We need not wish to be more consistent than the inspired writers, nor be afraid of speaking as they have spoken before us. We may easily perplex ourselves and our hearers, by nice reasoning on the nature of human liberty, and the Divine agency on the hearts of men ; but such disquisitions are better avoided. If when you are in the pulpit, the Lord favours you with a lively sense of the greatness of the trust, and the worth of the souls committed to your charge, and fills your heart with his constraining love, many little curious distinctions which amused you at other times will be forgotten. Your soul will go forth with your words ; and while your bowels yearn over poor sinners, you will not hesitate a moment whether you ought to warn them of their danger or not. That great champion of free grace, Dr. Owen, has a very solemn address to sinners, the running title to which is, ' Exhortation unto believing.' It is in the Exposition of the 131st Psalm."

Another extract from a recent publication is also much to the purpose. " Mr. Elliot, the Indian Apostle, said to a minister who came to visit him in dying circumstances, ' Brother, brother, let there be much of Christ in your ministry, if you would win souls.' Christ crucified must not only be preached, he must be preached to *all*. If the Gospel is of the inspiration of the Spirit, then the free preaching of that Gospel will prove the certain medium of his ministrations and glory. It is the stale declamation of an inflated orthodoxy, that you may with as much hope of success call upon a dead man to arise and come forth from his grave, as to persuade a dead sinner to believe in Christ. But with the leave of these sapient logicians, we may ask, what is there that bears the least resemblance or agreement in the cases supposed? To raise a dead body, a *miracle* must be wrought ; but the process by which a soul

was, as an excellent writer observes, with Elliot, Brainerd, and several others, who preached Christ with so much success to the American Indians. They seemed to have their work all plain before them. They had none of those shackles with which good men have sometimes found themselves encumbered, so as to enfeeble their minds and bar their exertions. In such addresses to the consciences, as it is evident they delivered, there is something to rouse attention and excite the interest of every one. The care of the souls of hearers of every class, the rescue of perishing sinners from the brink of destruction, or, to use the energetic language of inspiration, 'pulling them out of the fire,' appear, when this is the case, to be the great object of a minister's preaching; and through a Divine blessing, the strong holds of Satan are demolished, a holy violence

is raised to spiritual life, is as plain as it is adapted and efficient. Here are the Scriptures, the ministry,—all necessary means of instruction; means appointed by the wisdom, and sanctioned by the blessing of heaven. The sinner for whom this provision is made, though dead in sin, and debased by it in the noble faculties of his nature, must yet be treated as a rational being. You are to state the Gospel to him, and urge the belief of it upon him as one who is capable of thinking, reflecting, understanding, remembering, reasoning, and feeling. The Holy Spirit gains access to the heart, through the media of the ear, the understanding, and the conscience. To these faculties you must therefore address yourself, unshackled by any false notions. Otherwise you would be chargeable with the guilt of shutting up the very avenues by which the Spirit approaches and takes possession of the soul: and you would then rest the final condemnation of men on grounds as abhorrent to the Divine character, as they are inconsistent with the real condition of the sinner, and the tenor of revelation. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

is done to the most careless and stupid, so that they begin to cry out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' On the contrary, when the precious moments are spent by the preacher in dwelling almost entirely on the counsels of God from eternity, attempting to prove and defend things utterly beyond human comprehension, and to establish his peculiar system ; he may by his supralapsarian visions, or, according to the cant terms formerly much in use, by eluoidating the *upper fall settlements*, amuse the fancy and lull the consciences of a certain description of persons, who will applaud him for the correctness of his notions ; but the souls of his hearers are in general, it is to be feared, in a starving condition ; no warnings given, no encouragements held forth to them to 'flee from the wrath to come.' The conduct of such teachers is like that of a learned divine, whose mind was so much absorbed in his favourite studies, that when preaching to a number of converts under sentence of death, he entered into a long and laboured dissertation on the form and dimensions of Solomon's temple, which he told them, when concluding his sermon, he would finish at a future opportunity. Alas ! the poor wretches, in whom such a discussion was not likely to excite much interest, were to be executed the very next morning.

The writer of these pages has been led to dwell pretty largely on these subjects, by several hints interspersed through different parts of the diary, and some circumstances which were frequently mentioned by the deceased, when speaking of the time which he spent as a private member of the church at Bradford. During the early part of his ministry, his worthy and highly respected pastor enlarged much more upon those points

which distinguish high Calvinism than in later years; and this was likewise the case with others, who occasionally filled his pulpit. Some even carried their notions so far as to endeavour to show, that where the terms 'wicked and unrighteous' are used, and exhortations given them by the voice of inspiration to forsake their way, regenerated or converted persons were intended. These perversions of Scripture, and the small portion of the discourses he sometimes heard which could be applicable to the circumstances of careless sinners, and of those who were beginning to feel some concern about the best things, could not but occasion much uneasiness to one who retained a lively impression of the energetic sermons which Whitefield had delivered to thousands who received their first serious impressions under his awakening ministry, and in whom the sentiments he then imbibed were matured by a diligent study of the writings of Flavel, Henry, Watts, and Hervey.

Neither his taste, nor his talents, as has before been stated, led him to engage in controversy. He had an utter aversion to it; he had no leisure to turn aside for the purposes of vain wrangling. Nobler aims and objects engaged his attention. He was desirous to feel the power of Divine truth upon his own soul, and thus to make his 'calling and election sure.' The doctrines of free grace, properly so called, were through life the foundation of his hope and comfort. He was ready on all occasions to adopt the language of the blessed Apostle, 'Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.' The views he had on these subjects tended to expand his soul in love to God and

love to perishing sinners. 'The unsearchable riches of Christ, in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell,' and his 'ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him,' were the burden of his song; he rejoiced in the invitations of the Gospel, as displaying its freeness and fulness. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,' &c. 'If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.'

Some of his religious friends at Bradford, who were strongly tinctured with high Calvinistic sentiments, and rigidly attached to the books which favoured those opinions, having in one of their interviews made some pointed observations on his slowness of speech, his backwardness to engage in controversy, and his partiality to the writings of some other divines, he soon after addressed a poetical epistle to one of them, in which, with much good humour and pleasantness, he made a reply to the charges adduced against him. Towards the close of life he occasionally repeated, from recollection, some lines of it; but no copy can now be found. In justification of his slowness of speech, he replied that while there were so many to preach and dogmatize, it was certainly fit that *some should hear*. The concluding lines were to the following effect:

"To be brief, my dear friends, you may say what you will,
I'll ne'er be confined to read nothing but Gill."

For the writings of this laborious divine, he had, as we have already intimated, a high value; in many respects; but he could by no means reconcile himself to

that *exclusive* attention to them, which his friends wished to enjoin.

In the diary there are several intimations of his having, in a private way, given exhortations from portions of Scripture; but, in the year 1763, he was induced, by the persuasion of his pastor and Christian brethren, though attended with many fears, to speak in a more public manner. On his first appearance in this way, he chose, as the subject of discourse, the words of our Saviour, John x. 'Other sheep have I which are not of this fold,' &c. In this attempt his mind was very unhappy. The assembly was much larger than he expected, and he was overcome by that fear of man which bringeth a snare. This prevailed to such a degree, that he could not recollect what he had premeditated, nor avail himself of the notes he had before him. He was so much discouraged by what he then felt, that he formed a resolution never more to expose his weakness in the same way; but his friends saw something, both in what he delivered at that time and in what they had heard from him on former occasions, which led them to solicit him again. They also requested Mr. Hartley, to whose judgment he paid the greatest deference, to urge him to a compliance. After a considerable interval of hesitation, he consented. His text was in unison with his feelings: 'A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.' He was, on this occasion, as happy as he could wish; his hesitations were removed; he was enabled to look above man, and to express himself

with becoming boldness and firmness. From that time he continued to preach frequently. The following is extracted from his diary: "When I had engaged six or seven times in public, the church agreed to pass their approbation on me; and an invitation having been sent from the church at Wainsgate, I consented to officiate, after many earnest supplications to the Almighty for his direction; being deeply impressed with a sense of my own unworthiness. The first Sabbath I spent there was, if I am not mistaken, December 18, 1763. The text in the morning was 1 John, iii. 2: 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God,' &c. In the afternoon I preached from Psalms li. 17. I had great liberty on both occasions. The people expressed their satisfaction, and invited me to go again. I have been four times, not successively, but every second Sabbath."

"February 9, 1764.—I have been for some weeks exercised with bodily affliction, and my mind is not less afflicted than my body. I go mourning from day to day under a sense of my unfitness for the great work in which I have engaged, and what to do I know not.

"About a fortnight ago I received an invitation from the church at Liverpool, under the care of Mr. Oulton, to go and preach in conjunction with their pastor; but I believe, if I have a call any where, it is to Wainsgate. The people there unanimously approve of my poor labours, and unweariedly press me to settle among them."

"February 10.—My companion and I set out for Wainsgate, and were mercifully conducted thither."

"February 11. Lord's Day.—But poorly in body; and in the morning was very unhappy in my mind. I feared it would be a lost day to the Lord's dear people

to whom I had to speak. I thought my poor services would be of no use; but in the evening learned, to my great joy, that I was, in some measure, disappointed."

"Wainsgate, May 10, 1764.—Yesterday our goods were removed from Bradford to this place. A number of the brethren here came with horses; and having met us at Haworth, conveyed us forwards, and the goods we brought with us.

"I have now set my hand to the plough, and have made a solemn entrance upon the work of the ministry. My partner in life and I have taken leave of our dear friends and brethren, with whom we had an affectionate and sorrowful parting.

"I would now apply with diligence to the work incumbent upon me. I am conscious of great weakness and inability; but the language of my heart is, 'Lord, help me!' I rose before six in the morning, and spent most of the day in regulating my books and other things; at night I was dull and weary.

"I am favoured in my new situation with a convenient study, and almost all the advantages and opportunities I could wish for; but, alas! I see so much of my own emptiness and insufficiency, that I shall be miserable, in the midst of them, if the Lord add not his blessing. Prov. x. 12: 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich.'"

The situation in which he had now taken up his residence was very different from a considerable manufacturing town, and in itself could have few

attractions; but he had internal resources; and his books, those silent but inestimable companions, prevented him feeling that *ennui* which throws a gloom over the minds of many, and renders a solitary situation almost insupportable.

Whatever the motives might be, whether to avoid interruption and persecution, or merely for the sake of the private convenience of those who erected them, the first Dissenting places in this part of the country, which were generally small, humble edifices, were built in secluded spots, adjoining neither towns nor villages, but withdrawn from the notice of the public. The promoters of these erections had no idea of courting the attention of their neighbours, by inviting appearances and splendid attractions. Such was the situation of the meeting-house at Rawden, which was unquestionably one of the oldest in this part of Yorkshire. Though there were numerous villages in the vicinity, without any place of worship, it was erected in a solitary, though beautiful place, at a distance from the public road, surrounded by woods, excepting on one side, where the river Aire is seen winding along the valley. Tradition records that when it was opened, the minister, who officiated on the occasion, struck with the peculiarity of its situation, chose for his text the words of the Psalmist: 'We have found it in the fields of the wood.' The congregation, afterwards increasing, and finding much inconvenience from the situation, removed to a more central place. Part of the materials were taken away; but the shell of the old building yet remains nearly covered with ivy, with scattered tombstones grown over with moss, and overshadowed with trees,

inviting the attention of the traveller, as being perhaps the only ruin of a Dissenting meeting house to be found in this part of the kingdom.

The erection of a place of worship at Wainsgate may, under a Divine blessing, be imputed to the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, of Haworth, which is six or seven miles distant, separated from it by a wild and bleak moor. Mr. Richard Smith, who was the first pastor, in the former part of his life attended Mr. Grimshaw's ministry, and derived great advantage from it. The particular circumstances attending his conversion cannot now be ascertained. For some time his mind was in a gloomy desponding state, and he was harassed with many disquieting fears respecting his own personal interest in God's salvation; but he was earnest in prayer, and other means of grace, till at length it pleased God to calm his troubled breast, and to fill his heart with 'joy and peace in believing.'

Being possessed of strong natural parts, and diligent in his application to study, it was the general opinion of his religious friends that he was designed for public usefulness in the church of God. He was accordingly solicited, and at length prevailed upon, to give a word of exhortation. This he did at first privately, and afterwards in larger assemblies. His efforts were rendered acceptable and useful to many.

After some time he was invited to preach in the township of Wadsworth, then a wild and inhospitable part of the country, where civilization was in a low state, and where there was little of the fear or knowledge of God. Mr. Smith preached in the houses of those who were willing to receive him. The number of hearers gradually increased; and though some 'con-

tradicted and blasphemed, many believed and turned to the Lord.'

As an evidence that the power of Divine grace had reached the hearts of many individuals, and that they were attached to the ministry of Mr. Smith, they entered into voluntary subscriptions, and, without soliciting assistance from any other quarter, erected a small meeting house, which they called Wainsgate, from the farm on which it was built, in a high situation, without any considerable village near it. The proprietor of the farm, being a warm friend to the cause, gave the ground for the place of worship and for a burying place adjoining. A house was afterwards erected on a very small scale for the minister, whose family consisted only of himself and his wife. As those concerned in the erection were principally poor persons, every part of the work was done in the most economical manner; in one respect, so as to render the place uncomfortable, especially in the winter season. When the walls were reared and the roof about to be put on, thinking that they had not made it sufficiently high, instead of raising the wall a few courses, they lowered the inside of the building about half a yard, which caused it to be damp. The roof was supported by a stone arch, near which was the pulpit. Having no gallery at that time, the place could not accommodate more than one hundred persons.

Under the ministry of Mr. Smith, a Christian church was gathered and constituted in the year 1750. Inconsiderable as it may appear, it was the mother church to many others in the neighbouring towns and villages. The Almighty was pleased to honour the small society at Wainsgate, by bestowing on some of its members

excellent gifts for the ministry. Two of them were particularly distinguished, who were raised up under Mr. Smith's ministrations ; namely, Mr. James Hartley, so often mentioned in this biographical account, and Mr. William Crabtree, of Bradford, who laboured long with great acceptance and success.

In the former part of Mr. Smith's ministry, he dwelt much on doctrinal subjects ; but being discouraged under the apprehension that his labours were not useful, and that this might be owing to some defect in his mode of preaching, for some years before his death he turned his attention more particularly to the moral and religious duties incumbent on professing Christians. These he enforced by the most striking arguments and incentives, drawn from the love of God, the death of Christ, the credit of the Gospel, the hope of saints as laid up in heaven, and the honour of him who called them ' out of darkness into marvellous light.' In his ministry he had a manner peculiar to himself, of coming home to the conscience, and touching the springs and movements of the soul. His address was full of gravity, and his words as weighty as words could be. A stranger who occasionally heard him, once said, " This man's words fall on us like mill-stones."

In his own deportment he was eminently conscientious, avoiding conformity to the world, and bearing his testimony against the prevailing vices and irregularities of the times in which he lived. In some respects he carried his scruples respecting matters of conscience to a length which few would think it necessary to imitate.

It is related of him, that when he felt the risings of fretfulness and discontent, he generally visited the poorest of his neighbours, which, next to the truths of

Christianity, his experience taught him was the best antidote to these painful sensations.

His natural constitution was very infirm; and he was so broken down with disease, that when but middle aged he had the appearance of one advanced in years. His last sickness was long and tedious, and his pain for the most part very severe. But his humility and patience were remarkable, his faith steady, and consolations strong. 'He longed to depart and to be with Christ,' and his desire was at length granted. His soul was dismissed from this tenement of clay, August 24, 1763, in the 53d year of his age, after he had been pastor of the church about thirteen years.

Those of his hearers who yet survive, bear witness to his integrity and faithfulness.* His successor, who has now followed him to the grave, never mentioned him

* A pastoral letter, from which the following passages are selected, has been found among the manuscripts of the late Mr. Smith. It is without date, but was probably written near the close of his public ministry.

"To the Church of Christ, at Wainsgate, grace, peace, and love be multiplied through Christ our exalted head.

"I am standing at the threshold of your door, with my heart towards you in the bowels of Jesus Christ. I must shortly give account to him that is ready to 'judge the quick and the dead,' as to *what* I have preached, *how* I have preached, and whether I have held fast Christ's name and the form of sound words which he has committed to my trust. If I have let them slip, with a view to gain to myself, to acquire honour or friendship from men, or from any other worldly motive—how can I hope to give up my account with joy?' how shall I be able to say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith?' I am pained to hear that you discover so much indifference to the Gospel, and that you can tamely admit of innovations of a dangerous tendency. You are anxiously concerned when your temporal interest is at stake. Ah! my brethren, does not your conduct in more important matters betray, if not want of knowledge and discernment, what is much worse, want of zeal and love?

but with respect. As is evident from the former part of this account, he had an intimate personal acquaintance with him, before he left Bradford. He wrote an elegy on his death, of which the following are the concluding lines :

“ For numerous years his labours have been blest,
But now his work is done, and he’s released.
The Gospel tidings he no more declares,
His voice no more makes glad his people’s ears.
Alas ! for them !—how shall they now be fed ?
Who for their souls will care ? their shepherd’s dead !
Like scatter’d sheep, will they not wander now ?
Who then to them the way of truth will show ?

“ Thou, God ! from whom all gifts and graces come,
Who thus hast call’d thy servant to the tomb,
Raise up another who shall useful prove,
And rightly preach the messages of love ;
That thy poor flock may be instructed still,
And guided safely to thy heavenly hill.”

Are not you seeking your own more than the things of Jesus Christ ? Is not that night of which Dr. Gill speaks coming fast upon us ? Does not he who ‘ walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks,’ see your Laodicean temper of mind, and has he not something against you, because ‘ you have left your first love ?’ Let us search and see. Is there that love to Christ, his ministers, his word, his truths, and company, that there once was ? Is there that zeal for his cause, his honour, his interest, which was evidenced at your first conversion ? Is there that fervency of prayer in your families and closets ?—But I forbear ; let conscience speak ; and if it bear witness against you, ‘ let him that hath an ear, hear what the spirit saith unto the churches :—’ ‘ Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works.’

“ What I have written to you more at large before, I wish you to read with diligence and deliberation ; and if things are not as I apprehend, be so kind as to inform me better. Having no other copy, I wish them, along with this, to be returned to me. ‘ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.’ Amen.”

During the long confinement of Mr. Smith, as the number of Baptist ministers was small, and no academical institutions were then established in the north of England, the church at Wainsgate was unable to procure supplies more than once in the fortnight. On the intervening Sabbaths, one of the members, whose son has been since known to the public as the writer of "Essays in a Series of Letters to a Friend;" read the whole of Gurnal's "Christian Armour," to the congregation. Being a person of strong mental powers, he occasionally commented upon his author, so that he was enabled to keep up the attention of his audience, who often expressed themselves edified by what they heard.

Few persons indeed were better qualified than he for usefulness as a private member of a Christian society. Having a deep sense of the importance of Divine things, a warm heart, and a well-informed mind, he and his partner in life, for a long succession of years, laid themselves out in encouraging, by social converse and meetings, those who were setting out 'in the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward.' Religion was the business of his life from youth to advanced age; and nothing excited his interest so much as the prosperity and extension of the kingdom of Christ among different denominations. A man of such a spirit is a most important acquisition to any Christian society; and through the course of his public ministrations, he who was about to be Mr. Smith's successor found in this old disciple a steady, zealous fellow-helper in the work of the Lord,—The reader will excuse this digression; it is a just, though imperfect tribute, to one whose memory is now precious to many.

Among others ministers invited to fill Mr. Smith's

pulpit while he was laid aside, Mr. Johnson of Liverpool spent some time at Wainsgate. He had been connected in association with the Baptists, and was requested as a friend to assist them in their 'time of need;' but whether some of Mr. Smith's hearers had misrepresented his sentiments to Mr. Johnson, or from some other cause, he embraced the opportunity of disseminating some peculiar opinions of his own, which were rendered the more acceptable by his ready and fluent utterance. On his return home, he published a book, which he denominated the "Trial of Two Opinions," in which he laid before the public many things relative to Mr. Smith, in a hasty, improper manner. Mr. Hartley, of Haworth, grieved by this attack upon his afflicted brother, published a pamphlet in reply, entitled, "The Trial of Two Opinions Tried," wherein he vindicated the conduct and character of Mr. Smith, and confuted many erroneous positions which Mr. Johnson had laid down. The controversy is now become quite obsolete, but, for the time, it had a very unhappy effect on the small society at Wainsgate. The number of members was but about thirty, and some of these were infected with Mr. Johnson's sentiments. This was a discouraging circumstance to a young minister, who was naturally very timid, at his first entrance among them; but by avoiding any share in the controversy, and by a conciliatory disposition on his part, the breach was made up, so that those members who had stood at a distance, on account of some difference in sentiment on matters of minor consequence, were again united, and they mutually agreed to allow one another their own way of thinking and of expressing themselves.

What has now been related will convey a general idea of the situation of this little society, when the subject of this narrative first entered upon his labours. As to the neighbourhood in general, it would be difficult, at this distance of time, to form any proper idea of its civil and religious state. The population was comparatively small, and the provincial dialect almost unintelligible to strangers: in those parts where large and flourishing villages now stand, there were only a few scattered houses, and in some instances no erections of any kind. The principal hamlets were on the declivity or near the summit of almost inaccessible hills; which situations were also the favourite residence of persons of landed property, who appear to have had no idea of the picturesque beauties which, in more modern times, have been discovered in the valleys and dells below, where the scenery is distinguished "by being ever varying and ever new." As there were no wheeled carriages, little attention was paid to the public roads, which were generally carried through valleys and over the summits of hills, so as to suit the convenience of the proprietors and occupiers of the land, without much regard to the accommodation of the more distant traveller.

The introduction of carriages, the influx of trade, and the consequent connexion with commercial towns, pointed out the necessity of new roads, winding along the valleys; and the abundance of waterfalls on the Calder and its tributary streams, forming situations where considerable factories have been erected since the invention of machinery, have altogether produced an incalculable change in the appearance of the country, and a great accession to the population.

At the period before referred to, the places of worship were very few and thinly attended; the principal of which were, an ancient and almost dilapidated episcopal church at Heptonstall, which has since that undergone many repairs; a small Methodist meeting house at the same place, and two others on a still smaller scale, at Slack and Rodhill End, belonging to the Baptists. Among the inhabitants in general, ignorance and vice prevailed in a deplorable degree; there was little appearance of religion; their tempers, dispositions, and habits, partook much of the wildness of the country, so that an extensive, though unpromising field, presented itself before those faithful labourers who were raised up in these parts about this period.

Among the number of those who came forward at this time, and were for many years great blessings to this neighbourhood, the Rev. James Crossley is deserving of particular notice. He was born in the year 1731, at Lower Saltonstall, a small hamlet in Warley, near Halifax. His parents were industrious, respectable members of society; but having a large family, were not able to give him a liberal education. His disposition from his earliest years was cheerful and engaging. Whilst young, he had many alarms of conscience, which were much increased by his attendance upon the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, and among the Methodists, who had sometimes preaching at Luddenden. It is not known what was the precise time, or what were the particular means, of his conversion to God; but he became a zealous professor among the Methodists, and used all his influence to induce his former companions in sin to follow him in the ways and service of God. He was a leader at one of the prayer meetings,

and having frequently dropped a few words by way of exhortation, he at length ventured to make a few remarks from a portion of Scripture. He was led to devote his attention to the study of God's most Holy Word, with a view to the ministry; and some change having taken place in his religious sentiments respecting the doctrines of the Gospel, a separation from his former religious connexions ensued, and a large room was hired at Upper Saltonstall, where he preached regularly every Lord's Day. The room, though spacious, soon became inadequate to contain the numbers who flocked to hear him. A suitable place of worship was now resolved upon; but much discouragement arose, from the poverty of the hearers, and other obstacles. A subscription was entered into; and those who had no money laboured alternately in digging the foundation, getting stones in the quarry, and serving the masons. During the year 1761, the building, called Booth Chapel, was reared and rendered fit for public worship; there were no galleries in it at the time of its first erection. The situation was very solitary, and, for want of suitable roads, for a long time difficult of access; but it was probably fixed upon as being at a central distance from several surrounding villages. Mr. Crossley opened the meeting house himself, by preaching an animated discourse from Psalm xxvii. 6: 'I will offer in his tabernacle,' &c. He was ordained in the year 1763. The Rev. Mr. Knight, of Halifax,* who had been or-

* The Rev. Titus Knight was born December 17, 1719. He began to preach in the year 1749, being then among the Methodists. He withdrew from that connexion in 1762, with a few friends who had adopted his views on the doctrines of the Gospel. The place becoming too small for the congregation, a very spacious and

dained the day preceding, the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Leeds, and the Rev. Mr. Scott, of Heckmondwicke, were present, and took part in the services on that occasion.

Mr. Crossley continued for the space of about twenty years in this situation. A friendly connexion took place between him and his neighbour, the minister at Wainsgate, which was maintained through life. They frequently preached double lectures together; and for several years, in conjunction with the Rev. Mr. Simpson, of Warley, they gratuitously preached in succession once in the month at the workhouse belonging to Warley, for the benefit of the paupers there, who were not able to attend Divine service elsewhere.

Having received an unanimous invitation to accept the pastoral office in the newly established Independent interest at Bradford, he resigned his beloved charge at Booth, though very reluctantly. He was no doubt induced to go, from the hope of more extended usefulness; but it is generally supposed that he died of a broken heart, so greatly did the removal prey upon his spirits. He only preached one Sabbath after he finally left Booth; and died the Lord's Day following, May 18, 1782, aged 51 years. Rev. Mr. Cockin preached his funeral sermon, from the 3d epistle of John, 8 verse. Mr. Crossley was plain in his person and address; but the primitive simplicity, piety, and good sense, which dis-

elegant structure was erected, and opened in May, 1772. About the year 1764, he had become acquainted with Mr. Whitefield, and was appointed one of the preachers at the Tabernacle, in London. He was engaged during forty-three years in the work of the ministry, and died, after a tedious illness, March 2, 1793.

tinguished his discourses, rendered him a very acceptable and useful preacher. He printed one sermon, occasioned by the melancholy end of one of his hearers, who, having formed a connexion with coiners, was tried and executed at York, April 28, 1770. The text was 2 Sam. xii. 14: 'By this thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord,' &c. A copy of a letter which he wrote to Mr. Crossley, just before his execution, is in possession of the writer. It was found in his pocket. He bewails, in the most feeling manner, his past backslidings in heart and in life. "God in his judgment," he says, "has overtaken me. But, in the midst of judgment, I would hope he will yet remember mercy. O that my wanderings may be a warning to others, and that my death, shameful as it is, may produce some good effect, and prove a real blessing to others! My heart is pained for my dear relatives; O that I could bear their sorrows! but I must leave them. Let me entreat you to give them seasonable and suitable advice whenever you can.—I can say no more; but, O that I could come to tell you what my heart feels!"

But it is time we should return from this digression, and resume the thread of our narrative. In the month of May, 1764, a public meeting, or association of the Baptist denomination, was held at Halifax. The letter sent by the church at Wainsgate is still preserved, in which they mention, in a feeling manner, the death of their pastor, with the steps they had taken during his illness, and subsequent to his death, particularly in inviting a young preacher from Bradford, whose labours

gave universal satisfaction. "We, therefore," they say, "looked upon him as one whom the Lord was raising up in our necessity, and requested him to come and settle among us, which he has done. We earnestly entreat the Lord to give him suitable abilities for the great work, and make him a wise and faithful steward of the mysteries of God."

In a passage of the diary, written a few days after his removal (May 12), he complains on account of the state of his mind, which was still probably unsettled, from the hurry necessarily attendant upon so great a change in situation :

"I have endeavoured to prepare for the Sabbath this afternoon; but was dark, and made little progress. What pains me most is, that I am not more deeply interested. Lord, incline my heart to pray, and cause thine ear to hear !

"I have spent the Saturday wholly in my study; but, alas ! it has been an unprofitable day with respect to prayer and converse with God in my work. My object has been to lay up something for the Sabbath; but, though favoured with every advantage, I have done little to purpose. Formerly, when I had less time, I found the work much more easy."

"Lord's Day, May 13.—I have been carried mercifully through the work of the day, though not so happily as at some times. I had not freedom of utterance, and my mind was contracted. The text in the morning was Matt. v. 3: 'Blessed are the pure in

heart, for they shall see God:’ In the afternoon, Heb. xiii. 6: ‘ So that we may boldly say,’ &c.”

“ Lord’s Day, July 15.—This has been such a day to me as calls for much thankfulness. I found great freedom and pleasure in every part of the work I had to attend to. John xiv. 19: ‘ Because I live ye shall live also ’ was the subject of discourse; I enjoyed somewhat of the sweetness of what I held forth to others.”

“ Lord’s Day, July 22.—I was not prepared, as I could have wished to be, for the work of the day. In the forenoon I spoke from Luke viii. 6: ‘ Some fell,’ &c. At noon I was very poorly; but after I entered upon the afternoon service I felt much better; and was comfortable in enlarging upon Ps. xcii. 12: ‘ The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree,’ &c.

“ In the evening the church, after consulting together, gave me a call to take the pastoral office upon me. I told them it was a very important affair, and desired time to consider of it. O that the Lord would give me a heart to lay the matter before him, and to ask counsel at his mouth!”

“ Monday, July 23.—The former part of this day I spent in fasting and prayer, in examining my heart, confessing my sins, &c.

“ I proposed to myself, and in my poor manner answered, those questions in Mr. Henry’s Life, page 47:

“ I. ‘ What am I?’ After examination, I concluded myself to be a subject of grace.

“ II. ‘ What have I done?’ Here my conscience charged me with many sins and imperfections through my past life.

“ III. ‘ From what principles do I act?’ If I am not

deceived with myself, from zeal for the Divine honour, and a principle of real love to the souls of men. "Lord search me and try me!"

Before he had left Bradford he had formed an intimate acquaintance with some families at Yeadon, near Rawden. Among his papers a letter has been found, dated August 30, 1764, subscribed with the initials of the names of five females, who were then young in years and religious profession; but through their future lives, which were protracted to a considerable length, they were ornaments of the societies to which they belonged. For strong sense, sterling piety, and engaging manners, they had comparatively few equals.

"An extract from the letter, it is hoped, will be acceptable to the reader.

"DEAR SIR,

"We should have written to you some time ago; but a variety of things prevented. We trust you will not do us the injustice to impute our silence to want of friendly regard. Your last letter was very acceptable, and particularly the short sketches you gave us of the sermons you had preached since your removal to Wainsgate. We were much interested in that from these words: 'The Lord is my helper.' It was very seasonable and applicable to the difficulties with which we were then struggling. The Almighty has seen meet to exercise us lately with heavy trials; but he is infinite in wisdom, and therefore cannot err. We have had great reason to complain of pride and unbelief. O the bitter fruit which these corrupt trees produce!

What poor creatures should we be were the Lord to leave us to ourselves; but we have to 'sing of mercy as well as judgment.'

" The power, love, and grace of God, have been displayed in so wonderful a manner, that we think we can now number our greatest trials among our choicest blessings. We see the need of them, to make our souls more lively in the ways of God—our views are thus directed to the precious promises contained in the Divine Word; and while the Almighty is chastening us, he puts underneath us his everlasting arms, and bears us above all our troubles.

" Thus we have endeavoured to describe to you the feelings of our minds. We love to speak of God's goodness to us; but we mourn on account of the body of sin and death which we daily carry about us. It, at times, causes us almost to faint; but it pleases the Lord, who giveth strength to them who have no might, to grant us fresh supplies of grace, which enable us to keep our heads above water. We often compare ourselves to a ship tossed upon the tempestuous ocean, ready to be swallowed up in the great deep, or ready to be dashed to pieces upon some fatal rock. Not that we are left to doubt of God's faithfulness in perfecting the good work which he has begun; but our fears arise from ourselves, lest our comforts and usefulness one to another should be prevented. Pray for us, that we may be kept lowly and honourable in our profession—that we may overcome the evils of our own hearts, the temptations of Satan, and the allurements of the world.

" We remain

" Your unworthy but affectionate Friends,
and fellow Pilgrims."

The following verses were some time after addressed to the ladies who subscribed this letter.

" To ——— and others who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

" Hail! heaven-born souls, celestial race,
Offspring of God's peculiar grace;
Ye ransomed tribe, ye pious few,
Whose feet the paths of life pursue.

" From off the rocks, like him of old,
Your blissful state let me behold;
Not void of hopes that worthless I
Belong to your blest company.

" Through a long wilderness you rove,
Where beasts and savage monsters roar;
Gins, pits, and snares, infest the road;
But your defence and help is God.

" Eschol's sweet grapes you've now in hand,
In earnest of the heavenly land;
Celestial fruits e'en now you eat,
And long to have your bliss complete.

" May you oft stand on Pisgah's top,
And view your home with stedfast hope;
With patience wait till Jesus say,
'Come over Jordan, come away.'

" Then in his arms he'll you embrace,
You shall behold him face to face;
His beauties then unveil'd you'll see;
Ah! Lord, and is this bliss for me?"

The diary affords some further materials relative to this period of his life, though with considerable intervals.

" Tuesday, January 1, 1765.—This forenoon I was in the greatest distress. I had a meeting to keep up at

K

Colding, and never found myself more unfit* for the work. I could not fix upon a text till yesterday evening. On account of the severity of the weather, I had great difficulty in walking to the place, so that I could not think on my subject. When I stood up I scarcely knew what to say; but my mind was enlarged in prayer, and I was afterwards enabled to go on with pleasure. The text was Isaiah, xxvii. 13: 'The great trumpet shall be blown,' &c. May I never forget this happy beginning of the new year!"

"Thursday, January 3.—My mind was uncomfortable in the former part of the day; nevertheless, the Lord visited my soul in preaching at Mytholmroyd Bridge. I spoke in a great measure extempore."

"January 6.—I have not found much satisfaction in study during the two last days, and was but poorly in body; but the Lord has been pleased to afford assistance in going through the work of this day. O what sacred joy did I feel in speaking upon 'the life of faith,' from Gal. ii. xx. Lord help me to live more by faith!"

"Lord's Day, February 17.—Have been afflicted with a cold more than a fortnight. I had some close thoughts on death, and have been much interested in reading Burnham's 'Pious Memorials.'"

"This day, though hoarse, and my throat much swelled, I have had great enlargement, and unspeakable pleasure, in the public exercises of God's house. I preached from Rom. viii. 38, 39: 'For I am persuaded,' &c. Precious Redeemer, what hast thou done for the vilest of thy creatures!"

"Lord's Day, May 26.—I was this day much strengthened in body, and very happy. Texts, Matt. vi. 9: 'After this manner pray,' &c.: and Matt. xi.

25, 26: 'I thank thee, O Father,' &c. I am filled with wonder when I review the Lord's dealings with me."

" Wednesday, May 29.—Went from home about ten, A. M. Had some agreeable conversation with a friend at Mytholmroyd. Passed through Sowerby, and took a view of the new church there, which is indeed a beautiful building, and then proceeded to Halifax. Had a pleasing interview with Mr. Wood—heard his answers to some questions proposed for discussion at the Association, and told him my temptations, discouragements, &c. He is much endeared to me."

" Thursday, May 30. Read with pleasure some parts of 'Nature Displayed.' Went to John Foster's, and spent an hour or two with him very agreeably. On my return home, began to make some preparation for the Lord's Day."

" Friday and Saturday, May 31, &c.—I have been studying a subject in which my own conscience condemns me, namely, *private prayer*. O that God would enable me to practise what I recommend to others!"

" Thursday July 18.—This day I set apart to seek the Lord by fasting and prayer; to examine myself in order to my ordination, having accepted the invitation of the church, which was unanimous."

" Friday, July 26.—The church met to make the necessary arrangements for the ordination. Moses Brigg spent some time in confession of sin; James Murgatroyd, and John Foster, also engaged in prayer. After this, I addressed the society from Ps. xc. 17: 'Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us,' &c. I concluded the meeting with petitions in behalf of the

church and congregation. It has been a good day to me; may it never be forgotten!"

"Lord's Day, July 28.—My dear wife and I received our dismissal from Bradford, and joined the society here. I preached from Cor. ii. 2: 'I determined not to know any thing among you,' &c."

"Wednesday, July 31, 1765.—This day I was solemnly ordained pastor over the church at Wainsgate; the most important day, as to its transactions, I have ever yet witnessed. Mr. Hartley asked the questions, and made the ordination prayer. Mr. Crabtree gave the charge, and an awful one it was, from 1 Tim. ii. 15: 'That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself,' &c. Then Mr. Nuttal preached to the people from 1 Thes. ii. 20: 'For ye are our glory and joy.' The place was very much crowded, and the weather exceedingly hot. O my soul! what a work hast thou now entered upon."

"Thursday, Aug. 1.—Had much pleasure in conversing with Mr. Oulton, Mr. Hartley, &c.; but have reason to complain on account of the hardness of my heart, and want of fervour in prayer."

"Lord's Day, Aug. 4.—I was feeble in my outward man. Preached in the forenoon from Numb. xxvii. 15; in the afternoon from Ps. xvi. 2, 3: 'O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord,' &c. I was much edified in the morning, in reading Mr. Newton's Life."

"Lord's Day, Oct. 27.—During the last week I have been composed in my mind, found my heart engaged in the service of God, and was greatly refreshed in reading Mr. Henry's "Exposition," the sweetest and most spiritual work I ever consulted.

'This has been a comfortable day. We had a short meeting in the morning, which was opened at ten o'clock, when I read the first Psalm, and began to expound the first Chap. of the Epistle to the Romans.*

"The latter meeting commenced at twelve. This method we intend to continue for the winter season. I much prefer it to the practice still prevalent in some neighbouring churches, of having only one long service in the winter quarter."

"Lord's Day, Nov. 3.—This, through mercy, has been a happy day. In the morning I expounded, and in the afternoon preached from these words: 'The just shall live by faith.' Oh that I may live the life I spoke of!"

These extracts will give some general idea of the state of his mind, from his removal to Wainsgate to his ordination. This comprises considerably more than the space of a year. His labours at that early period of his ministry were by no means confined to the pulpit. He preached, after the example of primitive ministers, from *house to house*, wherever a door was opened to him. By these means, under a Divine blessing, prejudices were gradually weakened, and a spirit of inquiry was excited.

It may perhaps appear strange that so considerable a period elapsed between the invitation to accept the charge, and the time of ordination; but a

* His expository remarks on the Epistle to the Romans, which he probably continued from this time, were written at large, and afterwards put up in a separate volume; he was often solicited to publish it.

variety of papers, still preserved, show the sense he had of the arduous nature and difficulty of the pastoral office, and the discouragements he often felt from a conscious sense of his own weakness. Sometimes his mind was cheered by the liberty he found in speaking, and the satisfaction his hearers expressed; at others he was full of despondency and dejection. These painful feelings so preyed upon his spirits, about six months after his removal, that he had serious thoughts of wholly declining the work of the ministry. He wrote a letter to his intimate friend and counsellor Mr. Hartley, of Haworth, of which the following is a part :

“DEAR SIR,

“I have taken this opportunity to acquaint you with the bitter distress I at present feel. I fear I have entered upon a work to which God has not called me; and instead of combating these fears with success, I think I grow worse. I compare myself to the parched heath in the wilderness, which knoweth not when good cometh. I am continually bowed down under a sense of my weakness and foolishness. I spend my days in pain and anguish of mind, on these accounts; and what will be the event of these things I know not. Surely, if the Lord had called me to the work, I should be more sensible of his presence with me, and of his assistance. I make my complaint to him daily, but he seems to cover himself with a cloud, that prayer cannot pass through. I am ready to say with Job, ‘When I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer.’ In attempting to make preparation for the pulpit, I sit for hours together, and can do little or nothing.”—

" MEMORANDUM.

" N. B. I drew up these few lines on the 15th of Sept. 1764, with a design to send them to my honoured friend Mr. Hartley; but when I had got thus far in my letter, he unexpectedly came to the door. This filled me with surprise, and led me to think there might be something providential in his coming. I put the paper into his hand; he read it over and said, "These are my old complaints;" as Herod said of John, 'they are risen from the dead.' He further told me that he was so far from thinking, on account of my present uneasiness, that I was not called to the work of the ministry, that he was more fully confirmed in his belief of my being commissioned to preach the Gospel. Oh what a deliverance did I now experience! I was as one made alive from the dead."

The writer of these pages has to lament, that from this period of his parent's life, he has not been able to derive much assistance from the diary. The little that remains is chiefly written in short-hand, in which he is not much versed; and though from time to time resolutions appear to have been formed to renew the diary, pressing engagements, and in particular literary pursuits and theological studies, fully occupied his solitary hours.

In this retired and apparently inhospitable situation he became acquainted, through the good providence of God, with two persons who afterwards attained to great eminence in the Christian church; namely, the Rev. Henry Foster, and the Rev. Dan. Taylor. Mr. Foster

was born in 1745, at a farm-house, a short distance from Wainsgate. He received the rudiments of his education at Heptonstall school, which, under the superintendence of Mr. Pawson, and afterwards of Mr. Shackleton,* furnished the church, and different seminaries of learning, with many useful characters. At the time when this friendly connexion commenced, Mr. Foster was a student at Queen's College, Oxford.

Mr. Taylor was born in the neighbourhood of Halifax, in the year 1738. His first impressions of a

* A neat marble tablet was put up in Heptonstall Church, soon after Mr. Shackleton's decease, with the following inscription:

" In affectionate remembrance of
WILLIAM SHACKLETON,
Late Master of the Free Grammar School at this place,
Where thirty-six years of his life were occupied
In an able, zealous, and laborious discharge
Of the duties of his profession,
This Monument was erected
At the expence of his grateful Scholars.
He died November 16, 1805, in
the 61st year of his age."

The following memorial is inscribed upon a plain slab which covers his mortal remains :

" Hic requiescit GULIELMUS SHACKLETON,
Qui, per annos triginta et sex,
Scholam Heptonstaliensem fideliter rexit,
Quique inter primos sui ordinis claruit,
Humanitate ornatus ;
Decessit decimo sexto die Nov^{re}. 1805,
Ætatis Anno 61,

The classical reader will excuse the insertion of an inscription on a tomb-stone in the church-yard over another person, brought up in this neighbourhood, whose talents and literary attainments were of the first order ; but wasting and lingering disease repressed the

religious nature were among the Methodists; but leaving that society on account of some difference with respect to the ordinances of the Gospel, and points of doctrine, he accepted an invitation given him by a number of persons, resident in Wadsworth, who had also withdrawn from the Methodist connexion for similar reasons. This was about the time, or probably a little before, the removal of Mr. F. to Wainsgate.

Mr. Taylor was possessed of intrepid courage and persevering diligence, undaunted by difficulties. He was not discouraged by the wildness of the country, the roughness of the inhabitants, or the little prospect of adequate means of support. He had been inured to hardship from his earliest years; and like the blessed Apostle, whose spirit he eminently imbibed, 'he conferred not with flesh and blood.' During the summer months, he preached at the Nook, a farm-house about a mile from Wainsgate, under a tree, having then no better accommodation. On the approach of winter he and his friends took a small house in Wadsworth Lanes. The church and congregation increasing, a

" Hic sepulta jacent ossa
JOSEPHI DYNELEY, M.D. Eding.
Qui æqualium suorum,
In artibus Medicinæ et Humanitatis
Literis, facilè princeps exitit.
Vir et sociis semper carus
ac in omnes pro re benignus,
Otiique gaudium necnon seriorum
Ornamentum.
Obiit 9^o die Sept^{ris}. 1814,
Anno affecto ætatis 38.

commodious place of worship was afterwards erected at Birchcliffe,* near Hebdenbridge.

Though these three friends had different sentiments as to some points, both of doctrine and discipline, Mr. Foster's views being directed to the church, and Mr. Taylor being afterwards the distinguished leader of the new connexion among the general Baptists, this difference did not disturb the harmony that subsisted between them, having each of them the same grand ends in view; namely, to glorify God, and to proclaim the everlasting Gospel.

In reading the history of those who have risen to eminence in their generation, and more especially in tracing the *situations* from which they made their exit, we are often ready to express our surprise, in the same way as the Jews, when they heard of Christ being brought up in *Nazareth*. Some remarks have been made in the preceding part of these Memoirs, which may have a tendency to show the impropriety of these cavilling inquiries. In the obscure retreat in which these three friends were placed, their communion was often sweet; and Infinite Wisdom was preparing and qualifying them for the important circles in which they

* The society here was many years ago deprived of Mr. Taylor's personal services by his removal first to Halifax, and afterwards to London, where he ended his days; but it has continued, under successive ministers, to flourish and increase. A number of the members for their own convenience, and with a view to the extension of the cause, built a new meeting-house at Slack, near Heptonstall, some time since; where, under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Taylor, nephew to the first minister at Birchcliffe, they have had many accessions to their number, and have collected a large congregation.

were afterwards to move. During the long vacations, when attendance at college was not necessary, Mr. Foster spent a considerable portion of his time at Wainsgate, where he was joined by Mr. Taylor. It was customary with them to be together three or four days in the course of every week. They were associates, not only in the study of divinity, but in reading the classics, and other branches of polite learning. Their society proved, in each of these respects, a source of great pleasure and advantage. Engaged in such important pursuits, and stimulated by such motives as ought to influence a minister of the Gospel, no situation, however forbidding in itself, can be tiresome; the wilderness itself is transformed into a fruitful garden.

The friendship thus auspiciously begun continued through life. These friends, after their separation, witnessed with delight and holy satisfaction the success which the Almighty was pleased to grant to their respective labours, in those diversified situations where Providence placed them. As often as distance and necessary engagements would permit, they corresponded and met together. With respect to characters so well known to the public as Mr. Foster and Mr. Taylor were, it is scarcely necessary, and might be deemed irrelevant, to mention many further particulars. Mr. Foster left Yorkshire, in September, 1767, when he was ordained deacon by the Bishop of London. The following is extracted from one of his letters, dated September 9, 1767:—

“ This day fortnight I came hither; on the Friday following I was examined by the Bishop’s Chaplain. He gave me the twenty-third article to translate into Latin, and then inquired how I proved it to be

true. He afterwards gave me the Greek Testament, and I construed about five verses of Matthew xi. upon which words he asked me the following questions :

“ 1. ‘ Did John send to inquire of Christ for his own satisfaction, or that of his followers ?’

“ 2. ‘ What evidence did Christ give that he was the Messiah ?’

“ 3. ‘ Upon what miracle did the truth of Christ’s doctrine turn ?’

“ 4. ‘ How may the possibility of a resurrection be proved ?’

“ 5. ‘ Will the same body rise or not ?’

“ 6. ‘ How do you prove that we have the same doctrines Christ taught ?’

“ Having answered these questions in such a way as appeared to give satisfaction, he dismissed me ; and the Sunday after I was ordained by his Lordship.”

The first situation to which Mr. Foster was invited was, that of curate to the Rev. Mr. Romaine, Black-friars, who nearly, if not entirely, stood alone in the metropolis, till that period, as an asserter of those principles which were termed evangelical. About the time of his going to London he became acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Newton of Olney.—Mr. Newton invited him to become his curate ; but Mr. Foster considered London as the place in which his labours were most likely to be useful. In this he was not mistaken. No individual was more instrumental in the diffusion of evangelical principles through this great and populous city. He was chosen lecturer of several churches in different parts of the city, so that for a long course of years he preached from five to eight sermons weekly, and often to crowded auditories. His attachment to those among

whom he had laboured with so much success, induced him to decline accepting the valuable living of Clapham, to which he had been nominated by the will of J. Thornton, Esq.

By way of relaxation from his arduous work, and that he might spend some time among his relations and Christian friends, so much endeared to him by early acquaintance, he generally went down into Yorkshire once in two years, and preached in those churches where he could be admitted. His popularity, though he did not affect the graces of eloquence, exceeded that of any other minister who ever visited this part, Whitefield alone excepted. His early and steady piety, the plainness, simplicity, and solemnity of his address, combined to excite a great degree of interest. The general method which he adopted in preaching was to deduce from his text a series of observations, in which he greatly excelled. It was no uncommon thing for the hours of service to be altered in the neighbouring places of worship, that the congregations might have an opportunity of hearing him; and though numbers might be attracted merely by curiosity, in many instances the most happy effects were apparent, both in the revival of religion among the professors of Christianity, and the conversion of sinners to God.

The author has felt it his incumbent duty to dwell a little on the character of this excellent man, both from motives of personal respect, and because he was the early and intimate friend of his deceased parent. That the friendship continued to the latest period of life, will appear from the following passage, extracted from one of Mr. Foster's letters, received a short time before his death: "Though I write with a trembling hand, and

never take up my pen when I can avoid it, I feel a desire to say to you before I die, that you are often in my thoughts, sometimes in my prayers, and always in my good wishes. The Lord bless you, my dear Sir; may your last be your most comfortable and useful days!"

Mr. Foster was naturally rather reserved; and his observations on human nature, in an extensive sphere, led him to be extremely cautious in forming new acquaintances; but he was steady in his attachments:—the Rev. Mr. Newton and the Rev. Mr. Cecil were his chosen associates, and to them he introduced repeatedly when in town the subject of this narrative. Through the medium of Mr. Foster, he also became acquainted with that justly celebrated character John Thornton, Esq. of Clapham-common; where he had the privilege of witnessing the religious order observed in his hospitable mansion, and occasionally conducted the devotions of the family on a Lord's Day evening; nor did their acquaintance terminate with these transient interviews, as appears from one of Mr. Thornton's letters, found among the papers of the deceased.—They have now all finished their career; and are, no doubt, gone to that better world, where party distinctions are known no more, and where the friendship of kindred souls shall be perpetuated and brought to full perfection. Mr. Foster departed this life, May 26, 1814, aged 69 years. The tablet erected to his memory contains no eulogium, but a solemn admonition, "Brethren, the time is short!"

It may not be improper to mention here an event which, though not interesting to the public, must have

had a considerable influence on the private and domestic feelings of him, the incidents of whose life are here recorded; namely, the birth of his first child, a daughter, after having been married nearly eight years. This took place, October 17, 1766. Till that time he had been unacquainted with some of the chief cares and pleasures of the marriage relation. He had always shown great fondness for children; and on more than one occasion employed his poetic muse in lines to the memory of some who died in infancy; but no one, except a parent, can realize the genuine feelings produced by such an endearing relationship. Often, in familiar conversation, did he describe the almost ecstatic pleasure he felt when he first embraced the little stranger:—but, alas! his future experience convinced him of the uncertain tenure by which these enjoyments are held.

The dear delights we here enjoy,
And fondly call our own,
Are but short favours borrow'd now,
To be repaid anon.

In the year 1767, his first publication made its appearance, under the title of "Poetic Essays." They are on the following subjects: "Spring;" "Isaac meditating in the Fields;" "The Sight of an open Grave;" "In Memory of the pious and ingenious Mrs. Rowe;" "To a Gentleman, on the unexpected Death of his Son;" "On the Death of a favourite Child;" "An Elegy on the Death of J. S.;" "On the Death of Mr. Richard Smith, Wainsgate."

These short poems were chiefly, if not entirely, written before he left Bradford. They appear to have

been collected for circulation among a few intimate friends, and have long been out of print. Though they exhibit many traces of warm piety and of a contemplative mind, they were considered by the author himself as ephemeral juvenile efforts, which he did not think proper to make more public, either by reprinting them separately or introducing any of them in his subsequent poetic compositions. In the poem entitled "Isaac went forth into the Fields to meditate," the following lines occur :

- " Could I but thus my time improve,
And rise from earth to things above,
What sound instruction might I gain,
When walking in the field or plain !
- " The spreading trees might teach me how
The sons of grace should thrive and grow ;
Shoot forth their branches fair and green,
Whilst in the house of God they're seen.
- " The friendly ivy twining round,
May show how saints to Christ are bound,
And how to him I ought to cleave
With my whole heart, and on him live.
- " The holly and the green-bay tree
Might kindly then admonish me :
Through changing seasons still to grow,
E'en when rude storms and tempests blow.
- " The sprightly birds that sport and play,
And chaunt the pleasing time away,
Might teach my grateful heart to sing
Perpetual songs to heaven's great King.
- " Thus in the book of nature broad,
Writ by the finger of my God,
Important lessons I might learn,
And from the fields with joy return."

"ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CHILD.

" O what a moving sight is here,
Who can withhold a gen'rous tear?
This infant, late in beauty gay,
Is now a piece of breathless clay.

" But let me lift my thoughts on high—
To yon bless'd world beyond the sky:
Jesus, thine arms do such embrace;
Where angels ever see thy face.

" Ye weeping parents, cease to mourn;
Can you once wish for his return
To this vain world, where griefs annoy,
And troubles drink up all our joy?

" Nay, rather let your hopes aspire,
With steadfast hope and strong desire,
To meet him in that bless'd abode,
Where holy souls shall rest with God."

About the year 1768 or 1769, the Rev. Mr. Cross came to the curacy at Crostone, on the borders of Lancashire. Though this place was a considerable distance from Wainsgate, part of the little society lived in the neighbourhood; and in the discharge of his pastoral office, Mr. F. went occasionally to preach among them. Some unfavourable and unjust representations having been given to Mr. Cross of his views and sentiments, he addressed a letter to him, both with a design to rectify these mistakes, and to form a friendly correspondence with a person for whose ministry and character he felt a sincere respect. It is dated April 22, 1769.

" DEAR SIR,

" I had the pleasure of hearing you on Monday last;

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and from the idea I have been led to form of you, I am persuaded you have so much candour, that you will not hastily form a judgment of your neighbours from the report of the prejudiced multitude, and so much humility and condescension as not to be offended with a well-meant letter, though coming from a stranger. I beg leave to say, that whatever peculiarities of sentiment may have been imputed to me, I am no friend to controversy, nor have I the least inclination to engage in any thing of the kind. So far as I know my own heart, there is nothing else I so much desire as the conversion of sinners to Christ; and I cannot forbear expressing to you the joy and pleasure I feel on account of your being directed by Providence into this neighbourhood: I sincerely rejoice to see such crowds of poor, ignorant persons attend your ministry, and such an esteem entertained for you. I trust that while you are endeavouring, by close Scriptural arguments, to lay open their guilt, their utter ruin, and absolute helplessness, many will be pricked to the heart, as those were under Peter's sermon, Acts, ii. 37—that whilst you are pointing out the nature of regeneration as being a real, vital, and universal change of heart, and showing the absolute necessity of it, in order to true holiness here and everlasting happiness hereafter, many will be concerned for an experimental acquaintance with this change:—that while you zealously testify from the Scriptures, that the ground and matter of a sinner's justification before God are the obedience and sufferings of the Son of God, many will, like the blessed Apostle, count 'all things but loss and dung for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus:' in short, that while you point out the extent, and urge the necessity, of

practical holiness, many will be brought to walk in its ways.

“ These, Sir, are the doctrines I am endeavouring constantly to preach, and which I could wish may be published to the ends of the earth ; believing that they have been and will be made the ‘ power of God to the salvation of both Jew and Gentile.’

“ If you will be so kind as to return a few lines in answer to this, you will very much oblige one who sincerely loves you and esteems it his duty to pray for your prosperity and abundant success.

“ I remain,

“ Your very affectionate and humble Servant,

“ J. F.”

The kindness and unaffected humility of the late Rev. Mr. Cross’s disposition, no doubt, induced him to accede to these overtures of a friendly correspondence. In imitating the meek and lowly disposition of their Divine Master, they were closely allied. A mutual esteem and steady attachment took place ; and through the future periods of life, both while he continued there and when he became vicar of Bradford, as often as opportunity offered, they enjoyed sweet converse together on the best things. No one entered more into the spirit of Christian communion than Mr. Cross ; his heart was in his work, and a savour of devotion and true piety appeared in all his conversation.

The ministers of Christ sometimes labour for a considerable period without much apparent success :—they cast the precious seed here and there, with tears in

their eyes, and look again and again, without being able to discover any hopeful prospects; yet the great Head of the church, has promised that 'his word shall not return to him void, but shall accomplish the purposes for which it is sent,' in a greater or less degree. Whenever the Gospel is brought into a neighbourhood, it is with a view to accomplish some end. Paul was commissioned to go to a certain place, and was encouraged by the assurance, that his Divine Master had 'much people in that city.' As praying breath shall not be spent in vain, so when the bread or the seed is cast upon the waters, we may rest assured that the produce shall be seen after many days.

Though seed lie buried long in earth,
It sha'nt deceive our hope;
The precious grain can ne'er be lost,
For grace ensures the crop.

Though Wainsgate might be considered as the station in which the subject of these Memoirs was fixed; his ministerial labours extended to a very extensive circuit, both on the borders of Lancashire and in the opposite direction. Where he was invited to preach on the week days, numbers, who at first came merely from curiosity, were afterwards induced from better motives to struggle with the difficulties of the way, and repair to this hitherto solitary place, for the purpose of attending upon his ministry in a stated manner. The barren desert began to assume the appearance of a fertile region, 'bearing the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God.' Numbers who had never been in the habit of resorting to public worship, were constrained to say, 'Let us go up to the

house of the Lord, for he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths ;' whilst many derived advantage from his occasional labours, who from distance of situation and other causes could not regularly attend and unite with the society ; but used their influence and exertions in their own immediate neighbourhoods to obtain a stated ministry. Where this was the case, with the spirit of an Apostle, he was ready to say, ' Christ is preached, and herein do I rejoice, yea and will rejoice.'

From the imperfect records which remain of this part of Mr. F.'s life, it is evident, that there was a considerable revival in his own congregation.* The place became too small to accommodate the stated hearers, some of whom came regularly many miles every Lord's Day. A gallery was erected and several other improvements made in the interior of the place of worship. The prospect among the younger part of the audience was peculiarly encouraging. Many of these began to ask the ' way to Zion, with their faces thitherward.' Fears and painful anxiety lest he should have run without being sent, were now dispelled, by seeing these his spiritual children, the greatest joy a faithful minister can have, ' walking in the truth,' while he looks forward to the period, when they shall prove his joy and rejoicing ' in the day of the Lord Jesus.'

The following is extracted from an address which he wrote for the use of these young persons ; it is dated Wainsgate, August 11, 1769.

* The following note is prefixed to a discourse, preached April 9, 1769. " N. B. The day on which this sermon was delivered, eight persons proposed to join the church, and were approved of The text is strikingly appropriate. Is. ii. 3: ' Many people shall go and say, Come ye,' &c."

“ To the several young men belonging to the church of Christ, at Wainsgate, grace and peace be multiplied.

“ Dearly beloved in the Lord !

“ It is matter of continual joy and thankfulness to me, that God has called you ‘ out of darkness into marvellous light ;’ that he has brought you out of a state of slavery to ‘ divers lusts and pleasures,’ to walk in the paths of holiness. I think myself highly honoured that I am entrusted with the oversight of you in the Lord. With an affectionate, yet trembling heart, I have engaged to watch for your souls, as one that must give an account. O that I may obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful ! But, who is sufficient for these things ? Of this, however, I can assure you, my dear brethren, that if I fail in any point of my duty to you, it is not for want of solicitude about your welfare. God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. You are inexpressibly dear to me, and seldom absent from my waking thoughts, by night or by day. O my dear youths, what should I not be willing to do, or to suffer for your advantage ? I have long had it in my heart to give you a little advice, relative to some things which I cannot so freely speak upon in public, and I flatter myself you will receive the following hints in the spirit of love and meekness. So far as they may suit your respective cases, and appear to you rational and scriptural, for love’s sake I beseech you to pay the most serious attention to them.

“ 1. Let me entreat you not to slacken your diligence in any of the means of grace, public or private. Beware of neglecting stated periods for reading the

Scriptures, prayer, and meditation. One omission often makes way for another. Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. You have hitherto run well. God forbid that any stumbling block should impede or hinder your progress !

“ 2. Be very careful to keep up the spirit and power of godliness, while you attend to the form.

“ Be not satisfied with performing the round of duties, without the enjoyment of Christ in them. Keep yourselves in the love of God, and be careful lest your zeal and the blessedness, the holy delight you have found in the ways of God, and your desires after them, should decline. ‘ Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.’ Lukewarmness and indifference in religion are ever hateful to God. A dull lifeless professor enjoys neither the pleasures of this world nor of religion.

“ 3. Guard against useless controversy and unnecessary contention. It is commendable to labour after an increase of spiritual knowledge, but beware of engaging too much in unedifying speculations and barren disputes. Regard the Holy Scriptures and the truths of the Gospel, not merely as matters of speculation, but as the food of your souls. Labour to taste the life and sweetness of them. Observe how the bee employs herself in the flowery mead ; see how she flies from flower to flower to collect the balmy spoil, and to load herself therewith ; so may you and I deal with the Scriptures.

“ 4. Shun vain and unprofitable company. ‘ He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed ;’ Prov. xiii. 20. There are some even among those who make pretensions to religion, whose society may prove rather in-

jurious than useful. Of this number are those who are ever doating about questions and strifes of words, 'whereof cometh envy, railings, evil surmisings,' &c. 1 Tim. vi. 4. Our intimate friends should be well and deliberately chosen. 'Have no friendship with an angry man, lest thou learn his ways :' Prov. xxii. 24.

" 5. Prize and improve the many advantages you enjoy in a single state. This is a precious, a most important part of life. What opportunities may you have for religious exercises, of which others are deprived ! You are now exempt from that 'trouble in the flesh,' which is almost inseparable from the married state. In a matter of so much consequence to your future happiness, be not precipitate. Think of the additional toils, anxieties, and difficulties, in which many of your poor neighbours are involved, and which you must expect when you change your state. This view of things is very needful for those who are discontent in an unmarried state. Many form connexions without any proper consideration what they are likely to meet with therein. This makes their difficulties much heavier when they come upon them. But

" 6. I would not be understood to say any thing against a relation which is the appointment of God, and which is declared in Scripture to be 'honourable in all things.' Duty and inclination may hereafter unite in leading you to enter into it; and when this is the case, there is reason to hope that it will contribute to your real advantage. Let me recommend you to refer yourselves wholly to God by prayer in regard to it. Ask direction of him who is the supreme disposer of all events. A good wife is his gift : Prov. xix. 14, Re-

member how Abraham's servant prayed, and how he succeeded. You have reason to hope for similar guidance, if you seek unto him. The advice of judicious Christian friends may also be of great advantage, if timely attended to ; as a person's own judgment is often bewildered when the passions are engaged.

“ Never entertain the thought of forming a connexion with one who is destitute of the fear of God. This would be highly imprudent. What comfort can you promise yourself with one who is in heart entirely opposed to what you would chiefly pursue ?—with one from whom you may ere long be eternally separated. Consider whether there is a suitableness in the temper of the person you may fix upon ; and whether there be not some things in your own habits and dispositions which will require correction. Mutual forbearance will in these respects be found absolutely necessary.

“ Thus, my dear friends, I have addressed you with great plainness, out of the abundance of my concern for you ; and I am persuaded that a practical attention to these hints will be of great service to you. Your own temporal and spiritual prosperity are here concerned, together with the glory of God, the credit of religion, and the peace of the church. May I be permitted to add, the comfort of your poor minister is here concerned. Ye are my glory and my joy. I live, if ye stand fast. But if the contrary should take place, ye will bring down my ‘ youthful hairs with sorrow to the grave.’ Fare ye well. The God of Israel bless you, my dear children. I am ready to bedew the paper with tears on your account. May we remain united in the

bonds of Christian fellowship here, till we meet in a better and brighter world !

“ I am your most affectionate, though
“ unworthy Pastor.”

His ministerial labours at this period were by no means confined within the sphere of his own neighbourhood. Besides exchanging occasionally with other ministers, and preaching at the associations, he took an active part, in conjunction with them, in forming new stations, at Rochdale, Bingley, Lockwood, and other places. Some time before there was any design of building a chapel at Rochdale, several persons from that neighbourhood became members at Wainsgate, and were pretty regular in their attendance, though twelve or fourteen miles distant.

A brief narrative has already been given of the distinguished success which attended the labours of the Rev. Mr. Venn, during his continuance at Huddersfield. He was, as has been related, the great instrument in the hand of God of the diffusion of Gospel light in that neighbourhood. To that period we may refer, as being the happy commencement of what afterwards took place in that populous manufacturing district among the Baptists, Methodists, and Independents. ‘ As a wise master builder, he laid the foundation, and other men built thereon.’

At the removal of this truly great man from Huddersfield, the crowds who had followed him from different

places, with so much earnestness and delight, became like sheep deprived both of their shepherd and of the pasture, where they had been so richly fed. A considerable body formed themselves into a society on the Independent plan, and erected a spacious edifice for public worship, where a large congregation was soon collected, and still continues to attend, under the ministry of that venerable minister of Christ, the Rev. Mr. Moorhouse. Another considerable society on the same plan was established at Holmfirth. Others connected themselves with a small Baptist church at Salendine Nook, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Henry Clayton, who, though he preached there, lived at a farm near Wainsgate. The interest, previously to the accession and the removal of Mr. Wood * from Halifax

* The good man, who is repeatedly mentioned in this Memoir, was born in the month of October, 1734. His father was a Presbyterian, and trained up his family in a regular attendance on public worship; but the son received his first impressions of a religious nature among the Methodists, and, at the age of seventeen, joined their society at Leeds. By hearing Mr. Whitefield, and forming his own opinions as to the points of difference between him and Mr. Wesley, he was induced, with many others, to leave the Methodist connexion; and, when about twenty years of age, he became a member of the community under the care of the Rev. Mr. Edwards. He had, previously to this, been encouraged to preach occasionally at Shipley, near Bradford, and at other places; and he continued to exercise his gifts after he became a member at Whitechapel. About the year 1769 he was invited to preach at Wakefield; and, in compliance with repeated solicitations, he soon after removed thither. While he was at Wakefield, a change took place in his views with respect to baptism; and the infant church at Halifax being destitute of a pastor, he settled amongst them. He was afterwards, for a short time, at Prescott, in Devonshire; but the scene of his principal usefulness was Salendine Nook, near Huddersfield. The interest there, which owed its origin, in a great measure, to

to be co-pastor with Mr. Clayton, was in so low a state, that the collections scarcely served to defray his journeying expenses.

Mr. Benjamin Ingham, of Lockwood, having received the word with joy from the lips of Mr. Venn, knew its value by an experience of its power on his own soul. Being in very extensive business as a

itinerant preaching, was established, August 24, 1743, when the church consisted of twelve members, several of whom were dismissed from Rodhill-end and Slack, in the parish of Halifax. Mr. Henry Clayton had preached to them many years, but was ordained pastor at this time; Mr. Wilson of Rawden, Mr. Jackson of Barnoldswick, and Mr. Thomas Ashworth of Cloughfold, assisting at the ordination. Mr. Clayton was pastor of the church thirty-three years. For a long course of years he had laboured with little apparent success; but in the latter part of his ministry the congregation increased, and many were added to the society, who were the fruits of Mr. Venn's ministry. Mr. Wood was invited to be Mr. Clayton's assistant, and was received into the family of Mr. Ingham, where he was generously entertained for several years. Mr. Wood succeeded Mr. Clayton, after having been his assistant about four years, and was pastor above twenty years. He died in September, 1794.

Mr. Wood was remarkably circumspect and exemplary in his conduct—steady in his attachment to what he believed to be right, whether in principle or practice.—His judgment was correct; and he was well skilled in casuistical divinity; but his preaching was plain and practical, especially for the last twenty years of his life.—During this period he was fully convinced of the propriety and necessity of a ministerial call to the unconverted; and it is worthy of remark that, after he had this conviction, and acted upon it, his labours were abundantly more successful than before.—He was much attached to the writings of the late President Edwards; but the Bible was his chief delight, and he studied his sermons with great assiduity; he wrote them almost at length, though he did not use notes in the pulpit.—He was the author of an excellent association letter on *religious zeal*.

cloth merchant, he had among his other premises a large room which he appropriated to the worship of God, principally for the use of the Baptists, to whom he now decidedly attached himself. Salendine Nook, where he was a member, was at the distance of three miles, and like many other meeting-houses which the Baptists formerly erected, stood in a very solitary, dreary situation. He, however, made a point of attending there with his family regularly on Lord's Days till towards the close of life, when he generously, at his sole expense, erected a handsome place of worship for the convenience and accommodation of Lockwood and the neighbourhood.

The meetings at the period now referred to, were chiefly kept up on week days. Mr. Hartley, Mr. Crabtree,* Mr. Parker of Barnoldswick, and the subject of this Memoir, were the principal preachers, and attended there in rotation. Their visits were rendered very

* A well-authenticated anecdote has often been related in private circles, which, as it may serve to give some idea of Mr. Crabtree's method in preaching, is here recorded. He was remarkable, like many of his brethren at that day, for being slow and sententious in the beginning of his discourse, and gradually becoming more animated as he entered into his subject. A simple, honest man, who had the care of a fulling mill, which he could only leave at intervals, urged by curiosity, stepped into the room to hear what the preacher, who had just taken his text, had to say. Attending more to sound than sense, he saw few attractions in what dropped from his lips, and quickly returned to his mill; he was, however, induced to go again before the conclusion of the sermon, when so great a change had taken place in the preacher's manner, that he supposed a different person was addressing the congregation, observing to a by-stander, that he had rightly judged, that he who had so little to say when he was in before would soon be obliged to come down and make way for another.

pleasing to them by the primitive hospitality, piety, zeal, and frankness, of their kind host, and the uncommon spirit for hearing the word of God which pervaded all ranks. In looking over the account of sermons preached at different places by the deceased, Lockwood occurs for the first time April 16, 1771. The text was, 'Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.' In the subsequent accounts of itinerant preaching, Lockwood is very often mentioned.

A much esteemed minister, who was at that time resident in the village, and who, after having received his first impressions from hearing Mr. Venn, regularly attended these services, has kindly communicated the following particulars :

" Of those worthies whose names are dear to the denomination to which they belonged, and to Christianity itself, your father, as far as my judgment went, was not inferior to any. A very venerable appearance, according to the costume of the times, a mind of deep research, the strength of his arguments, the fervour of his mind, and sense of the importance of eternal things, which appeared in the whole of his demeanour, produced a strong and lasting effect upon the minds of his hearers. At the moment I write this small testimony of respect, not only to his memory, but to the memory of past times, I feel more than I am able to describe ; the impression then made remains, and will remain, to the latest period of my life. Recollection is a pleasant and profitable exercise of the mind, and especially when it brings to view the days of the right hand of the Most High, and the seasons of heavenly visitation. Three or four texts of the sermons I heard from your

father at that time, I shall mention, as having struck me particularly. You will not expect that I should be able from memory to say much on what was delivered more than forty years ago, being then very young. The first sermon I heard was from Rom. ii. 16 : ' In the day,' &c. (This was preached, as appears from the diary, May 29, 1771.) The believer's trials and supports was the subject of another. The last I shall mention was on Ezekiel's vision of the wheels,' in the first chapter of his prophecies, as representing the mystery of Providence. This attracted particular attention."

The collection of papers in the hands of the writer contains a letter, dated Watford, near London, Aug. 15, 1770, addressed to his parent by the late truly pious and amiable Dr. Stennet. It cannot now be ascertained how the correspondence first commenced : but, though no personal interview had taken place, there appears, even at that early period, to have been a mutual regard, which was afterwards greatly increased, and remained unabated, till death produced a separation. The delightful retreat at Muswell Hill, to which the Doctor removed in the decline of life, with his courteous behaviour and the charms of society under his hospitable roof, afforded high gratification and pleasing reflections to many, and to none more than the deceased.

" DEAR SIR,

" I received yours of July, and was greatly comforted with the contents of it. I intended to acknowledge it sooner, but one engagement or other prevented. My health has been indifferent, but I bless God I am now somewhat better. This I write from my mother's, who

lives at the distance of nearly twenty miles from London. Her health being in a declining state, I think it my duty to be with her as much as possible.

“ I sincerely sympathize with you in the distress you have felt on account of some misunderstandings in your church, and rejoice to find that, through your prudent and Christian conduct, and the blessing of God, they have in any measure subsided: Trust, my dear brother, in God, and you will still find him nigh at hand to help you. Jesus, the great Head of the church, is touched with his people’s infirmities, and, doubtless, has a tender compassion for his faithful ministers when exercised with such trials as these. I have no doubt the good of immortal souls, and the peace of the community you preside in, are your grand objects. Having these in view, a prudent, meek, firm, and persevering conduct, will, with the Divine blessing, carry you through great difficulties, and make you superior to all the discouragements which the devices of Satan, and the foolish passions of men, may throw in your way. And O remember, my dear friend, how good a master you serve, and what exceeding great and precious promises he has made for your support and comfort. This is the time of trial and suffering; but the day of rewards and triumph will speedily come.

“ I rejoice with you in the success of your ministry, and particularly in the instance you mention, wherein the great power and goodness of God were seen. There was something truly remarkable in it. An ardent desire to be useful to the souls of men is frequently, through grace, thus rewarded. When we are weak, it often appears that through Divine assistance we become strong. Go on, my dear brother, courageously in

your work, and I doubt not the Lord will be with you.

“ I thank you much for the esteem and affection which you express, though undeservedly, for me. I assure you I feel my heart knit to you ; and I doubt not you will favour me with an interest in your prayers at the throne of grace ; I need them, much need them, so great is the work to which Providence has called me, and so unequal am I of myself to it. We have had lately some additions to the church, and have yet some more in prospect.

“ You will remember me affectionately to all friends, particularly Mr. Hartley, when you see him. Wishing you much of the Divine presence, and every needful blessing, I remain,

“ Your very affectionate friend and brother,

“ SAMUEL STENNETT.”

“ It will always give me pleasure to hear of your health (which the Lord of his mercy establish), and of your welfare in every respect. Adieu.”

Those who are acquainted with the late Dr. Stennett's writings must be pleased to observe, in his private correspondence, the same lovely spirit by which they were distinguished. His own life and character were a striking comment on the discourses he published, on *Personal and Social Religion*.

Among the young persons to whom Mr. F's. ministerial labours were blessed at this time, the course of the narrative now leads our attention to the late Rev.

John Sutcliff of Olney. He was born and brought up in a sequestered spot about four miles from Wainsgate, on the borders of Lancashire. Under the eye of his pious parents he was trained up with great care. He was preserved from associating with ungodly companions, and early instructed in the leading truths of Christianity. The family were in the habit of attending at the old Baptist meeting-house, in their own vicinity, called Rodhill End; but as there was service at that place only every other Sabbath, they went on the intermediate one to Wainsgate; and under the ministry of the Word there, Mr. Sutcliff was brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, and joined the church in 1769, being then in his seventeenth year.

From his infancy he showed a fondness for books; and with little assistance, except what he obtained from private reading, he acquired a competent acquaintance with the branches of learning commonly taught in country schools. In the fifteenth or sixteenth year of his age, he occasionally assisted the Rev. Dan Taylor, in a school which he had established at Birchcliffe. During his attendance there, Mr. Taylor encouraged his taste for learning by initiating him in the rudiments of the Latin tongue; their intercourse was also of advantage to Mr. Sutcliff in the best things. His subsequent determination to unite with the church at Wainsgate, naturally led on to a more intimate acquaintance with the minister and people of that place. From the following letter he appears to have laboured, like many other good men, at some seasons, under heavy discouragements. These he took occasion to state to his pastor, who soon after wrote to him the following lines:—

* MY DEAR YOUTH, “ Wainsgate, Feb. 9, 1771.

“ That you are still complaining of the power and prevalence of indwelling sin, is no matter of surprise to me. We find one of the most eminent of Christ's servants crying out on this account, ‘ O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ Be not discouraged; Christ was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. Carry your sins and diseases to the foot of the cross; lay open your sores, your wounds, and bruises, before him, and plead the promise he has made, ‘ I will in no wise cast out.’ Wrestle with him for sin-subduing grace, and lay hold on his strength by the hand of faith. Millions of poor sinners have taken this course, and none ever failed of success. No mean is so effectual for the mortification of sin, as constant converse with Jesus in this manner. May the good Lord establish your heart with grace, and confirm you to the end! Assure yourself of my steady affection for you, as one of the children God has given me, and accept of this small token of the same from

“ Your unworthy brother and pastor,

“ J. FAWCETT.”

The following is an extract from one of Mr. Sutcliff's letters, written some time, as appears from the date, after the receipt of the above :

“ HONOURED PASTOR,

“ It is now a long time since I expressed my thoughts to you in writing. Though I feel many discouragements, I trust I have ground to say, that reli-

gion has been for some time on the advance in my soul. As my acquaintance with Divine things, and knowledge of my own heart, increase, I hope the grace of humility is also in exercise. I find a growing pleasure in religious opportunities, and the thought of being deprived of them would be very distressing to me.

“ The more closely I am engaged in religion, and the more I live under its power, the more enjoyment and satisfaction I experience from it. The path of duty is not only the path of safety, but of pleasure. My mind is generally most comfortable when lowest in the valley of humiliation ; for then I am led to cleave unto God as my chief good ; but, alas ! I often forsake my own mercies. Many things are ready to captivate my affections, and to divert my attention from what I ought daily to live in the pursuit of ; my heart is perpetually prone to forsake the Lord, and to turn aside to crooked paths.—

“ Straithey Head, April 13, 1771.”

Mr. Sutcliff, having an increasing desire to improve his mind, frequently went to Wainsgate, not only on the Lord's Day, but at other times. He received during these visits considerable assistance in the study of English grammar, and made some progress in the classics. At one period he resided several weeks at a house near Wainsgate, that he might be under the eye of his pastor, and pursue his studies without interruption. During this intercourse he gave such proofs of his piety and abilities, that his friends saw reason to hope that he was designed, by the great Head of the church, for public usefulness. With a view to this, they recommended him to the patronage of the Bristol Education

Society. Being admitted on the list of students, so great was the ardour of his mind to enjoy the benefit of that institution, and by preparatory study to obtain such knowledge and qualifications as might contribute to render him acceptable and useful as a minister, that what would have been formidable obstacles to many, did not at all deter or discourage his mind from engaging in this hallowed pursuit. Though of a weakly constitution, he travelled on foot from his native place to Bristol (a distance of about 200 miles) in the depth of winter. He was a stranger on the road; but the expences of the journey, which he performed in about seven days, fell short of twenty shillings. He often travelled afterwards on foot, solely with a view to save a little money for the purchase of books.

In what manner he conducted himself there, will be evident from the following letter to his pastor, written by the Rev. Hugh Evans, who, in conjunction with his son, the Rev. Caleb Evans, presided over that excellent institution. From the beginning of the letter it appears that Mr. Sutcliff was at the time indisposed:—

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Bristol, June 4, 1773.

“ I was favoured with yours in due course, and was very willing our friend Sutcliff should return to you immediately, if he and the Doctor had thought it advisable; but as they did not, he has continued with us to the present time. He has behaved with great propriety, and agreeably to his character and profession while with us; he stands high in the esteem of his tutors and friends here, and where he has occasionally preached. His labours at Trowbridge, in the last

vacation, were of great service to the interest, and much approved of by the church. They have had their eye upon him for their pastor; and if his health permit, they still desire it. There is a pleasing prospect of much good being done there.

“His progress in his studies has been as considerable as could be expected. He has lately gone through a course of experimental philosophy, which I hope will be of advantage to him. He has hitherto done you, as his pastor, and the church which recommended him to us, much honour. I trust he will be spared for great usefulness in the church of God, and be a burning and shining light in his day.

“I presume, when you have heard him for some time, the church will give him a call to the ministry, wherever Providence may direct him to labour. I hope his zeal will not exceed his prudence in the services he may attempt while with you, and that he will take care not to injure his health. When the vacation is over, we shall expect him here to pursue what he has begun, and prosecuted thus far with so much success. You have, dear Sir, our sincere and hearty wishes for your success in the same service with ourselves; and we hope you will be the happy instrument of training up many, who may shine as stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of the church below for a time, and in that above for ever. Pray for us, as we desire to do for you; and be assured that I am, with great regard and kind respects to you and your spouse, though unknown, in which my wife and son join,

“Your affectionate friend and brother in Christ,

“HUGH EVANS.”

Extract of a letter from Mr. Sutcliff:

“ Bristol, Nov. 4, 1778.

“ Many are the vicissitudes attending all things here below. One minister after another leaves the stage. May the Lord enable us properly to act our parts while on the scene of action! Our concerns are weighty indeed. As the painter said, ‘Pingo in æternitatem,’ so we may say, ‘Concionamur in æternitatem.’ If we cast our eyes around, what a solemn sight! Souls, immortal, souls by multitudes hastening into another world, who have never called seriously to mind why they came into this! Let us cry aloud and not spare, be ‘instant in season and out of season, abounding in the work of the Lord.’ May the best of heaven’s blessings descend upon you, and prosper all your labours in our Redeemer’s cause and interest in the world! Amen.”*

* During Mr. Sutcliff’s continuance at Bristol and after he had begun to preach, he received the following letter from the Rev. Dan. Taylor. It shows the interest he took in the welfare of his young friend; and its intrinsic excellency, it is presumed will be sufficient apology for inserting it here:

“ ESTEEMED FRIEND,

“ With great pleasure I often hear of you, and desire to adore the conduct of Divine Providence towards you. May God give you a thankful, humble, upright heart, a watchful spirit, and a serious mind! With trials you are a little acquainted; more and greater will probably come upon you. But he is faithful who hath said, ‘As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ Here is a never-failing support. Cleave to this God, and you are perfectly safe. I should be glad of a line from you, or rather of a long letter. In this I wish you to give me a short account of Bristol and the neighbouring parts, especially as to the state of religion. Is there one General Baptist in all the West of England, who believes in those truths which we consider as essential to the Gospel?

“ Be watchful over your spirit: prize and redeem time: trust not

The duties of Christian ministers are so diversified and important, and their influence so extensive (if they conduct themselves so as to be respected), that much relating to the best interests of society depends upon them. They have it not only in charge to feed Christ's sheep, but to endeavour to gather and tend the lambs of the flock, to go out after them in the wilderness till they find them. The Divine precept to them, as well as to parents, is to use all proper means, by warnings and instructions, in order to train up the youths who attend their ministry 'in the way in which they should go;' to bring them up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'

How often have prejudices been removed, and the affections of young persons won by kind expressions and condescending attentions! There is, indeed, the greatest hope of success among those whose vicious habits are not deeply fixed. It would be well if this truth were more attended to. The hopes of families and Christian societies depend upon the rising generation; if *they* unhappily are overlooked or neglected, how gloomy the prospect! John, the beloved disciple, in his epistles often mentions the children of those persons to whom he wrote, in the most tender manner: 'I have no greater joy than to hear that thy children walk in the truth;' and in the close of one of his epistles

your deceitful heart: live upon the promises: study the Gospel closely: pray much and fervently: always go forth in the strength of the Lord God: be careful of your health: disregard the applause of men: attend to the advice of the aged, the serious, and judicious.

" Bear with my freedom, and believe me,

" Yours cordially,

" D. TAYLOR."

he addresses them himself, in figurative, but nervous language, 'Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.'

Ecclesiastical history records that in his sermons he frequently paused, turned to the young of his flock and called their attention in such words as the following: 'Ad vos juvenes,' 'this is for you young persons.' What a model for the imitation of all who have the 'care of souls,' of all charges the most weighty and important! The writer has no hesitation in saying that, through a Divine blessing, the revival among young persons at Wainsgate, and the bringing forward of several who were afterwards useful in their generation as private Christians and public characters, were intimately connected with the line of conduct here recommended. Young children were catechized, both in private and public; a taste for reading was encouraged, by the loan of books; a small circulating library was formed out of the minister's own collection, increased by a small quarterly contribution in the church and congregation. In conjunction with the Rev. Dan Taylor, the *first book society*, on a more general plan, in this part of the country, was established at Heptonstall. Ignorance is the parent of many vices, and in particular of vulgarity and disorderly habits. Of what importance the above society, and almost innumerable others (of which it may justly be termed the parent), have been, in civilizing the manners of the inhabitants, it would be impossible to say. Amusements of some kind are necessary for young persons; and those who direct their attention to such as are truly rational and improving to the mind, are, in the best sense of the word, benefactors to mankind. The books selected for

these libraries were principally on divinity, with historical and biographical works, accounts of travels, &c.

A minister may thus greatly benefit the rising generation, by directing their attention to such publications as both enlarge and please the mind; and while he shows such an interest in their welfare, if they are sensible of the value of his advice, they will love and revere him as a parent. But undoubtedly his most delightful employ will be with those among them in whom he sees some hopeful appearance of early piety, some latent sparks of heavenly desires; he will fan the flame, and encourage the timid and backward in their imperfect attempts to tell what God has done for their souls, either in writing or familiar conversation. He will imitate, in his own sphere, that blessed Jesus, who ‘does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.’ He will avail himself of personal and family afflictions, and even common incidents, to deepen the impressions which appear to be made. A considerable number of short letters, displaying different degrees of talent and ability in writing, have been found among the papers of the deceased, written by several young persons at this time; in which they address him as their pastor and best friend, describing the state of their minds, and soliciting counsel and direction: no doubt he had great pleasure in answering them. There was no part of his work as a minister for which he was more eminently qualified; combining in his character that wisdom which is profitable to direct, with the meekness and condescension of the babe in Christ.

In the year 1772, the “Christian’s humble Plea for his God and Saviour,” a pamphlet sold at six pence, made its first appearance. The feigned name of Christophilus

is appended to the preface, his real one being probably withheld to avoid entering further into controversy.

This publication was in answer to a pamphlet, entitled "The Triumph of Truth:" some other attacks on the divinity of Christ are also noticed. He chose to convey his sentiments in verse; not only from having a strong propensity to court the Muses, but because, as Mr. Pope says, "What is so written, both strikes the reader more forcibly at first, and is more easily retained by him afterwards." The arguments in defence of the divinity of Christ, so far as they are drawn immediately from the Holy Scriptures, are stated in a striking and comprehensive manner, with references, at the foot of each page, to the passages quoted. The rapid sale of several editions, some of which were published in London without the author's knowledge, showed the estimation in which it was held, as containing a summary view of the subject.

In March, 1772, he, for the first time, went up to London, being invited to officiate for Dr. Gill, who, through age and infirmities, was incapacitated for his public labours. A short account of this journey is now before the writer of these pages; and it affords many proofs of the interest he took in the objects that here presented themselves to view, which must have been peculiarly attractive to one emerging from so retired a situation; but he expresses the greatest satisfaction in the society of Christian ministers, whom he had before only known by correspondence, or by perusing their writings.

A few passages are here selected from the diary:

"April 1.—Preached at Mr. Wallin's meeting, from

Zech. xiii. 1: 'In that day,' &c. Just before the service began, I received a letter, which informed me that my dear wife was very ill. This affected me greatly. Lord help me! My troubles follow me every where; but I would not repine!"

"Lord's Day, April 5.—Preached at Dr. Gill's meeting, morning and afternoon, from 1 Peter, ii. 7: 'Unto you that believe he is precious.' In the evening at Dr. Gifford's. I was comfortable all the day. O what a mercy!"

"Monday, April 6.—Saw the Museum, where are ten thousand beauties of nature and art. The Gospels written in gilt letters, the Egyptian mummies, the collection of birds, &c. struck me very much."

"Tuesday, April 7.—Heard Dr. Conder, at Pinner's Hall, in the morning, on Eph. i. 7: 'We have redemption,' &c. My soul was richly fed under this discourse. In the evening, Mr. Medley preached in Goodman's Fields, from Acts v. 31: 'Him hath God exalted,' &c. He spoke of Christ as a prince: 1. He is such by nature; 2. He has all the noble and amiable qualities and endowments of a prince; 3. The achievements of a prince; 4. The authority of a prince; 5. The riches of a prince. "He described him as a *Saviour*—exalted by the Father—by the Holy Spirit—by angels, and by Saints. The ends for which he is exalted: to give *repentance*. Finally, for whom is he exalted—for *Israel*. This was a valuable discourse indeed. The former part of it was sweet to me; but, towards the close, vain thoughts robbed me of all enjoyment and profit."

"Friday evening.—Heard Rev. Mr. Foster. His text was 'Whom resist stedfast in the faith.' His leading observation was, that in whatsoever manner

Satan may assault, we should make a stand against him 'by the sword of the Spirit.' ”

“ Lord’s Day, April 12.—Preached twice at Dr. Gill’s meeting, and was greatly assisted from above. O what reason have I to be thankful! My text in the morning was “ Mercy shall be built up for ever.’ ”

During his continuance in London, he preached, as appears from his diary, fifty-eight times.

He was absent from his family and flock, at this time, about nine weeks ; and, some time after his return, was invited, in consequence of Dr. Gill’s decease, to go again, with a view to a permanent residence there. Many things seemed to urge an acceptance of this invitation, as he had a prospect, both with respect to temporal supplies and extended usefulness, far superior to any thing which his present situation was ever likely to afford. His income, as a minister, had never exceeded 25*l.* per annum ; and though a revival had taken place, and the congregation increased, several circumstances in the state of the church rendered his residence among them often unpleasant.

The dwelling-house was extremely small and inconvenient, which was now particularly felt, as he had a growing family of young children, requiring more room and increasing supplies. The question of removal was seriously agitated, and so far resolved upon, with the advice of many of his friends, and the consent of some in the church, who were well aware that what they had been accustomed to raise could not afford an adequate support, that part of the furniture and books were sold, and other preparations made for his departure ; but his affection for his little flock, which he had so long

tended 'in the wilderness,' would not suffer him to leave them when the trial came. Those disinterested views which first determined him to settle in this secluded spot operated so forcibly, that he could not desert his post. Like the country clergyman,

"He ne'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change, his place."

When he found his mind to waver, he intimated to the people that 40*l.* a-year would be the extent of his wishes; but though they hesitated, and even declined entering into any engagement to raise that sum annually, his attachment to them was so deeply fixed, that he concluded, at once, to cast himself upon Providence, and live and die with them.

Such a line of conduct as this may not be proper as a general precedent; prudence may frequently dictate a deviation from it; yet it exhibits many traits of character which are endearing in the man, the Christian, and the minister. It shows a delicate and solemn sense of the duties of the pastoral office, not to be deserted, except for the most urgent and satisfactory reasons; steadiness of attachment, compassionate regard, and disinterested love, where that love perhaps has seldom met with suitable returns. Of this the Apostle Paul exhibited a most admirable instance, when he says, 'I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.'

The event now related, was certainly of great importance in the life of the subject of this Memoir. It was, in some sort, the crisis which gave a new impulse to his mind and views, and it was a resolution of which he never afterwards saw reason to repent. Though he

had many trials to encounter, the blessing of Providence attended his exertions, both to provide for his family, and to promote the kingdom of Christ in that neighbourhood where he now resolved to spend the remainder of his days; to which resolution he afterwards steadily adhered, though he was often pressed to remove to more inviting situations. The notes of the two sermons he preached on the Lord's Day, after he had given up all thoughts of going to London, show the state of his mind at that period, both with respect to himself, as an individual, and his family. The circumstance is noticed on both in red ink, August 9, 1772. The former is on resignation to the Divine will, from Lev. x. 3: 'Aaron held his peace:' the latter on dependance upon Providence, from Luke xii. 15: 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' In this sermon he first illustrates the point asserted in the text—showing that abundance is not essential to life, or the comforts of it—that it will neither prolong life, nor give contentment—that many live more comfortably who have not abundance, than others who are in opulent circumstances, a little that a righteous man hath being better than the riches of many wicked—that abundance will neither prevent cares and inquietudes, crosses and losses, nor secure from those afflictions which are incident to man; from these and other forcible considerations, the most powerful arguments are drawn to submit to the disposals of Providence, to live as strangers and pilgrims in the earth, and to direct our desires and wishes to those objects which are not seen and eternal.

The principal, if not the only institution the Baptists had at this time, for training up young men, with a view to the ministry, was at Bristol. To that place, as we have before related, Mr. John Sutcliff was sent ; but though the advantages enjoyed under the care of the Rev. Hugh Evans were deservedly held in high estimation, yet the remoteness of the situation, and the increase of churches in the north of England, for which supplies were with difficulty obtained, rendered a similar establishment there highly desirable. The subject was mentioned to Mr. Evans himself, as appears from the letter already inserted, to Mr. Ryland, and other ministers, who all approved of it. Many gentlemen in London were also favourable to the design. In consequence of these assurances of encouragement, a circular was drawn up, addressed to ministers and others, and signed by John Fawcett and John Sandys, who was a young man recommended as a likely assistant in this undertaking.

An extract from the circular may not be unacceptable to the reader.

“ Wainsgate, June 18, 1773.

“ We trust it is our object to promote the cause and interest of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is our most earnest desire that the efforts we are now desirous to make may be crowned with success, and the tokens of the Divine approbation. It will also greatly contribute to our satisfaction to have your concurrence and friendly assistance in the work in which we are engaged, viz. the training up of pious young men for the ministry.

“ The grand design we have in view is to furnish the churches of Christ with lively, zealous, judicious, dis-

interested ministers of the Word. We need not say how much they are at present wanted. The youths to be admitted are such members of Baptist churches as appear to have promising abilities for the ministry. We are conscious, that no literary advantages, without the above, will constitute a minister of Christ.

“ We purpose (through Divine assistance) to use all proper endeavours for impressing the minds of those who may come under our care, with a deep and lively sense of the awful and important nature of the work ; to recommend the duties of self-denial and charity, and continually direct them to seek the light and guidance of the Divine Spirit, to enlighten their minds, enlarge and strengthen their mental powers, and assist their progress in all the branches of useful knowledge. And in order to preserve a lively sense of Divine things on their minds, it is proposed that they spend, exclusive of the duties of the family and the closet, one hour together, every day, in singing and prayer ; ever remembering that those ministers who live nearest to God are the most likely, by their labours, to bring others to him, and consequently answer the important ends of a gospel ministry.

“ Several candidates have proposed themselves ; we, therefore, hope you will recommend the design to such of your friends as are likely to encourage it.”

An enlargement of the premises at Wainsgate became indispensably necessary to afford accommodation for those who were about to reside in the house, and enter upon their studies. While the additions and alterations were making, the family took up their temporary abode at a farm-house in the neighbour-

hood. Mr. Abraham Greenwood, who had been previously a year and a half with his brother-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Armitage, now came to reside with them, and continued two years and a half. According to a memorandum now before me, he entered July 27, 1772:—he was the first minister at Rochdale, where he remained some years; and is now, in his declining years, usefully employed as a minister in Lincolnshire. After the additional buildings were completed, three other persons were successively added to the number of students: Mr. John Hindle, who quitted his secular employ, Nov. 2, 1772; Mr. Thomas Slater, Nov. 1, 1773; and Mr. George Townend:—they have some years ago finished their course on earth. Mr. Hindle was distinguished as a popular and very eloquent preacher: he was first settled at Halifax, and died in Manchester. Mr. Slater became a clergyman of the Church of England. Mr. Townend was afterwards ordained pastor of the church at Ackrington in Lancashire, where he ended his days, much respected.—A funeral sermon on occasion of his decease was preached by his tutor, and soon after printed. The text was Psalm xxxiv. 19: ‘Many are the afflictions of the righteous,’ &c.

The Rev. Wm. Hartley, still living, began to preach about this period; and though not an inmate in the family, availed himself of such opportunities for improvement as circumstances would admit.

Mr. Wm. Tommas, who resided near Hebdenbridge, a member of the church, and a most amiable, pious person, from every information that can now be collected, showed a great desire to improve his mind, and was not without serious thoughts of the ministry;—being a

person of property, and living at no great distance from Wainsgate, he attended as often as he could conveniently at the seminary, without any expence to the institution.—The most pleasing hopes and expectations were entertained respecting him: but alas! that dreadful malady, the small pox, which formerly, like the plague, spread its devastations through the country, blasted this opening flower, and consigned him to the gloomy mansions of the grave. He had kept up a regular correspondence with his most intimate friend, Mr. John Sutcliff. An extract from the last letter to him seems too valuable to be consigned to oblivion.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“March 27, 1773.

“Your epistle arrived safe on the 17th March. How do my spirits rise and my heart leap for joy whenever I hear from you! I know by painful experience what it is to be deprived of a friend,—a friend do I say? if there be any term more tender, I wish to use it: a bosom companion,—one that is dear to me as my own soul! With what regret do I look back on the time I have spent with you at my side!—Often engaged in profitable conversation, though I have to lament that on some occasions the precious moments were misimproved, by the introduction of trifling topics on my part, which damped the holy flame of heavenly mindedness in your soul, and insensibly brought on too light a frame of mind.

“The spring season is once more returned; and this again serves to remind me of the many delightful walks we have had together, sometimes in the valleys and on the hills; sometimes in the verdant meadows, when the surface was all one beautiful parterre, adorned

with charming flowers, which display the bounty of the Creator. But what are those entertaining scenes? What are they when compared with the immaculate, the transcendently glorious Immanuel, the Lamb of God? Do these attract our senses to behold their beauty, and the exquisite skill apparent in their formation? O let us attentively consider for a few minutes the beauties and excellencies of the Son of God!—He who is wisdom itself; who was enthroned in glory unapproachable; he bowed the heavens and came down; clothed himself in flesh; lived on earth; and at length died the accursed death of the cross. Here indeed all wonders meet! Here are beauties that far exceed the works of creation! Here is love beyond degree: he suffered for his enemies,—the offended suffers to set the offenders free! Shall we be silent in his praise though we can no longer unite in this holy exercise? Let us learn a lesson from the tuneful lark: she begins with the dawn of the day, nor does she wait for company to soar aloft with her!—No; when Nature smiles upon her, she seems contented, though alone, to warble the praises of her bountiful Provider. O what reason have we to sing and triumph in the God of our salvation! ‘The winter is now indeed past, and the time of the singing of birds is come!’

“I have had some distant thoughts of paying you a visit, but have laid them aside for the present. The small-pox spreads very much all about us, and has been fatal in many instances.

“The meeting in Wadsworth-lanes is kept up as usual, and we often find it good for us to assemble ourselves together. We have a succession of trials and comforts, but upon the whole I trust we are going on

well. Many send their kind respects to you, and heartily wish you success in your studies. They express their regard for you in the warmest terms. Mr. Fawcett has been lately at Rochdale:—he generally preaches four times in the week.

“ Begging an interest in your prayers,

“ I remain,

“ Your unworthy but affectionate brother.”

On the back of the letter, Mr. Sutcliff has written the following memorandum :

“ This my dear friend departed this life on Lord’s Day, May 30, about six o’clock in the morning. He died full of comfort and good hope through grace. He left his relatives and friends in the deepest distress. Lord sanctify this affecting stroke !”

The following letter to Mr. Sutcliff contains a more particular account. A letter had been written to him previously, to inform him of his indisposition.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ Wainsgate, May 30, 1773,

“ My last, dated the 26th instant, I suppose has reached your hand. If so, you will open this with anxiety to know how it fares with your friend. I will endeavour to give you a more particular account of his disorder. It is about a fortnight since he began to be poorly ; the eruption appeared on the Wednesday or Thursday. He was very full, but seemed to go on well, I visited him often, and always found him comfortable in his mind ; wholly resigned to the will of God ; and steadfastly trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for all his

salvation. Thursday last, the disorder came to its crisis. Many thought him still in a fair way to recover, but I have had my fears of the contrary, from the beginning of his indisposition. I was with him some time that night. He had, for the most part, the command of his senses. The pox seemed to fill and come forward well ; his cheeks were almost all in one, yet he was never blind, till—Oh! how shall I relate it ?—death closed his eyes :

“ Tommas, the Friend, is dead ! O empty name,
O earthly bliss, 'tis all a painted dream !

You cannot, my dear Sir, be more affected on reading this account, than I am in communicating it. The dear, the lovely youth is no more ! No more shall we see his countenance smiling, nor hear his improving conversation. You have received your last letter from him. But a few hours before he died, I inquired whether I should write to inform you how he was. He replied, “ Tell him I expect to die soon, and he may not be long after me.” On Friday about five in the evening, he had a great accession of fever ; was very restless and delirious during the night ; the swelling of his head settled ; and the eruption fell in. Saturday morning, about three o'clock, he sent for me. He seized my hand with great eagerness, and told me he supposed he was lying on his dying bed : “ but the Lord,” says he, “ is my refuge ; my soul trusts in him ; he is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever !” ‘ The Lord has loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn me.’ “ Since the small-pox came into the neighbourhood, I have endeavoured to live in a state of actual preparation for

death ; and now the time is come. I shall soon be in his presence where ‘ there is fulness of joy,’ and at his right hand, where there are ‘ pleasures for evermore.’ Come, Lord Jesus, comfort my soul with the consolations of thy Spirit ;” with other expressions to the same purpose. At his request I spent some time in prayer ; he seemed to join in every petition, and was perfectly sensible to the conclusion, when he was, for a short time, delirious. He afterwards addressed his relations ;—giving them the most pertinent and seasonable advice, and in the tenderest manner. At proper intervals I asked him several questions, to which he gave such rational and satisfactory answers as amazed both myself and many others who heard him. John Foster being present, he seized his hand and said : “ Oh, my friend, you are an old soldier ! I had but just as it were entered the lists : pray for me, we have often prayed together in our pilgrimage : let us do it now at parting.” He was so deeply affected that he hesitated for a little time ; on which the dear youth, with a clear and audible voice, engaged in prayer himself with great propriety : friends and relations were all bathed in tears, and listening with eagerness to the dying words of one to whom they were united by the strongest ties of affection.—Amidst all he was composed, peaceful, and resigned.—I was ready to say : “ Come here and learn to die !” He assured us that he was as willing to depart from this world, as we were to go to our own homes. I went again to visit him last night, and found him still worse than before. He expressed a most tender regard for me, and rejoiced to see me once more. I told him I thought he was near his end ; he answered in a most calm and composed manner. After prayer he was very restless, and not quite himself. He imagined he had

some of my children in bed with him, and said there was one, "that must go with him to glory." I must confess this struck me much. I stayed several hours with him; and when I took my leave, he spoke of departing *to-morrow*.

"This morning (Lord's Day) I went down again about six; but he expired the very moment I got to the door. I understood he had slept about three hours very quietly, and lived two hours after.

"I cannot tell you how much this mournful event has affected my mind; but the deceased has glorified God, both in his life and in his death. Eight months ago he prepared an epitaph, to be put on his grave-stone; it is to this effect:

" No lying stone shall tell of me
The things that are not true;
For what I was, and what you are,
The Judgment Day will show.

"I hear he is to be buried on Wednesday next. The good Lord help us to improve the awful Providence. Farewell!

" J. FAWCETT."

It is not improbable that when Mr. Sandys was engaged as an assistant, expectations were entertained of more ample resources, and an increasing number of applications for admission; but with several intervals of absence, the whole time of his continuance in the family did not exceed a year. His letters indicate sterling piety; but from the unsettled state of his mind, he does not appear to have been formed for that close,

assiduous attention requisite in a seminary. He was minister, for a short time, at Shrewsbury, whence he removed to London, and has been dead several years.

The care of the young men thus devolved principally upon Mr. F. having also begun to take a number of pupils of more tender age, his time was fully occupied; and the once solitary, silent abode at Wainsgate began to wear a very different appearance. The duties of his pastoral office also closely engaged his attention. He was unwearied in his discharge of them, 'being instant in season and out of season.' He often mentioned, during his life-time, an expedient he adopted for redeeming time, and acquiring a more habitual readiness in the composition of sermons. He fixed regularly upon some passage of Scripture, to be a subject of meditation when he retired to rest, till he could compose himself to sleep; the consequence of which was, that sleep departed from him; and he was obliged entirely to relinquish a plan which was destructive of his health. He generally preached nearly two hundred times during the course of the year. He continued his week-day meetings, when opportunity afforded, at the stations in the surrounding neighbourhood which he before occupied; and was frequently invited to Haworth, Cloughfold, Bingley, Bradford, Gildersome, Bacup, Rochdale, &c.; in the infant cause, at the last-named place, he took great interest. The settlement there, and successful labours of his much esteemed friend, the Rev. Thomas Littlewood, many years after, gave him great satisfaction. He assisted, in the year 1771, in the ordination of Mr. William Roe, at Sutton, when he preached from 1 Thes. ii. 11, 12: 'As ye know how we exhorted,' &c.; and in 1772, at the ordination of Mr,

William Hartley, at Halifax. His text was Col. iv. 9: 'With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother,' &c. On one occasion, whether at this period or some time after cannot be now precisely ascertained, he was in the most imminent danger of losing his life. He was passing from Sutton to Bingley, where he had engaged to preach in the evening. A dreadful storm of thunder and lightning came on as he was travelling, succeeded by torrents of rain, which quickly inundated the whole neighbourhood. On his way, being determined to press forward, that he might not disappoint the expectation of the congregation, he came to a place where was a bridge across a brook, at other times not considerable, but now swelled to a mighty torrent. A great concourse of persons had assembled to see the rise of the water, which evidently endangered the bridge. While he was hesitating for a moment whether to proceed, the bridge was suddenly carried down before his eyes, and he must inevitably have been overwhelmed with it, if his progress had not been providentially stopped.

Previously to the time now referred to, as has been already intimated, some considerable improvements had been made in the meeting house at Wainsgate, where the audience, from the causes before named, and another which may be proper here to state, was rapidly increasing. The Rev. Mr. Thomas, the pious and venerable minister at Rodhill End, near Todmorden, and Slack, near Heptonstall, was removed, by the stroke of death, in the year 1772. He had long been the laborious minister of a poor people, who met for Divine worship at these places, which were several miles asunder. His pecuniary recompense had been very small; his con-

stitution was weak, and his station very fatiguing ; yet such was his attachment to his little flock, that he was willing to the last to spend and be spent for them, though he had invitations to situations in every respect more eligible.

The attendants at Slack, at the time of Mr. Thomas's death, were too few to support a separate interest any longer ; and Mr. F. consented, in compliance with the request of those who were particularly attached to the situation where they had been in the habit of worshipping God, to preach there statedly every fourth Sabbath. His friends at Wainsgate showed no reluctance to this, as many of the persons who were in the habit of attending his ministry came from that immediate neighbourhood. This place was generally crowded to excess, partly by his own stated hearers, and partly by strangers, for whom it was more convenient and accessible than Wainsgate.

A friendly connexion had taken place between Mr. F. and several families in Liverpool long before the period now referred to. He had some acquaintance with Mr. Oulton, the Baptist minister there, while he lived at Bradford. Being quite superannuated, this worthy man afterwards removed to the house of his son, who preached at Rawden, near Leeds, where he ended his days. If the writer is not misinformed, he was succeeded by Mr. Hall, a judicious, but by no means a popular preacher. The interest at Liverpool was then in a very low state.

From a letter, dated September 30, 1771, it is evident that Mr. F. had preached there frequently

before that date, and that his occasional ministrations had met with acceptance and considerable success. The Rev. Mr. Medley, who proved so great a blessing to that town and neighbourhood, was invited to settle there, about the close of the year; but it does not appear from the letter that the church had any knowledge of him at that time. Mr. Joseph Walley, the writer of it, says, "I hope you will pray for us, and not be reluctant in helping us. This is indeed a time of need, and it is highly necessary that we should give ourselves unto prayer. Last week a day was appointed for bewailing our sins and seeking the Lord for the restoration of our gospel privileges: O that we may pray in faith and wait with patience! Your children (meaning those who had received their first impressions under his ministry) continue to evidence earnest concern about their souls, and give diligent attendance upon the means of grace, public and private. May the Lord keep them, and make you an instrument of as much good in your next visit as in your former one! Mrs. Walley joins in kindest affections to yourself and family, and our church to yours.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Yours, in the best friendship and relation,

"JOSEPH WALLEY."

The removal of the Rev. Mr. Medley, from Watford to Liverpool, was, under a Divine blessing, a happy means of dispelling the discouragements under which the small society at Liverpool laboured, when this letter was written. His popular talents and zealous ministerial labours attracted the attention of multitudes, who, though they might be first invited by curiosity, afterwards became stated attendants, and many of them

lively, active members, and steady promoters of the cause of Christ in that populous and flourishing town. The great accessions to the congregation rendered it necessary to make frequent enlargements in the places of worship, which, not being sufficient to afford accommodation, new ones were successively built.

Mr. Medley, being one of the Tabernacle preachers, application was generally made to the Yorkshire and Lancashire ministers to supply his place during his absence, and among the rest Mr. F. frequently went to Liverpool for that purpose. His visits and ministerial labours were rendered useful to many. He maintained a friendly correspondence with several of those to whom his heart was united and who loved him as their spiritual father, and some valuable materials for this work might have been collected from the letters he addressed to these persons (many of them then in the younger stages of life), who were, in the best sense of the term, 'beloved in the Lord.' To them he no doubt disclosed the feelings of his mind, as a Christian and minister, communicating such counsels and consolations as the case required. Of their letters to him, strikingly displaying, (to use the language of inspiration,) the 'love of their espousals' to Christ, 'the kindness of their youth,' when they, as young pilgrims, went after 'him in the wilderness;' many are in the hands of the author; but the replies, which could not fail to bring into exercise every sentiment of Christian love, and to contain many encouraging expressions and admonitions, suited to the trials with which those who are setting out in the ways of God have to struggle, are irrecoverably lost. They were entrusted to the late Captain Mainé when he went out on one of his voyages, that he might peruse them at

his leisure, and that they might, in some measure, dissipate the tedium which a good man must feel when deprived of social converse and religious opportunities. The vessel was captured by the French; and the letters, no doubt, fell into the hands of persons unable to appreciate their value.

In the year 1773, about Whitsuntide, the annual association was held at Wainsgate. It was attended by the Rev. Mr. Medley, who was one of the preachers, with many friends from Liverpool and other distant places. Having long known the minister, from his labours among them, they showed their personal regard for him, and more especially their love to the cause of Christ, by submitting to temporary privations and inconveniences, that they might enjoy his society and that of other Christian friends. The meeting-house being much too small for the assembly, some of the services were conducted in the open air, the officiating minister being elevated on a temporary platform erected in the burying ground. The Rev. Mr. Parker, of Barnoldswick, had been nominated at the preceding association one of the preachers. He was in a great measure a stranger to Mr. Medley and his friends from Liverpool. His appearance was humble, and at first view far from prepossessing, having none of those exterior appendages of the dress by which men of the clerical order were usually distinguished. Mr. Medley could not forbear, with his usual frankness, expressing his regret, that one so unlikely had been selected to preach on that public occasion, especially as he had persuaded many to accompany him, in the hope of enjoying some peculiar privileges; but when the good man began to speak, and when he opened his subject, Mr. Medley's

prejudice was soon turned into admiration. The Christian simplicity, pertinent illustrations, and holy fervour of this man of God, captivated his heart, and riveted his attention; so that it proved a most delightful and refreshing season, not only to himself, but to most that were present.

During the month of July, in the same year, Mr. F. had the pleasure of another interview, with his dear connexions at Liverpool; whence the following letter was dated. (July 26.)

“ I reached Liverpool on Saturday noon, and was kindly received by friends here. Mrs. Johnson died about ten days ago. Her conversation has been truly exemplary, for forty or fifty years. She left the stage triumphantly. The last words she spoke were, “ I cannot express the joys I feel.” O that I and my dear companion in life may thus live and thus die! The meeting-house erected here is spacious and handsome, but not gaudy or extravagantly expensive. Yesterday I preached three times, viz. from Acts xv. 36, Luke xiv. 23, and Song iii. last verse. I was attended with my usual fears and discouragements; but through the good hand of God upon me, I had a comfortable day.

“ 'Tis he supports my fainting frame,
On him alone my hopes recline;
Jesus, I trust in thy dear name,
And lean upon thy arm Divine.

“ Infinite wisdom! boundless pow'r!
Unchanging faithfulness and love!
Here let me rest while I adore,
Nor from my refuge e'er remove.

“ My God, if thou art mine indeed,
Then I have all my heart can crave ;
A present help in times of need,
Still kind to hear and strong to save.”

In March, 1774, that dreadful disorder the small-pox, which in its progress had been remarkably fatal in the neighbourhood, after having cut off the rising hopes of many families, and deprived him of several valuable young friends, entered his own habitation, and seized his four small children. Inoculation was at that time little known in this part of the country, and the prejudices of many pious persons were against it. The mode of treatment which generally prevailed was also, as future experience showed, very improper. All his children had the complaint very severely, except the youngest, and in one instance it proved fatal.

A lovely boy about four years and a half old, the darling of his mother, who never afterwards could mention him without the strongest emotion, was snatched from their fond embrace. This affecting providence his mourning parent improved, two days after his interment, by a discourse upon Luke xviii. 16 : ‘ Suffer little children to come,’ &c. A hymn sung on the occasion has already appeared in print. The following lines relating to the same event have been found among his papers :

“ As once of old the proto-martyr cry’d,
‘ Jesus receive me,’ so young Stephen dy’d ;
‘ I go to Jesus,’ said the lovely boy,
Then took his flight to yonder world of joy.

Deep in the grave his body sleeping lies
Till Jesus comes and bids the dead arise;
His happy spirit dwells above the skies.
O then restrain the fond paternal tear,
And hope and wait, and long to meet him there.

“ June 8, 1774.”

A plain tombstone in the burying-ground, near the house where he died, records his name, with this inscription subjoined, “He was taken away from the evil to come.”

These domestic afflictions excited the most tender feelings in an affectionate parent's breast; but they were quickly succeeded by another, in many respects still more trying. Whether from disturbed repose, and the anxiety occasioned by the recent bereavement, or from the close application to study which his numerous and increasing avocations required, he was suddenly seized, on the very day after the funeral sermon was preached, with a complaint which entirely incapacitated him for his public work, during the space of at least two months. The suddenness of the attack, which commenced when he was about to sit down to dinner, and the violence of the paroxysms, led his medical attendants to conclude it was the *stone*, one of the most painful complaints to which the human frame is subject. Every method then in practice was resorted to, in order to afford relief, particularly the warm-bath and opiates. Through the violence of the pain, sickness and cold sweats being succeeded by the excessive heats of a scorching fever, his bodily frame was soon so much reduced that little or no hope was entertained of his recovery.

One of the first recollections which the writer of this

Memor has of paternal care (having spent the year preceding these afflictive dispensations at Bingley, among his maternal relations) a recollection which has recurred more frequently to his mind through life than any other event which distinguished the days of childhood, was when called during this illness to his bedside, then apparently the bed of death. He was scarcely six years of age, and of course incapable of duly estimating the loss he was likely soon to sustain; but the affectionate solicitude of a parent who expected soon to leave him and his other children, and the advice he gave on that occasion, produced impressions which advancing years have never obliterated. Among other things, he mentioned to him that beautiful poem, by Dr. Watts, as applicable to his own case, entitled "A Sight of Heaven in Sickness," which at his request he then committed to memory.

During these weeks and months of confinement, his thoughts were, as was afterwards evident, in the short intervals from violent and overwhelming pain, employed about his family and the people of his charge, who to all human appearance were about to be left destitute.

It has often been found that the tribulations and afflictions of God's ministers have been over-ruled, not only for their own good, but for the benefit and the furtherance of the Gospel. Some of the choicest epistles of the Apostle Paul, and in particular that to the Philippians, were written while he was, in prison, prevented from taking an active part in those public labours in which his heart was so much engaged. These epistles have edified and consoled the church in every succeeding age. The "Pilgrim's Progress," com-

posed by John Bunyan while in prison, has been of incalculably greater utility in promoting Christianity, than he, as an individual, could have expected, whatever facilities had been afforded to his ministerial labours. The amiable Dr. Watts was for many years of his life wholly incapacitated for preaching; but it is well known to what useful purposes he devoted this period of bodily debility, not only exercising the meekness and resignation of the Christian, but employing his pen in writing many invaluable works, whereby, though 'dead, he yet speaketh.'

No doubt similar aims and views induced the subject of this Memoir to direct his thoughts to the composition of a work for the use of others who were brought into the same trying circumstances, imitating the examples of David, Hezekiah, Jonah, and others, who rehearsed their agonies of distress in the day of trouble, and offered to heaven their songs of deliverance. They 'called to remembrance their song in the night,' and were not ashamed to let the world know, that amidst the sinkings of life and nature, God and his promises had been their support.

The title of the publication now about to appear was, "The Sick Man's Employ, or Views of Death and Eternity realized." Having employed the intermissions from excruciating pain, and the period of convalescence, in preparing this work for the press, it was entrusted to the care of his friend, the Rev. Mr. Booth of London, who kindly superintended the publication. At that time there were but few persons in the North of England who had attained to any considerable proficiency in the art of printing.

The estimation in which this work has been held by the public is evident, not only from its wide circulation, but from the testimonies given to it, both from the press, and in more private communications; which strongly indicate that if the writer had published no other book, this would have been sufficient to endear his memory to his friends, and the professors of Christianity in general. In the dedication to the church at Wainsgate, for whose use it was primarily intended, he addresses them as one called back from the verge of eternity; briefly enumerates those doctrines which had been the support of his mind in affliction, and which it was his desire again to declare amongst them. He mentions some of those devotional writings which, next to the Bible, had been most dear to his heart during his affliction. Among the rest Augustine's "Confessions," Gerhard's "Meditations," the melodious strains of Dr. Watts, the elevated aspirations of Mrs. Rowe, and the flowing periods of Hervey, whom he terms his favourite; and he reminds them, that in this little work they had before them the very phrases in which he expressed himself in the intervals between his fits of pain. A cursory perusal of this book must show how well it is adapted, at once to alarm the secure conscience, and to direct the attention to the only true sources of consolation in the hour of affliction and in the prospect of death.

He who is at ease in his possessions, enjoying the glare of outward prosperity, and unalarmed by the views of death, may consider some expressions as bordering on enthusiasm, or as of too gloomy a cast; but a humble, penitent soul, bowed down with sorrows, and impressed with a sense of the vanity of the world, with

the infinite importance of eternal realities, will be led to form very different conclusions.

A new edition of this work was published a few years ago, with some alterations, and very considerable additions and improvements.

The following letter, though it does not entirely relate to this season of affliction, may not be improperly inserted in this part of the Memoir. It has been recently received from the Rev. Abraham Greenwood, the first person who resided under his roof for the purpose of preparatory study, and who is now the only survivor of the young men then educated by him for the ministry.

“DEAR SIR,

“I have great reason to be thankful that I was put under the care of that man of God, your father, in the early part of my life. His house was like a little heaven below. The sweetness of his temper, with the mildness and gravity of his manners excited my admiration, and still more his diligence and unremitting application. I never saw him idle. If at any time he took his pipe, as he was wont to do, he would also have a book in his hand, and read to himself or to others.

“The devotions of his family were solemn and regular. He commonly read a chapter or a Psalm, sung a few verses, and prayed in the Spirit five, six, or seven minutes. I have often accompanied him to Hep-tonstall, where he had a week-day evening lecture well attended. Never shall I forget the fervour of his piety, and the rich variety of doctrinal and practical truths which appeared in all his sermons. I had the happiness to be with him two years and a half, and

have thought of him and his advice to greater advantage for the last twenty years, than I ever did before. Lord help me, that I may be more like him in faith, in patience, in humility, in diligence, and in every amiable qualification!

“Vain words, or slanderous language, never came out of his mouth in my hearing; nor did he bear malice against any one, though sometimes very unkindly treated. He well knew how to commit himself into His hand who judgeth righteously.

“I have often admired his holy resignation at the time of his great affliction, when he wrote his ‘Sick Man’s Employ.’ His pain was so great, that he often sweat till there was a dew on the covering of the bed on which he lay; yet he did not use any improper expressions of impatience. Even then when he had some alleviation of his pain, he would sit up and write down what he afterwards published. He was often heard to exclaim, “How exceedingly precious is time;” and his life was a full and continued proof that he was under the abiding impression of this idea. He redeemed the very fragments of it. O that I, in this respect, had imitated him more! I have him still in my eye, my ear, my heart. His love to the souls of men, his bright example, his evangelical, experimental, and practical preaching, may have been equalled, but have been rarely exceeded.

“I remain,

“Yours, &c.

“ABRAHAM GREENWOOD.”

Next to the consolations of religion, the sympathy of relatives and friends, in seasons of deep distress, is

to be valued. It must have added greatly to David's troubles, when he had to say, ' Lover and friend hast thou put far from me; yea, mine own familiar acquaintance hath forsaken me.' Seasons of darkness and affliction call for some kindred breast to catch and dry up the falling tear, and to pour balm into the soul; they try the sincerity of professed friendship, and show whether any dependance may be placed on it. The various extracts from letters, which are contained in the following pages, while they afford him who writes this account an opportunity of mentioning names endeared to the deceased and his family, and who have left an honourable testimony behind them, will show the kind interest which distant friends, as well as those who were near, took in the heavy afflictions with which the Lord saw meet to exercise his servant.

" DEAR SIR,

" Liverpool, May 12, 1774.

" It gave me great concern to hear of the removal of your lovely child, and soon after of your own affliction. This is indeed sorrow upon sorrow. With respect to your son, you have many sources of consolation. His heavenly Father has taken him to himself; be thankful then for his removal so soon from this vale of tears. He has got beyond the reach of sin and misery, to which even the best of men are exposed in the present world. I trust when natural feeling has subsided a little, you will be enabled to kiss the rod which inflicts this heavy stroke. But, O my dear friend, how I felt for you, when I heard of your own affliction, and of the acuteness of the pain. Your case, with all your personal and relative trials, has been spread before your Father and our Father in our prayers. I trust he will spare

your desirable life, and restore your health, for the good of the church of God, and for the sake of your own dear family. We long to hear some further particulars. I should be glad of the heads of the sermon you preached from those words: 'Suffer, little children,' &c. May the Lord comfort and heal you! I am, my dear Sir,

"Yours for Christ's sake,

"JOSEPH WALLEY."*

* The remark has often been justly made, that it is much easier to point out to others sources of consolation and motives to submission, than to realize the one and practise the other. This good man was, many years after he wrote the preceding letter, exercised with a very severe trial; and though in point of time the letter may be misplaced, it is of great value, as exhibiting the power and efficacy of religion in seasons of peculiar distress:

"DEAR SIR,

"You may probably have heard, before this, of the very affecting Providence which has befallen us in the departure of our beloved son out of this world, which took place a few days ago. Such a shock we have never before experienced, as a family. May the Lord, who has been thus chastising us, sanctify this dispensation to our souls, showing us more than ever our frailty and nothingness! May we be quickened in the ways of holiness, weaned from the world, and stirred up to prepare, with becoming earnestness, for a better country, that is, a heavenly one! We have great cause to mourn, but none to murmur. I hope we are enabled to be still and submissive under the hand of our Father; and I trust your prayers will be united with ours, that we may be supported under this heavy affliction. Mr. Medley, at our request, endeavoured to improve the Providence by a sermon, from Job xiv. 1st and 2d verses. Sincerely thanking you for all your kindness,

"I am,

"Yours in our living Redeemer,

"JOSEPH WALLEY."

From the latter part of this letter (not here inserted) it appears, that at the time when it was written a number of youths from Liverpool were resident at Wainsgate, and among the rest, a son of Mr. Walley, to whose death, occasioned by that dreadful malady the stone, the letter in the note relates. The first and principal encouragement which the subject of the Memoir met with, for forming a private seminary, was from that quarter. This he often gratefully acknowledged; and the connexion which thus subsisted with several respectable families in Liverpool was a happy means of promoting and maintaining that intercourse which had for years before been productive of much enjoyment and real advantage. It was also an inducement with him to spend the seasons of recess as much as possible at Liverpool.

In reviewing those years which have long since rolled away, we cannot but admire the cordial friendship, the steady, ardent piety, and devotedness to God, which so eminently distinguished the professors of religion, where their numbers were comparatively small. This very circumstance had a tendency to unite them more closely together. While they were a *spectacle*, a *gazing-stock* to the world, and almost shunned by those around them, their affections were more concentrated and fixed on one another.

A more striking instance of those amiable qualities which distinguish the true Christian in public and private from the man of the world, could scarcely be selected than the writer of the preceding letters, the venerable Mr. Joseph Walley. In him primitive simplicity and gravity of manners were united with urba-

nity, mildness, and condescension of deportment. He appeared to have learned in an eminent degree the happy art of *using this world so as not to abuse it*, and of considering the Divine glory as the end of his actions. Whatever the subject of his conversation or letters might be when addressed to his friends, something of a religious nature was generally introduced, not in a morose, but engaging manner, strongly indicating the habitual state of his mind. Like Enoch, he "walked with God;" and his path was that of the just, "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

A few more letters of condolence addressed to Mr. F. while yet under heavy affliction, or gradually recovering from it, are here presented to the reader.

(From the Rev. Mr. Medley.)

"Liverpool, May 16, 1774.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"My heart has often been with you since I heard of the visitations of the Almighty upon your little ones, and now upon your own body. I have frequently had such realizing views of your afflictions, that I have almost imagined I heard you adopting the solemn and affecting exclamation of Job, 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.' I can assure you, that you have the sympathetic concern of your friends in this part. Respecting the variety of afflictive dispensations with which you have been exercised, it may, with truth and propriety be said, 'God hath spoken once, yea twice;' and I trust you, my dear friend, have heard the rod, and him that hath appointed it, and that you have now

found that there is something sweet and soul supporting in having *a God*, to call upon in the day of trouble.

“ ‘Good when he gives, supremely good,
Nor less when he denies;
E'en crosses from his sov'reign hand
Are blessings in disguise.’ ”

“ When at Watford I was attacked much in the same way that you have been, and was in the greatest agonies for twelve hours, but God was graciously pleased to raise me up again. May your soul be sweetly stayed upon the Divine power, truth, faithfulness, wisdom, and love, in the believing views of which may you be enabled to bow with humility and submission !

“ The various afflictive dispensations of God, to his dear children, are all consistent with his designs of mercy. ‘ This is the will of God, even your sanctification ;’ and as Archbishop Usher justly observed, ‘ The essence of true Gospel sanctification consists in having my will swallowed up in the will of God.’ May the Lord perfect his work in your heart and mine ! It is my earnest and fervent prayer, that you may be spared for further usefulness in the church of God, in your day and generation. We are all very desirous of hearing of you by every opportunity, and shall be glad if you will employ some one to write to us. I commend you most affectionately to God, even our Father, and remain,

“ Your most affectionate brother and

“ Servant, for Christ's sake,

“ SAMUEL MEDLEY.”

(From the Rev. Mr. Sutcliffe.)

" HON. AND DEAR SIR,

" Sorry I am to hear of your late affliction ; hope the Lord has in mercy to you and your many friends removed his hand. However this be, it is our comfort in the midst of all that 'the Lord reigneth.' Our afflictions spring not out of the dust. Our steps in this, as well as in other respects, are 'ordered by the Lord.' It is, if need be, that we are 'in heaviness through manifold temptations.' Sanctified strokes of his chastening rod are often some of the choicest proofs of his paternal love. Yet it is hard amidst afflictions to say, the 'will of the Lord be done,' it requires much grace, but not more than God has to give. The Almighty prepares by the dispensations of providence, as well as by the influences of grace, for the enjoyment of glory. It is in the exercise of faith and patience that we are meetened for an entrance into the kingdom. O that I could practically learn this myself! If you can write, favour me with a few particulars how you go on. I belong to Wainsgate, and wish well to the designs carrying on there, but have lately had few opportunities of hearing any thing.

" I am,

" Shrewsbury,
" June 14, 1774.

" Yours most affectionately,
" JOHN SUTCLIFFE."

(From the Rev. Mr. Beatson.)

" DEAR BROTHER,

" Hull, June 21, 1774.

" Yours I received, and upon the perusal of it could not avoid shedding a sympathetic tear. It immediately brought to mind the just, the painful observation ;

"woes cluster; rare are solitary woes; they love a train, they tread each other's heels!" But when I came to the latter part of your letter, and found that your strength was at least *equal* to your day, my mind brightened, and the gloom quickly dispersed. 'Surely,' said I, 'there is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens for the help of his people.' I have likewise been in the furnace a considerable time. My wife has had a long, and in some respects a peculiarly painful confinement, and is now brought to the borders of Canaan. A few days more, and she will pass the stream of Jordan. The waters to her have long appeared as *still as a stone*, and I make no doubt will be so, till she, as one of the ransomed of the Lord, pass over. Never did I see, Ps. xxxvii. 37: Mark the perfect man,' &c. more eminently fulfilled. I hope, my dear brother, we shall pity, pray for, and compassionate each other, amidst these trying scenes. I want to see your little piece ('The Sick Man's Employ'), and hope it will afford a feast to me. I cannot at present add more, than assure you of my oneness of heart with you, and beg a share in your requests at the throne of grace.

"I am, your friend and brother,

"JOHN BEATSON."*

* The acquaintance between these two friends commenced many years before, while Mr. Beatson was minister at Sutton in Craven, which was too confined a sphere for his superior talents. He removed to Hull, in the year 1770, where a Baptist Church had been founded in 1736. His predecessors in the ministry there were Mr. Palmer, Mr. Brown, Mr. Thompson, from 1758 to 1762; Mr. Twining, from 1762 to 1765; Mr. Rutherford, from 1765 to 1769. Previous to the building of the chapel in Salthouse Lane, in the year 1757, the congregation met for public worship in a hired place, being part of an old tower.

Mr. Beatson's nervous system was very weak. When going up

The excellent woman referred to in this letter died soon after. Mr. Hartley, of Haworth, preached the

to the pulpit his whole frame was often agitated so as to give the appearance of great timidity; but when he began to speak, he seldom disappointed the expectation of his hearers. He was a close thinker; his sermons were well digested; and his printed works are highly esteemed. The letter subjoined to this note was written soon after his settlement at Hull, where he was for a long succession of years an instrument of great good. The Catholic spirit which prevailed in that town rendered Christian society among different denominations highly edifying and delightful. With the Rev. Joseph Milner (who had been his school-fellow at Leeds) no less distinguished by his learning than by his ardent zeal in the cause of Christ, and the Rev. Mr. Lambert, his cotemporaries, and bright ornaments of Hull, he for many years maintained the most friendly connexion. Laying aside, for the time, all party distinctions, they often associated together with all the cordiality and freedom of Christian brethren.

Through a Divine blessing on the exertions of these worthy men, in the important situations which they occupied for a series of years with increasing success, large congregations were collected in the places of worship where they officiated, and others have since been raised up, so that few towns are more distinguished by religious profession and privileges. Mr. Lambert's church was formed in the year 1769. On his first going to Hull, only eleven persons were united in church fellowship; and for a long time the prospects were inauspicious; but during the course of his ministry more than six hundred became members of the church, besides many others to whom the Word was blessed, though they were not in communion with the society.

Mr. Beatson's letter contains some account of the situation of the Baptist church when it was written.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"Hull, March 8, 1771.

"Your favour of the 1st instant I received; it rejoices me much to hear of the welfare of my friends, and equally afflicts me when the dispensations of Providence seem to frown upon them. But perhaps if we were perpetually to enjoy its smiles, we should be too much elated, and apt to kick against God. I am sorry to hear of

funeral sermon, from 1 Cor. xv. 55 : 'O death! where is thy sting?' &c. This sermon was afterwards published, with a brief account of the departed saint.

your late troubles and disappointments. I am, I thank God, agreeably settled here, though we are not without our difficulties and our trials. We are in all about forty members, and I have encouraging hopes that the Lord will increase our numbers. I find freedom and liberty in my work in general, and esteem it my highest honour to be an ambassador to the 'King of saints.' It is true, I am an unworthy creature, 'less than the least of all saints, but by the grace of God I am what I am.' I feel, painfully feel, what you say of yourself, relative to the workings of sin within you; but blessed be God, I hope it doth not REIGN in either of us.

"I am in some respects sorry to hear that Mr. Wood has left Halifax; though I have for some time thought there was little prospect of his usefulness there. May the Lord favour that part of his Zion!

"I read with pleasure the plan you suggest in your letter for a correspondence to be kept up, consisting of short hints on passages of Scripture. I should be glad to accede to it, though I cannot say that in doing it I am free from a selfish principle. The following is a specimen of what you may expect from me: Luke xxii. 20: 'This cup is the New Testament in my blood.' 1. Open the nature of this Testament, which is the will of God concerning his people, and contains in it the names of all that may lay claim to the blessings of it—the inheritance bequeathed to them—the time when they shall come to the possession of it. This Testament can have no addition made to it, or diminution from it; and it is actually in force by the death of the Testator. 2dly. What are the legacies contained in it: pardon of sin—a justifying righteousness—peace of conscience—support in death—perseverance in grace—victory over death—the reception of the soul into glory at the dissolution of the body—the resurrection of the body at the last day, and the final glorification of both in the full fruition of God. 3dly. Who are the legatees? Such who are of a contrite spirit—who have a spiritual appetite for heavenly provisions—who are willing to partake of it—who delight in the Gospel's joyful sound, and to whom Christ is precious. 4thly. Why is this New Testament said to be in his

Extract of a letter from the Rev. Mr. Parker, of Barnoldswick :

“ Nov. 28, 1774.

“ I THANK you for your ‘ Sick Man’s Employ.’ I have been much refreshed by reading it. It gives me pleasure to find that your mind has been so well engaged, while your place was empty in the sanctuary ; and that the Lord was teaching you when you could not teach others. By this, I perceive that a real saint, if in the path of duty, is never out of his way to heaven ; and it may be is making the greatest advances when he lies on a bed of languishing, and is ripening fastest for glory when most of all exposed to the storms and blasts of adversity. When there is the greatest submission of mind to the will of God, there is the nearest communion with him, and the best preparation for the full enjoyment of him in heaven. This is the sum total of all we can wish and desire. But, alas ! in the present state, sin hangs heavy on our souls. Were it not for this, how much of God’s presence and of heaven itself should we have in this wilderness world ! Sin is the worst of all evils ; it wounds our souls, embitters all our comforts, vitiates our taste, and poisons our nature. It is a disease which bids defiance to the efficacy

Blood ? Because the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper is a representation of the pouring out of his soul unto death—it is expressive of that joy and consolation which spring from a view of his atonement and sacrifice, of that endless pleasure which they shall partake of with him hereafter.

“ These thoughts I enlarged upon the last time the Lord’s Supper was administered. It was a precious season.

“ I remain,

“ Your sincere friend and brother,

“ JOHN BEATSON.”

of medicine, and all that human power can do ; but Christ the great physician *can* heal this disease of the soul, and his remedies are exactly suited to our case. Let it be our business to proclaim his excellence to wounded, perishing sinners ; let us tell them that there is ‘ balm in Gilead, and a physician there ; ’ and let us implore the influences of the all gracious Spirit to cause the dying to live, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the once despairing soul to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. In so doing we have reason to believe that our work shall not be in vain in the Lord. Farewell.”

The first time he entered the pulpit again, after two months’ confinement by this most severe attack, was May 29, 1774. He was scarcely in a state fit to leave his room, being unable to stand during the time of service ; and his appearance altogether, with the recollection of what he had passed through, rendered it a most affecting season. Many were melted into tears, on seeing his countenance marked with all the traces of extreme debility and violent pain. His text was, Phil. i. 23 : ‘ I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better, though to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.’ From this time, however, he resumed and continued his usual labours, not only in his own pulpit, but in the neighbourhood, and also in more distant places. The texts for many Sabbaths following as selected from the account of sermons which he kept for several years, were such as his recent afflictions, and the realizing views of death and eternity, might naturally lead him to fix upon. ‘ Ye know not what shall be on the morrow.’ ‘ I have

longed for thy salvation, O Lord!" 'Behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good in his sight.' 'I commend you to God and the word of his grace.' 'Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom,' &c.

During the month of August in this year he went to Liverpool, and also to Chester, where he often spent a few days during his absence; the distance from Liverpool being inconsiderable, and the prospect of usefulness pleasing. He remained some weeks from home, chiefly, no doubt, for the benefit of his health, which had suffered such a shock by the late attack as he never after wholly recovered. Having signified to his kind friends there, his intention to devote his future attention more particularly to the education of youth, he received several accessions to the number of his pupils. With this increase of family new cares began to accumulate, and new scenes to open upon his view, entirely different from those to which his former days were accustomed. A school-room was engaged at a short distance from the house, and he also began to occupy a small farm, as a necessary appendage to his enlarged establishment.

In the course of the following summer, he was again called to spend some time at Liverpool, both in his ministerial capacity and on account of his connexions with several families, having some of the younger branches still under his care, whom he took with him and brought back again in returning. His stay being necessarily protracted beyond the time fixed, he addressed a letter to the church at Wainsgate, from which some passages are here selected.

" DEARLY BELOVED,

" Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord. I am now absent from you in body, yet present in spirit, bearing an affectionate remembrance of you before the throne of grace. God is my witness, how greatly I long after you all, in the bowels of Jesus Christ. It is in my heart to live and die with you. I requested but two Lord's Days to remain here ; but unavoidable circumstances will render it necessary for me to continue a little longer, 'except I were to return hither in a fortnight, which would be attended with much additional trouble and expense. Through the abundant goodness of my heavenly Father, the journey and the means I make use of have been abundantly serviceable in restoring my health. This morning one that was to be intrusted to my care died of the small-pox. ' He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.' To-morrow I must assist in consigning him to the grave. Mr. Medley has a child in the same complaint dangerously ill. Thus the seeds of mortality spring up in every soil. I must beg of you to excuse my absence for one Lord's Day more. I trust you will spend the day together in humble and earnest prayer to God, in which I hope to join you in spirit.

" I have endeavoured hitherto to serve you with some degree of diligence and cheerfulness, amidst many weaknesses, temptations, and discouragements, and am willing to be spent among you. The Lord bless you all, revive, comfort, strengthen, and establish you for ever !

" I am your affectionate pastor,

" J. F."

(Postscript.)

“ TO MY DEAR WIFE,

“ I hope you received my last in due course. I desire you would make yourself easy ; cleave to God and trust in him ; and may you be very happy in the enjoyment of his favour, which is better than life.

“ I am, &c.

“ J. F.”

October 31, 1775—A letter was received from Mr. Sutcliff, requesting his dismissal to the church at Olney. He had been for some time employed in the work of the ministry. The first pulpit he entered for this purpose was at Trowbridge, as appears from the Rev. Hugh Evans's letter. After he left Bristol he spent six months at Shrewsbury, and as many months at Birmingham, as assistant to the Rev. Mr. Turner. But Providence at length directed him to Olney, where, under the hospitable roof of Mrs. Andrews, he found himself *at home*, and was enabled to expend the greatest part of his income in the purchase of books. No man had a higher value than he for literary treasures, or a more correct and extensive acquaintance with that description of books to which his attention was particularly directed. He was not a mere *helluo librorum*, but the strain of his conversation on all occasions showed that his mind was richly stored with what he read, and that he had a comprehensive view of the arguments and manner of different writers, which he readily communicated to others. In removing to Olney he found himself in a situation which the Christian and the scholar must consider as almost consecrated ground ; not to mention that the vicinity was the scene of the

inimitable John Bunyan's labours, Olney itself was distinguished as the residence of the poet Cowper, the Rev. Mr. Newton, and others, who in their respective spheres were among the brightest ornaments of the age. When we consider these circumstances, and the intimate connexion which afterwards took place between him and Mr. Fuller, with others of his own denomination, we shall not wonder that through life he continued to retain a fixed partiality for this favoured place. In the letter mentioned at the beginning of the preceding paragraph (from an immediate attention to which the very mention of the name of *Olney* has almost imperceptibly withdrawn our attention), Mr. Sutcliffe expresses himself as follows :

“ I take this method of informing my dear and honoured pastor, and my beloved friends of the church at Wainsgate, that I think it my duty, with your leave, to remove my connexion with you as a member, to the church of Christ here in Olney. I esteem it a great privilege that my lot has, through Divine Providence, been cast among you, and it is with pain and reluctance that I now solicit my dismissal from you. As long as I have a memory to recollect, and a heart to feel, so long shall I retain the most sincere and warm affections for my friends at Wainsgate. God is my witness that, though removed to a considerable distance, I am not unmindful of you ; but though thus separate one from another, our union to our exalted Head remains indissoluble. Delightful thought ! because Jesus lives we shall live, and *where* Jesus lives we shall also live. But to return to the subject before-mentioned, I think the leadings of Providence evidently point out Olney to me as the place of my present residence ; what circumstances may

hereafter occur I know not ; the church has, however, given me an unanimous, cordial invitation to join them as a member. With this I scarcely should as yet have complied, had there not been things in the church which require my attention, with which I cannot properly interfere unless I am a member. Ardently wishing that the Lord may abundantly bless you, and fill up my place, not only with one, but with many who shall shine in Divine gifts and heavenly graces, and entreating that you will remember me in your prayers,

“ I remain,

“ Affectionately yours,

“ J. SUTCLIFF.”

In a postscript to this letter he intimates that there were about thirty-eight members, and that many young persons were waiting to be admitted.

The reply to the request of a dismission is here subjoined :

“ The church of Christ at Wainsgate, near Halifax, to the church of the same faith and order at Olney, sendeth Christian salutation.

“ DEAR BRETHREN,

“ As it has pleased the great Head of the church to call forth our dearly beloved brother, Mr. John Sutcliff, to labour in the word and doctrine among you, and as his situation among you is so far to his satisfaction that he has requested a dismission from us, in order that he may unite in full communion with you, these are to certify, that our above-named dear brother has been for some years a member with us, and that we, as a church, have had much comfort and satisfaction in him. We are

bound to give thanks to God on his behalf, for the grace and gifts bestowed on him. As the voice of Providence apparently directs him to you, we cannot object to his request, but do, as a church, give him up to you in the name and fear of God, that he may walk with you in holy fellowship, and enjoy all the privileges of the Lord's house. Brethren, receive him as becometh saints, both in the capacity of a member and a minister of Christ. Let no man despise his youth, but may you love him tenderly, esteem him highly, and pray for him fervently, that he may be among you without fear.

"That the God of Israel may bless you in him, make him a blessing to you, and succeed all his labours for your good; give him many seals of his ministry among you, and make him a repairer of your breaches; that unity and peace, liveliness, and fruitfulness, may long prevail and flourish among you is the sincere prayer of,

"Your affectionate brethren,

"In the kingdom and patience of Christ,

"JOHN FAWCETT,

"W. SUTCLIFF, &c."

(To Mr. Sutcliffe, with the above under cover.)

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I thank you for your kind letter, and can assure you, that you have a distinguished place in my affections, and a share in my poor prayers. I am heartily concerned for you, and should be glad to see you. If your ordination should be during the Christmas vacation, I shall be strongly inclined to attend, if possible.

"The affairs of this nation, I think, wear a gloomy aspect. Most who mention the unhappy con-

test with America here are desirous that lenient measures may be adopted, and that a speedy accommodation may take place.

“As to the state of religion I have no very encouraging news to communicate at present. In some respects the church was never so unhappy since I knew it; the debate respecting a new meeting house is renewed, and it is more than probable that a breach will take place among us. O, my brother, what a world is this! May you and I be fitted for, and hastening to, a better.

“I am,

“Most cordially yours,

“J. F.”

The ordination took place a short time after, at which Mr. F. was present, and had the province assigned him of delivering the charge to the minister. He often mentioned, in the subsequent periods of his life, the high gratification he enjoyed, by becoming personally acquainted with many eminent ministers who were assembled there on the occasion. Among the rest, the Rev. Benjamin Beddome particularly attracted his attention. He was strongly solicited to take part in the public services of the day; but through that timidity which is often an attendant on genius and talent, he declined it; he was, however, by entreaties, and almost compulsion, induced to deliver a sermon in the evening, with which the audience was greatly delighted.

From the latter part of the preceding letter it is evident that a new place of worship had been for some

time before, and was then, in agitation. The arguments in favour of it were very forcible. Such had been the happy fruits and effects of their minister's occasional labours in the adjoining districts, in keeping up week-day meetings, that though Wainsgate had been sufficiently central for the congregation first raised by Mr. Smith, it was far from being so to the greater part of those more recently collected ; who were not only exposed to much fatigue in traversing the valley and mountains, but often found their health endangered from the dampness of the place, after perspiring freely in ascending the hills ; and also in hot weather, by being suddenly exposed to the cold in coming out of so small and crowded a place. On the other hand the partialities and prejudices of the original members were in favour of the old meeting house, which was convenient to themselves for attendance, and to which they had so many local attachments. Both the contending parties felt the weight of their own arguments, probably without a disposition to give due attention to the other. Amidst these contests, the mind of the minister, who was always himself a man of peace, was deeply pained ; for many months the subject preyed upon his spirits. From a most earnest desire that the matter might be amicably settled, he forbore for a considerable time to take any decided part, knowing that a house divided against itself is not likely to stand, much less to prosper. He felt the strongest regard for those who took the lead on both sides, and laboured with all the meekness and tenderness of a Christian minister to produce an amicable determination of a matter so intimately connected with the welfare of the society. In pursuance of which

design he addressed a letter to them, of which the following is a part :

“ To the church of Christ at Wainsgate, grace and peace be multiplied.

“ DEAR BRETHREN,

“ I cannot forbear expressing my concern for you, while I see you engaged in a contest that threatens your ruin as a church. We are already diminished and brought low in a variety of respects ; in numbers, in gifts, in brotherly affection, in liveliness and zeal, and in most other respects, excepting a public attendance on the means of grace. We are too much like a house divided against itself, and cannot stand long without some speedy remedy. I mourn over you, my dear brethren, and in the night my sleep departs from me. I think I could be willing to make almost any sacrifice, if it would tend to bring about peace and restore prosperity.

“ I love your souls, and I would willingly live and die with you. How shall I bear to see the interest, weak as it is, rent and torn to pieces, while the enemies of religion rejoice in your calamity ? I know of nothing that could more effectually contribute to bring me down with sorrow to the grave. I am often saying, ‘ O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest.’ I now think it my duty to let you know that if things remain in their present state, I am apprehensive that I must either sink under the weight of these things, or otherwise speedily remove into some other part of the Lord’s vineyard.

“ Amidst the various opinions that are given, and the questions in agitation about building or not building, I

tremble for the ark of God. I fear lest the lively stones that should be built up a spiritual house, should be disunited and trampled upon.

“ Brethren, as a watchman, I warn you of the danger ; none of you can say that my fears are groundless, or my concern for you without a cause. Could I contribute any thing towards the healing of these divisions, how gladly would I do it ! But here I am involved in darkness, and I am ready to fancy I hear a voice in these dispensations, saying unto me, ‘ What dost thou here Elijah ? ’

“ I am,

“ Dear Brethren,

“ Your disconsolate but affectionate pastor,
and willing servant in the Gospel,

“ J. FAWCETT.”

“ Oct. 28, 1775.”

There is reason to conclude that this affectionate, pastoral address produced a happy effect, and that the future discussions were carried on with more Christian temper and moderation. The matter continued for the two ensuing years to be frequently brought forward ; and various plans were produced, which had their different adherents, till at length, as will appear in the sequel, this long agitated question was amicably settled.

During these proceedings, many circumstances in his domestic economy rendered a removal from the house at Wainsgate desirable, if not absolutely necessary. The tenement was too small for his family, which, through the kindness of his friends, was rapidly increasing ; the distance of the school-room from the dwelling house was likewise a great inconvenience. The proprietor of the

small farm he had occupied for some time also wished to have it in his own hands again. Being thus deprived of the means of obtaining a supply of those articles of diet which are indispensably necessary for children and youths, inquiry was made in the immediate neighbourhood for a place that might suit the purpose. These inquiries proved unsuccessful, or at least were clogged with conditions, that could not be acceded to.

In this perplexity of mind respecting a situation, he went into Luddenden Dean, about three miles from his present residence, to preach in the evening at a friend's house. Here was incidentally mentioned a farm, not far distant, which had been recently purchased by Robert Parker, Esq. of Halifax, and which his steward, who lived near, was empowered to let. He obtained all the information those who were present had the means of affording; and some of the party, who were acquainted with the steward, accompanied him to his house. He had afterwards an interview with Mr. Parker, and took the farm.

In reviewing the dispensations of Providence, whether they relate to individuals, families, or even nations, on how small and apparently contingent circumstances do those events turn which give a change to their future destinies! When we are ready to say, 'All these things are against me;' the Almighty, by some occurrence entirely unexpected by us, makes our way plain before us; the difficulties and discouragements which before bowed down our spirits, then appear to be (as they are in reality) but parts of that benevolent plan designed to promote, though in a way which we could not before comprehend, our best interests.

Brearley Hall was one of those houses anciently inhabited by a respectable family; but, through those vicissitudes so common in the neighbourhood, it had been long deserted by its original owners, and being let into small tenements, was in a most ruined, dilapidated state. The family, however, removed to such part of the premises as were tenantable, in the early part of the spring, 1776, and were for some time exposed to great inconvenience for want of room; but agreeably to the stipulated conditions, the buildings were, during the succeeding summer, fitted up for their accommodation. In this respect the kindness and generosity of the landlord anticipated the wishes of his tenant, though he had been till now nearly a stranger to him. The situation, in all respects, appeared to correspond with the wishes of the family, and to be suited for the purpose to which it was now devoted. In many things it was quite a contrast to the former: the back grounds there were moorlands of vast extent; but the house now occupied stood upon a small eminence, nearly surrounded by a hanging wood, having, in front, a view of the river Calder, and the valley through which it runs for a considerable extent, and was adjoining the public road (scarcely finished at that time) from Halifax into many parts of Lancashire. Agreeably to the ancient style of building, the house, being partly in the castellated form, contained, in the middle, a large room or hall, the height of the building, with a gallery on one side. Whether these apartments were originally intended for courts of justice, or merely for the purpose of festal entertainments, cannot be ascertained: but it was now consecrated to a purpose for which it had, in all probability,

never been used before. It had been the regular practice of its present occupier to have three services every Sabbath at Wainsgate; but as that place was several miles distant, and the family could not conveniently remain there to a late hour, a lecture on Lord's Day evenings was opened in the Hall above-mentioned, and continued for many succeeding years. The first text was happily selected from Acts xxviii. 30, 31: 'Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him, preaching the kingdom of God,' &c.

His resolution was like that of the venerable patriarch, wherever God fixed his habitation, to erect an altar there, publicly to maintain the worship of God, and to use every effort in his power to promote the best interests of the neighbourhood at large. The congregations, at these evening lectures, were generally much crowded, when the weather was favourable, and consisted, for the most part, of persons who were in the habit of attending places of different denominations during the preceding parts of the day. The choice of his subjects for these occasions showed that it was not merely his object to make proselytes to his particular sentiments, but to explain and enforce those great fundamental truths, relating to doctrine and practice, which are of equal importance to all who call themselves Christians. Instead of robbing other churches, his wish was to promote their welfare and prosperity. On summer eves the scene was often highly interesting, while many, not only of those who made a profession of Christianity, but others who had hitherto lived in the neglect of religious duties, joined in these evening

oblations, and afterwards became regular attendants on public worship.

Many young persons, in the higher walks of life, from the neighbourhood of Halifax, were frequently present, friendly connexions were formed with them ; and on the minds of several, impressions were made which, there is reason to believe, were never afterwards effaced.

A habit of observing the works of God in creation, and those beauties which rural situations afford, so as to derive mental improvement from them, is seldom to be found. While there are many flowers, and many enchanting landscapes, in the trackless desert, that never meet the human eye, but are totally unobserved, how many scenes in the haunts of men, which in some would excite the most delightful emotions, pass almost equally undiscovered and unregarded, by the great mass of human beings ! They have eyes, but they see not ; their grovelling souls seem incapable of those meditations which lead the contemplative mind to behold the finger of God displayed in every spire of grass, in the shady grove, and in the purling stream. ‘ They regard not the works of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hand.’

The following fragment, found among the papers of the deceased, shows that, however indifferent others might have been to these attractions, they did not now pass unnoticed or forgotten. He was enthusiastically fond of trees and shady walks ; which taste, the common trait of a studious mind, his new situation was every way calculated to gratify.

" BREARLEY HALL.

" INSCRIBED TO ROBERT PARKER, ESQUIRE.

" Rure ego viventem, tu dicis in urbe beatum. Hor.

" I seize the silent hour of hastening night,
 Or the still moments of the morning dawn,
 Friendly to contemplation or to song ;
 Pensive and slow I tread the flow'ry lawns,
 Impearl'd with dew ; far from the noisy throng,
 The smoky city, and tumultuous crowd,
 The choicest scenes here bless my roving eyes,
 Shame my ingratitude, and stimulate
 My too, too languid powers to reach the skies.

" Here blooming nature, with her jocund smile,
 Unfolds the rich profusion of her stores,
 Pleasing to every sense. The freshening breeze
 Comes loaded with its fragrant, precious sweets,
 Gifts of Divine benignity to man.

" The listening ear receives the welcome sounds,
 Brought by the faithful undulating air,
 From the adjacent groves ; beneath whose shade
 Indulgent Providence has fix'd the bounds
 Of my abode, on *Calder's* fertile banks,
 Allotting me the task, the arduous task,
 Of guiding youthful minds along the path,
 The flow'ry path, of wisdom and of virtue.
 May but Almighty goodness grant me skill,
 By every gentle art to win the soul,
 To love and follow whatsoe'er is lovely.

" Parker ! to you my untaught muse devotes
 Her humble lay ; what gratitude inspires
 In artless verse, she tries to sing, and hopes
 To gain a moment your attentive ear.
 Yours are these flowery lawns, these solemn groves,
 These purling streams, and all these rural scenes :
 Yours is the sweet retreat, the rustic cell,
 For contemplation form'd, where oft I sit,
 Wrapt up in pleasing reveries, more blest
 Beneath the humble ivy-cover'd shed

Than Cræsus on his golden throne, or he
Who conquer'd worlds, and call'd the globe his own.

"Oft I, beneath the moss-grown rock reclined,
Enjoy the noon-tide hour, or evening air :
Pleased with the raptures of some ancient bard,
Or later poet, native of our isle.
Here I forget my cares, and almost lose
The sense of pain itself awhile, though oft
To sharp affliction's discipline inured."

In the above verses, a rustic cell is mentioned. This was a small apartment which he had erected, in a retired part of the orchard, for the purpose of spending in it a few solitary hours, during the summer months. It was in the humblest style of architecture. In one corner was a human skull,*

* This skull, which came out of a charnel house, was afterwards consigned again to the grave. The sight of it, while deposited in the cell above-mentioned, often brought to mind the lines composed by Dr. Doddridge, which he put in the mouth of a skull constantly kept in his study.

"Why chuse you in a maze of books to stray ?
I dictate wisdom in a shorter way ;
Nor need I words my purpose to dispense,
For looks like mine are powerful eloquence.
Behold these ruins of a mortal frame,
And say from what dark sepulchre they came ;
My rank, my genius, or my form declare,
Say, was I mean or great, deform'd or fair, }
The public scandal or the public care ?
Alas ! thou know'st not ; and thy pride must own
That thou thyself must be as much unknown.
Thus shall thy beauties moulder in the dust,
Thy sparkling eye, thy smiling cheek be lost ;
Thy learned brain shall be to worms a prey
And every curious trace be worn away ;
Learned in vain till thou this secret have,
Or to avoid, or triumph o'er the grave."

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and underneath it the following inscription cut in stone :

“ In this unpolish'd, lonesome cell,
From noise and interruption free,
My thoughts on solemn subjects dwell,
Death, judgment, and eternity.”



But while his sources of enjoyment and mental progress were thus enlarged, his cares and anxieties, by the extension of his concerns, were proportionably increased ; and for many years after his removal to this place, in itself so congenial with his wishes, his bodily health was in a most precarious state. He was seldom free from inward pain, as is feelingly intimated in the close of the preceding lines ; and the attacks were not unfrequently so sudden and violent, that there appeared little prospect of his being long able to bear the toils incident to his situation. His countenance was pale, and his general appearance indicated the acuteness of his complaints. The writer of this account was often witness to these severe sufferings ; and the painful apprehensions respecting the final result of them, threw a gloom over the years of his childhood and youth. By advice of the physicians, he took many strong and powerful medicines, which, though they might be effectual in dissolving the stone, the supposed cause of all his misery, at the same time were injurious to his general health of body.

During the vacations, he frequently visited Liverpool, and derived some advantage from change of air and sea-bathing. In one of his letters from thence, now before me, dated July 19, 1776, he thus writes :

"I should be glad to know how you are in your health and spirits. May the Lord give you peace and comfort in your souls! Through the goodness of God, I find myself better than when I left home. The change of air, the use of water, and relaxation from the toil of the school, have been of great service to me. I have likewise experienced thus far much composure of mind. Goodness and mercy still follow me! O let us unite in praising our kind benefactor for all his mercies!"

In another, dated July 22, written from Chester :

"I hope I am in some measure kept sensible of Divine mercy, and of my own unworthiness. It has been a humbling season with me since I left home. My soul breathes after nothing so much as fellowship with God, and the enjoyment of him. How empty and vain is all with which this world can flatter us! May the Lord draw us more and more towards himself, that we may love him in sincerity, and live to his honour. May the Almighty bless you and my dear children!—Give my love to them. I cannot enlarge. Peace be with you!"

His heavy and long continued afflictions did not in general prevent the discharge of his ministerial duties, or his arduous exertions in the education of youth; but in some respects gave an additional interest to his sermons, which he delivered with the solemnity of one on the verge of eternity, and expecting soon to give up his account to God.

The regular increase of the congregation at Wainsgate at length convinced almost every one of the absolute necessity of a larger and more suitable place of worship. A plot of ground in the village of Hebdenbridge, as being central, was purchased, but soon after exchanged for another near it, in a still more convenient situation, on which a plain, commodious building, capable of containing from five to six hundred persons, was erected in the year 1777. The plan of it was so much approved, that it has been, with some slight variations, the model followed in the numerous meeting-houses since built throughout the neighbourhood. It was undertaken by a few individuals of property, who advanced the money, which, being in due time refunded, the place was vested in the hands of trustees.

A printed statement was about this time drawn up, with a view to solicit the aid of the benevolent, stating the circumstances which rendered a new erection necessary.

A few passages selected from it may not be unacceptable to the reader.

“ The place where we have hitherto met to worship God was considerably too small for the congregation. In winter it was extremely cold, and in the summer season very uncomfortably crowded; so that persons of delicate constitutions were discouraged from attending on the means of grace. As to its situation, it was convenient for the neighbourhood for which it was first built; but the chief increase of the congregation being from another quarter, in a course of years it was found inconvenient for the greater part of those

who gave attendance there. This was a matter of complaint for a long time, and motions were repeatedly made for a removal, which were overruled by the objections of a few individuals. But the necessity of a new meeting-house appeared, at length, in so strong a light to the body of the people who attended under the ministry of the word, that it was judged a matter of duty to set about it, for the peace of the church, and the advancement and prosperity of religion among us.

“ Our brethren who remain at Wainsgate are embodied together, and have a settled minister ; we are at peace and friendship with them. Our own prospects are more encouraging than we could have expected, since, notwithstanding the separation, we have almost double the number of hearers that could be accommodated in the old place. Peace and harmony prevail among us, and we trust that as the Lord has thus far smiled on the undertaking, he will crown it with still farther tokens of his gracious approbation, by giving success to his precious Gospel.”

The expense of the meeting-house, with the ground, was about five hundred pounds, which was partly liquidated by subscriptions in the church and congregation, and partly by generous benefactions from other quarters.

Those who remained at Wainsgate* were principally persons who had taken a part in its erection, and

* In the year 1815, this meeting-house, though it had previously undergone many repairs, was found to be in so unsafe a state, that it was judged necessary to take it down ; and soon after a new and more commodious place was erected on the same situation.

attended the ministry of Mr. Smith; or their descendants, whose attachment to the place cannot be wondered at. Their number was, at least, equal to the congregation in Mr. Smith's time, so that those who assembled at the new place, a few individuals excepted, might be considered as the happy fruits of Mr. F.'s personal labours. On this account, as well as his removal to a distance from Wainsgate, the path which duty pointed out to him was evident. The great object of a minister ought to be extensive usefulness, and to co-operate in those plans that are most likely to promote it. As Hebdenbridge was in the centre of a populous neighbourhood, many were now enabled to attend Divine worship statedly, who, from the distance, could only do it occasionally before. This circumstance also rendered it less necessary to hold week-day itinerant meetings, for preaching in those parts which were at some distance. The infirm state of his bodily health, and the engagements in his family, rendered laborious exertions in this way almost impracticable. Riding on horseback, and walking, were both attended with uneasy sensations; and he was often, through extremity of pain, obliged to lie, during the day, in particular postures, on benches or chairs.

In the year 1778, he published his "Advice to Youth, or the Advantages of early Piety." The number of books written expressly for the use of young persons was, at that time, comparatively small; and of those few, scarcely any, on religious subjects. On this account, something of the kind was much wanted; and the reception this book met with from the public far more than equalled his expectations. It appears, from many passages that might be referred to, that it was

composed under the pressure of deep affliction, and intended as a legacy to his beloved pupils, from whom he considered himself as likely to be soon removed by the stroke of death. The following extract, from the preface, shows how little we know of futurity, and how incompetent we are to answer the inquiry, "How long have I to live?"

"The great Searcher of hearts knows the design of this undertaking, and it is humbly laid at his feet, who alone can make it successful. I am conscious of many defects in it. Perhaps the candid will admit, as some excuse for these, the many weighty concerns which lie on my hands, and the continued afflictions with which it has pleased the Lord to exercise me. While the pen is in my hands, death and eternity are before my eyes. The youths who are, or have been, under my care, as a master; those with whom I have to do in the public exercise of my ministry, and especially my own dear children; may look on these hints as the advice of a dying friend, who is most tenderly and affectionately concerned for their present and eternal welfare."

Near as the event of nature's dissolution appeared, at that time, in his own apprehensions, the Almighty was pleased to lengthen out the thread of life to nearly *forty years* beyond that period. The greater part of those for whose use it was primarily written, and whom he addressed as on the verge of eternity, preceded him to the grave; and he had the satisfaction to know that it had been rendered useful in reclaiming many from vice, and leading them into the ways of piety and true wisdom.

It is evident, from this publication, and from the uniform plan which he adopted, and adhered to, in conducting the seminary, that, as he felt the infinite importance of religion on his own mind, so he considered it as an incumbent duty to endeavour to instil into the minds of the young the principles of piety and morality. Like Abraham, his aim was to command 'his children and household to keep the way of the Lord, to do judgment and justice.' And those who knew him best, and enjoyed his religious instructions, will bear witness that his *manner* of doing it was such as to win the heart and affections, entirely remote from that moroseness and reserve which tend to increase rather than subdue prejudice.

He was deeply sensible of the importance of learning; but he ever considered the *fear of God* as entering essentially into the character of the truly wise and accomplished youth.

At the period when this seminary was established the number of similar institutions, in this part of the kingdom, was very small. Population was very limited; and education was not much attended to, except by those who were intended for the learned professions; but the influx of trade and the intercourse which this produced with the higher and more polished ranks of society, soon pointed out the importance of literature to those who were engaged in commercial pursuits; and in proportion as this impression is felt, will be the regard which young persons afterwards retain for those places where they first enjoyed these advantages. Next to the paternal abode, will be a strong attachment to the academic shades where the bright and cheerful season of youth was spent. The thoughts which a charm-

ing poet penned on a distant view of Eton College, have often been applied by the youth grown up to manhood on revisiting more humble seats of science.

“ Ah, happy hills ! ah, pleasing shade !
Ah, fields beloved in vain ;
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain.
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.”

The sight of those places where youthful amusements and innocent pleasures were enjoyed, greatly assists the recollection of that train of feelings and ideas which then occupied the mind. The rocks and trees, the murmuring streams, and relics of frail memorials, made to perpetuate their memory, when recognized in future life, seem almost to assume the power of speech, and to tell of days long since passed, but never to return ; of companions once so dear, now perhaps cut off by the premature stroke of death, or separated either by misfortune, or some other cause, to such a distance as to preclude the hope of ever enjoying their society again.

Often, very often has the writer of these lines observed these emotions ; while numbers after a lapse of years, revisiting these scenes, have rambled, with inexpressible feelings of interest, in the adjoining woods, fresh recollections starting up at almost every step. The seat occupied in the school, the station of the master, the marks intended to be indelible, cut in the

rocks or footpaths, &c. altogether produced an effect on the mind, which may be better conceived than described. The reader, or at least the young reader, who has participated in these feelings, will it is hoped pardon the introduction of these reflections, which have almost imperceptibly absorbed the attention of the writer, while tracing back the period when the beauty of science first opened to his view, when it might be literally said with respect to himself and his youthful companions: "Gay hope was theirs, by fancy fed, the sunshine of the breast," and in reviewing which, many incidents start to his recollection, to which he may apply the language of the poet, *quorum pars fui*. He well remembers the circumstances and the views under which the "Advice to Youth" was written; and this remembrance has tended greatly to enhance the value of it to him, as an individual.

The publication of this work contributed more than any of the author's prior writings to make him known to the religious public of different denominations, not only in his own neighbourhood, but in other parts of the kingdom. The style is plain, and suited to the capacities of young persons; the arguments are forcible, urged with the greatest earnestness and affection; and still more deeply to impress the mind with the subject, the ideas are frequently comprised in verse, at the close of the chapters. Every page bears the strongest marks of the sense the author had of the importance of his subject, and his desire to promote the best interests of those whom he addresses. If proofs were necessary, this book contains the most ample proofs, that the doctrine he taught as a minister and an instructor of youth had

the most direct tendency to promote holiness of heart and life.*

* Many fugitive pieces which he wrote about this time for the use of his pupils (some of whom gave evidence of true piety) yet remain. One of these is here selected ; though not distinguished by poetic excellence, it has merit which gives it a still higher claim to the attention of the juvenile reader.

“ THE SCHOOL-BOY'S RESOLUTION.

“ May heavenly mercy lend an ear,
To hear a youth's request,
That I my Maker's name may fear,
And be for ever blest.

“ O might I learn his will to know,
His holy word to love !
That I may serve him here below,
And dwell with him above.

“ My parents, who with tender care
Do all my wants supply,
With grateful love and humble fear,
I'll honour till I die.

“ May but kind Heaven grant me grace,
My studies to pursue,
Learning's mysterious path I'll trace,
With pleasure ever new.

“ My lesson thus my joy shall be,
My book my constant play:
Then will my friends the progress see
I'm making ev'ry day.

“ My native tongue I'll strive to learn,
My study this shall be,
That I its beauties may discern,
And speak it properly.

The numerous editions through which it has passed are sufficient proofs of its acceptance with the public ; and notwithstanding the variety of other works since written for the use of young persons, it is still highly deserving of their attention. In some of the later editions, considerable improvements have been made.

The perusal of this publication, when it first appeared, was the happy means of bringing the late Mrs. Oldham, of Messinden Abbey, to an acquaintance with the best things, in the early period of her life. She resided at that time near Halifax, and wrote to the author on the subject. This was the commencement of a friendship which continued undiminished, through all the changing

“ 'Twould be a shame to leave the school
And not to understand,
By method and grammatic rule,
The language of our land.

“ In writing fair, I'll strive to shine,
And every youth excel :
Improving still in every line,
My copy minding well.

“ Arithmetic shall oft engage
My study and my care ;
Then to revolve the classic page
I'll eagerly prepare.

“ May I my kind instructors love,
And not their words despise ;
But by my grateful conduct prove
How much their help I prize.

“ Each path of danger may I shun,
And choose the way of truth ;
'Tis pleasant in that way to run,
E'en in the days of youth.”

scenes of life, till death removed her out of this world. To those who had any knowledge of her character it needs no eulogium. For sweetness and affability of disposition she had few equals; and of her good sense and unaffected piety, the numerous letters in possession of her friends bear the strongest proofs. She had learned through grace, to conduct herself with Christian patience and fortitude in the shade of adversity; and, which is a still greater trial of real religion, to move with condescension and steadiness in the sunshine of prosperity. A long and interesting letter from this lady now lies before me, dated Utrecht, Sept. 3, 1783; containing an account of what she saw in Holland, interspersed with many pious reflections: at the conclusion she says, "I recommend myself to your prayers. I can assure you my spirits are scarcely equal to this expedition; but the appearance of discontent would be ungrateful to my friends here. I shall be happy to see England again: God grant that in this succession of objects and circumstances, I may be enabled to keep my heart with all diligence."

In the former part of this biographical account several intimations have been given of the views, at an early period adopted by the subject of it, relative to the *Gospel call*, or the obligations of mankind in general to believe and receive the Gospel. It was a sentiment he maintained with great firmness, yet with the true spirit of a Christian pastor; and in the progress of his ministry he had the satisfaction to see his brethren gradually freed from those shackles which had cramped

their energies, and been a means of preventing the success of their labours. Without wishing to make it a point of controversy, much less bringing it forward as a matter of speculation in the pulpit, *he acted upon it*; and the effect produced in the extension of the cause, was a sufficient answer to the objections of those who had been of a contrary opinion. The celebrated publication by Mr. Fuller did not make its appearance till some years after; but the following extract from the "Advice to Youth," shows a coincidence in the views of these writers, though at that period entirely strangers to each other. It is acknowledged that some objections might justly be made against the introduction of the subject at all, by way of disquisition, in a work designed expressly for the use of young persons. The text is, 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' In explaining what is included in *remembering* him, it is observed that it must intend more than a bare recollection of him. "It includes a remembering him according to the revelation he has made of himself, it takes in what we are to believe concerning him, the confidence we are to repose in him, and a practical regard to his commands. Should any one say, "Is this required of fallen man?" I answer, who can doubt it, that considers the law which we are under, as the descendants of Adam? Though man has lost his power, God cannot lose his authority, nor the law its binding efficacy.

"But should it be inquired further, "Since man has not power to know, love, and fear God himself, wherefore is he called upon to do it?" I answer, this is but just the same as if you should ask, "Since man is now become carnal in his mind, and in enmity to God,

wherefore does the law of God still require him to love the Lord with all his mind, soul, and strength? " But further, since we know it is so, wherefore should we puzzle ourselves about the reason *why* it is so? If we could find out no other reason why the Judge of all the earth has appointed this and that, his will and good pleasure alone should satisfy us. If in his Word he calls the young to *remember* their Creator, the sinner to repent, believe the Gospel and be converted, though they have in themselves no power to do it, let us remember that there must be some reason for it, and propriety in it, though we should not be able to discern the one or the other.

" There are some points concerning which, perhaps, we shall never have full satisfaction, till we come into the world of light, where every doubt will be solved, and every difficulty removed. ' What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.' Some imagine that these, and such like commands, only intend an external reformation. They might as well say, that when God's law requires us to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, it means only external acts of love. And who will assert this? Besides, is it not evident that the repentance called for is connected with pardon? ' Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Let the wicked forsake,' &c. Such was the repentance to which Simon Magus was exhorted, when he was discerned to be ' in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity.'* Why should the

* Acts viii. 22, 23. In these and such like exhortations there is nothing inconsistent with the secret purposes of God. Neither the

ministers of the Gospel scruple to follow their Lord and Master, who, though he assures us none can come to him, except the Father draw them, yet often addresses the consciences of sinners in terms which by some, perhaps, would be condemned as inconsistent and legal, were they not known to be his? See how he addresses, not his disciples, but the multitude, John vi. 27, Luke xiii. 24—27. Peter and the other Apostles copied after their Divine Master. This is evident from the whole book of the Acts of the Apostles.

“Though sinners are void of spiritual life, they are not mere machines, but rational creatures, possessed of understandings, wills, affections, and consciences. And if it is the will of God, by calling them, through the instrumentality of his ministers, to *repent*, be *converted*, be *reconciled to God*, and the like; to convince their judgements, awaken their consciences, and impress their hearts with a just sense of the nature and importance of these things, what are we that we should call in question the propriety and reasonableness of this appointment?

“If the author errs in this point, he errs in the company of almost every evangelical writer of the last age, of our great reformers themselves, and of the most successful ministers of the Gospel that have appeared since their day. This is some satisfaction. But his aim has been, ever since he engaged in the ministry, to follow the example of Christ and his disciples; and in the view

minister nor his unconverted hearers know any thing of these. But in the ministration of the Gospel, men are dealt with simply as sinners. God's purpose concerning them is to us out of sight.”

to this he has been particularly led to study the Acts of the Apostles, being desirous to acquit himself in the awful work, so as to be 'pure from the blood of all men.' He rejoices in the doctrines of distinguishing grace as revealed for the comfort of saints: but when he addresses a perishing sinner,* he thinks he is not to inquire about his election, but to testify to him the necessity of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

The length of this quotation may require some apology; but it is of considerable value, as containing a clear and explicit view of his sentiments on a point of great importance. It was this view of the subject which led him to exert himself, both by his writings and by his ministry, for the conversion of sinners, trusting that the same holy unction and Divine blessing which had accompanied the earnest and unwearied labours of God's servants, in thus calling sinners to repentance, would still succeed the use of the same means.*

* During the repeated visits which Mr. F. paid to London, he had the happiness to form a friendly connexion with many valuable private Christians, of great eminence in their day. One of his most intimate friends was the late James Smith, Esq. of Colebrooke Row, Islington, a deacon of Dr. Stennett's church. He was a warm and zealous supporter of the various institutions established to promote the interests of religion. The following extracts from one of his letters, written soon after the publication of the "Advice to Youth," exhibit both the pious feelings of his own mind, and his sympathy with his friend, who was at the time under the pressure of heavy afflictions. It is dated March 6, 1779. "I received yours in December, and am ashamed of my long silence. Allow me to say it is not owing to any want of regard, for I respect you much; I feel most sincerely for you under your great afflictions; but you are in

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In the year 1779, a few persons at Leeds, of the Baptist denomination, hired a part of the Old Assembly Rooms, and requested Mr. Fawcett and the Rev. J. Parker, of Barnoldswick, to preach on the occasion of its being opened for public worship. It is said, that Mr. F. delivered a very ingenious sermon, which was greatly admired, from Neh. iv. 2: 'What do these feeble Jews?' This may be considered as the commencement of the Baptist interest in Leeds. In 1781, he preached a judicious and solemn discourse, at the

the hands of a Covenant God, who knows what is best. I am glad to find you are so resigned; 'tis your Father's good pleasure thus to prepare you for himself. Heaven will make a rich amends. The book you refer to (meaning the "Advice to Youth") I have not yet seen, but will obtain a copy the first opportunity. I showed your letter to Dr. Stennett, when I first received it, and he evidenced great tenderness and affection for you. He is tolerably well at present, but often otherwise. I am glad to see from yours, that real religion is on the whole getting ground in your parts. I trust it does so elsewhere. I often think that this is the best support we have, and the greatest encouragement that the Lord will not utterly forsake us, though many things look very dark at present. It is of little consequence to us as individuals how we are conveyed home, whether in a storm or otherwise; the inheritance is sure. There is a rest, and a secure rest too, remaining for God's Noahs, and not far distant."

In a postscript, written some time after, Mr. Smith mentions having met with and perused the publication referred to in the former part of the letter, expressing in strong terms his approbation of it as likely to be productive of the most essential good.

Mr. Smith died December 20, 1803, aged seventy-six. His biographer says of him, "He was a gentleman well known to the religious world, and respected wherever known. His piety, zeal, and suavity of manners, entitled him to the esteem of a numerous acquaintance, among whom he attained the name of Demetrius, 'having a good report of all men and of the truth itself.'"

opening of the present Baptist chapel in that town, from Gen. xxviii. 17: 'How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

Towards the close of the year 1779, and in the commencement of 1780, Mr. F. was deprived, by the stroke of death, of four of his most intimate and faithful friends. He felt their removal most sensibly, not only as an individual, and for the sake of the families they left behind, but on account of the loss the neighbourhood in which they lived, and the church of God, sustained. The persons here referred to, were the late Mr. Wm. Greenwood, of Oxenhope, near Haworth, who died Sept. 30, 1779; Mr. Wm. Hudson, of Gildersome, near Leeds, who died Nov. 7, 1779; Mr. Adam Holden, of Halifax; and the Rev. James Hartley, of Haworth. The death of the first three was sudden, particularly that of Mr. Hudson, who, though apparently in the vigour of health, dropped down in a fit of apoplexy, and expired a short time after. In memory of this gentleman, he wrote a poem, entitled the "Death of Eumenio," the name by which he designated his friend, on account of the candour, humanity, and benevolence, by which he was so eminently distinguished.

The most intimate friendship, as appears from some of Mr. Hudson's letters, had long subsisted between them, which the congeniality of their dispositions, and the similarity of their views on religious subjects, tended to cement and increase.

The following lines, extracted from the poem, are evidently the expression of genuine grief and sincere attachment:

"Here is Eumenio's grave! O my full heart!
 A flood of tears would give thee some relief;
 Here sleeps the breathless dust of him I loved,
 Beloved of all: whose heavenly virtues shone
 With an unusual brightness to the close
 Of his dear life, alas! (for us) too short!
 He was a public blessing to mankind;
 And public grief attends his sudden fall:
 Each friendly bosom heaves a bursting groan;
 Each neighbour pours a sympathizing tear;
 Each servant mourns the best of masters dead.

"As heavenly Watts lamented Gunston's fall,
 So, dear Eumenio, I lament for thee.
 Inferior is my strain, not so my love.
 Friendship divine, that sweet and sacred tie,
 Had bound my heart to thee, and made us one:
 Hence doubly painful is the parting hour;
 Hence I this grave with nightly tears bedew."

A few elegiac verses on the death of Mr. Wm. Greenwood are subjoined to this poem, descriptive of his amiable and charitable disposition, and of the deep interest excited in the neighbourhood, by the death of one so much beloved as a husband, a parent, and a friend to the poor, as well as to his equals.

Mr. F. preached a funeral sermon for Mr. Hudson, from Ps. xii. 1: 'Help Lord, for the godly man faileth,' &c.; and for Mr. Wm. Greenwood, from Rom. iv. 20: 'He staggered not at the promise of God,' &c.

Soon after the decease of the Rev. Mr. Hartley, the "Reign of Death," a poem occasioned by his death, was published, with a funeral sermon on the same event by Mr. Crabtree. A tribute is also paid in this publication to the memory of Mr. Adam Holden, under the poetic name of Philander, or Lover of Mankind. By a mysterious providence, he, as well as Mr. Greenwood,

was snatched away unexpectedly, leaving behind them a numerous offspring of tender age.

“Midst scenes of business and domestic cares,
Death's hand unseen the fatal shaft prepares.
A fierce disease Philander's life assails,
Baffles the healing art——
His God sustain'd him in that gloomy hour,
When all created comforts lose their power.
When nature faints, and death's impending shade,
In awful darkness, hovers round the bed.”

The Rev. James Hartley had not completed his 58th year when he departed this life; but the delicacy of his constitution, being much afflicted with the asthma, had long impressed the furrows of age on his countenance. The summer before his death, he had a paralytic stroke, succeeded by all the symptoms of a consumption, which gradually brought him down to the dust of earth. The writer most distinctly recollects accompanying his parent to Mr. Hartley's house, a short time before he died, where they also met the Rev. Mr. Crabtree. The object of their meeting was to value his books, the chief property he had in the world, that they might be sold for the benefit of his wife, so soon about to become a widow. His wish was 'to set his house in order,' and to make every necessary arrangement previous to his departure. He was still able to sit up, and evidenced an extraordinary degree of calmness, composure, and even cheerfulness. When Mr. Crabtree, who had engaged to preach in the evening, was about to go into the pulpit, Mr. Hartley re-

quested that he would not pray for his recovery, as he was satisfied it was the will of God to take him hence, but rather that all needful support might be afforded in the prospect of the closing scene.

The high esteem which Mr. F. long had for the excellent man, whose end was now approaching, is evident from the preceding part of this narrative; and in this poem he exhibits his character as a Christian minister, in the strongest and most pathetic language, as one who well knew how to appreciate his worth. The following lines are descriptive of the closing scene :

“ But dear Euphronius felt his frame decay,
By slow degrees his vitals waste away ;
His happy mind, composed to sweetest peace,
Wish'd only for the day of his release.

“ Clear was his prospect of the vast reward
Of heavenly bliss ; by sovereign grace prepared
The setting sun was cloudless, bright, and clear,
Rejoicing that the happy goal was near.
Celestial comforts all his powers sustain,
Support his fainting heart, and ease his pain,
Till he resigns the sad remains of breath,
Infolded in the friendly arms of death.”*

* The Rev. Isaac Slee, who had before been a clergyman of the episcopal church at Plumpton, in the county of Cumberland, was Mr. Hartley's immediate successor. He preached with great acceptance and success for about three years. His constitution was delicate, and being invited to officiate at the funeral of the late Rev. Mr. Smith's widow at Wainsgate, he caught a severe cold, through the inclemency of the weather, which terminated in a pulmonary consumption. He died Jan. 13, 1784. At his request Mr. Crabtree preached on the occasion, from Job. xix. 25; and Mr. Fawcett delivered the oration at the grave. Mr. Whitfield, of Hamsterley, published an account of his life, from which he appears to have been eminently pious and conscientious.

Soon after the death of Mr. Hartley, a letter was received from Mr. Medley, of Liverpool, from which the following passages are taken.

“ L——, Feb. 14, 1780.

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,

“ To-day at noon I had the opportunity of perusing your affectionate and mournful letter to Mr. Walley. The first intelligence of the death of Mr. Hartley, and also of Mr. Sugden, was conveyed to us by it. From the little I knew of Mr. Hartley, I must say, ‘A great man is fallen in our Israel, indeed.’ I shall ever feel a respect for his memory. In reading the account you give of his last hours, how justly may we adopt the language of the Psalmist: ‘Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.’ Our good and gracious God has fulfilled all his counsel, respecting these his servants in this world, and now he has in loving-kindness and mercy taken them to himself. O that I may not be slothful, but ‘work while it is day,’ and ‘be through grace a follower of them, who do now through faith and patience inherit the promises.’ In this vale of tears we must expect these mournful, and for a season parting strokes; but blessed be God, the scene will ere long change, and change undoubtedly for the better. I was yesterday led to speak from Heb. xi. 40: ‘God having provided some *better thing* for us.’ And will not he who has provided them for his people put them at last into the eternal possession of them? Most certainly he will. You know who has said, ‘I am he that liveth.’ Blessed be his glorious name, because he liveth, his saints shall live also. Ministers must die. Our heads must soon be laid in the

silent dust. But our Divine Master wanted us not before we were born, nor will he need us as instruments to carry on his work when we are no more here. 'The government is on his shoulders,' and Zion lies near his heart; so that he will most assuredly make her a praise in the earth, and cause her to prosper, whatever our misgiving fears may suggest to the contrary. Yes, my dear brother, I humbly hope we shall shout and sing with the redeemed, to all eternity, 'He hath done all things well.'

"The sympathetic grief of my heart has been excited by the account you give, in another part of your letter, of the falls and backslidings of some concerning whom you hoped well. This, to an affectionate minister, is in many respects a trial worse than death itself. My own painful experience has taught me this. We have lately been under the necessity of excluding several members for immoral conduct. On account of these things I have been brought so low, as frequently to say, 'If I had not the precious word of God to fly to, pray over, plead, and depend upon, I must have given all up.' Both outward and inward trials have multiplied upon us; but blessed be God, all this does not prove that we are not in the right way, but rather the contrary; for it is said, 'We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom.'

"On account of bodily weakness, and the loss of my voice, I have been for a long time almost laid aside, but through tender mercy I am now much recovered. I hope I can say I have been kept during my indisposition from a murmuring, impatient spirit; and if I have not felt raptures of joy, I have derived solid and substantial support from Scripture.

"I most affectionately commend you to God, and am yours in the best bonds,

"SAM. MEDLEY."

In addition to the affecting breaches which have now been noticed, another event took place some time after, which, though long expected, must have been painful to his private feelings. His widowed mother, who had been for years confined to a bed of languishing, waiting with Christian patience and resignation for her release, died March 2, 1782, aged 79. On this occasion he preached a funeral sermon, from Rev. xiv. 10: 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,' &c.

About the year 1783, a favourable change began to take place in his health; though for several preceding years he had been so much indisposed, that there was little, if any probability that his life would be continued much longer.

At one period he had been incapacitated for his public labours, during the space of four or five weeks. The paroxysms were so acute, and the attacks so frequent, that, as has been hinted before, he was in the habit of taking strong medicinal preparations both to afford some present alleviation of pain, and to remove the supposed cause of his indisposition. Notwithstanding these means were continued for a long period, he experienced no relief. To freedom from pain, he was a stranger. His extreme sufferings gradually wasted his frame, and produced a constant fever. In this distressing situation he resolved to put himself under the care of his highly respected friend Mr. Hey, of Leeds, and to undergo the operation of having the stone taken out, which was considered as the occasion of his misery. That

eminent surgeon, when he saw the debilitated situation of his patient, declined performing the operation, from an idea that death would almost inevitably ensue. At his recommendation, Mr. F. in a great measure discontinued the use of medicine, and took more exercise; by means of which his appetite improved, and his bodily strength increased, so that he became better able to endure the pain, from which, though greatly mitigated, he was seldom entirely free. It is not improbable that the medicines before mentioned might have dissolved the stone, and that change of habits prevented the formation of another.

About the same time he began to wear his own hair, instead of a large white wig. This alteration, together with his more healthy complexion, occasioned such a change in his external appearance, that his distant friends, for some time, scarcely knew him at first sight. A ludicrous mistake, arising principally from his uncommon timidity in preaching before strangers, and especially before ministers, was often mentioned by him in social converse. A poor man, to whom he gave his last appendage of this kind, attended the Sabbath evening lecture at Brearley Hall. Observing a person thus attired, in a distant part of the room, and not recollecting the circumstance just mentioned, he was much agitated till near the close of the service; when, on a more distinct view of his countenance, he recognised his humble friend, who had been the object of his charity.

Finding that exercise was of great advantage to his health, he for some time amused himself at his leisure hours with a turner's lathe, and afterwards with book-binding, an employment which, while it afforded exercise, was more congenial with his taste. As his bodily

health improved, the vigour of his mind also increased, and his exertions were unwearied in the discharge of the duties of his station, to which he found himself more equal. The extended intercourse he now enjoyed with many persons, of both sexes, eminent for piety and taste, while it was a source of pleasure, was no less so of mutual improvement.

The following verses, inscribed to him, under the name of Abdiel, written by one of these associates, have been found among his papers.

“ Sequester’d from the haunts where folly drowns
 Each serious thought, derides each mild reproof,
 And revels in the lap of earthly bliss,
 Oft may the lonesome cell engage thy hours,
 To meditate the task which God enjoins :
 Delightful task ! O Abdiel, to plan
 Thy people’s welfare and secure thy own.
 Delightful task ! to form thy tender youth,
 To root within their minds the great concerns
 Of life and death, of judgment, and of heaven.
 And may the Power, who looks propitious down
 On all his servants, bless thy pious care,
 Assist thy labour, and reward thy love !
 So shalt thou see these infant hearts aspire
 To things divine, their manhood clasp and guard
 The Christian faith, assert their Maker’s praise,
 And vindicate his ways ; so shall the peace
 Unknown to vice adorn thy useful life,
 And a new vigour o’er thy frame diffuse—
 Blest antepast of immortality.

“ SYLVIO.”

In the year 1782, the first edition of “ Hymns, adapted to the Circumstances of Public Worship and Private Devotion,” made its appearance. Several of these hymns, of which a new and neat edition has recently been published, had been composed at a very early

period in life; others on occasions which sometimes occurred in the long course of his ministry, when he preached from subjects which were not particularly referred to in Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns. For this inimitable work no one could have a greater value than himself; it was in unison with his avowed sentiments, and touched the finest feelings of his soul. On no occasions did his mind approach so much to holy rapture as when joining with the great congregation, at the close of public worship, in singing these divine compositions. He had not the most distant intention, in publishing the above-mentioned poems, to interfere with a work so long and so universally admired, but to furnish his friends with a humble supplement for occasional use; several of them being in metres not to be found in Dr. Watts's Hymn-book, and adapted to favourite tunes of recent composition. As he observes in the preface, it had "been customary with him for many years, after having digested his thoughts on some portion of the Divine word, to sum up the leading ideas in a few plain verses, to be sung after the service, that the recollection of his hearers might be aided, and that the truths he had been attempting to explain and enforce might be more deeply impressed on their minds." Copies of these hymns had been frequently circulated in a fugitive form, and it was in compliance with the earnest request of many, that they were at length collected into a volume. He observes, that they had been (whatever imperfections may be discerned in them) the result of much labour, "and were principally composed in the midnight hours previous to the Sabbath, while others were enjoying the sweets of balmy rest."

Another portion of these poems was not intended so

much to be introduced in public worship, as for perusal in private. Among these may be enumerated the imitation of the Latin prayer of Mary Queen of Scots, the Christian Soldier, and the Hymn on Spring; to the last of these the notice of Reviewers and the insertion of it in the "Introduction to the English Reader," have given considerable publicity. It is unquestionably one of the happiest of his poetical effusions, though produced with less effort than others of inferior merit.* It was

* The following is a copy of it: besides this, there are several others in the "Hymn Book" on similar subjects, particularly the 51st and the 153rd.

SPRING.

I.

"Lo! the bright, the rosy morning
Calls me forth to take the air;
Cheerful spring, with smiles returning,
Ushers in the new-born year;
Nature, now in all her beauty,
With her gentle moving tongue,
Prompts me to the pleasing duty
Of a grateful morning song.

II.

"See the early blossoms springing,
See the jocund lambkins play;
Hear the lark and linnet singing
Welcome to the new-born day:
Vernal music, softly sounding,
Echoes through the vocal grove;
Nature, now with life abounding,
Swells with harmony and love.

III.

"Yonder rise the lofty mountains,
Clad with herbage fresh and green;
Playing round the crystal fountains,
There the lowing herds are seen:

composed on a fine morning in spring, while enjoying the scenery he there describes. This has not always been the case with those who have excelled in the description of rural scenes. With them imagination and

There, the stately forest bending,
Thrives amidst the limpid streams ;
Whilst the source of day ascending,
Crowns it with his mildest beams.

IV.

“ Now the kind refreshing showers
Water all the plains around ;
Springing grass and painted flowers
O'er the smiling meads abound :
Now, their vernal dress assuming,
Leafy robes adorn the trees ;
Odours now, the air perfuming,
Sweetly swell the gentle breeze.

V.

“ Now the tuneful tribes delight us,
Perching on the bloomy spray,
And to gratitude invite us,
With their sweetly dying lay :
Now the shrill-tongued blackbird singing,
Loudly sounds its Maker's praise ;
All the spacious valleys ringing,
Teach us thankful songs to raise.

VI.

“ Praise to thee, thou great Creator,
Praise be thine from every tongue ;
Join, my soul, with every creature,
Join the universal song ;
For ten thousand blessings given,
For the richest gifts bestow'd,
Sound his praise through earth and heaven,
Sound Jehovah's praise aloud.”

recollection have often supplied the place of actual enjoyment. The biographer of Thomson informs us, that his "*Seasons*" were written in a situation most unfavourable for seeing what he so admirably describes. These miscellaneous poems, with many others which might be referred to in this volume, principally owe their origin to a friendly connexion with a venerable widow and her three daughters, who resided at Gildersome near Leeds. The deceased husband had been one of Dr. Doddridge's pupils, and having settled as minister at Gildersome, died in the prime of life. Enjoying a decent competency, the attention of the widowed mother, who was eminently distinguished by her sterling sense and piety, was devoted to the education of her young family. Her exertions to train them up in the ways of virtue and religion were attended with a Divine blessing; they all became members of the Baptist church at Gildersome. For Dr. Young's "*Night Thoughts*" she had a particular regard, and frequently mentioned having had the pleasure of seeing and expressing her gratitude to a writer to whom she felt herself so much indebted. The younger branches of her family fully entered into her views and sentiments. Much of their time was spent in reading books on religious subjects, and on different branches of polite learning, particularly poetry, in which some of them had a talent for original composition. Mr. F. being often engaged to visit Gildersome in his ministerial capacity, became acquainted with this exemplary family, and the mother, accompanied by one or more of her daughters, occasionally accepted the invitation to spend a few weeks during the summer at Brearley Hall. To this they were induced from motives of friendship, and

particularly that they might have the opportunity of attending the ministry of one whose views were so congenial with their own. Many fragments of poetry addressed to this pious family yet remain, besides those contained in the volume of hymns. In a humble way, the solicitation of these friends produced the same effect which the hints dropped by Mrs. Unwin and others of Cowper's inmates, sometimes in a playful manner, and at others in the form of request, produced, in directing his attention to the composition of those works which have immortalized his name.

It has often been remarked that there is a close connexion between a taste for poetry and music. Milton, after he was blind, dissipated the tedium which he might otherwise have felt, by playing upon the organ. The happy effect of music in affording a temporary relief from the sense of pain, was often evidenced by the subject of this memoir. Upon his bodily frame it appeared to produce an effect somewhat similar to the harp of David on the disordered mind of the King of Israel. This was the principal relaxation which he allowed himself from his severer studies. The acquaintance with the family now mentioned greatly tended to enlarge the sources of enjoyment, in this respect, to himself and his domestic circle. He was particularly partial to the solemn strains adapted to the full-toned swelling organ. The hundredth Psalm tune, said to be composed by Martin Luther, was his favourite; and the delight with which he sometimes listened to parts of Handel's Messiah, rehearsed in his own house, will not soon be forgotten by those who were present. The charms of the music, however, were in themselves an inferior consideration. The sublimity of the words, as descriptive of the suffer-

ings, the character, the offices, and triumphs of the Messiah, to which the melodies were so well adapted, formed the principal attraction. The objections which some good men have made to the public exhibition of this and other pieces of sacred music, as performances, were in this case inapplicable ; as the hours devoted to these purposes evidently had a tendency, both at the time and on recollection, to inspire and promote devout feelings. If the acts of praise and thanksgiving will form an essential part of the blissful employment of heaven, surely it is the duty, as well as the privilege, of those who are waiting for the consummation of their hopes and wishes, to begin their songs on earth. The more we enter into the true spirit of religion, the more we shall be desirous to anticipate that ' song of Moses and of the Lamb,' which will resound through the angelic choir. What that song will be, exceeds the powers of human imagination fully to conceive : but in retracing the period now referred to, the writer is reminded of numbers now no more in this world, and in particular of the family, the incidental mention of which gave rise to these observations, who have left an honourable testimony behind them of the power and efficacy of Divine grace, and now join the blissful society of heaven ; where those anthems which they often sung on earth, with tears in their eyes, are exchanged for the notes which angels use, and which the beatific vision of God alone can inspire.

In the former part of this work an account has been given of the association which existed in the Baptist denomination, at the time when the subject of this nar-

rative began his public ministry and continued for several years after ; some of the causes of its dissolution were also assigned. An annual lecture was still kept up at some of the places, with a view to maintain a friendly connexion ; but as no letters were written, nor any account of the existing state of the churches brought forward, the advantages of Christian communion were not experienced in such a degree as many wished. Many began to regret the suspension of their associate meetings, which in some measure operate upon the minds of good men, as we may suppose the annual journeys of the children of Israel did upon the pious among them, at the return of the passover. The psalmist David most beautifully describes his feelings on these interesting occasions, ‘ Thither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, to give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.’

A circular letter was in consequence addressed, by several of the ministers, to the churches ; in which they disclaimed every idea of a wish to infringe their liberties and privileges as independent societies, or the remotest attempt to exercise dominion over their faith and consciences. The design being approved of by several of the churches, the first meeting of this kind was held at Colne, May 30 and 31, 1787, on which occasion a letter was read, written by Mr. F. on the privileges and duties of gospel churches. It was intended to explain more particularly the objects they had in view in establishing that union, which was now denominated the Yorkshire and Lancashire Association. About seventeen churches at first entered into the connexion, but the number has been considerably increased both by the accession of some which at first declined to unite, and of others which have been recently established ; ex-

perience having shown that the objects in view were simply to promote the prosperity of the cause of religion and the fellowship of Christians. In the plan of this and other similar associations, now so general among the Baptists, it has been found that there is nothing inconsistent with the rights of private judgment. Public preaching, social prayer, reading the letters from the churches, stating the events which have taken place among them as a religious body in the preceding year, with the circumstances, prosperous or adverse, which led to an increase or diminution of their numbers, the ways and means for promoting the spread of the Gospel, and a circular letter addressed to the churches, are the objects which engage and interest the attention.

It has been questioned by some judicious men, whether an improvement might not be made in the plan of the circular letter, by postponing the writing of it till after the letters from the churches are read ; when the remarks addressed to them might be grounded on their existing situations, as detailed in these letters. This is the method adopted by the Society of Friends in the epistles written for the use of that respectable body of people at the close of their annual meetings ; the advice contained in them is often highly deserving of the attentive perusal of other denominations.

Some advantages, and no doubt inconveniences also, might attend a deviation from the present practice. According to the existing plan, the writer of the letter has an opportunity of taking a retrospective view of the statements at the prior meetings, and of dropping such hints as the case requires. These annual publications, though extensively circulated among the churches, on account of the smallness of the size, and fugitive form, are

seldom carefully preserved, but they are of considerable worth and interest, as they not only have a tendency to direct the attention of ministers to composition, and thus to bring their abilities in this way into exercise, but they collectively exhibit a comprehensive view of the Gospel system in doctrine, and in practice. The letters published by the Northamptonshire and other associations in the south and west of England are many of them of great value. The talents of Fuller, Sutcliffe, Francis, Beddome, Hall, and Ryland, were in early life usefully employed in this way. These ephemeral productions were the prelude of those invaluable works which afterwards made their appearance; and it will no doubt be recollected by many, that a great part of the books published by the subject of this memoir, owed their origin to the sermons he preached, and the circular letters he wrote, on these public occasions. He was often requested to print single sermons, and in some cases he complied; but he had in general a great objection to it, as, however they may arrest the attention, either from their own impressive nature, or from local circumstances, they are often doomed to neglect and sink into oblivion. From this and other considerations he was induced, in several instances, to enlarge upon the ideas he delivered in sermons, and publish them in a more permanent form.

He was, for a long course of years, regularly invited to take part in the public services, at these associated meetings; and he, or his friend Mr. Crabtree, frequently preached the concluding discourses. The subjects he invariably fixed upon, were such as he considered to be of the greatest importance; such as were of general concernment; at once calculated to encourage and

edify the minds of professing Christians, and to awaken the attention of the careless and unconcerned.

In a letter, lately received from a worthy minister in the neighbourhood, after having expressed his sentiments of the deceased, as a minister and a writer, he says, "It is almost forty years since I first heard him preach at an association at Ackrington. The subject was the nature and necessity of religion. At the conclusion of the service, that admirable hymn, composed by himself, and afterwards inserted in his Hymn-book, was sung :

" ' Religion is the chief concern
Of mortals here below :
May I its great importance learn,
Its sovereign virtues know ! ' " &c.

" This sermon was profitable to many ; and has left a strong and lasting impression on my mind.

" A few years ago, he was engaged on a similar occasion at Bacup ; the text was, Rev. v. 12 : ' Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,' &c. I never saw a congregation so much affected. The remembrance of it is still precious to those who were present. He delivered another memorable discourse at Salendine Nook, on the mystery of Providence. His last sermon there was, on the glory of the heavenly state, from the words of the Psalmist, ' The Lord will give grace and glory.' I am ready to suppose that some who sat under the sound of his voice, at that time, will recollect what they then heard, till they come to the actual enjoyment of it, and that the employment of heaven itself will not efface the remembrance of it. If it were necessary to describe the strain of his preaching, on these occasions, I

might say, it was nervous, plain, and practical, adapted at once to inform the judgment, and comfort the heart. Our association must suffer a severe loss by his decease ; but while we mournfully exclaim, 'Our fathers, where are they ; and the prophets, do they live for ever ?' we may take comfort from this consideration, that ' Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' "

The mention of a few other texts will call to mind, in some who yet survive, the effect produced by his sermons, when addressing the multitudes assembled on these occasions.

At Rochdale, May 19, 1785, Amos iv. 12: ' Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.' *

* The outlines of this sermon are here inserted, not as displaying particular ability, but as showing the earnest desire he had to improve those seasons for the spiritual advantage of his hearers. I. The meeting here intended calls for our attention, and what kind of a meeting it will be. (1.) There is a meeting of God in his ordinances. ' Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness.' Preparation for this consists in a proper sense of our wants ; of the importance of what we are attending to ; earnest breathings after God, and faith in the Divine promise. (2.) A meeting God in his judgments. (3.) A meeting of him at death: ' At an hour when ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.' This will be a meeting from which nothing can exempt us, neither youth, nor strength, nor beauty, nor wisdom, dignity, nor meanness: Eccles. viii. 8 ; a meeting to which mankind are called, at different ages, in childhood and in youth, as well as in advancing years, from the cottage and from the throne ; it is often sudden and unexpected, *in an hour when we think not*: Eccles. ix. 12. Many warnings are given of it in the Divine Word, in the death of others, and in our own infirmities. Yet few, alas ! think seriously of it: ' O that they were wise,' &c. It is a meeting which will put an end to our present state of existence, cut short our worldly purposes and projects: Ps. cxlvi. 4. It will be very different according to the state in which we are found ; ' the wicked is driven away, but the righteous hath hope in his death.'

At Manchester (1790), Luke x. 42: 'One thing is needful.' Ackrington (1796), Psalm lxxviii. 18: 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.' Salendine Nook, Psalm lxxii: 'Men shall be blessed in him.' This sermon was considered as bearing a strong resemblance to some which had dropped from the lips of the Rev. Mr. Venn, and reminded many of those who heard it of what they had felt under his ministry. It was truly a season of sweet enjoyment, and refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

A publication, which came out in the year 1793, entitled "The Cross of Christ the Christian's Glory," was, at its first appearance, a circular letter. As containing a brief, yet comprehensive view, of the glories of the Gospel manifested in a crucified Saviour, it has

Finally, it will produce a surprising change in our souls and bodies; 'this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality.' (4) There will be a meeting with God at the last, the great day of judgment; this meeting is *certain* to take place; the justice of God and the express declaration of Scripture require it; it will be signalized by the most awful events. It will be a general meeting: 2 Cor. v. 10; 'We must *all* appear,' &c. A meeting of trial; a final meeting; it will therefore be most dreadful to many: Rev. i. 9; 'Behold he cometh with clouds,' &c. A meeting to which the views of good men are directed: 2 Cor. v. 9, 10; 'We labour that whether present,' &c. It will crown their best wishes, recompense their toils, vindicate their characters, finish salvation: 1 Pet. i. 9; reward their benefactors, and admit of no separation. II. Wherein a state of preparation for this meeting consists. In regeneration: John iii. 5: in repentance, faith, the pardon of sin and acceptance through Christ, a good conscience, in being dead to the world, having clear evidence of interest in Christ, and being found in a waiting posture. 'Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.'"

met with general acceptance. The ideas advanced by Maclaurin, in his celebrated treatise on the same subject, are here condensed into a small compass. It was one of those subjects on which the author felt himself in his element; it was the theme on which, of all others, he most delighted to dwell; not with the coldness of a mere speculatist, but with that holy fervour which inspired the Apostle, when he exclaimed, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' The sweet comment upon this passage, in Dr. Watts's Hymns, was particularly precious to him; and he could never repeat it without the strongest emotions:

"When I survey the wondrous cross," &c.

Several large impressions of the pamphlet on the Cross of Christ were printed by the author himself, and it is now gaining a more extended circulation, being one of the pieces distributed, and sold at a low price, by the British and Foreign Tract Society.

Of the many ordination sermons, which Mr. F. delivered, none was more impressive than that from our Saviour's words: 'He was a *burning* and *shining* light.' The former epithet he considered as descriptive of the feelings of the man in his personal character, and the latter of his exertions as a minister.

In the year 1784, the subject of this Memoir was solicited, by his landlord, to occupy another farm, in

addition to Brearley Hall; the ground being adjoining, and the buildings not far distant.

Though attended with some inconvenience, several circumstances pointed out the propriety of his compliance with this request; particularly the increase of his establishment, for which the lodging-rooms were inadequate, and the advance of his own family towards maturity. His personal feelings, also, as a studious character, were interested; this material addition to the premises affording him an opportunity of selecting a room more favourable for retirement than he had before. In all the changes of situation which took place in his pilgrimage on earth, some place of retreat from the crowd, where he could be surrounded by his books, his silent but beloved companions, was his favourite object.

A friend, who lived on the opposite side of the valley, where he could see the window of his study, often remarked, that whether he rose early in the morning, or from any cause had occasion to sit up later than usual at night, in the winter season, the light was generally, if not always, visible in his apartment. As often as the circumstances of the family would permit, he withdrew, during the day, from the bustle to his study; and, in the evening, he frequently repaired to the same place, after his pupils were retired to rest, seldom returning till the midnight hour. It is not improbable, that the exercise he was under the necessity of taking in passing between the houses, which were, at least, a quarter of a mile asunder, might be of some advantage to his health.

April 1, 1785, Mr. F. was deprived, by the stroke of death, of his eldest daughter, Sarah Fawcett. She was in her nineteenth year, and had shown an inclination to undertake the care of a number of young persons,

of her own sex, for which the steadiness of her conduct, her engaging disposition, and acquirements, well qualified her; but when the arrangements for that purpose were completed, with every prospect of success, her health began to decline; and after languishing for many months, and continuing in such a state that for weeks her death was daily expected, she at length left this world, like an expiring taper, almost without a sigh or a groan. She had a strong interest in his paternal affection; but he was enabled to bear this heavy trial with Christian patience and resignation: to this, the composure which she uniformly evinced greatly contributed. A letter, now before me, written by a dear friend, who was then an inmate in the family, feelingly describes the emotions of the afflicted parent, when anticipating the parting stroke, with the tender and pathetic petitions which he offered up, both in the family and at the bed-side of her who was about to be taken from him. The evening before her death, the family had assembled, as usual, to pray with her. She appeared more cheerful than for some time before; so that there being no apprehension that her end was so near, most of her relatives retired to rest. About midnight a change took place, which soon terminated in death. Though his own feelings were stronger than language could express, his first care was to communicate the intelligence, to those who were not present, in such a manner that the anguish of the parting stroke might be diminished, by pouring in the balm of consolation. He felt as a man, and as a parent; yet he did not sorrow as those who have no hope. It was, indeed, one leading trait in his character through life, that while incidents and disappointments, of a nature com-

paratively trivial, sometimes unnecessarily perplexed his mind, and led him to draw gloomy conclusions; amidst overwhelming trials, the energies of his soul were called into exercise, and he evidenced, in an eminent degree, the composure and fortitude of the Christian.*

* The following extract of a letter, addressed to him on another occasion of severe domestic affliction, and written by one who was intimately acquainted both with his character and trials, is evidential both of the tenderest sympathy, and of the holy resignation, which he was enabled to exercise in the day of trouble.

“ My dear, my invaluable friend, will believe that I feel the most affectionate solicitude, and that my earnest petitions have frequently been offered up for him, and his family, amidst present afflictions. Great God, thy judgments are inscrutable, and thy ways past finding out! yet mercy and compassion are attributes which thou delightest to exercise; and, therefore, in Thee will we yet hope: ‘Light shall yet rise out of darkness, and the voice of joy and rejoicing be heard at the habitations of the just.’ The Almighty will, ere long, fully vindicate his darkest dispensations; and we, who have wept and mourned together, shall unite in songs of praise; but, before this happy termination arrives, patience must have its perfect work, its fullest exercise. The great Author and Finisher of our faith was made perfect by sufferings; and it is by following his footsteps, that we shall be made partakers of the glory to be revealed. Much do I owe to you, my inestimable friend, for the advantage I have received, in time past, from your example, your instruction, and counsels; but the lessons I am now aiming to learn from you, surpass all that I have seen and admired before. That holy-resignation, that composed submission to the will of Heaven, which you now exemplify, in the midst of these afflictive visitations, afford the noblest testimony to the truth of religion, and the most convincing proof of its Divine efficacy, that humanity can exhibit.

“ Affliction is the good man’s *shining* scene,

“ Prosperity conceals his brightest ray.

“ I do pray for you, that your faith fail not; but, alas! of how

The remains of, her who was now taken from him lie at Hebdenbridge, with the following inscription on her tomb :

In memory
of
Sarah, Daughter of John Fawcett,
of Brearley Hall,
who supported a lingering indisposition
with Christian patience,
and, in the cheerful prospect of Immortality,
departed this Life,
April 1, 1785.

“ If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” 1 Thes. iv. 14.

This long-continued and heavy domestic affliction was, as he intimates in many of his letters, still extant, of great service to him in the discharge of an important part of his ministerial office, to which he was frequently called ; namely, the visiting of young persons who were languishing under the power of flattering, but fatal disorders. He felt and evidenced the tenderest sympathy towards them, and by his correspondence (some parts of which will be hereafter introduced), and his personal interviews, he was happily instrumental in bringing

little avail can such powerless breathings be ! This idea often discourages me. Were I happily conscious of that purity of heart which is required to render prayer efficacious and acceptable in the sight of God, I could sometimes be more importunate ; yet, ‘ He will not break even the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.’ The great Intercessor pleads for you above ; his intercessions are of sovereign avail ; for ‘ Him the Father heareth always.’ Through Him grace and strength shall be imparted to support you in this conflict, fulfilling his own precious promise : ‘ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.’”

them to an acquaintance with Christ, and those all-important truths and promises which are the only real consolation of a dying bed.

It is thus that the afflictions of God's people become blessings in disguise, not only to themselves, but to all with whom they are connected.

The decease of Mr. F.'s daughter was the only instance of mortality, except in the case of an old domestic, which occurred in the family, for the space of more than thirty years. This will appear an extraordinary circumstance if the number of youths (often inattentive to their own personal safety) is considered, who, during this long period, were entrusted to his care. In one instance the interposition of Providence was strikingly manifested. Some unsuccessful attempts had been made to procure coal in the premises belonging to the seminary. A gentleman, who had formerly been a pupil, came over on a short visit; and from the recollection how much he had enjoyed an unexpected holiday, he solicited a similar indulgence for those now around him, whose youthful ardour rendered them alive to the same feelings. It was granted, on the express condition that they should not approach the dangerous place above-mentioned. Stimulated by curiosity, and by that propensity to enjoy forbidden pleasures so often seen in young persons, a number of them stole away, and after having looked into the pit, which was about ten yards in depth, and thrown a few small stones in, to hear the effect that would be produced, urged by conscious guilt, they made a precipitate retreat. One alone remained unobserved. who took up a stone which he could not properly wield, so that while attempting to throw it in, he was precipitated headlong to the bottom

of the pit, and pitched his head on the very stone which he had taken up. His companions soon missed him, and having given the alarm, a person was let down to him in the bottom of the pit. Though his skull was much fractured, so that a surgical operation was necessary, he soon recovered, and survived this accident many years.

At the time when the intelligence of this distressing event was brought to the ears of the master, he was pleasing himself, by employing the short interval of relaxation in fixing upon a situation, in the adjoining orchard, for the retired cell which has been mentioned before. Alas! how often are our visions of future enjoyment, even of the most innocent and rational kind, suddenly obscured by thick darkness and some unforeseen catastrophe!

In the year 1788, the "Essay on Anger" was published by subscription. The first idea of this work originated in a sermon delivered at one of the public meetings. The subject itself being rather uncommon, and the manner of discussing it adapted for general usefulness, he was repeatedly urged to commit his thoughts to the press, either as at first delivered, or in a more enlarged form; the latter of these appeared, on all accounts, more eligible. It is scarcely necessary to detail the contents of this work, as it has been pretty generally read and approved. It may, however be expected that something should be said relative to a circumstance which, though very contrary to the author's wishes, has been frequently mentioned. For the

British constitution, as a fabric which had been gradually reared by the wisdom of ages, he felt and uniformly evidenced great reverence. He had a particular attachment to the august Family seated on the throne, both on account of the extended privileges of a religious nature enjoyed under their mild administration, and the personal virtues of the reigning Sovereign, who was nearly coeval with himself. As it is a principle in human nature to desire that, where sincere and grateful sentiments of respect are felt, they should be communicated to the object of them, he embraced an opportunity, offered by the kindness of a friend, to present a copy of this small work, accompanied by a humble address expressive of his sentiments, to that venerable Personage. This he afterwards learned was graciously received, and perused with approbation. He was repeatedly induced, in conjunction with others, to solicit the exercise of royal clemency in mitigating the severity of that punishment which the law denounces; and it gladdened the sympathetic feelings of his heart to know that these petitions were not unavailing; but the modesty of his character made him often regret the publicity which had been given to this subject.—How mysterious, that the evening of life in one so distinguished by private virtues, and deeds of condescending benevolence, should be so beclouded, as to render him incapable of witnessing the joys and sorrows, or even knowing the grateful and sympathetic emotions, of his family and people!

In the year 1792, some time after the death of that excellent man, Dr. Caleb Evans, who had been no less eminent as an eloquent preacher than as a tutor, Mr. F. was invited, by the Bristol Education Society, to become President of the Bristol Academy. Alderman

Harris, and Thomas Ransford, Esq. were delegated by the society to wait upon him with the invitation. Much as he felt himself honoured by their intentions, his present attachments, his various engagements, and his advancing years, forbade a compliance. His habits of life were now fixed; those sentiments which had influenced his determination in his younger days, when invited to remove, were now become, if possible, still more deeply rooted; as many inducements of a temporal nature, through the blessing of Providence on his exertions, no longer existed. It was a matter of great satisfaction to him that the views of the society were subsequently directed to one so well calculated for discharging the duties of that important station.

Though the superintendence of a numerous family, ministerial exercises, and studies preparatory to them, engaged a principal part of Mr. F.'s attention, and could not leave much time for other pursuits, he showed, at this period of his life, all the assiduity which becomes the youthful inquirer, in enlarging his stores of general knowledge, and perusing those works, in the different departments of science, with which no language more abounds than the English. His own experience had taught him the advantage which the man, the Christian, and the minister, may derive from an increase of information on various subjects; for though 'the world by wisdom know not God,' though vain philosophy has at different periods obscured the lustre of Gospel light, and though the presumptuous ostentation

of some sciolists may have given occasion to the enemies of learning to speak evil of what they understand not ; yet the diversified acquisitions of knowledge, if properly improved, are handmaidens of wisdom in the best and most important sense of the word. It is well known that learning and religion revived together. Erasmus, in many respects the most elegant scholar of his age, though he did not afterwards co-operate with Luther, yet by his attacks on the absurdities and abuses of the church of Rome, particularly the monastic institutions, afforded him indirectly the most important aid. Had Luther himself, and Calvin, with the rest of that intrepid band, been destitute of literary acquirements, they would have been ill qualified for that great work which they were instrumental in accomplishing. Destitute of learning, they could not, without the interposition of miracles, have been able to translate the Scriptures into the vernacular tongues, defend their doctrines, or repel the arguments of their subtle antagonists.

If we have never mounted the hills and traversed the valleys beyond our confined habitations, if we have never heard of empires and kingdoms of almost boundless extent, we may be ready to imagine that this world affords no excellence superior to our own, and that in traversing our narrow contracted circle, we know all that is necessary to be learned ; but when we surpass our native boundaries, survey the population, manners, customs, &c. of other lands, and above all, when on looking upwards, we find that numberless worlds move in the immensity of space, all under the government of a Supreme Agent, we then indeed see our own nothingness, we are led to exclaim, ‘What is man that thou art mindful of him!’ and

“vanity confess.” Thus it will be in exploring the vastly extended fields of science. If these objects are pursued under proper limitations, they cannot fail at once to promote humility, to inspire devotion, and to enlarge the soul.

For an illustration of this we may refer to the great Apostle Paul. He had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; and even a superficial attention to his writings must show, that though, after his conversion, he counted ‘all things but loss and dung for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus,’ and had the most humbling views of his own attainments; yet the advantages he had enjoyed of a literary nature, contributed, with the zeal and fervour of his mind, to give him a superiority over the other Apostles. On a comparison of his public discourses with those of Peter and James, we shall find that while the latter were plain and unornamented, such as the fishermen of Galilee under Divine inspiration (aided by the gift of tongues, which must now be acquired by study,) might be supposed to deliver, the former were often graced with all the charms of eloquence, and showed a mind well versed, not only in the manners and customs, but in the celebrated writings of past ages, and of the times in which he lived; to them he most pertinently alludes as illustrations of his subjects. Witness his dignified defence before King Agrippa, his sermon before the Athenian sages; and indeed all the specimens we have of his eloquence in the Acts of the Apostles, evince an acquaintance with the style of energetic oratory by which Greece had been so much distinguished. What would Doddridge and Watts, with others whose names might be mentioned, have been, in an intellectual point of view, without the aids

of science? They might in a narrow circle have edified those around them; but the permanent advantage now derived from their writings on diversified subjects, would have been lost, or rather never known. If in connexion with such names the deceased may be mentioned, the whole of his life was evidential of the sense he had of the importance of learning, and of the advantage to be derived from it.

As a relaxation from severer studies, he was uncommonly interested in the perusal of biographical accounts and historic records. The lives of eminent men, however minutely related, have always been found to excite the peculiar attention of those engaged in similar pursuits. They here see the difficulties which others had to encounter, the expedients by which they obviated them, and the success which ultimately crowned their efforts. Of the writings of the justly celebrated Dr. Johnson, he was extremely fond. The "Rambler" (a title by no means appropriate to the grave, philosophical essays which that valuable work contains) first engaged his attention, before he knew much of that author's rising celebrity. He afterwards perused the "Idler," "Rasselas," and the "Lives of the Poets," a work of inestimable value, both as recording in a pleasing manner the incidents which occurred in the biography of those whose names he enrols among the votaries of the Muses, and as a body of profound criticism; though it must be acknowledged that on some occasions his better judgment was biassed by those prejudices and that impetuosity of temper which cast a shade over his character. His "Journey to the Hebrides," written by himself, with Boswell's further account of that tour, and the minute account published by the same writer of Dr. Johnson's

"Life," often afforded rational amusement, in those hours when he was prevented by disease from attending to his regular avocations. Some time after the publication of this last mentioned work, he wrote a letter to Mr. Boswell, expressive of the pleasure and advantage he had derived from the Doctor's works, and his gratitude for Mr. Boswell's assiduity and perseverance in treasuring up his sage remarks, and relating the incidents of his life. Mr. Boswell, in a polite reply, enclosed, at his request, a specimen of the Doctor's hand-writing. He often lamented that a man who illustrated almost every subject on which he wrote with the most profound and judicious observations, had not clearer conceptions of the gospel system: the want of this, as is evident from his "Prayers" and "Meditations," threw a gloom, a morbid melancholy over his mind, and rendered the slow, but inevitable approach of death, often dismaying. Yet the many occasions in which he expresses, though with trembling apprehensions, his dependance on Divine mercy, connected with deep humility and earnest desires, encourage us to hope that the termination of his bodily afflictions was a happy release from sufferings of every kind. The faith of good men under the former dispensation was sometimes so weak, that 'through fear of death, they were all their life time subject to bondage;' and even under the present dispensation, the views and expressions of pious persons may be, in some measure, beclouded, though the principles essential to the Christian character may exist in the soul. This consideration should lead us to avoid those hasty conclusions as to the present characters and final condition of others, which our Divine Master so pointedly condemns.

The sermons written by the Rev. Dr. Blair of Edinburgh, about this time, attracted the attention of the public, and for a succession of years were more generally read, especially among the higher ranks, than any other works of that description. Discourses of so much celebrity could not fail to engage the notice of one who had an insatiable avidity for reading, and who had devoted so considerable a portion of life to pulpit composition. While he was far from considering them as proper models for the imitation of him whose object it is (as it ought to be the aim of every minister of Christ) to alarm the secure conscience, and to call sinners to repentance ; and while he regretted, as much as any could do, that more explicit declarations are not given of his views as to the way of salvation by Christ Jesus ; he admired the perspicuity, good sense, and attractive graces of the writer, in discussing many practical subjects. The instructive lessons which may here be found, as to the regulation of the heart and government of the passions, the discharge of relative duties, &c. are such as no one can seriously attend to without being profited by them. For this reason he frequently selected some passages from these compositions for Sunday evening reading to his numerous charge.

It is well known to those who are acquainted with literary anecdotes, that the manuscript of the first volume of these sermons, when sent to London, with great difficulty met with a purchaser ; but they were not long known, before the press could scarcely supply the increasing demand for that and the succeeding volumes. To those who have read them all, it is scarcely necessary to remark that a considerable degree of sameness is observable as to the matter and mode of illustration in

many of the latter volumes. The mind of the author was like an even flowing stream, which is beheld with pleasure, while it moves along in its noiseless bed, without any of those bold cataracts and roaring torrents which at once strike with surprise and admiration. We shall in vain look here for the glowing eloquence of a Massillon, a Bossuet, or a Saurin ; or for the nervous reasoning of a Barrow or a Clarke. As a proof that Dr. Blair's views were far from being averse to the evangelical system, he wrote a warm eulogium* on the ministerial character of his coadjutor Mr. Walker, prefixed to the first volume of his posthumous sermons. These discourses, which are justly held in high estimation, contain the most undisguised and unreserved avowal of his sentiments, as to the leading truths and doctrines of Christianity. They are remarkably animated and impressive, exhibiting in an energetic manner the glories of the Gospel, and its tendency to promote holiness of heart and life.

The course of lectures which Dr. Blair published towards the close of his life, was read with peculiar satis-

* An extract may not be unacceptable to the reader. " With regard to Mr. Walker's public labours I need not say much to those who have so long had full proof of his talents, and experience of his assiduity and fidelity in the ministry of the Gospel. *There* indeed he appeared in his highest character, as an eminent and successful labourer in the Lord's vineyard. To this work his greatest application was bent. With this he allowed nothing else to interfere. By the elegance, neatness, and chaste simplicity of composition in his sermons, and by the uncommon grace and energy of his delivery, he rose to a high and justly acquired reputation. But mere reputation was not his object. He aimed at testifying the whole 'counsel of the grace of God ;' at dividing rightly to every man the Word of truth, instructing the ignorant, awakening the careless, reproving the sinner, and comforting the saint."

faction by the subject of this narrative, and strongly recommended by him to the young persons under his care, and to others with whom he was otherwise connected, who had a taste for literary researches. It justly ranks higher than any other work which has since been published on a similar plan; and nothing, except that perverted taste in composition which has of late been too much encouraged, can cause it to sink into neglect. Mr. F. having occasionally corresponded with the Doctor, wrote a letter to him on this occasion, to which the following reply was given.

“ SIR,

“ I received a few days ago the letter with which you honoured me. The testimony which you are pleased to give to my College lectures and other writings, as having been of any use and comfort to you, cannot fail to be very acceptable to me. It is, indeed, one of the highest gratifications one can have in this world, to receive such testimonies of having been of service to others.

“ The success which Providence has given to my publications is much beyond what I had any title to expect, and what I have great reason to be thankful for. I am now very far advanced in life, having been a minister for above 50 years, and am in the 76th year of my life; yet still, I bless God, enjoying a very tolerable share of health, and continuing to discharge the usual labours of the pulpit. I hope you will have much satisfaction and comfort in the numerous pupils you have educated, and in the congregation to which you minister; and it shall be my hearty wish that all your labours may be

crowned with success ; being, with a very grateful sense of your approbation and esteem,

“ Sir,

“ Your obliged and most obedient humble servant,

“ HUGH BLAIR.

“ Edinburgh,
“ 26 Dec. 1794.”

Facility in composition is generally acquired by practice. The subject of this Memoir had already written much ; but his advancing years produced an improvement in his style, to be accounted for principally by his studying the best models, and availing himself of the rules and directions contained in the above-named standard works, and many others of a similar description.

In the year 1794, “ Letters to his Friends, by the Rev. John Parker, with a Sketch of his Life by Mr. F.,” appeared from the press. No man was more respected than Mr. Parker in the sphere in which he moved, though, as that was very confined, this work has never attracted that attention from the public which the solicitation of his friends and its intrinsic value gave reason to expect. The sketch of his life states that he was born at Barnoldswick, near Colne, March 10, 1725 ; and that he derived great advantage from attending occasionally the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, of Haworth. He afterwards became a member of the church under the care of Mr. Alvery Jackson. Mr. Jackson noticed his early piety and advancement in knowledge, and encouraged him to turn his thoughts to the ministry.

In the year 1753, after much hesitation, he was pre-

vailed upon to speak a little in public, but never settled any where as a stated minister till the death of his pastor, Mr. Jackson, in the year 1763; when he succeeded him in that office, and continued to labour there for many years. His voice being weak, and his manner of speaking slow, he was not formed for becoming a popular preacher; but to a mind imbued with those holy dispositions and pious sentiments by which he was eminently distinguished, his discourses were peculiarly sweet and acceptable. He shone particularly in the domestic circle, and as a correspondent; he was always ready to suggest something pertinent to the cases of all with whom he was conversant, not forgetting nor overlooking even the menial servants. This, together with his unaffected simplicity and humility, made him a pleasant inmate wherever he came. His views on the grand truths of Christianity, with some points of minor importance, very much coincided with the sentiments maintained by Mr. F., and this no doubt had its effect in producing a close union between them. The letters were principally selected from those addressed to the pious family at Gildersome before-mentioned, to the minister of that church, and to Mr. F. himself. Mr. Parker's longest and most frequent journeys were to Gildersome, where he was always received with the greatest cordiality. Mr. F. had been acquainted with him for more than thirty years; and he often mentioned the pleasure and solid advantage which, in a religious point of view, he derived from his friendship. Towards the close of life, Mr. Parker removed to Wainsgate, and continued to preach for some time after he was totally blind. He died May 29, 1792, in the 69th year of

his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. F. from the words of the Apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus, Acts xx. 25.

Some time after the publication of "Parker's Life and Letters," Mr. F. had an opportunity of purchasing, at a cheap rate, a printing press, with a small quantity of type; and in conjunction with an esteemed friend, who had long resided in the family, he frequently amused himself with printing short pieces of poetry, original and selected from approved writers, for the use of his pupils, and for distribution in the neighbourhood. With that perseverance which distinguished most of his pursuits, he soon after fitted up an apartment as a printing office; and after procuring an additional stock of type and other necessary articles for the purpose, he engaged, in May, 1796, a person who had been regularly brought up to the business, and who was well qualified to conduct it in its different departments. He soon afterwards issued proposals for publishing a "Life of the Rev. Oliver Heywood," and a treatise written by him, entitled "Life in God's Favour," to appear in monthly numbers.

The character of Oliver Heywood he had long held in the greatest veneration; * he frequently went to the

* In the introduction to one of his sermons, on the 2d Epistle of John, 8 verse: 'Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward:' the following passages occur: "I have in my possession a MS. Diary of Mr. Oliver Heywood, in his own hand-writing. On the 25th of May 1679, I find this memorandum—'God helped me in

place of worship which was erected for Mr. Heywood, in the latter part of his life, at Northowram near Halifax, and to the house in which he lived, then occupied by one of Mr. F's. acquaintances. The circumstance of Mr. Heywood's having relinquished Coley Chapel, when the Act of Uniformity passed and the events connected with it, would not have induced him to enter into those particulars after such a lapse of years, if he had not noticed many things peculiarly excellent in his character, both in looking over his MS. papers, with which the public were not acquainted, and perusing many of his excellent printed works, some of which were become very scarce. In the introduction to the work above mentioned, after having observed that he had been several years collecting materials for a life of Oliver Heywood, he adds, "I venerate the piety of many of those learned and eminently useful ministers, who were excluded from the church, without entering minutely into their political system, or undertaking to vindicate their conduct, in every respect. It is often found that contending parties are, in some respects, both in the wrong." This may be accounted for by considering the common weaknesses of human nature in its present state. I am far from having any intention to revive,

prayer and preaching all the day; the congregation was large, and the season solemn; my text was 2d John 8, 'the words just read. May the same God who blessed this eminently great and good man 115 years ago, graciously assist us in our poor attempts at this time. That heavenly man has long ago received his reward. How he improved the words read it is not possible for us to say. He was a scribe well instructed, a man of warm piety, full of zeal for God and charity to men. It would have been a high gratification to hear him, but we have the same God to trust in, and the same Spirit to help our infirmities."

in the least degree, that asperity which formerly subsisted between the members of the established church and those who differed from it. Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind respecting modes and forms of religious worship, but let it be remembered that the disciples who forbade those who followed Christ knew 'not what spirit they were of.' Nothing is more evident, than that the presence and favour of the Most High have been granted both to Conformists and Non-conformists; that the power, life, and spirit of religion, have sometimes eminently appeared in the established church, and at others as eminently among those who have separated from it. God is my witness, that the design of this work is not to advance the interest of a party, but the cause of religion at large."

The plan of this work was scarcely brought to maturity, before the sale of the estate, with a variety of other considerations, led to his removal from Brearley Hall, where he had resided more than twenty years. At this juncture, Ewood Hall, a large mansion in the neighbourhood, capable of accommodating his own family, as well as that of the writer of these Memoirs, who was connected with him in the education of youth, being unexpectedly at liberty, after some deliberation a removal was concluded upon, which took place, Christmas, 1796. This house was rebuilt about a century ago; and there is a traditionary account that its site was the birth-place of Robert Farrer, Bishop of St. David's, who with Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, &c. suffered martyrdom in Queen Mary's reign. It is certain that he was born in this neighbourhood; and the circumstance that the estate itself, and lordship of the vicinity, have been for ages in possession of an ancient and respectable family

of the same name, renders it more than probable that the account is correct. The veneration which is felt for those noble worthies, who for the sake of conscience sacrificed all that the world holds dear, in some sort attaches to the places with which they were connected.

This house having been recently modernized and greatly improved, afforded accommodations for a seminary much superior to the former situation. A small apartment in the garden was here selected and fitted up as a study. Mr. F. often mentioned this period of his life as by far the most active and laborious, having, in those hours which he could redeem from his other engagements, to prepare materials for a monthly publication which, under the title of "Miscellanea Sacra," was continued, till two volumes were completed, exclusive of the "Life of Oliver Heywood," and "Life in God's Favour." He very frequently prepared copy in the evening, which was printed on the following day.

The "Life of Oliver Heywood," contains much interesting information respecting the times in which he lived, and the characters of eminence with whom he was connected. The manuscript diary before referred to, from which many extracts are taken, was esteemed a great curiosity, being written in a very small hand, with much care and exactness. Several editions of the "Life" have been called for; and it is probable that, if Mr. Fawcett's other avocations had not prevented, many additions would have been made to it, from materials in possession of Mr. Heywood's collateral descendants, and other persons.

In writing the "Miscellanea Sacra" he obtained very little assistance, though he urgently requested it from his friends. The Essay on "Christian Commu-

nion," published also in a separate pamphlet, was originally a contribution to the work by the writer of this Memoir. He was indebted to the kindness of two individuals, in furnishing materials for the "Life of the Rev. Mr. Senior, and of Mrs. Crane." The largest treatise contained in this periodical work, is entitled, "The Preciousness of Christ to them that believe." It forms, as a separate publication, a volume of considerable size; and was written in consequence of a request to print a sermon he had preached at an association on that subject.

About this time the writings of Paine against revelation were industriously circulated among the lower class, and infidelity appeared to be making rapid progress. With a view to counteract the efforts of the enemies of religion, and to confirm the minds of the wavering, Mr. Fawcett, after having preached a sermon on a public occasion, from the words of King Agrippa to Paul, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,' at the solicitation of the ministers then present, wrote a short *summary* of the evidences of Christianity. This proved a word in season unto many. It is one important and convincing proof of the truth of Christianity, that the most violent attacks of its opponents do but serve to show the impregnable strength of those arguments which evince its Divine authority. Whilst the insidious and secret designs of infidels too often entangle and ensnare the minds of the unwary, there is no reason to dread the consequences of open hostility; for it has often been seen, that the more it has been assailed in this way, the more glorious and complete have been its triumphs. As the treatise was not intended by any means to supersede larger and

more elaborate works on the subject, it was printed in a cheap and popular form, both as part of the periodical work, and for separate distribution. The design he had in view was briefly to state the evidences which might rationally be expected in favour of Christianity; the evidence arising from the credibility of what is contained in the Scriptures, and from the characters and qualifications of some of the writers; the evidence arising from the concurring testimony of heathen writers; from the prevalence of the cause amidst great opposition, though promoted by means which, in themselves, might appear inadequate; and the evidence arising from the patience, fortitude, and cheerfulness, with which primitive Christians endured persecution.

The "Miscellanea Sacra" also contains, among other pieces of considerable interest, an "Essay on the Wisdom, Equity, and Bounty of Divine Providence," which had been the subject of a circular letter, and was more extensively dispersed under the title now mentioned. It exhibits a comprehensive display of Divine providence, a subject mysterious in itself, best, if properly considered, calculated to inspire submission, and to afford consolation.

A large Sunday school having been established in the neighbourhood, in the success of which he felt great interest, he wrote, unsolicited, a small book, entitled, "The History of John Wise," for the use of the children; which has obtained a more general circulation than any of his other publications. It was begun and completed in a few days; the family not being at all apprized of his design, till he produced the copy and read it in the company of a few select friends. This little volume shows something of that versatility of

talent by which Dr. Watts was so eminently distinguished, which can adapt itself to the lowest gradations of intellect, to the first dawns of reason, as well as to those subjects which delight and edify the cultivated understanding. Many anecdotes which have been mentioned to the writer, show the eagerness with which children have read this book for the purpose of entertainment; the simple tale being related in so natural a manner as to produce on their minds all the effect of reality; but the author had the satisfaction to know, that it had not only been a source of much innocent amusement, but of essential advantage to young persons, in leading them to a serious attention to the best things. To a pious mind this is a consideration which is infinitely more gratifying than the applause of the great, with all the false glare and empty boasts of science.

The British and Foreign Tract Society has printed a neat edition of "The History of John Wise," with plates, suited to fix the attention of children on the most interesting incidents related in the story.

Many other publications might here be enumerated which successively issued from the press, some of them original, and others new editions of books, which had long been out of print. Among the former may be mentioned, a pamphlet on the "Order and Constitution of a Gospel Church," a "Sermon on the Death of the late Mrs. Littlewood," and "Thoughts on the Revival of Religion;" among the latter, "Gouge's sure Way of Thriving," and "Watson's Treatise on Christian Contentment," both of them a little abridged and modernized. The first edition of "Dr. Williams's Christian Preacher" (a small portion of the work excepted,

which was printed at Halifax), issued from the press ; and the correspondence necessary in editing that valuable book, was the means of his maintaining a friendly connexion with that truly respectable and much lamented divine.*

* The following extracts contain some interesting information relative to the progress of that work.

“ Rotheram, Sept. 16, 1799.

“ My letter must consist of expressed obligations and apologies, the latter of which is not a little painful to me. I thank you for your last valued present, the funeral sermon, which, as well as the larger publication, ‘ Christ precious to them that believe,’ is well calculated to promote our best interests and highest enjoyments.

“ I little thought that the appendix, &c. of the ‘ Christian Preacher,’ would have met with such interruptions, or would have taken up so much of the few intervals from regular business which I could devote to it. For above four months a branch of my family has been exercised with a severity of pain and weakness, not to be described: nothing remained for me but the most assiduous attention to his distressing case, by day and by night. Through much mercy, and to the astonishment of the medical men who attended him, he is now able to move, though for about three months totally helpless and in excruciating pain.”

“ Jan. 4, 1800.

“ You have now waited much longer than is agreeable to my feelings, for the remainder of the volume under hand. The appendix has cost me nearly as much time and attention as the whole book beside. It contains a scientific arrangement of many hundred volumes, with a critical sketch of the most prominent character of almost every work. I hope I may venture to say, that it is the most complete *Theological Bibliotheca*, for the Christian preacher and evangelical divine, in the *English* language.

“ When I first undertook to revise ‘ Jennings and Frank,’ with a few notes and a recommendatory preface, I little thought in what it would terminate; a book above six times the bulk, and twenty times the labour.”

In the year 1800, Mr. F. was induced by the declining state of his health, which had no doubt been injured by his close application, to dispose of the printing concern, which, after being in his possession more than four years, was removed to Halifax. This released him from the obligation of providing materials to keep the press at work, though he still continued to write occasionally, when he was either solicited by his friends or saw a probability of rendering service to the public.

But we shall here pause, and retrace some of the years which preceded the period we are now upon, so far as they were distinguished by the establishment of the Baptist Missionary Society, which in its commencement and progress deeply interested the mind of him who is the subject of these Memoirs. In biographical accounts the order of time appears in general to be the most clear and satisfactory ; but there are cases in which it may be more proper, without reference to particular years, to class together the papers and other articles relative to transactions which took place, and especially such as had no particular influence on other circumstances, arranged according to the succession of time.

An observation was made in the former part of this narrative, that the same spirit which inspired those who were so eminently instrumental in the revival of religion, has continued to prevail, more or less, ever since.—It has undoubtedly been the grand stimulus to the missionary exertions which have so honourably distinguished modern times.

"The Evangelical Magazine," which, from its commencement, has been conducted, and still continues to be so, by ministers of the gospel, of different denominations, has been the means of forming a bond of union among themselves, their numerous friends, and connexions. Wherever such an union takes place, on proper principles and with suitable motives, it cannot fail to stir up the mind to love and *good works*, and to be the means of putting into execution those benevolent plans which solitary and divided efforts would in vain attempt to accomplish. It is unnecessary to enter into a detail of the proceedings of the London Missionary Society (evidently an offspring of that union), which has been for a succession of years so nobly supported—so widely extended in its operations.

The Baptist Missionary Society, which, if the writer is not mistaken, was prior in its formation to that just mentioned, originated with a number of ministers resident in Northamptonshire and the adjoining counties. They were conversant with the most eminent Transatlantic divines; they admired the holy ardour of Brainard, and the persevering industry and disinterested labours of the Moravian brethren; having no scruples as to the propriety of addressing impenitent sinners, they longed to be employed in so important, though arduous a work. In the year 1791, a meeting of ministers being held at Clipstone in Northamptonshire, two sermons were preached; the one by Mr. Sutcliff of Olney, on jealousy for the Lord of Hosts; the other by Mr. Fuller, on the pernicious influence of delay. Mr. Carey, the Baptist minister at Leicester, who was then present, fired with the noble ardour of a missionary spirit, was induced to propose the question,

“ Whether it was not their incumbent-duty to attempt to do something towards spreading the Gospel in the heathen world?” In consequence of this inquiry, which implied what his own convictions were, he was requested to draw up a pamphlet on the subject, which was printed some time after, as well as the sermons before-mentioned. The society was established October 2, 1792; and the proceedings of that and the following meetings were conducted with great cordiality, but without much noise. The circumstances attending Mr. Thomas’s proposal of himself as a missionary to the east, and Mr. Carey’s prompt and firm determination to accompany him, are too well known to need insertion here. Though the pecuniary resources of the Society were at first very small, and discouragements presented themselves, such as might have dismayed the stoutest heart—they were determined to attempt something; and they found that they had but to make known their wants, in order to obtain the necessary supplies. The most generous exertions were made, not only by many of their own connexion, but by numbers of other communities, who approved of the plan on which the business of the Society is conducted. A considerable part of the money collected is appropriated exclusively to the translation of the Scriptures; a work for which the missionaries they have sent out are eminently qualified.

The transactions of this infant society were at an early period communicated to Mr. F. and excited in his mind the most lively interest. He quickly caught the holy flame; and in the year 1793 he published a small pamphlet, entitled “ Considerations relative to sending Missionaries among the Heathen;” stating what had

been done by former societies, and the prospects which now opened to view. The interesting nature of the subject, and the facts related, gave this pamphlet (many copies being given, and others sold at the low price of one penny) an extended circulation; and the effect produced did not disappoint his expectations. A meeting was held at Halifax, as a central place, at which he was appointed secretary of an auxiliary society.

By the assistance of his venerable friend, Mr. Crabtree of Bradford, who entered most cordially into the design, the sum of two hundred pounds was soon raised and forwarded to Mr. Fuller. This was introductory to a regular correspondence. Some of Mr. Fuller's letters merely contain an acknowledgment of the receipt of the sums annually subscribed and collected in support of the mission: and being written amidst the pressure of urgent and important concerns, cannot be supposed to contain much information; but there are others in which he lays open the genuine feelings of his soul as a Christian, a minister, and a warm supporter of the cause in which he had embarked, and in which he rejoiced to see so many others engaged.

Two copious and valuable works having been published on the Life of Mr. Fuller, it may appear to some irrelevant to swell the size of this narrative by extracts from his letters; but though the writer has laid many aside which he once intended to incorporate in this volume, he cannot bring his mind to suppress the whole of a correspondence which had every thing endearing in it: that Christian friendship and congeniality of views could produce. Of the contents of Mr. F.'s

letters, addressed to this valued friend, some idea may be formed from Mr. Fuller's replies.

The first letter, dated January 28, 1792, gives an account of the proceedings of the Society to the time of Mr. Carey's proposing himself as a missionary.

“ It was a solemn day, spent, as several others have been, in fasting and prayer. We feel, as you may suppose, a mixture of hope, joy, and trembling. We would not act rashly on the one hand, nor tardily on the other. It is not a business that we have undertaken in a hurry :—for eight or nine years we have been *praying* for it; we now think we ought to do something more than pray. We have solemnly bound ourselves to God and each other, at least to make a trial. We have by congregational collections and private subscriptions advanced about one hundred and sixty pounds, and the work goes on. Three or four hundreds more will be wanted, and that in little more than three months: we rely upon the blessing of God, who, we hope, will incline the hearts of our brethren throughout the kingdom to help us in so good a work. Any sums of money conveyed to me, brother Carey of Leicester, Sutcliff of Olney, Ryland of Northampton, or Hogg of Thrapstone, will be thankfully received. The sooner the better, as the time is short.—Mr. Carey will be in your part in the course of a week or two on a visit to a relation. Hear him preach, and you will give him a collection.

"If the above should meet your approbation, we hope for your friendly concurrence, and that you will use your influence, not only in your own congregation, but amongst the churches in your neighbourhood. I am not insensible of the disadvantage under which I write, being an entire stranger; but I hope you will think of the *cause*, and forget every thing else. I feel that willingness to exert myself, that if an excursion of two or three weeks through Yorkshire, or any other county, would promote it, I would cheerfully engage in it. Though unknown in person,

"I am

"Your affectionate brother

"In our common Lord,

"ANDREW FULLER."

"Kettering, Feb. 4, 1793.

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"I have known and loved you ever since I saw your Elegy on dear Mr. Hartley. My heart, about eleven or twelve years ago, dissolved in reading over that Elegy. The third in number of your 'Book of Hymns,' also has often afforded me a song in secret, full of mournful pleasure. My lot, as there described, for near twenty years, has been full of changes: last June the partner of my life was taken extremely ill, and on August 23d died. A week ago I lost the use of one side of my face; my speech is affected, but not so much as to incapacitate me entirely for preaching. There are some symptoms also which afford hope that it is not paralytic, and that I may in process of time recover.

"About eighteen years ago, I saw the venerable Hartley in London, among the ministers at the coffee-

house. I felt an union of heart with him, though I never spoke to him, and I suppose he knew nothing of me, as I was then only about twenty-one years of age, and had preached little more than a year. At the age of seventeen I became a member of the church at Soham in Cambridgeshire, which is my native place. At the age of twenty, they called me to the ministry, and at twenty-one chose me for their pastor. My heart was much united to them, and theirs to me; yet there were some circumstances that necessitated my removal from them in 1782. This was one of the heaviest afflictions I ever experienced. It was while my mind was agitated by suspense as to my removal that I saw your Elegy on Mr. Hartley: I have not got it by me, but I never forget one line:

“ ‘And in his native village lived and died.’

I wept bitterly to think I could not do so too. You will excuse me for writing thus much about myself.

“ Your country is indebted to us for a Sharpe whom we could ill enough spare. We must not greatly complain, however, since we are indebted to you for a Sutcliff.

“ I am, ever yours,

“ A. FULLER.”

“ My heart rejoices that you have so cordially entered into the mission business. Blessed be God for opportunities of proving our love to him,—and blessed be those that embrace them! Surely God, our own God, will bless us! For my own part, I am sure I have been abundantly repaid for all that I have done, by the pleasure of

doing it; and hope to be doubly repaid in the fruits that may follow.—When you write again, send me six of your printed papers. Please to tell me your age, and that of your brethren around you.—Excuse this question, I only wish to be better acquainted with you.

“ My complaint, through mercy, is removed from my face; but I have such a weakness about my head, that I cannot read, write, or think closely for two hours without bringing on the head-ache: I suppose it was a slight paralytic stroke, probably occasioned by great fatigue, care, and much writing. I mention this because, though it does my heart good to hear of your unremitted labours, yet I wish you to pay some attention to your own health. I wish, as you say, we had a Whitefield; but every age is not blessed with one. I think there is a plan amongst the American Baptists of selecting from themselves a minister, whose strain of preaching is the most interesting and profitable, and engaging him to visit different parts of the country, and preach at each place as he goes. Isaac Backus, I think, was lately chosen at an association in New England, to go and visit the churches in Virginia and the Carolinas. Such a plan as that might be of use in lesser districts. I mean, suppose a person, whose turn and talents were of an awakening tendency, were engaged at an association, to travel through all your connexions, visiting the least as well as the greatest churches, and so on in other connexions.

“ Present my warmest esteem to the Society and the ministers, when you see them.

“ I remain,

“ Affectionately yours,

“ A. FULLER.”

"I received from brother Sutcliff lately a letter, including one from Mr. Crabtree. I was rejoiced to see the ardour of mind which possessed the venerable man! Our exertions have already been amply repaid by the increase of Christian love, and the revival of every Christian grace which they occasion. I have no doubt that the work will go on; and those whose hearts are too cold to aid it are to be pitied; theirs will be the loss.....

"Kettering, 12th April, 1793.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"I have deferred writing to you till I should be able to inform you of the issue of the application for a passage; and I can now say, thanks be to God, *they are embarked on board* the Earl of Oxford East-India-man. Surely there has been a wonderful concurrence of Providence in this business; a concurrence which, as the systems of Providence and grace are in fact but one perfect system, may inspire us with hope of success.

(The succeeding part of the letter contains a copy of the resolutions at the Leicester meeting.)

"An address was also drawn up, and signed by the Society, to Ram Boshoo Parbokee, and Mohun Chund, or any other Christians in India who might be united with them, congratulating and exhorting them, and commending our brethren Thomas and Carey to them.

"Surely I need not say it was a solemn and affectionate meeting! O, my dear Sir, thousands of tears of joy have been shed on this occasion! Our hearts are enlarged! We love Christ better; we love

one another better; a new bond of union subsists between the churches and ministers who have embarked in this cause! How many names will now be embalmed in our remembrance for ever. O how it cheered our hearts to read your animating letter, and to find such an ardent soul in the venerable Crabtree. Blessings crown his latter days and yours! Your efforts doubled our expectations; and so have many others. When we review the shortness of the time, and the magnitude of the object, we seem 'like those that dream.' It seems to be too great to be true; but 'God hath done great things for us.' O that he may yet do greater things by us! 'We fasted, and prayed, and trembled, when we set out.' It seemed to us that we were launching a vessel that required superior abilities to steer it—at length we ventured; and hitherto we have succeeded. Surely the Lord hath been our pilot! Perhaps the greatest storms are yet to come: but be it so; our eyes shall be up to him. When Christ was on board the vessel, it could not sink; and those who doubted were reprov'd for their want of faith. Remember me to Mr. Crabtree, and all your friends.

" I remain

" Affectionately yours,

" A. FULLER."

" Kettering, August 30, 1793.

" MY DEAR BROTHER,

" Thanks for your kind inquiry after my health. I am still incapable of mental application, without suffering from the head-ache, and probably I shall never be much better. I am just able to preach twice on a

Lord's Day. As to composing sermons, I have reason to be thankful that, in twenty years' labour, my mind has been, in some measure, furnished with knowledge, otherwise I should now find it difficult to go on. However, my heart is as much in my work as ever; and my anxiety for the salvation of souls has increased. Under these impressions, I find but little difficulty in preaching without much premeditation.

"I wish the piece, on the Socinian controversy, may be attended with a blessing. It has cost me much thought. Had not the composition been finished before I had the paralytic stroke, it would never have appeared; probably it may be my last labour of the kind.

"It gave me pleasure to find, by your association letter, that the next annual meeting will be at your place. It is in my heart to come and see you at that time; but what unexpected events may take place between the present time and that period, I cannot determine. It would be a charming treat to me, to see you and the venerable Crabtree, my dear friend Sharpe, and others of whom I know little. Thus, like a child, I please myself with prospects of future pleasure. But, alas! I tremble amidst it all. So often, of late, have my purposes been frustrated, that I am almost in the habit of expecting disappointments in all I do, or think of doing. I go up, like Paul to Jerusalem, from stage to stage, not knowing the things that shall befall me in each, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth that in every stage bonds and afflictions abide me.

"I have, however, much to be thankful for. Though my head is poorly, my health is good; and in general my heart at rest in God. Neither are my mental

powers at all impaired, only that I cannot exercise them, for want of bodily strength. You will excuse so much said about myself, especially as you requested it.

“ I have sometimes fears respecting the missionaries we have sent out ; I suppose they are now about the Cape of Good Hope. But let us have faith in God ! Surely all the prayers and disinterested efforts of the thousands of our Israel will not be lost. God hath all hearts in his hand. ‘ Believe in the Lord our God, so shall we be established ; believe in his prophets, so shall we prosper ! ’ The greater the difficulties the more of God is seen in removing or surmounting them. It was a noble sermon that Carey preached at Nottingham, in 1792, from Isaiah liv. 23 : ‘ Lengthen thy cords,’ &c. the heads of which were comprised in two exhortations to his brethren : I. Let us *expect* great things ; II. Let us *attempt* great things. This was lengthening our cords, and strengthening our stakes. I feel the use of his sermon to this day. Let us pray much, hope much, expect much, labour much ; an eternal weight of glory awaits us ! Farewell, my dear brother, farewell ! Remember me affectionately to your brethren. The Lord be with you all !

“ A. FULLER.”

(Extract.)

“ Yes, my dear brother, I perceive you are yet in the land of the living ; and I hope God is blessing you in your work. I also begin to look towards home. I was fifty years old the 6th instant. My health and strength, however, are good at present ; and I hope some good attends my labours. I feel happy in my work ; in no part more so than in expounding a chapter

of God's Word every Lord's Day forenoon. I have done this for the last fourteen years; and as I keep the notes of the exposition by me, I find them of great use in other labours.

"My visit to Yorkshire is uncertain. The complaint (which is on the lungs, and causes fever and loss of rest) so often returns, even when I seem to be getting better, that I can calculate on no future labours. I have not preached since the twenty-first of April. Last Lord's Day I ventured to administer the Lord's Supper, and spoke low, about half an hour, without any apparent ill effects; but any change of weather, especially an east wind, affects me much.

"I think, at times, of the words of the prophet, when, after recruiting for a few days, I relapse again: 'For all this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.' The Lord may have a controversy with me. If it be his pleasure to restore me to the work of preaching to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, it will be *grace* given to one who is less than the least.

"I remain, &c.

"A. FULLER."

"The denomination seems more interested in the mission than it has ever been before. Assistant societies are formed in many places, particularly Norwich, Cambridge, Portsea, Plymouth, Bristol, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, &c. We have one in our own congregation.

"The funds of the Society, which were more than exhausted, are now happily recruited. I believe Dr. _____'s pamphlet has been beneficial to us. His

object was to whip the Bible Society ; but he has done justice to us, in a manner that we could not have done for ourselves.

“ Carey, Marshman, and Ward, are extraordinary men, and God is with them. Their ingenuity in type-foundries, paper-making, printing, &c. is astonishing. They remind me of Bezaleel and Aholiab, to whom the Lord, when he had a tabernacle to build, gave a wise and understanding heart, so that nothing seemed to impede their progress. All this is a token for good ; an indication that God has designs of mercy for the eastern world. ‘ I do not know,’ says Dr. Carey, ‘ that I am of much use myself ; but I see a work which fills my soul with thankfulness.’ ”

Several letters from the Rev. Mr. Pearce have been found in the collection. They appear to have been written on the spur of the moment ; but exhibit striking traces of the warmth of his affection, both to the servants and the cause of Christ. His most intimate friend, Mr. Fuller, often compared him to a nightingale ; unpromising and unassuming in its exterior, but delightfully harmonious in its song. When the intelligence of his death was first communicated to him, he exclaimed, in the pathetic language of David over Jonathan, ‘ My brother, very pleasant hast thou been to me !’

Many interesting particulars are related in letters received from Mr. Carey and other missionaries ; but from an apprehension that they have already appeared in the missionary accounts, they are not inserted here.

The happy effects of that missionary spirit which had thus gone forth, and acquired renewed vigour and energy in its progress, were evident in many of the congregations connected with the society, by a revival of religion, in such as had been in a declining state, and by exciting an earnest desire for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in their respective neighbourhoods. So true is the declaration of Holy Writ; 'He that watereth, shall be watered also himself.' But whilst the harvest all around was great, the labourers were few. A deficiency of suitable instruments for carrying on the work had long been felt and lamented. The failure of the design formed in the year 1773, of establishing an institution for training up young persons of promising abilities for the ministry, has already been mentioned. This had been partially remedied by the occasional admittance of a few young men, designed for the ministry, into the seminary at Brearley and Ewood Hall. Of these some are now deceased, among whom may be noticed the Rev. Mr. Whitehead, minister at Farsley. A memoir is given of him in the "Miscellanea Sacra." Others are usefully employed in different parts of the kingdom. As living characters, they will be nameless here; but the course of individuals among them has been so strongly marked by pious exertions and literary attainments, that the reflection of having in any measure contributed to bring them into those spheres in which they have moved, cannot fail to be gratifying to the best feelings of the heart. That they were deeply sensible of the value of their tutor's instructions and friendly attention will appear from the following passages in a letter addressed to him by one of the number, to which might be added many others, re-

ceived both before and since his decease. "Your letter was extremely grateful to me. But what shall I say of the long time which has passed without any acknowledgment of a favour so little expected and cordial to my feelings, as the days of returning spring? It were vain to attempt apology. I could plead only that each successive week I have intended to write to you; but still a certain fatality of procrastination, to which I have long been subject, has here too prevailed over me. It is more manly to confess than to extenuate. Yet it grieves me much that appearances do warrant an imputation of such ingratitude, as I am certain I never can feel; and I will entreat you, dear Sir, to lay aside, in this instance, the ancient rule of judging the heart by the conduct. The sincere, unalterable respect with which I always think of you, assures my own mind that I have some claim to such an exception. Memory often recalls with a sentiment of pensive but grateful interest, the season of my life which was passed under your immediate care, and those instructions, those kind anxieties, those prayers, and that example of which the effect I trust cannot be lost to the latest moment of my life; no, nor in that eternity beyond. Will you accept from me the wish that your cares may not fail of a happy issue and an abundant reward: but of their reward they cannot fail; that is independent of their success: it will be conferred by him who knows and approves the hearts of his faithful servants, while sometimes his wisdom denies to those efforts the desired effect."

In one instance the writer of this narrative may be allowed to mention a name, the distance of almost half the circumference of the globe, the probability that he

will never see his native shores again, and the character he now sustains, may, it is hoped, preclude the necessity of an apology for this deviation. A residence of about a year and a half at Ewood Hall, endeared Mr. Wm. Ward in private life as much to the family, as his exertions in behalf of the heathen world have raised him in the esteem of the public. They witnessed the first appearance of that missionary spirit which induced him, as soon as an opportunity offered, to relinquish every other engagement and endearing connexion, for this sacred cause. His most delightful employment was to preach in hamlets wherever he could collect a congregation; by hints of admonition and by the dispersion of short tracts, to lead the most careless, as well as inquiring souls, to a serious attention to the best things. Though accustomed to situations above the lower walks of life, he most cheerfully, after the example of his Divine Master, associated with 'publicans and sinners,' that he might gain the more. The conflict of nature when he left the family and his numerous friends, without the prospect of ever seeing them again, must have been great to his feeling mind; but he wisely avoided the pang of separation, by finally absenting himself before any one was aware of his immediate intention. To such separations as these, what could reconcile the mind, but the hopes of extended usefulness (which in him have been realized), and the prospect of meeting in a better country, that is, a heavenly, where those who have suffered all things for Christ, and have been willing to give up every thing for his sake, shall hear those welcome accents from the Saviour's lips: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Mr. Ward, and his companion Mr. Marshman, who has been so eminently

distinguished by his assiduous and successful study of the Chinese language, set sail May 25, 1799. A printing press had, some time before their arrival in India, been presented to the Society. Having been trained up in early life to the printing business, Mr. Ward was every way qualified to superintend that important department of the mission, in which the views of the society were aided by the most generous contributions from almost every quarter. The translation of the Scriptures into the several languages of the natives, in which considerable progress has already been made, and which is still continued on a very extended scale, appears the most likely method of giving permanency to the mission. Men, the greatest and best of men, are frail, dying creatures; they have this treasure in 'earthen vessels;' the benefit of their exertions may not extend far beyond the sphere in which they are stationed; but by translating the Bible into foreign languages, perpetuity is, under a Divine blessing, given to what might otherwise be evanescent and fleeting. The 'entrance of the Divine Word giveth light;' it giveth understanding to the simple: and when these lively oracles are introduced into any country, we have every reason to rely upon the promise of that God who first revealed them, 'that they shall not return to him void, but shall accomplish the purpose for which they are sent.'

But to return from this digression, which it is hoped the reader will not consider as altogether unconnected with the immediate subject: as the number of young men who occasionally received instructions under Mr. F.'s care was by no means commensurate to the exigence of the churches, and some degree of inconve-

nience attended the plan of associating them with other young persons designed for commercial situations, it became a matter of serious inquiry, what means would be most adviseable for supplying the destitute churches and others which had been lately raised. Many of the ministers who had been useful in their generation were either gone, or sinking in the vale of years. The promise which the great Head of the church has made to give unto his people pastors after his own heart, to feed them with knowledge and understanding, does not by any means preclude the necessity of proper exertions for accomplishing these ends. The late Mr. James Bury, of Pendle Hill, near Blackburn, had for a considerable time shown a deep interest in this subject. In the friendly interviews between him and the subject of this narrative, the question was often brought forwards and seriously discussed, long before appearances were sufficiently encouraging to warrant the adoption of any decisive measures. But where the heart is really engaged, fired with love to Christ and disinterested zeal for his cause, opposing difficulties do but stimulate to proportionable efforts to overcome them. The want of pecuniary resources being one of these obstacles, Mr. Bury generously proposed to give 500*l.* as the commencement of a fund, to be raised by voluntary subscription. This being made known, the Rev. Mr. Langdon, of Leeds, preached a sermon at the ensuing association, held at Hebdenbridge, expressly on the subject, which produced a very considerable impression. The text was, Eph. iv. 11, 12 : ‘ And he gave some apostles and some prophets,’ &c. At the close of the public services several resolutions were proposed and unanimously agreed upon, Mr. James Bury being appointed Treasurer, and the

Rev. Thomas Littlewood, Secretary. A meeting of the subscribers and other friends of the institution was held in the month of August following, at Rochdale, when a committee was appointed, and other arrangements were made.

The Rev. Robert Hall had been invited to deliver an address to the newly-formed society on that occasion ; but as his being able to comply with the request was extremely doubtful, Mr. F. was appointed in case of failure. The text he thought of for that purpose was, 2 Tim. ii. 2 : ‘ The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.’ But he was released from the necessity of speaking on that passage (which must strike every one as being admirably adapted for the purpose), by the arrival of his highly esteemed friend, who preached from 1 Tim. i. 11, 12. ‘ According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God,’ &c. What his feelings were on that solemn day, will appear from the following paragraph, in a letter to a friend, dated Aug. 4, 1804.

“ This week I have had a high gratification, in attending a meeting of the Northern Education Society at Rochdale. A large concourse of people was present. The Rev. Robert Hall delivered a discourse, which, of all that I have ever heard, was in my opinion one of the best and greatest. It was full of evangelical doctrine, and of the most powerful inducements to every good work. By Mr. Hall’s coming I was happy in being exempted from preaching. It was a most melting, moving season to me and many others. The zeal discovered for the good cause gladdened my heart.

About six hundred pounds were received at the time in favour of the institution, and much more subscribed."

The society in its proceedings since that period, and particularly in the appointment of the worthy president, who came into Yorkshire, June, 1805, and soon after settled at Bradford, has, amidst some difficulties, enjoyed many tokens of the Divine approbation. The number of applicants for admission into the seminary, which from the commencement has been at Horton, near Bradford, has more than kept pace with the finances of the establishment, so that while redoubled exertions become necessary, these extended prospects of usefulness afford much encouragement. Though the beginning in the breast of an individual or two was small, there is reason to hope, that the latter end will greatly increase.

The library of the Rev. John Sutcliff, of Olney, has been a most important acquisition. These, in addition to the many other valuable books which had previously been presented to the institution, form a very desirable collection for the Biblical student, the greatest part of Mr. Sutcliff's library consisting of choice, with some very scarce works on divinity. This excellent man died June 22, 1814. In his will he left his library for the purpose before mentioned, subject to a small bequest. The regard he retained for his native place and the surrounding districts, so evident from his letters contained in the preceding part of this narrative, and which he showed by his regular visits, so long as the state of his health permitted, led him to bequeath to this infant establishment that treasure of which he himself best knew the value, and which it had

been one of the most pleasing occupations of his life to collect. The munificence of Thos. Key, Esq. of Fulford, near York, in purchasing the premises occupied by the students, and presenting them to the society, with other liberal donations, have given still further stability to the institution, which we trust for ages yet to come will be the means of enlightening the minds of thousands, and leading them to serve the living and true God.

The following letters have been transmitted to the writer, by a dear friend, now resident in a distant part of the kingdom. They were originally addressed to the young person, of whose tranquil departure out of this world an account is given in the new edition of "The Sick Man's Employ." Though never intended to meet the public eye, they are here inserted, in the hope that they may be the means of imparting similar consolations to others, as they did to the amiable invalid to whom they were written.

" July 10, 1799.

" Since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, you have been much in my thoughts, and I have offered up many petitions for you to the throne of infinite mercy. It would afford me much satisfaction to hear that you are carried on comfortably, and gradually recovering. You are in the hands of a merciful and compassionate Father, who will not fail to do that for you which will be for the best. Commit your soul to the Almighty Redeemer, who is able to save you to the

uttermost, and to make you completely and everlastingly happy. If at any time your mind should be beclouded, your spirits low, and your heart oppressed with a consciousness of your own unworthiness, may you still be enabled to cast yourself at the feet of him who hath said, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.'

"That the God of infinite love may bless you, make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, is the sincere prayer of,

"Your sympathizing friend,

"J. F."

"Aug. 24, 1799.

"In your present state of weakness and pain, I know not whether you will bear to read these lines, which are dictated by the sincerest friendship and solicitude for your best interests. I trust all that grace will be bestowed upon you which you now stand in need of, to enable you to bear your long-continued afflictions with patience, submission, and resignation. The ways of God are mysterious. He has a kingdom of glory and felicity in reserve for his dear children, but it is through much tribulation that they must enter into it.

"The amiable and heavenly-minded Dr. Watts was so much afflicted, that (as he himself related to a friend who visited him) he had no sleep for three months, excepting a little which had been procured by the power of medicine. Afflictions, in one form or other, are the common lot of those whom Jesus loves and designs to save. How often have the words of the

disciples respecting Lazarus been applicable to them :
' Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick !'

" You have hitherto, my dear friend, been wonderfully supported in the different stages of your affliction. The hand of paternal love and tenderness, according to the Divine promise, has made all your bed in your sickness. The everlasting arms of mercy have been underneath you. Still may you be enabled to commit your soul to him, who died to redeem and save you ! I hope to see you soon. May the God of patience and consolation be with you, to fill you with heavenly hope and joy, and to carry you safely and comfortably through this scene of affliction, to the land of rest ! There, unworthy as I am, I trust ere long to meet you, and in this hope remain,

" Your affectionate friend,

" J. F."

" Aug. 30, 1799.

" You are now under the afflicting hand of your heavenly Father ; but this affliction, however grievous in itself, is the fruit of his love, and for the promotion of your best interests. Hear him say to you, ' I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.' The issue, my dear friend, will be glorious. In a little while the blessed inhabitants of heaven will receive you into their happy society, they will welcome you to the regions of immortal felicity, far from these gloomy abodes of sin and woe. I am looking and waiting for my own release, from this state of warfare ; and your situation, as being apparently near the conclusion of the painful journey of life, appears to me most desirable. To the tender care of that Almighty Being, who knows and

pities all your present sufferings, I again commit you. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, to strengthen, to support, and comfort you, to fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. Amen!"

The following extracts of letters written by Mr. F., while they show a mind susceptible of the most sincere and steady friendship, strongly evidence the sense he had of his own imperfections, and his earnest desire after greater attainments.

" Sept. 3, 1801.

" — How often are our earthly hopes blasted, and our sanguine expectations disappointed! All things, however, shall work together for good to them that love God. I know you desire to be of that number; and it is, if I have any acquaintance with my own heart, my prevailing wish; but alas! I see perpetual reason to chide myself for the want of more fervency of mind.

" 'Fain would my thoughts leap out and fly;
But sin hangs heavy on my soul.'

" I have been much refreshed, and I hope edified, by reading the lives of some holy men, who are gone to glory; but here my own defects make me ashamed. O how happy is it for us, that the blessed Gospel holds forth a remedy suitable for poor sinners. This, my dear friend, is the sovereign support of a desponding heart. When we were enemies he died to redeem us: will he then reject us when our souls are following hard after him, and desire nothing so much as to win

Christ, and to be conformed to him? O no! Let us not harbour a thought so dishonourable to his blessed name.

“ You have been a dear and valuable friend to me for many years. I am greatly, very greatly indebted to you. I trust we shall meet again in the regions of immortality, and be for ever with the Lord!”

“ Feb. 21, 1804.

“ My obligations to you are so great, and my attachment to you is so sincere, that I often blame myself for not writing to you more frequently. Yet as you know my time is fully occupied one way or other, I hope you will not impute the omission to a want of gratitude or respect. You are aware of the stated calls of business, to which I must attend; besides those, I have a prevailing thirst for reading and study. My mind is like an empty house that wants every kind of furniture. Since you left us I have spent some time in perusing some classical works, with increasing pleasure and advantage. Of late I have amused myself with chemistry. The improvements which have recently been made in that science are astonishing; it would however be improper in a person of my years to run to much expense, and still more so to devote much time to it. I look on myself as approaching near to the end of my race, and above all things would cultivate an acquaintance with a future world. O that I may be found ready, having my loins girt, and my lights burning! At present I am indisposed, and on the whole apprehend myself to be in a declining state.”

The indisposition mentioned at the close of this

letter attended him during a considerable part of the year 1804; and the family were much alarmed by a slight paralytic stroke, which for some time greatly impaired the use of one side. The intelligence was communicated to some of his distant friends, and the following passage in a letter addressed to him will show the tender and delicate sympathy it excited.

“ Whatever may be the effects and the issue of this trying dispensation, I trust they will all redound to the glory of God, the good of others, and the advantage of the patient, resigned sufferer. Infinite wisdom and goodness sometimes assign us bitter cups, for our own greater refinement, to prepare us for leaving the things of time, as well as to improve our relish for those which are to be handed to us in a future blessed state. Sometimes they are intended for the instruction and encouragement of others, that they may profit by the influence of example, and perceiving that the children of God have their afflictions here, may be prepared to endure similar trials, and bear them with Christian fortitude. When we reflect on the momentary duration of all present things, that this is but the very bud of being, when compared with eternity, how little and light do all the sorrows of mortality appear! more especially when faith is lively and active; but as the drop of a bucket, as the small dust of a balance.

“ May renewed and increased portions of grace and strength from above, cause my dear friend to rejoice even in tribulation! When drooping under the oppressions of nature, may the cheering recollections of the past goodness of God, and his gracious assurances,

be effectually brought into view! How greatly was the pious David revived by such views under deep affliction! ‘Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted? I will remember the Lord, from the land of Jordan, from the hill Mizar.’ These were places and recollections of Divine favour to him, places where his goodness had passed before him.”

To this truly consolatory letter, an answer was soon after returned, in which the following expressions occur.

“Sept. 28, 1804.

“I am greatly indebted to you for your last as well as your former letter, which I duly received. They have both afforded me much consolation. I consider an interest in your friendship as a valuable favour. Indeed, it is what I for many years longed to enjoy. The knowledge I had of your character and of your writings, attached my heart to you before I became personally acquainted with you. Your very precious letter on the subject of my late affliction has done me good. Through Divine mercy, I am much better, though still poorly. I feel a degree of resignation to the Divine will, but am waiting, often with earnest desire, for my dismissal from this state of sin and imperfection.”

The lives of studious persons cannot be supposed to afford much variety of incident, and especially when they are stationary as to their residence, and the habits of life are in a great measure fixed. Their enjoyments are chiefly of the solitary kind, such as

strangers intermeddle not with, except when their professional duties call them forth to public notice. For this reason it cannot be expected that the biographer will have much to record during that period when, satisfied with the world, and no longer fascinated with sanguine expectations from any thing it can afford, the soul turns inward, and is engaged in contemplation of a life to come. In 1805, after the two families had lived together nearly nine years, the subject of this Memoir determined upon retiring from the busy scene, leaving to the younger part of the family a charge in which he had been more or less concerned for the space of nearly forty years. His inducements to do this were such as could not but appear of sufficient weight to his best friends : the declining health of his partner in life, who was nearly six years older than himself, rendered this measure adviseable, if not absolutely necessary.— Having fixed upon a piece of ground, not far from the place of worship where he officiated, which he thought an eligible situation for a house, he proceeded to the erection of a building. The superintendence of it was quite a new employment to him, but proved of essential advantage as contributing to the restoration of his health, and to the prolongation of his life. At the time when he entered upon this undertaking, he had all the indications of an incipient dropsy, both in the extremities and in the chest. His legs were often so much swelled that the impression made by the finger remained, as is usual in cases of confirmed dropsy. The frequent exercise of walking to the new erection, which, for a reason hereafter to be assigned, was called Machpelah, was happily instrumental in checking the progress of that disorder ; so that, though the worthy

physician apprehended that he had water on the chest which might almost at any time prove fatal, it does not appear that the indisposition which ultimately brought him to his end had any connexion with that complaint. We have had frequent occasion, in relating the events of his long life, to state the advantage he derived from exercise; the want of it was probably one principal cause of his first severe indisposition in the year 1774. The improvement in his constitutional health, after years of debility, was, under a Divine blessing, to be attributed to exercise; which, while it enlivens the spirits and invigorates the body, counteracts the effects of that incessant study, which is a weariness to the flesh, and often productive of fatal consequences. His sedentary life, when removed to Ewood Hall, where the vicinity of his study rendered it accessible without the intervention of a walk, brought on the tendency to dropsy, which, had it not been for the exertion of walking four or five miles during several days in the week, while his new habitation was preparing, might have hastened his end. It is highly proper that facts of this kind should be stated, not only as illustrative of the character of an individual, but more especially for the benefit of others, who, by too close application to study, ruin their health, and unfit themselves for future usefulness in society. In how many instances this has been the case, the interesting account of the life of Henry Kirke White, and of multitudes more, might be adduced as affecting and lamentable proofs.

Along with the house which Mr. F. was building, he formed the design of making a vault as a private burying place, in a cavity of the adjacent hill. His reasons for doing this were: partly the small extent of the bu-

rying ground at the meeting-house, to which no addition could be made, and more especially, a wish he had always felt (which had been increased by the havoc he had seen in many crowded public cemeteries) that his *flesh might rest in hope*, and his bones remain undisturbed till the great resurrection day. Such feelings were sanctioned by the example, not only of the ancient Egyptians, but by some of the most eminent among the patriarchs. From the interesting and affecting story of Abraham's solicitude to procure a suitable burying place for Sarah his wife, the name of Machpelah was derived, and now given to this spot. The vault was completed, and for several years considered as the burial place of the family; but the increase of building and population in the immediate neighbourhood, with some other considerations, determined him, towards the close of life, to fix upon a very sequestered spot, which he had purchased for a burying ground, adjoining the chapel at Wainsgate. The name of Machpelah, however, still remains, and will probably continue long after its origin shall have been forgotten.

In several letters, which, by the kindness of those friends to whom he addressed them at this time, are now before me, he repeatedly notices his intended removal to this place. In one he says:

“ I am drawing fast towards the close of my life and labours. I have a plot of ground now called Machpelah, where I have erected a house. The employment in which I have been engaged for many years begins to be

much for me:—in a few weeks my wife and I hope to retire. God grant that we may end our days in piety and peace! It would give me pleasure to think that you and your dear lady do not forget me. Is this vanity? I hope not wholly so: I can be indifferent whether some men love me or not, but I cannot be indifferent about the regard, of those to whom my heart is united.

“O never let our souls divide,
Nor death dissolve the chain.”



In another letter to the same person, written soon after the preceding, he thus describes the state of his mind:—

“The duties of my station as a minister, and the attention necessary to a numerous family, with other important concerns, fill up my time so as to leave me very little leisure. But I look forward, with pleasing hope, to a period of relaxation,—yet how uncertain are all earthly enjoyments! Two of my friends are just buried in the same grave, the husband and his wife: they had been united above fifty years, and lived in the greatest harmony. The wife died of a short sickness; and the husband, who, a few days since, was healthy, cheerful, and active, was so affected with the loss of his dear companion, that he never looked up after she died:—

“Close from his side the dearer half was torn,
The rest lay bleeding, and but lived to mourn.”

Y

“He actually died on the day of his wife’s interment; died in the presence of those who were invited to attend the funeral! My mind was so much moved on the occasion, that I attempted to improve the affecting providence, in speaking from these words: ‘Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they were not divided!’ As these worthy people were much beloved, the audience was very large, and many were melted into tears; at some periods, I could scarcely govern my passions, or command my voice. I hope you and your amiable companion will long continue to be happy in life, and that your latter end will be peaceful and honourable. I esteem you both so much that I wish to be united with you for ever. Though in some external things there may be a shade of difference between us in our views, and though I would act upon principle and be faithful to the light and conviction of my own mind, yet this is no hindrance to that union of spirit which, I think, is of great importance in the religion of Jesus, and which contributes so much to the happiness of his true followers. The two aged persons, whose death I have mentioned, were not of our community, but my love and esteem for them were not the less on that account.

“My dear companion and I have been happily united for almost forty-eight years.—The parting stroke would be heavy to either of us; but the kind Redeemer has said: ‘My grace is sufficient for thee.’”

The following letter is without a date, but is supposed to have been written about this period.

“Your solicitude about my recovery affects me not a little. I hope I am getting better: I had some hours of comfortable sleep last night, but my mornings are tedious, because sleep then departs from me. I have great reason to be thankful I am no worse,—the kind attentions of my family and friends almost overcome me. O that my heart were but more grateful to that gracious Being, who has done me good all my life long! I have been very happy during part of our vacation; I never remember to have enjoyed more solemnity of mind, more freedom and enlargement in prayer and preaching. I might have expected some trial at hand; but I hope my soul is resigned. The greatest pain I feel arises from a consciousness of my own unworthiness. A little story just occurs to my mind: Lockman, a noted Arabian author, was one day required by the King, his master, to eat a nauseous bitter melon (this command was given as a trial of Lockman’s wisdom and obedience)—he immediately ate the apple without showing the least reluctance. Astonished at this act of obedience, his master asked him how he had been able to take a fruit so disagreeable in the taste; Lockman replied, “I have received so many sweets from you, that it is not surprising I should have eaten the *only bitter fruit* you have ever given me.”

How much reason have we to make the same reflection, in reference to the God, whom we profess to love and serve! Providence has dealt kindly with me; beyond what I had any reason to expect, though my life has been full of evil and anxiety, and I have had large experience of that folly and vanity which prevail among the rising generation, to whose instruction so

considerable a portion of my past years has been devoted."



He removed to Machpelah, at Christmas, 1805; his household consisting of himself, his aged partner, and her sister. The little improvements which the grounds adjoining his house gave him an opportunity of making, agreeably occupied his attention, and prevented him from feeling that tedium which a sudden retreat from active life has very often produced, so as to throw a gloom over those enjoyments which imagination had previously realized. The proximity of his habitation to the public road afforded his friends, who were travelling, an opportunity of calling upon him; and he was here in the centre of his church and congregation, who were now enabled to benefit, not only by his preaching, but by frequent opportunities of social intercourse, which his prior engagements, and the distance of the situation, had often precluded.

On the opposite side of the public road from his house, was an uncultivated bank, adjoining a part of the Rochdale canal; this he purchased from the Company, and planted with trees, retaining, even to the latest period of life, that exquisite relish for the beauties of nature which had distinguished his early years. Here he erected a small apartment, as a solitary retreat, and found a constant source of enjoyment in the walks, &c. so long as he had strength to go down to it. The sheet of water in front, the hanging woods on both sides of the hill, the distant view of small villages and bridges, and the noise of an adjacent waterfall, heard

through the trees, all contributed to interest his feelings in this place, which, though in a public situation, afforded all the gratification of retirement.

The following passages are extracted from letters which he wrote to one of his distant friends, a few weeks after his removal to Machpelah.

“ I now live in retirement, and am as happy as I have reason to expect to be. My leisure hours are spent in cultivating my little spot of ground, in study, and in social converse. I am subject to great lassitude, weakness, and pain. Many trials attend me; yet I have many comforts. My dear companion has been much indisposed; but, thank God, she is spared, and in some measure restored.”

On the nineteenth of January, 1807, he was deprived, by the stroke of death, of his brother, Mr. Richard Fawcett, of Bradford, the last survivor of that generation in his family, himself alone excepted. They had been long endeared to each other, not only by the ties of nature, but by the bonds of Christian love and friendship. The close connexion which subsisted between them in early life, was noticed in the commencement of this narrative; and though the older brother adhered to the Methodist society, while the subject of this narrative connected himself with a different body of professing Christians, this did not operate as a bar to Christian communion between them. Mr. Richard Fawcett, after his marriage, resided for more than twenty years at Horton, whence he removed to Bradford, where Providence smiled upon him, in his

commercial pursuits : yet he ever retained that meekness and humility which are the greatest ornaments of the man and the Christian. ‘ He was an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile.’ After a life spent in the unostentatious discharge of the duties of personal religion and Christian benevolence, labouring to win souls to Christ by his example, prayers, and exhortations, he left the world in peace with God and all mankind. He was only seven or eight days indisposed ; but, during that time, displayed such a sweetness of temper, such trust and confidence in God, and faith in the atonement of Christ, as tended to remove, from the breasts of his surrounding friends, those overwhelming sensations of grief which frequently attend a dying bed.

Though Mr. F. had now no concern in the care and education of young persons, excepting so far as connected with his ministerial duties, he still felt the deepest interest in their welfare ; and some time after his removal to Machpelah preached a sermon from Prov. xxii. 6 : ‘ Train up a child in the way in which he should go,’ &c. As he now resided in the neighbourhood of a populous village, he had an opportunity of seeing more of the manners and habits of the lower classes than his former situation afforded : and his observation could not but point out the necessity of some advice both to parents and their offspring. The earnest concern he felt for the poor children in Hebdenbridge and the surrounding hamlets, had been evidenced by the little book already noticed, entitled “ The History

of John Wise," designed chiefly for their use, and by his taking an active part in the establishment of a Sunday school at Hebdenbridge, almost immediately after the simple, but grand idea was suggested by Mr. Raikes; but as suitable accommodation could not be obtained for continuing the school during the winter quarter, to his great regret, the institution declined, and was at length relinquished. Of all the benevolent designs by which the present age has been so honourably distinguished, Sunday schools may be considered as one of the most effective; especially in those manufacturing districts where the introduction of machinery, while it finds employment for the children of the poor, deprives them of week-day advantages for education, and exposes them to the danger of acquiring vicious habits, by associating promiscuously together. Who that loves his country, and has any regard to religious principle, would not be willing to embrace every opportunity of counteracting those evils, which, but for institutions of this kind, seem unavoidable? The prevailing character of the poor is of infinite importance to the well-being of society; and he who endeavours to raise the standard of morals, so as to restrain the rising generation from vice, and stimulate them to the practice of virtue, may certainly be considered as one of the greatest benefactors of mankind.

The sermon we have already noticed, produced a considerable impression when it was delivered; and he was repeatedly urged to print it, to which he at length consented, not as a sermon, but by the more inviting, though less assuming denomination of "Hints on the Education of Children, particularly the Children of the Poor." Though containing much more matter than

sermons in general, it was sold at four-pence, neatly printed, the principal object being to give it as extensive a circulation as possible among those for whose use it was intended. The demand was so considerable, that it soon reached a fourth edition. It was the author's wish that the language should be level to the meanest capacity, and that it should present, in a condensed form, the most powerful inducements to the great work of cultivating the minds of young persons.

In a letter to a friend, he says, "This tract is designed to be put into the hands of the lower class of people, who have not access to more elaborate treatises. There are thousands of poor families who never think of laying out money on books of this kind; and yet none stand in greater need of instruction on the subject of education. Among these I give many copies away; and for those who purchase, the expense is very easy. The subject itself is of the greatest importance."

Some time after the publication of this pamphlet, he printed, by request of the hearers, a sermon preached at Ackrington, for the benefit of a Sunday school, from Deut. xxxi. 13: 'That the children which have not known any thing may hear and learn to fear the Lord.' In this sermon are considered the importance and benefit of Sunday schools—to the children themselves—to others, with whom they are connected—to the families into which they may be introduced—to society at large—to the parents of the children, and, above all, to the salvation of their own souls, and the promotion of true religion in the world.

In the year 1806, having heard of a considerable revival of religion in the neighbourhood of Bradford, though not in a denomination with which he was con-

nected, he took occasion to write a small pamphlet, under the title of, "A tender Address to returning Prodigals, in the Form of a Letter." It possesses considerable interest, as an evidence that his declining years did not at all diminish the ardour of his soul for the conversion of sinners; and that he felt the most disinterested regard for all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, by whatever name distinguished amongst men. He says, "For more than fifty years, it has been my heart's desire, and prayer to God, that my poor fellow sinners, in every place, might have their eyes opened, their hearts changed, and their wills bowed to the will of their Maker. The instances which have come to my knowledge of this great work, have filled my mind with pleasure and gratitude.

"With respect to many of you, I never saw your faces in the flesh, nor perhaps ever may, in this world. I must shortly put off this tabernacle; the time of my departure is at hand; but from what I have heard of you, and of the great change that has taken place among you, I do most sincerely love you. O that thousands and millions more may be subdued by victorious grace, and made willing in the day of God's power!"

Several of Mr. F.'s friends had long expressed a desire that he would give a digest of the sermons he had preached on almost every part of the Divine Word, and his general idea of the sense of Scripture, by writing a short comment on the Bible, with suitable reflections at the close of each chapter. The materials he

had long been treasuring up, the leisure he now enjoyed from the confinement of his former avocation, and the state of his health, which was in some respects improved, induced him to take the matter into serious consideration. His mind, however, for a considerable time, shrunk back at the thoughts of such an undertaking.

To commence a work of that magnitude when on the verge of seventy, was what perhaps had never before been attempted. The recollection of the many instances in which those who had engaged in similar works in the vigour of their days, as Poole, Henry, Doddridge, &c. but died before the completion; was a discouraging circumstance. His intimate friend, Mr. Fuller, though he approved of the design, had little expectation that his life would be prolonged till he could bring it to a conclusion. In one of his letters, he says—I hope your life and strength may be spared to go on with the commentary, though there is not much probability of your living to finish it. I have somewhere met with the following expression, “Jesus could say ‘It is finished,’ and then gave up the ghost; but this is more than can be said of any one besides. Death generally finds us with a number of our unfinished works on our hands.”

His advanced years certainly presented one important advantage for entering upon this arduous undertaking, namely, the mental stores and matured experience which he had acquired, from his constant study of the Scriptures, and from his ministerial labours. No doubt, when he finally concluded to accede to the wishes of his friends, he was influenced by motives similar to those of the Apostle Peter, when drawing towards the close of life: ‘Moreover, I will endeavour that, after my

'decease, ye may have these things always in remembrance; for we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

From a date (November 17, 1807) in the manuscript, at the close of Gen. iv. it may be inferred, that he entered upon the work of writing the comment, in the beginning of that month. His regular plan, unless prevented by some unforeseen occurrence, was to go through one chapter, on an average, every day; and on the Lord's Day mornings he expounded one of the chapters he had commented upon during the preceding week. This was both a relief to his own mind, in his studies preparatory to preaching, and proved highly interesting to the hearers, as was evident from the considerable increase in his morning congregations, more especially while he was upon the historical parts of Scripture, which he had the happy talent of rendering both entertaining and instructive. For the gratification of his aged partner in life, and others, who occasionally stepped in, he usually read, before he retired to rest, what he had composed during each day. These evening rehearsals also afforded him an opportunity of making the necessary corrections, and supplying what might have been omitted.

In a letter to a highly valued friend, to whose perusal part of the manuscript was submitted, he says, "I am glad to find you do not disapprove of my feeble attempts; in a work to which the powers of my mind are not equal, though I find a present reward in them. I often wonder that I have been enabled to sit to close study, for twelve or fourteen hours in the day, without any

material injury to my health. The fact is, I am running a race, with death at my heels, not knowing how soon he may overtake me. The work is formidable; but who can tell what the Almighty may intend to do by one of the weakest and most unworthy of his servants? I would live, and act, think, read, and write, depending on him. You will easily conceive that I must meet with many interruptions from company; and I have been obliged to publish three pamphlets during the last summer. The uncertainty of my being able to get through the work, must be an obstacle in the way of printing; but, if I should fail, it will be what others have done before me; and I should hope some one will be found able and willing to carry it forward to a conclusion. At all events, so long as I am continued in a capacity for writing, I feel a strong inclination to persevere. Above two thousand close pages have cost me some labour; and besides these, I have many materials, on several remaining parts of the Sacred Book. As to my style of composition, you know it is plain, and not embellished with the ornaments of modern refinement. My principal object is to make myself understood, and to interest the heart of the reader. It would not suit me to attempt to rise above the level of my own powers;—but pardon my prolixity. My dear wife sends her love; alas! she is sinking apace. I often fear she will soon be taken from me; we have been together more than half a century, and the separating stroke, whenever it comes, will be severely felt. We often talk of our absent friends; and it is my wish to write more frequently; but, after I have spent the whole day in study, I feel my spirits exhausted. Yet,

through Divine mercy, my health is in as favourable a state as I have any reason to expect, considering my years and infirmities."



A variety of letters lie before me, written by the subject of this Memoir about this period, which show that, though his attention was so closely engaged in his laborious and voluminous work, he retained a sense of those sacred obligations which friendship imposes, and found satisfaction in disclosing the feelings of his mind to his Christian friends. In several of these an interesting account is given of a young person to whom his ministerial labours were serviceable, and whom he regularly visited, when languishing under the power of a consumptive disorder. The similarity of her case to that of his beloved daughter, who died some years before, affected him greatly. At first her mind was beclouded, and her spirits were depressed under a sense of her sin and unworthiness; but she derived hope and encouragement from a view of that great remedy which God himself has provided, and the gracious promises of the Gospel; so that the fear of death and every other disquietude were removed, and she departed this life with the greatest composure and tranquillity.

In a following letter to the same esteemed lady, dated July 4, 1807, he relates another instance of mortality, of which he had recently received the mournful intelligence.

"I have lately lost a most valuable friend, who had resided for some time at Missenden Abbey, near

London. She formerly lived in our neighbourhood. It pleased God to make my poor labours useful to her about twenty years ago. She had many severe trials in the course of her life, but she bore them with meekness and Christian patience. She was my steady friend and correspondent for many years, in all the changes through which she passed; but she is gone, and I have no doubt to a better world. She was a person of an enlarged understanding, of a refined taste, and elegant manners, and, which is infinitely more than all, of *steady, persevering, and exalted piety.*"

" July 22, 1807.

" When you were pleased to express a wish to hear from me frequently, you were not perhaps aware of the trouble your poor correspondent might give you. The reason assigned for my last letter must be my apology for the present, namely, relief to my own mind. My dear wife has been greatly afflicted with a bilious complaint, but is at present a little better. We have lived long together, during which period we have weathered many storms, but we have enjoyed many comforts. We have outlived many of our dear friends; but the Lord liveth, whose loving-kindness is better than life, and ever the same, for his mercy endureth for ever. Permit me to thank you for the consolation your friendship affords me. After the many I have seen laid in the grave who were dear to me, it is a relief to my desponding mind to have an interest in your kind remembrance.

" I have just been attempting something by way of funeral discourse for the young person of whose death I gave you some account. When inquiry was made of

her, whether one should be preached, she replied, 'Let nothing be said of me;' a proof, among many others, of the humility of her mind. Her request has been strictly attended to; but I judged this a proper opportunity for addressing young persons relative to their most important interests. The text was Psalm lxxi. 5: 'For thou art my hope from my youth.' You will believe me when I say, that I was greatly affected."

" May 29, 1807.

" The Rev. ——— informs me, that your health has been for some time very indifferent. This intelligence excites my sympathy and tender concern. May it please the Almighty to restore you to better health, and to grant you the consolations of his Holy Spirit! May Christ dwell in your heart, that you may be filled with all joy and peace in believing, and made to abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost!

" I have just been at Liverpool to see my daughter, who has drunk deeply of the bitter cup of affliction. The journey of above sixty miles has been too much for me; I was unwell during all the time of my absence, and am so much indisposed on my return that I can scarcely lift up my head. My dear wife is also much afflicted, but mercifully supported in her mind. At Liverpool I was engaged to preach, along with some other ministers: I took for my text some words which came out of a foul mouth, but contain an important truth; for a liar, and even the father of lies, may sometimes speak that which is true. The enemy's design no doubt was to bring the apostles of Christ into contempt, through what was spoken; by leading the people to suppose that they were confederate with the

powers of darkness: Acts 16, 17: "These men are the servants," &c. All true ministers are the servants of the Most High God, but the apostles were so in a peculiar sense; hence their message claims our most serious regard. Men stand in need of salvation; there is a way of salvation, and but one; it is the business of ministers to show us that way; that is, to show us the *importance* of salvation, the *Author* of it, the *procurement* and the *application* of it, and the things which accompany it; namely, illumination of mind, repentance, faith, love, subjection to Christ, and obedience to his precepts. Some of the blessings of salvation were briefly mentioned in the conclusion, as deliverance from the wrath to come, pardon of sin, peace with God, adoption into his family, preservation by his power, and the crowning blessing of eternal felicity. For this felicity, my dear friend, you are now, I trust, waiting with joyful hope.

"I am pressing forward with my comment on the Bible, having prepared for the press 3180 quarto pages, which bring me to the end of the book of Job. My wish is not to exceed three volumes."

"Aug. 5, 1809.

"Your kind letter by my esteemed friend Mr. ——— came duly, to hand and gave me very great pleasure. The Bibles were also received a few days ago; a valuable present indeed; for which I hope and trust He that put it into your heart to impart, will reward you a thousand fold. Accept of my grateful acknowledgments, and those of my poor friends who are now enjoying the benefit of your liberality; some of whom received your gift with tears of joy. Gratitude is a pleasing sen-

sation; but O what obligations, what infinite obligations, do we lie under to him who *gave himself* for us! I have just been musing on Is. xii. 1: 'O Lord! I will praise thee,' &c. This passage I could wish to speak from to-morrow, if it please the Almighty to help me. My plan is simple: I. The sinner's distressful case, 'Thou wast angry with me.' The only procuring cause of God's anger is *sin*. Men, in their natural state, are, as guilty creatures, exposed to the Divine displeasure; yet such is their blindness and stupidity, they do not consider their danger; but when the mind is divinely enlightened, there are awful apprehensions of the Divine anger; 'Thou wast angry with me.' II. The words of the text state a happy deliverance: 'Thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.' The Holy Spirit, in illuminating the mind, directs it to that which affords comfort. The ground of comfort to the distressed soul is the complete work of Jesus Christ, finished on the cross; and the way in which the poor sinner receives comfort is that of believing the testimony which God has given of his Son Jesus Christ. III. The consequence of this is gratitude to God: 'O Lord! I will praise thee.'

"I hope you will pardon the brevity and abruptness of these hints.

"Amidst many infirmities, I am going on with my comment, and have finished the 62d Psalm. You do me great honour, by looking over a few pages of my notes; I wish they were more worthy of your perusal."

"April 22, 1810.

"I beg leave to present you with a few scraps and gleanings of a discourse which I have just been endeavouring to deliver to my dear people from Is. lix. 19:

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‘They shall fear the name of the Lord,’ &c. Obs. 1. They that fear the Lord are in a *militant* state in the present world. An enemy on the one hand, and a standard lifted up on the other, denote war. Hence we read of wrestling and of fighting, of enduring hardship, and of being more than conquerors. 2. The world is divided into those that fight *for* God, and those that fight *against* him. 3. An enemy is here spoken of who comes *in like a flood*. This enemy, namely, Satan, is the opposer of Christ and of all that is good. He tempted Christ, who came to bruise his head and to destroy his works. He commands a numerous host, principalities and powers in high places. He is of great power; hence he is denominated a roaring lion, unwearied in his efforts. 4. Those that fear the Lord are not of themselves able to cope with this adversary. Peter thought himself equal; but mark the issue. Jesus said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’ 5. The Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him. He enlightens, renews, sanctifies, comforts, seals, bears witness, and leads to the Redeemer. When we have no might, no courage, no help, he lifts up a standard to direct and encourage. 6. There are some special seasons when this is particularly verified, that is, when ‘the enemy comes in like a flood, and when the Spirit lifts up a standard against him;’ as (1) at the time of our conversion to God. While a man is secure in his sins, the enemy has him in his power; he keeps his palace, and his goods are in peace: but when once a man begins to desert his service, conflicts and temptations prevail. In this situation the Spirit of God lifts up a standard, and directs where to look, in what to trust, as well as how to act. The motto upon this

standard, to encourage the trembling sinner is, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.' (2.) When we have enjoyed heavenly consolations, the messenger, Satan, is sometimes suffered to buffet us, as in the case of the apostle Paul, when, after his seraphic vision, he had to complain of a thorn in the flesh. But a standard is lifted up: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' (3.) When we fall into declensions, backslidings, and lukewarmness, a standard is lifted up: 'He restoreth my soul;' 'I will heal their backslidings.' Alas! were not this the case, we should be undone. (4.) In times of great darkness and despondency, 'The enemy persecuteth my soul, he hath smitten my life down to the ground.' Perhaps horrid blasphemous thoughts assail and torment us; but the Spirit of God lifteth up the standard of the cross, to which we look, and find healing and comfort. (5.) In times of persecution, 'The dragon cast a flood after the woman;' fines, confiscations, racks, prisons, flames, &c., but the Spirit lifts up a standard. Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises in the dungeon: others rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the dear name of Jesus; they gloried in tribulation, took joyfully the spoiling of their goods; and amidst all their sufferings found an increase of love, of fervour, of joy, and of consolation. (6.) When error and infidelity are rampant. The flood-gates of error are sometimes opened, violent opposition is made to the most important truths, but the Spirit lifts up a standard; the truth is held fast by the real Christian, and shines with more resplendent rays, for 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' (7.) This is frequently verified in seasons of sickness, and at the approach of death. This is the enemy's *last*

effort. Sin is sometimes brought to remembrance, and unbelieving fears prevail ; but the standard of the cross is lifted up and relief afforded, fear is vanquished, and faith is victorious : ‘ O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, *through our Lord Jesus Christ.*’

“ To his gracious care, my honoured friend, I humbly commend you, and hope you will excuse any defects you may find in these imperfect hints. Accept them as a token of my most sincere regard.”

In another letter to the same friend, he says :

“ I have just heard of the afflictions and depressions of mind with which it has pleased the Almighty to visit you. Let me assure you, for your comfort, that the adorable Redeemer, who died to save you, ever bears you on his heart, and ever lives to make intercession for you. Let the thought of his love comfort your heart, amidst all your tribulations. Hear his tender language : ‘ Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in me,’ as the Redeemer of sinners, as the Mediator between God and man. Here is the best remedy, the best cordial for a distressed mind ; a cordial prescribed by infinite wisdom and love ; a cordial, which has been found efficacious by all who have tried it, in every age. Believe therefore in the power, the love, and the truth of God, in whom there is mercy and plenteous redemption ; believe in the all-glorious and compassionate Saviour, for the remission of your sins, the acceptance of your person, the supply of all your wants, and the enjoyment of everlasting life. Observe what he further adds for the re-

lief of troubled hearts: 'In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.' What can you or I, my dear friend, ask more?"

"I hope you will be pleased to excuse my long silence, and not impute it either to want of respect or gratitude. The work in which I am engaged so entirely absorbs my attention, that I have little leisure for any thing else. God only knows whether I shall live to see it completed or not. I desire to be resigned to his Divine will. My life has hitherto been a busy one, but it has pleased the Almighty to bear me up amidst many afflictions and discouragements. I make no apology for writing about myself, as I know your goodness will excuse it. That the best of blessings may rest on you, and all who are dear to you, is the sincere desire and hearty prayer of yours most sincerely."

Though Mr. F. avoided, as much as possible, being absent from his labours, which to almost any one at his age would have appeared an Herculean exertion, he acceded to a pressing invitation, to preach at the opening of the new place of worship, York-street, Manchester, April 20, 1808; and at the earnest request of many, he afterwards printed the sermon.

From an advertisement prefixed, it appears that it did not come out till the beginning of July following.

The delay, he says, has been owing partly to that reluctance which arises from diffidence and conscious inability, and partly to that bodily and mental weakness which attended the author in the first delivery, and which has still attended him in preparing it for the press. The subject of the sermon is, The Holiness which becometh the house of God, from Ps. xciii. 5: 'Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.' No text could have been better adapted for so solemn and interesting an occasion. The division of the discourse is plain, and such as the words themselves naturally suggested; namely, what we are to understand by the *house* of God, and the *holiness* that becomes it. Whether the term is applied to the church of God, as consisting of professing believers in Jesus, or to the material building wherever the worship of God is maintained, it may with the greatest propriety be said, 'Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, for ever!' But under the Gospel dispensation, this holiness does not so much refer to the place itself, as to those who assemble there for religious exercises; and as such it may include, holiness of *intention*, holiness of *doctrine*, holiness of *worship*, of *discipline*, and of *practice*.

The progress he made in writing the comment on the Bible far exceeded the expectations of his friends. That persevering and steady industry in his undertakings, which had distinguished the former periods of his life, did not fail in its effect here; but he had scarcely got to the middle of the work before his assiduous

labours were impeded by a circumstance most painful to his private feelings; though it did not come upon him by surprise, as is evident from many expressions in the preceding letters. His beloved partner in life, who had distinguished herself in that relation by activity, integrity, steady piety, and sincere affection, for more than fifty years; after languishing for some months, was removed by the stroke of death. The complaints with which she had long been attended terminated in a dropsy. She took her room about Christmas, 1809, and died March 30, 1810. Her sickness deprived him of the satisfaction he had found in reading to her his commentary; and the attention her feeble situation required by night and by day, while it broke in upon his rest, rendered him often unfit for study.

In a letter to a friend, dated March 25, 1810, he says:

“Exhausted with continual watching, fatigue, and anxiety, I feel myself unfit for any thing; yet would not neglect this opportunity of communicating a line to my much valued friend. My dear wife has been many times brought back from the very gates of death. When the lease of life seemed just going to expire, she has had it renewed from time to time. Last night we all assembled round her bed, and thought her dying for some hours; we did not at all expect she would live till morning, but she suddenly revived, and called me by name, with her usual tenderness. I think I never had closer exercise than to go through my labour of preaching in these circumstances. My text yesterday was, ‘It is the Lord, let him do what

seemeth him good.' This disposition I wish to feel, and to cherish. I have been revising part of my manuscript, and must now leave what I have done, as far as I am able, in the hands of Providence. The will of the Lord be done! If he smile upon this feeble effort, for the promotion of his glory, I hope I shall be thankful."

In another letter, he thus discloses the feelings of his mind, on this trying occasion :

" It has long been a gloomy, anxious time with us, and still continues to be so. My dear wife has been confined to her chamber for three months ; I cannot say to her bed, for she is not able to breathe otherwise than sitting up in her chair, which is her posture through the night. We have many times thought her ready to expire, but she is still spared to us. When she is herself, she is composed, comfortable, and very affectionate, but sometimes she is quite delirious. It often distresses us to see her suffer so much ; yet amidst her great affliction, she is sensible that it is the hand of the Almighty, and is desirous to wait his will in due submission. As to myself, I am as well as I can expect, considering what restless nights I have long had. My trials are very heavy, but strength has hitherto been afforded equal to the day. I feel the want of sleep very sensibly. This makes me a poor companion for the elevated prophet Isaiah. He is all life, but I have to complain of great dulness and stupidity. What I have written on the preceding part of the Bible is in the hands of some judicious friends ; and should they not encourage

the publication, perhaps it may be of some value to those with whom I am personally connected in its present form, when my head is laid low in the silent dust."

He was enabled to bear the parting stroke with the fortitude and patience of a Christian. It is one happy tendency of extreme and long-continued suffering, that it reconciles us to a separation from our dearest relatives, and especially when satisfactory evidence has been given, that death will be their release from all pain and sorrow. He remained by her to the last moment of her mortal existence, holding her arm, so as to feel her pulse, till the lungs finally ceased to heave, and the crimson current was arrested in its progress.

In many instances where the husband and wife have been spared so long together, the death of the one proves a forerunner to the removal of the other; the survivor languishes, and at length expires, unable to bear the separating stroke; but the close attention requisite for the work in which he was now engaged, tended greatly to divert his thoughts from those distressing ideas and reflections which such a bereavement must occasion, and which almost overwhelm the mind that can fly to no other resources.

Among the many letters of condolence which the aged sufferer received on this mournful occasion, the following afforded him particular satisfaction. It is here introduced, both on account of its own intrinsic excellence, and the subsequent reply.

“ I perceive by the public papers that my worthy and venerable friend has sustained an irreparable loss, in the death of a faithful and beloved wife, who has long been an affectionate support to him, and a cheering companion through the varied periods of life. I embrace an early opportunity to express my sympathy under this trying event. On such occasions I know of no reflections so consoling as the grateful remembrance of the many years we have possessed the mercy and the well-grounded hope of soon meeting the blessed spirit in a state of glory and happiness which admits of no alloy, and which will last for ever. ‘ The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord,’ are the pious aspiration of a devout and resigned heart ; and such I doubt not will be the humble and grateful language of my dear friend.

“ Infinite goodness has by this event afforded a fresh occasion of pious resignation to his holy will ; it has cut asunder one more of the bonds which attach to this world, and is thus mercifully preparing the spirit, with more composure and alacrity, to take its leave of all the things of time.”

To this truly sympathetic letter, he soon after returned an answer, dated April 19, 1810 ; from which a few passages are extracted.

“ It was very kind in you, my much esteemed friend, to favour me with a consolatory letter, in this midst of my distress. O how grateful do I feel for this token of your goodness ! Were not the distance so great, I would come and thank you in person. I do sincerely love you both, and feel that union of heart with you,

the sweetness of which I am persuaded you understand better than I can express. I have sustained a heavy loss indeed! Death has left a vacancy, which I feel every hour; but what you suggest is a great consolation to me. We have lived very happily together for a long course of years, and I hope we shall soon meet again, to *part no more*. My thoughts are far from being composed. Do write again, my dear friend. O what would I give to be able to spend one hour with you! There is something peculiarly soothing in sincere and tender friendship. It is a cordial to a wounded heart; and such a heart is mine at present. But I must bid you farewell, and make no apology for writing with a childlike simplicity. I am,

“ Ever yours.”

In the month of June, 1810, the annual association was held at Bradford. As this was Mr. F.'s native place, he was earnestly importuned, and at length consented, to attend on that occasion, to officiate as one of the ministers, and that he might once more have an interview with his relations and friends, who were resident there, and with those who came from distant places. On the morning of the day on which he had to preach, he was more than usually agitated in the prospect of appearing in public, expressing in the strongest and most humiliating terms the sense he had of his unfitness for the work, both on account of his great weakness and mental infirmities. But when he entered the pulpit and read his text (Joshua xxiii. 14: ‘Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth’), every eye in the large assembly

was fixed upon him, and he had not proceeded far in opening the subject, before almost every individual present was melted into tears. Since the days of Whitefield, few such seasons had been witnessed; and the remembrance of it will remain with many who were present to the latest period of life. It was not enthusiasm; it was that melting of the heart, which truths of infinite and universal concernment, delivered with feeling, and accompanied by divine energy, cannot fail to produce. He had a few months before completed his three-score years and ten; his partner in life, for whom this was intended as a funeral sermon, had, as we have seen, been recently taken from him; many present had known him long, and had often been greatly edified by hearing him at these solemn seasons; and their presentiments told them that he was now, like Joshua, taking a final leave of them, as a public character. This sermon, the last he published, was soon after printed in a cheap form, and has gone through many editions. It cannot be supposed that, independently of circumstances peculiar to the time and mode of delivery, and which in themselves have a great effect upon the mind, it should be equally impressive in the perusal, as when first delivered; but it has generally been considered as one of the best specimens to be found among the writings of the deceased of his method in preaching, and illustrating subjects of that nature. Those who have sat under his ministry will here find his manner exhibited, so far as language can convey it. For this reason it is subjoined to the narrative.

During the last year of his being employed on the commentary, he had several serious attacks of indis-

position, by which he was for weeks together prevented from making any progress. On one of these occasions he had a slight paralytic affection in his right arm, which disabled him from writing. This was a discouraging circumstance at his advanced age; but by the use of proper means and a little respite, he resumed his pen sooner than could have been expected.

In a letter written at this time, he thus expresses himself: "Through mercy I feel myself in a way for recovery. I began to be better yesterday in the afternoon, and have had a good night. I hope you will lend me your kind assistance on Lord's Day, in the afternoon. I thank you for all your affectionate solicitude, of which I am totally unworthy. The solemn subjects now under my consideration in Matthew almost overpower me. I sink under the idea of my own insufficiency. There is a majesty and glory in revelation, which I never felt so forcibly as now. It is all Divine. O that we did but understand it, and experience its energy!"

Notwithstanding these frequent interruptions from indisposition and other causes, the writing of the commentary was completed in less than four years from the time of its commencement; namely, in the month of August, 1811; and about the same time the degree of Doctor in Divinity was conferred upon him, by one of the Transatlantic Universities.

To a much valued friend, he thus writes when drawing towards the close of his labours.

"Your letter was to me as cold water to a thirsty soul, and good news from a far country. Accept of my warmest and most grateful acknowledgments. I am

favoured with a respectable list of subscribers; but among them all no name is dearer to me than yours. My time has long been fully, but pleasantly occupied about the solemn work I have in hand. I began too late in life, but I now hope I shall be helped through it."

The Sabbath after he had finished the manuscript, he descanted, in the morning, on the two last chapters of the Revelation. The whole of the service was interesting, and in particular the concluding part, in which he adverted, in a most feeling manner, to the events which had taken place since he undertook the work, the personal and family afflictions with which he had been exercised, the discouragements of mind under which he had frequently laboured, and the help which amidst all had been afforded him. In the afternoon he preached from the last verse in the Bible: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.'

As the care and expense of publishing a work of such magnitude were too considerable for him, as an individual, in his retired situation, and at his advanced age, to undertake, arrangements had been made for that purpose, through the medium of a kind friend, with some of the London booksellers. The copy was sent up as it was wanted, and carefully preserved, so that when the work was printed off, the manuscript was returned and bound up in sixteen quarto volumes. It extends to 8578 pages. The whole of it was written on single quarto-sized leaves; so that by loosening the string which connected the parts together, any single leaf might be taken out, and another substituted in its place. This was the form he adopted in all his manuscripts for the press. The number of erasures through-

out the MS. is very small, and shows the facility which, through practice, he had acquired of clothing his ideas in suitable, though not studiously elegant language.

In attempting to form our judgment of any publication, it is of importance to keep in view the avowed objects of the writer. The title of "Devotional Family Bible," in a few words explains what they were in this instance; and it is well adapted to the design and execution of the work. It exhibits no display of ingenuity in fanciful, far-fetched interpretations of difficult passages, or nice critical remarks upon them: for the former he had no taste whatever; and the objects he had principally in view would not permit him to dwell upon the latter, however sensible of their value in some cases. His mind was deeply impressed with a sense of the impropriety and danger of advancing such speculations as would tend to unsettle and unhinge those who are apt to be dazzled with every thing that has the air of novelty, and to be carried about with every wind of doctrine.

If Grotius, who wrote a learned Commentary on the New Testament, lamented, towards the close of his life, that he had spent too much of his time in laborious trifling, it ought surely to be the study of every minister, in explaining Scripture, and dividing the word of truth, to avoid every thing that may lead to the same painful reflections. That *soberness* of mind which an apostle so earnestly recommends to Christians in general, is most of all incumbent on the Christian minister, whenever he attempts to unfold and explain the

oracles of God, either from the pulpit or the press. Avoiding the just imputation of visionary systems and wild enthusiasm, he will be solicitous to advance the 'words of truth and soberness.' That this is one leading feature of the notes contained in the "Devotional Family Bible," must be evident to every one, even on a cursory perusal.

To direct the attention of the reader to prominent beauties, to those ideas which the text obviously suggests, and which were most likely to be useful, was the author's primary object; without any attempt to discover recondite meanings, and to add ornament to that which is most attractive when set forth in its own native simplicity, dignity, and grandeur. Though, where the elucidation of the passage requires it, he plainly expresses his sentiments on points which have been controverted, there is so little of that dogmatical spirit which always rouses opposition, that if conviction is not felt, hostility must be disarmed. Such indeed is the difference which has been observable in almost every period of time, in the mode of illustrating divine truth, that while one person dwelling on the same doctrines appears to be altogether employed in casting out firebrands, and lighting up the embers of controversy, another, through the happy influence of the word of God upon his soul, the fervour of piety, united with the meekness and simplicity that are in Christ, almost irresistibly wins the heart, while he enlightens the understandings of gainsayers. When the mind is under such an influence in studying the sacred Scriptures, and endeavouring to explain them, the truths of Christianity will appear with such an air of unaffected greatness, that, in comparison with them, all fanciful

speculations and strife of words, will be like the mere amusements of childhood.

The "Aspirations," throughout the work may be considered as forming its prominent and distinguishing excellence. Though a recurrence of similar ideas and expressions seems, from the nature of the plan, almost inevitable, there is a rich variety of devout sentiment which shows the bent of the author's mind, and the ardent desire he felt that the contents of the publication might correspond with its title. Like the patient, industrious bee, it was his study to extract the honey from the varied flowers which the historical and prophetic parts of Scripture, and more especially the glorious truths of the Gospel, presented to view. He often intimated to his friends that no part of his plan so much engaged his attention, and cost him so much labour, as the "Aspirations." In them we see that devotional frame of mind, that habit of study and reflection, of which there are so many indications in the diary, matured by the experience and observation of a long and laborious life.

The want of marginal references has been noticed by some as a deficiency. Before the work was put to the press the question was seriously agitated whether they should be subjoined to the text or not; but the conclusion was, that as the most important parallel passages were referred to in the notes, the rest might, without impropriety, be omitted. The addition they would have made to the size and expense of the volumes was another important consideration, as it was the earnest wish of the writer that the book might be accessible to families in general, and in particular to those

in the lower walks of life to whom his labours had been useful.

From a calculation made, in looking over a few of the first chapters in manuscript, it was expected that the whole might be comprised in twelve parts, forming two volumes quarto, of the common size; but in the progress of the work through the press it was found that three additional parts would be necessary to complete it. This was announced to the subscribers, with a pledge that it should not exceed that number. Under these circumstances the author, the manuscript not being completed, found himself circumscribed in his limits when he came towards the close of the Sacred Volume; a part on which he wished, from the importance of the subjects, to have expatiated more at large. On this account, as well as of his growing infirmities, the plan adopted by Dr. A. Clarke, who proceeded to the New Testament after he had completed his comment on the Pentateuch, might have been adviseable; but the necessary curtailment of the notes and aspirations in some of the minor Epistles is less to be regretted when we consider the valuable expositions on the New Testament exclusively, on a similar plan, which have been published by many eminent divines, particularly those by the judicious Dr. Guise, and the pious and learned Dr. Doddridge.

The expressions of approbation which the author received at the close of his labours, from many of the wise and good, were highly gratifying to him; but what he wished most of all was, that the work might be permanently useful, when his lips were sealed in silence. The frequent reference he made to it in conversation, and in

his epistolary correspondence, showed that he never engaged in any thing in which his heart was more interested. Writing to a young relative soon after he had completed it, he thus expresses himself:—

“ Your kind letter has given me great pleasure. I have you much in my thoughts, and have often longed to write to you, but have been prevented by many pressing infirmities. The *hydrops pectoris* renders me incapable of leaning long over my desk. Indeed all the little vigour of mind which you may think I once possessed has been exhausted by the assiduous attention which I have paid to the comment on the Bible. It is highly gratifying to hear that you pay attention to my labours, and to find that you are profited by what you read. The King of Israel proposed that important inquiry: “ Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way ? ” To which question he gives the following answer: “ By taking heed thereto according to thy word.” Nothing can give me greater pleasure than to find you thus employed.—Be assured of my affectionate regard for you, my earnest concern for your welfare, your present comfort, and your everlasting happiness.”

On the 14th of February, 1811, that venerable minister of Christ, the Rev. William Crabtree, of Bradford, departed this life. He had been for a considerable time incapacitated for public labour, and his death was sudden and easy, having in all its circumstances the appearance of a tranquil sleep in Jesus. The Rev. William Steadman preached on the day of the funeral,

from a text which the deceased had chosen for the purpose many years before : ' Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.' The funeral sermon, which Dr. F. was appointed to preach, was postponed on account of his indisposition, till April 14, when, by particular direction of his aged, departed friend, he addressed an immense concourse of people from Psalm xvii. 15 : ' I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.' He was earnestly solicited to print the sermon, but found himself unequal to it from his growing infirmities.

In this enfeebled state of his bodily health he received the mournful intelligence of the decease of his only daughter at Liverpool, leaving behind her six children, the oldest of whom followed her to the grave a few months after. From the declining state of her health for a considerable time, he was in some measure prepared for the event. It was a painful circumstance that he could not, on account of the distance, personally administer consolation to her, but the kind and unwearied attentions she received from those friends, who had long been endeared to him by every tie of gratitude and affection, and, above all, that good hope and steady faith which she evidenced, with the prospect of meeting her soon in a better world, greatly alleviated his sorrows on her account.

A cordial and uninterrupted friendship had, for more than half a century, subsisted between the Rev. Mr. Crabtree, whose death has just been related, and him to whose memory these pages are devoted. Though, in some respects, their pursuits had been different, they

united in one grand aim, the glory of God and the welfare of the souls of men. Mr. Crabtree's attention, as a minister of the Gospel, was almost exclusively directed to the study of the Scriptures, and the duties of the pastoral office. Though not possessed of literary attainments beyond the common standard, his fervent piety, his good sense, and native original genius, rendered him generally acceptable as a preacher, both at home and abroad. He was remarkably grave in his appearance and general deportment, but he had along with these traits in his character a vein of pleasantry somewhat similar to that of the late Rev. Mr. Berridge, which made him a very agreeable companion; it was occasionally apparent in his sermons, so as to enliven the attention of his hearers. Whatever is affected in this way excites disgust; but in him it was natural, and remote from that levity which is unbecoming the pulpit.

As a separate account of his life has been published, and also of the Rev. Mr. Hirst of Bacup, who had long been an intimate friend of Dr. F. and who died June 15, 1815, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, it is unnecessary here to enter into further particulars, relative to their public and private characters. Where a minister of the gospel is enabled to live down the censures of the world, and honourably to maintain his stand for a long succession of years to the close of life, with increasing usefulness and success, as was the case with these excellent men, no studied encomium is wanting; their *memory is blessed* indeed.—‘Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.’

THE British and Foreign Bible Society, instituted in the year 1804, was in its constitution and operations so congenial with the views of the subject of this memoir, that, from the commencement, it excited a lively interest in his mind. In this instance, as well as in Sunday school establishments, the simplicity of the plan recommended it to the attention of Christians of every denomination; and whilst every one was led to express surprise that such an institution, on an extended liberal scale, had never before engaged the attention of Protestants, who profess to consider the *Bible alone* as the standard of faith and practice, they hailed it as the blessed means of allaying the animosities which had prevailed among the different denominations of Christians; as that which would unite and concentrate their energies, and ultimately lead to the evangelization of the whole world.

In a society formed on such a basis there seemed to be no room for strife or controversy, except that of stirring one another up to renewed or more vigorous exertions. Here is no compromise of sentiment either with respect to matters of faith or modes of discipline. The minor differences among Christians are overlooked, and this single object kept in view, to extend the knowledge of the pure, unadulterated Word of God among professed Christians of every denomination, and throughout the habitable globe.

Such being the invariable plan of the society, the surmises of lukewarm friends, and the open attacks of avowed opponents, while they have tended to illuminate the subject and the objects it had in view, have given

it the most beneficial publicity. Its principles and proceedings have been brought forward and canvassed. Objections, and their answers, have been stated in large assemblies, and from the press; and it has come off uninjured and triumphant.

The patronage and success of the parent institution in London, naturally suggested the idea of similar plans and meetings, not only in different parts of Great Britain, but throughout the civilized world. Every encouragement and facility was afforded for this purpose by the parent society, and the opportunity of co-operating with it was eagerly embraced by many populous districts in the united kingdoms. The west riding of Yorkshire, so long favoured with religious knowledge, could not but feel the happy influence of that noble emulation in this sacred cause, which was diffusing itself in every direction. Leeds was one of the most forward and active of the manufacturing towns, and the energy, talent, and liberality, which have there been displayed, render it a most important station.*

* The concluding part of this note gives a noble illustration of what is stated above.—In addition to the grants annually made by the British and Foreign Bible Society, to the Corresponding Committee at Calcutta, of 2000*l*. (one moiety of which is appropriated to the translations going forward by the Baptist missionaries at Serampore) 1000*l*. have been voted for the especial purpose of aiding the printing and distribution of the Chinese Scriptures, translated by Dr. Marshman. And further, with a view to afford a more effectual encouragement to the translation and circulation of the Scriptures in India, the Corresponding Committee have been authorized to appropriate the sum of 500*l*. to the first thousand copies of every approved translation of the New Testament into any dialect of India in which no translation has previously existed. The resolution on

During the year 1810, the Rev. Mr. Hughes, one of the secretaries of the parent society, paid a visit, when on his progress in the north, with a view to aid and encourage the establishment of auxiliaries, to the subject of this narrative. In this interview the design of his mission, with the extension and utility of the society, formed a principal part of their conversation; the consequence of which was a determination to wait upon the Rev. Dr. Coulthurst, and some other respectable ministers and private gentlemen in Halifax, who cordially expressed their approbation of the design of establishing an auxiliary society, several of them being already subscribers to the parent institution. A considerable period, however, elapsed before any decisive measures were adopted. The twenty-fifth of December, 1811, was at length appointed, by public advertisement, for a preliminary meeting. The Rev. Mr. Hughes was invited to attend, but was prevented by other pressing engagements. In a letter which he addressed to his aged friend, on the prospect of this meeting, he congratulates him on being reserved, amidst many infirmities and bereaving dispensations of Providence, for the auspicious period when he might, by his attendance, show his marked approbation of proceedings so gratify-

which this procedure has been adopted, was prompted by the zeal and liberality of William Hey, Esq. of Leeds, and other respectable individuals, who, struck with the proposal of the Baptist missionaries, at Serampore, to execute twenty-six versions, on these moderate terms; and desirous to excite increased attention to this subject, presented the Society with the sum of 1475*l.* as an offering from certain "friends to the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular dialects of India."

ing to the best feelings of the man, the Christian, and the minister.

The Rev. Dr. Coulthurst, at the time of meeting, was invited to take the chair, and, to the satisfaction of every one, accepted it with great readiness, and in the spirit of a Christian minister, who felt an interest in the welfare of his parishioners. Many appropriate speeches were delivered, by several gentlemen present; and the subject of this Memoir, though oppressed with many infirmities, and scarcely capable of bearing the fatigue of the journey in that inclement season, was present, and most deeply affected on the occasion. He had intended to read part of a letter from the Rev. Mr. Hughes, and to address the meeting in a few words; but he was quite overcome by his feelings; and the silent, but expressive language of tears, was all that he could utter. A retrospect of the situation of the parish of Halifax, in a moral point of view, at the commencement of his own public ministrations, as detailed in the preceding part of this narrative; the happy change which had progressively taken place in the diffusion of religious knowledge; and, above all, the Christian benevolence and disinterested zeal of different denominations, on this occasion, might well overpower his mind. This was the spirit which he had endeavoured to promote in his own immediate neighbourhood, where he had long enjoyed the pleasure of witnessing the kind interest which Christians, distinguished by different names, took in each other's welfare; and the more extended diffusion of it was the consummation of his wishes, as a minister, on this side the eternal world. His emotions were like those of Moses, on the top of

Mount Pisgah, or like those of the children of Israel, after having traversed the wilderness for forty years, when they at length came to a portion of the promised land, on the farther side of Jordan, the commencement of their goodly heritage.

There is not indeed in this mortal state, according to the sublime representations which the inspired writers give us of the Canaan above, a more striking anticipation of it than in one of these assemblies, when those party distinctions, which have often been the great preventive of Christian communion on earth, and the source of fierce contention, are for the time forgotten and overlooked ; when all hearts unite in one harmonious concert, contemplating what God has wrought, stirring up one another to love and good works, promoting objects dear to every one who values the name of Christian, and forming an inseparable bond of union with the whole church militant. Such a society is heaven begun below ; and well may the transient enjoyment it affords, excite, in the aged servants of God, the most ardent desire to join that blessed assembly above, which will never be dissolved ; where every bar to communion will be removed ; where the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, will for ever unite in the blissful employment of Heaven. ‘ I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord ! ’ ‘ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.’

At this meeting, it was unanimously concluded to establish an auxiliary society, of which the Rev. Dr. Coulthurst was chosen president, the Rev. Mr. Knight, secretary, and Wm. Mitchell, Esq. treasurer. Some

time after, Dr. F. was appointed vice-president. A Bible association was also commenced at Hebdenbridge, of which he was patron; but, from his extreme debility, he was not able to attend any of the future meetings of the society at Halifax.

The death of Mr. Fuller, soon after that of his friend Mr. Sutcliff, both of whom had been the most active promoters of the Baptist Missionary Society, was a most painful and discouraging circumstance. To supply in some measure such a loss, vigorous exertions became necessary; and among other expedients, the formation of auxiliary societies was strongly recommended. The northern counties united for that purpose; and the first meeting was held at Manchester. On this occasion, which was the last time of his leaving home, Dr. F. was one of the preachers. The text was, Is. lii. 10: 'The Lord hath made bare his holy arm, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.' In what manner he illustrated and applied the strong and figurative language in the former part of the text, the writer is not able to say; but the latter part would lead him to a subject, of all others, the most interesting to his own mind, and on which he enlarged with ever-new delight. This, of any thing would make him forget his pains for the time, and call forth all the energies of his soul. The kindness of his friends, at this parting interview, and the noble spirit which was displayed by many individuals, in promoting the good word, greatly affected him, and rendered this journey highly gratifying, though his bodily strength was scarcely equal to such an undertaking.

Were the writer of these Memoirs to endeavour to trace the remainder of his pilgrimage on earth, it would prove, that when life is extended beyond its usual span, the strength of man is but *labour* and *sorrow*. It would exemplify the truth of that description which the wise man gives of the infirmities of old age, when the 'keepers of the house tremble, the strong men bow themselves, and the grasshopper itself is a burden.' A coldness, and almost incessant pain in his head, obliged him to wear a velvet cap; the weakness in his knees was for a long time so great, that he was unable to rise from his seat without help, or to walk, except for a very short distance, without support. He had also repeated attacks of the paralytic kind, and was subject to violent bleedings at the nose; these might have a salutary effect, as the means of preventing apoplexy, to which the stupor and heaviness preceding them indicated a strong tendency; but their frequent return occasioned great debility, and rendered him incapable, for the time, of attending to his public labours.

When recovering, on one of these occasions, he thus expresses himself, in answer to a letter of inquiry respecting the state of his health :

" You see I am able to hold my pen, and I am, in all respects, mercifully dealt with. Some hours of comfortable rest have relieved me considerably. I am a little better this morning than last night, for which, on your account chiefly, I feel thankful. I trust the Lord will support you in all you have to do and to bear! He is all-sufficient; but it is his will that those whom he loves should be tried to the uttermost. I have read Mr.

Cecil's 'Visit to the House of Mourning,' with advantage; it is an admirable little book."

After another season of severe indisposition, he says,

"I am following the prescriptions of my medical attendants, which, I hope, may afford in time some alleviation of my complaints; but I feel resigned to the Divine will. My forfeited life has been long continued, and I have reason to say, 'Goodness and mercy have hitherto followed me, and I am still loaded with benefits.' Mercy and truth be with you and yours!"

In other letters to his distant friends, there are strong indications that, while the outward man was decaying, the inward man was renewed day by day:

"Though I am unable to write much, on account of the weakness and affliction which attend me, I am desirous to say that I find great comfort in that union of spirit which I feel towards you, and in the prospect of meeting you in that world of rest and peace, where perfect harmony shall reign for ever, and where pain, sickness, and sorrow, shall be known no more.

"The short interviews I have had with you, have left the most pleasing sensations on my mind; and I think I know the meaning of that Divine direction: 'Love one another with a pure heart fervently.' You have my tender sympathy amidst those mysterious

afflictions, with which it has pleased the Almighty to try you. They are all ordained in wisdom and love; what you know not now, you will know hereafter. May you be divinely supported and strengthened to all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness. How happy should I be to see you! but though I have no hope of such an enjoyment in this world, I humbly trust that the friendship which has been begun on earth, will be perfected in heaven. I cannot forget you; nor am I willing you should forget me, however unworthy of your regard."

" Feb. 12, 1814.

" I am ready to suppose that this is the last time you will hear from me. I am far advanced in life, and loaded with infirmities and afflictions, which daily remind me of my approaching end. I am waiting in patient hope till my change come. It seems long since you favoured me with a line, but when I reflect on my unworthiness of your notice, my uneasy thoughts on this head are checked.

" Most earnestly do I wish that you may be happy in the enjoyment of every token of the Divine favour, which you need for life and godliness, for this world and the next. May the smiles of Heaven be upon you, and may the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your heart, and rule your mind, through Christ Jesus! To his Divine care I most affectionately commend you, and am

" Your most faithful friend, &c."

For several months before the conclusion of his pub-

lic services, the strain of his sermons, and the solemnity of his address, showed that he was fully sensible of the approach of that period when he must give an account of his stewardship, and when those who had so long been accustomed to hear him would see his face no more. He frequently took occasion to address the aged* who, like him, were going the way of all the

* As an instance of this, the sermon he preached from Ps. xxxix. 7, may be referred to: 'And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.'

" I. Inquire who ought more especially to adopt this language. (1.) The aged. The young are apt to form great expectations; but, what have we to expect? we have almost done with this world. Barzillai said, 'How long have I to live?' I may soon expect an ejection, and to be turned out of this house of clay. Time has made many chinks in it. One blast may bring it to the ground. O my aged friends, let us, like the Psalmist, cultivate acquaintance with a future world. (2.) This may be a suitable inquiry for the sickly and infirm: 'My heart and my strength faileth,' &c. (3.) For those who have experienced many disappointments. (4.) For one who has outlived worldly comforts: *q.d.* Of those who set out in life with me, how few are alive! I look around; a new generation arises to push us off the stage. (5.) For one who is deeply convinced of the vanity of the world. Ver. 6. 'Surely every man walketh in a vain shew.' (6.) For one who considers that he has concerns of infinite moment depending. 'What is a man profited if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul.'

" II. Let us consider the import of the expression, 'My hope is in thee.' It is as if he had said, (1.) I need salvation; and my hope of it is in thee. I cry, as in ver. 8, 'Deliver me from all my transgressions.' The atonement of Christ is the foundation on which I build, here I fix my trust. (2.) 'My hope is in thee,' for that rest and happiness which the world cannot give. Now I forbid my carnal hope, &c. 'Whom have I in Heaven but thee?' (3.) 'Therefore my hope is in thee,' who canst do all for me that I stand in need of. (4.) 'My hope is in thee,' who hast promised

earth; and the general choice of his subjects evidenced the state of mind of one who was on the verge of the eternal world.

In the latter end of January and the beginning of February, 1816, the weakness of his knees increased so much, that he was frequently under the necessity of using crutches. During the week preceding the Sabbath on which he preached his last sermon, he was seriously indisposed, and little hope was entertained that he would be able again to appear in the house of God; but on the Saturday and Sunday morning he was much better, and expressed a desire to go to the meeting, that he might once more have an opportunity of addressing his beloved charge. He was with great difficulty conducted into the pulpit, but during the time of preaching he appeared to be quite as well as for some months before. He spoke with great freedom; and though the discourse was longer than usual, he did not seem, at the close of the service, to be much exhausted, or to have sustained any injury from the exertion. During the whole sermon, an uncommon stillness and solemnity pervaded the assembly. The debilitated state of him who was speaking, and the subject itself, so well adapted to his situation, rendered it a most affecting season.

The notes of this sermon, from the words of the prophet Nahum, i. 7: 'The Lord is good, a strong hold

to save those that trust in thee. (5.) 'My hope is in thee,' who canst save me in the dying hour, and make me happy for ever.

"*Inferences.*—(1.) To forget our latter end is an indication of the greatest folly; for, (2.) The time is coming when all hopes but this will fail. (3.) Let us then live as dying persons."

in the day of trouble,' &c. ; were some time afterwards found in his pocket-book. They are more copious than he was in the general habit of writing ; and the author has complied with the solicitation of many friends, by subjoining them to this Memoir. The last words of those who have devoted themselves more immediately to the service of God, and who have known by experience the power of religion on their own souls, have always been considered as highly interesting. By such a testimony they set their seal to the truth and faithfulness of God, and afford the most substantial encouragement, not only to their immediate successors, but to generations, yet unborn, to know and fear the God of their fathers.

‘ O taste and see that the Lord is good ; blessed are all they that put their trust in him ! ’

On the Monday following, Feb. 27, he ventured out again to follow to the grave the remains of a poor, but very pious woman, who had left behind her a numerous family of children. His friends would have persuaded him to engage another person to officiate at the funeral ; but he felt so much on the occasion, that he could not be induced to decline making the attempt, which proved more than his strength was equal to ; his complaints returned, attended with a violent rheumatic fever, which entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs.

About the same time, his only domestic, who had long been declining, also took her bed, so that they were both in a state of extreme helplessness.

His fever often produced a considerable degree of delirium, but in the intervals he expressed his humble resignation to the Divine will. Psalm lxxi. was read to him, which affected him greatly. To a friend, who

called upon him, and lamented the loss the neighbourhood was likely to sustain by his removal, he said, " I am an unworthy creature, I see it more than ever ; but I would now say, ' Not my will, but thine be done.' " The unfavourable symptoms increased so much that, on the Saturday following, it was not expected he could continue till morning. He was frequently engaged in ejaculatory prayer, sometimes adopting the language of the publican, at others the devout aspiration of dying Jacob, ' I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord ! ' On the Sabbath day he was a little better, and more collected. He often repeated the following lines from Milton ; his thoughts, no doubt, being directed to a better and brighter world :

" Straight towards heaven my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gazed awhile the ample sky."

During the subsequent days, he had many relapses, and his friends had little or no hope of his surviving this affliction, but through the use of proper means, the fever gradually subsided, and by taking nourishing food he began to recover a little strength. The following lines were composed by him as he lay in bed, on Tuesday morning, March 19 :

" Here surrounded with mercies I wait,
Till the day of salvation arise ;
Of affliction, I still feel the weight,
But hope bids me look to the skies.

" That hope which on Jesus relies,
And on his salvation depends,
Shall issue in heavenly joys,
And peace that shall ne'er have an end."

By the recommendation of the physician, and at his own particular desire, he and his aged domestic were removed to his former residence at Ewood Hall, as soon as his strength would admit. Being neither of them able to sit up, they were conveyed in their beds. When ascending the hill near the house, he emphatically used the expression of his favourite poet, in speaking to the person who attended him :

“ The land of silence and of death
Attends my next remove.”

The fever, in a great measure, left him soon after his removal, but he continued in a state of extreme debility, and it became evident, when he attempted to walk, that along with his other complaints, one side had been affected by a paralytic stroke ; his memory also, with reference to places once familiar to him and to passing incidents, was greatly impaired. Happily he retained to the close of life, notwithstanding repeated similar attacks, the most distinct recollection of those Divine truths which had been so long endeared to him ; and his friends were often delighted with the fervour and pertinency of his devotional exercises in his room, and sometimes in the family.

On the 9th of May the aged domestic before mentioned, who had lived with him more than thirty years, expired, after having been confined to her bed thirteen weeks ; but he had still one companion in tribulation left, his grandson, whose health had been in a declining state for some months. It was painful to the family to witness from day to day the gradual decay of nature in these two invalids ; the one in advanced age,

the other in the bloom of life, yet both supported by the same promises, and rejoicing together 'in hope of the glory of God,' though at times 'in heaviness through manifold temptations.' 'It is better to go to the house of mourning,' to witness such a spectacle, 'than to the house of mirth;' here the vanity of the world and of all sublunary enjoyments, and the value of eternal realities, strike the mind, beyond all that human precepts can inculcate.

On the 10th of October his young companion was taken from him. He could seldom mention him afterwards without the strongest emotion. He had been endeared to him by early attachment, and similarity of pursuits, but still more by his Christian patience and resignation during his long continued afflictions; and it was in compliance with his request that the "Tribute" to the memory of this young person was made public, which he was no doubt induced to wish for, in the hope that it might be of some utility to the rising generation.

For some months after he began to recover, his principal amusement was reading; but of that he was at length deprived by another paralytic attack, which affected one of his eyes. Till that time, except for a few weeks after he was seized with the rheumatic fever, his eyes had been remarkably good, so that he could read the smallest print without glasses, constantly using a very small pocket Bible in the pulpit; on this account he felt the loss very sensibly; but though sometimes languid and dejected, he was enabled to possess his soul in patience, and to glorify God by *suffering* his will, when he could no longer *do* it by active service.

Long as the separating stroke had been expected, it was sudden at last. The Saturday evening before his

seizure, he repeated from memory a considerable part of the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, and prayed with the family, in such a manner as excited the surprise of all present. He enjoyed the company of a few friends, who came to see him on the Monday evening following; but the next day he had a succession of convulsive fits, which it was apprehended would terminate in immediate death, but they at length subsided. They however left him in such a state of debility, that after languishing for a few days, he expired on the 25th of July, 1817, in the 77th year of his age.

As to the state of his mind in this last illness, it was conformable to what he had experienced and evidenced through all his former afflictions. Mercy, Divine mercy, was what he implored, with all the lowliness of a babe in Christ. He joined with the greatest fervency in the petitions offered up at his bed-side; and though his mind was not in general so much elevated with holy joy as some of God's people have been, he had solid comfort, and often expressed his 'desire to depart and to be with Christ.' A short time before he expired he said, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' One of his attendants having said, 'There remaineth a rest for the people of God,' he added, 'O receive me to thy children!'

Few individuals had lived more in the anticipation of the closing scene than himself; the general train of his views and feelings, as claiming acquaintance with a future world, and the many afflictions which he had previously endured, led him to realize this event; and though the final struggles were very great, owing to a paralysis of the heart and leading arteries, which prevented the crimson current from flowing to the extremities long before the lungs ceased to heave, he was

quite collected to the last, and humbly resigned to the Divine will.

To those of the family whom he was leaving behind, and to his friends who came to be witness to his departure, it was a most affecting season. Imagination retraced the enjoyments which his society had afforded in former years ; and the continual attention which his debilitated state had long required, served to endear him still more to his immediate attendants. As long as he could speak, his expressions to them were full of kindness and tender regard, which, though intended to console, made them feel still more sensibly that they were about to sustain an irreparable loss.

His countenance to the last was remarkably florid, without any of those wrinkles which are generally produced by disease and advancing years.

On the day of the interment, and when the funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Steadman, an immense concourse of different denominations of Christians assembled to pay their last tribute to the memory of the deceased, and the solemnity of their deportment showed how deeply their minds were affected on the occasion. The sermon has since been printed ; the text, being part of the dying words of Jacob to his son Joseph, ‘ Behold I die, but God shall be with you,’ was selected for the solemn service by him who wished to adopt them as his farewell blessing to his family, his flock, and his friends in general.

It is an affecting consideration that his decease was the prelude to that of two other ministers present at his funeral, who had been, for a succession of years, eminently useful in their respective spheres, and with whom he had enjoyed the most cordial friendship. The per-

sons here referred to were the Rev. Dr. Coulthurst, vicar of the parish of Halifax, and the Rev. Mr. Littlewood of Rochdale. It has often been the wish of good men that their lives and labours might terminate together. In both these instances, this was realized, as scarcely a warning was given. They were to the very last day of their mortal existence actively employed in the discharge of the duties of their station, in promoting the welfare of society. 'Blessed are those servants whom their Lord shall find so doing when he cometh, whether it be in the evening, at the cock crowing, or in the morning.'



After the account which has been given at large of the life, ministry, and writings, of the subject of this narrative, it may be deemed almost superfluous to attempt to take, by way of conclusion, a summary view of his character; but as the writer has been favoured with communications from several of his esteemed friends, he cannot forbear availing himself of them, by laying some extracts before the public.

At the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society held at Leeds, August 28, 1817, the Rev. Thomas Langdon expressed himself as follows :

"The subjects which have hitherto engaged our attention, are highly calculated to afford us pleasure and encouragement. But I am now about to advert to an event which cannot fail to awaken deep and painful regret. I scarcely need inform you that I refer to the loss which this society has lately sustained by the

decease of our venerable friend and father, the Rev. Dr. Fawcett.

“ It may truly be said of him, that he was ‘ a burning and shining light.’ He was an eminent Christian, and strikingly exemplified in his own conduct the purifying tendency of that religion, which he recommended to others. Let a minister possess the finest natural abilities, the most extensive learning, and all the powers of the most commanding eloquence, unless they are accompanied with a good example, his labours are not likely to be useful. But Dr. Fawcett enforced all his religious instructions, by the powerful influence of a holy life. He was an affectionate husband, the best of fathers, a kind master, and a good neighbour, administering advice and consolation as the case required. His character was adorned with every Christian grace and virtue; but his unaffected humility and meekness, his fervent piety and his ardent and habitual devotion, were its most prominent features. He entered on a profession of religion when young, and he uniformly adorned the profession, by a pious and holy conduct to the end of his days.

“ As an instructor of youth, he was eminently qualified, and his labours in this capacity were extensively useful. He had the happiness of seeing many of his pupils filling highly reputable stations in society with honour and usefulness. I see some present who were once his pupils, and I am persuaded that to them his memory will always be dear. Our highly esteemed missionary the Rev. Wm. Ward was among those who went through a course of preparatory study under his direction.

“ I am not afraid of giving offence to any of my bre-

thren, when I say that as a minister, he stood, for many years, the first in our denomination in this part of the kingdom. His natural abilities were extensive, and these he had greatly improved by a long course of reading and study. His religious opinions were thoroughly evangelical, and equally free from any tendency to foster Pharisaic pride, and to encourage antinomian licentiousness. He inculcated the great doctrines of Christianity with a seriousness suited to their vast importance, and with a plainness almost puritanical. His manner was perhaps somewhat peculiar, but exceedingly solemn and deeply impressive. For considerably more than half a century, he continued with great fidelity, and zeal, and with increasing popularity and success, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

“As an author, though dead, he yet speaketh to us; and I hope will continue to speak to our children and children’s children when we are numbered with the dead. In his poetic writings he discovers no small degree of taste and elegance of thought. But they are principally distinguished by the strain of ardent benevolence, tender affection, and fervent devotion, by which they are pervaded. Of his prose works, perhaps his excellent ‘Essay on Anger’ will generally be allowed the precedence. With the merits of his ‘Devotional Bible’ you are well acquainted; and I doubt not but generations yet unborn will bless his memory, while they offer up the pious desires of their souls in the devout language with which he has furnished them in his ‘Aspirations.’ Of the support and consolation which many have derived from his ‘Sick Man’s Employ,’ I have often been a witness, when visiting the abodes of affliction, and standing by the bed of death. The ‘Advice to Youth’ has

had an extensive circulation, and has, I doubt not, been made very useful. But if I mistake not, a much humbler publication will not be the least useful of his writings, I mean the entertaining and instructive 'History of John Wise,'* a little book, which is daily read with peculiar interest by our children and servants.

"Of the Baptist Missionary Society, he has been from its first establishment a steady and zealous friend. But he is gone! His labours are finished, and the places that once knew him in the family, at our annual public assemblies, in the pulpit, at the baptismal font, and at the table of the Lord, where his manner was peculiarly interesting and affecting, will know him no more for ever! The death of his saints is precious in the sight of the Lord, and it ought to be precious in the sight of his servants too. Yes, we will often think of their excellences, we will embalm their memories, and endeavour, according to our respective situations and abilities, 'to be followers of them who do now, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.'"

The following passages occur in letters which have been addressed to the writer by persons who were intimately acquainted with the character and conduct of the deceased.

"My venerable and highly esteemed friend, whose

* The Rev. Edward Parsons, who seconded the motion made by Mr. Langdon, in an excellent and impressive speech, which he delivered on the occasion, told the meeting that there was a young person there present, now entering on a course of studies preparatory to the Christian ministry, who received his first abiding religious impressions from reading "John Wise."

loss we now lament, was a person of no common worth, his reputation has for a long series of years stood high among the churches of Christ in this part. We admit, that, like other great and good men, he had his infirmities, which he would readily acknowledge and lament ; but they were counterbalanced by excellences which are rarely seen to meet in the same person. He was a true patriot, and well understood the principles of civil and religious liberty ; but it was his uniform study to practise himself, and to inculcate upon others, the rule laid down by his Divine Master : ‘ Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’ The feelings of his heart and the dictates of his judgment led him to cherish the most ardent love for his native country, praying for ‘ kings and all that are in authority, that we may live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty.’

As a minister of the Gospel, notwithstanding his eminent talents, he was singularly modest ; always speaking of himself with self-abasement. I have seldom heard him say he had *preached*, but only that he had *attempted* to do it. His mind on all occasions, and through all the changing scenes of life, appeared to be deeply impressed under a sense of the importance and responsibility of the ministerial office. Though he had been so long in the habit of public speaking, to the very last he evidenced the same diffidence of his abilities as at the commencement of his labours. Instead of fancying that he had acquired an habitual readiness and aptitude for the work to which he was called, his standing motto was, ‘ Who is sufficient for these things ? ’ In some this might appear like affectation, but in him it was the genuine feeling of the soul. However painful it may be to the individual,

it is much to be preferred to those forward, self-important airs which sometimes disgrace the pulpit, and which are strong indications of an empty mind. This diffidence of his own powers was one principal reason of his making use of notes in the pulpit, not only at public meetings, but in addressing his own congregation. It was also a strong incentive to that diligent and persevering application to study, by which he was distinguished through life. He was always dissatisfied with his attainments, panting after more enlarged views of Divine truth, both for his own advantage as a Christian and for the benefit of others. On the return of any of the usual seasons of relaxation in the seminary over which he had long presided, he evidenced by his prayers in the family, as well as by his conversation, an earnest desire that they might be improved to some valuable purpose in an intellectual point of view, as well as for the renovation of health and spirits.

“ His sentiments on Divine truth were derived, not from human interpretation, but from the oracles of God. He preached the doctrines of the gospel in a practical manner, showing their genuine tendency to promote holiness in heart and life, at the same time exhibiting their influence by the purity and integrity of his own spirit and conversation. While, on the one hand, he steadily maintained and proved from Scripture that salvation is by grace ; on the other he strenuously enforced the practice of piety and the duties of religion, as the only proper evidence of an interest in the blessings of redemption. In treating doctrinal subjects he was careful to avoid those rash expressions, which, however pleasing to some, are dangerous to the licentious and the unwary. The remark which an excellent writer

has made in this respect, was the rule of his conduct : ‘ It is not enough that what we preach or write should be true in some possible sense which the words will bear ; it is highly needful to guard against expressions which easily admit of being perverted ; and that we should bring in Scriptural doctrines in their proper *place and connexion*, and use them for a Scriptural end.’

“ No one of the sacred writers insisted so largely on the doctrines of grace as the Apostle Paul : but his belief of them did not discourage him in the use of means, but rather incited him to greater exertions. He brought forward these doctrines always in their own place, not to blunt the edge of his own exhortations, and to excuse sinners in their rejection of the Gospel, not to encourage pride, but to promote humility in those who embraced it. As performing an embassy for Christ, as though God did beseech men by him, he prayed them in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God. ‘ We preach,’ says he, ‘ Christ unto you, the hope of glory, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.’ The Apostle evidently considered God’s decree, as *his* rule and not *ours*. That this is, and ought to be, the case, is evident from the language of the Almighty to the prophet Ezekiel ; for though he had told him that the children of Israel would not hearken to his voice, he still gave the direction to him, Ezek. iii. 4, 11 : ‘ Speak with my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear.’ Such is the Divine precept to ministers in every age, and such was the humble aim of him who has recently

finished his course. He warned sinners of their danger, and held forth the Gospel in the freeness of its promises and fulness of its grace, with its tender invitations, as encouragement to apply to Jesus for mercy and pardon. When pleading the cause of God, he made no formal attack upon those who differed from him in their opinions, knowing that Divine truth will work its own way. He formed his conduct as a man and as a minister on that Divine maxim: 'Follow peace with all men.' It was not his practice to dwell on subtle speculations and perverse disputations, which engender envy and strife, much less did he introduce trifling subjects which are at best calculated only to please the fancy; those who heard him statedly must have seen that his aim was to reach the heart, to touch the consciences of sinners, to bring them to Christ, and to edify the church.

"According to the poet's description he was

" 'Simple, grave, sincere, in doctrine uncorrupt,
In language plain, and plain in manner,
Decent, solemn, chaste, and natural in gesture,
Much impressed himself, as conscious
Of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the charge he fed
Might feel it too.' "

It is an observation which has been made with great propriety and judgment: "That we ought not to think our views of Divine truths are sound and correct, unless our principles will allow and naturally lead us to make use of *every part of the word of God*. Reference is not here had to obscure historical passages, nor

to prophecies yet unfulfilled, but to whatever relates either to privilege or duty. If the tendency of the system adopted be to make a person dwell upon Scripture doctrines, to the neglect of Scriptural exhortations, it will produce an unedifying sameness which must ultimately show that the Word of God has not been rightly and profitably divided. There is a harmony in Divine revelation which renders *every part* of the Bible beautiful in its season. It is not necessary to show how deeply the mind of the deceased was influenced by these considerations. The more he studied the volume of revelation, the more he saw of that rich variety of truth which it contains, and which, during the long period of his public ministrations, he endeavoured to exhibit, bringing forth out of the sacred treasury things new and old; but his work is now ended; he has finished his course, and received the crown which God has promised to his faithful servants. O that we may live and die like him! " *

* The following lines were written by the justly lamented Dr. Thomson, in memory of the subject of these memoirs. At the time when he penned them, his own career (alas! for his friends too short), which had been strongly marked by traces of high attainments and benevolent designs, was drawing to a close. Having removed from Halifax to Leeds, he was chosen Physician to the House of Recovery, and soon after, while attending that excellent institution, in the assiduous discharge of his professional duties, he caught a fever which quickly put a period to his mortal existence in the prime of life, *ut flos succissus aratro*.

" Servant of God well done! thy lengthen'd days,
Spent to promote his glory in his praise,
Have gently closed, in the grave's stillness blest,
E'en as the cradled infant sinks to rest.
Let those who in thy page have read his word,
And felt it raise their souls to praise the Lord;

With these remarks, for which he is chiefly indebted to various communications from his friends, the writer closes this narrative of the life of his deceased parent, connected with that of numbers of his contemporaries and associates, now no more:

*Qui sacerdotes casti, dum vita manebat,
Quique sui memores alios fecère merendo.*

His own feelings have been deeply interested, but he is well aware that this is not a criterion by which to judge of the impression likely to be made upon the minds of others, nor will it be a sufficient excuse for the improprieties which their cool judgment may discover. So far as he knows his own heart, it has been his aim to give a true delineation of the life of the deceased, and

They whose young minds first open'd learning's page
Under thy roof, and loved thee, saint and sage;
Let thy dear flock, who as their shepherd led
By living streams, in the green pastures fed;
Let the lost sheep who learn'd of thee the way
To join the few who never went astray;
O let thy children, children's children, say
How kind, how heavenward was thine earthly way;
And as their silent tears uncheck'd flow on,
Their hearts shall speak, ' Servant of God, well done! '

Let them, with eye of faith, the time behold
When there shall be one shepherd and one fold.
When the lost pastor, teacher, father, friend,
Shall at the feet of Jesus lowly bend;
With humble joy his sacred charge resign:
' Take back the sheep thou gavest, they are thine! '
Departed saint, O hear his glad commands,
See where thy risen, glorious Saviour stands—
Stands at the right hand of his Father's throne,
' Come thou up hither—Servant of God, well done! '"

of those events in which he was directly or indirectly concerned. In order to do this he has spared no pains in his researches ; and he has endeavoured also to aid his own recollection by that of others. If, in any instance, the force of affection should have led him to enlarge too minutely on past events, or to expatiate too diffusively on departed excellence, he trusts to the candour and sensibility of those who know what it is to have lost the best of parents—the guide of youth, the friend and companion of advancing years. Should he have erred in this respect, he most readily acknowledges that he has so far done injustice to the memory of the deceased, in whom modesty and a humble sense of many imperfections were prominent features. To have attempted to throw light on the shades of his character (for such there are in the best of men) would have been utterly inconsistent with that *filial regard* which would lead even the most insensible, when death makes a separation, to cover them with the mantle of love:—but he is under no apprehension that any thing will be suggested by others, even by way of insinuation, to invalidate the general testimony which has here been given.

By the *grace of God* he was what he was ; that grace qualified him for the work to which he was called, and through that grace his path shone ‘ more and more to the perfect day.’

It is not without sentiments of regret, mingled with other emotions, that the writer now lays down his pen. After having spent many of his evening and midnight hours, as it were, in converse with the deceased, by endeavouring to draw aside the curtain from days that are gone for ever, and by musing over his manuscript papers, the conclusion of his labours is like

another separation, without the prospect of meeting again on this side the grave. He now commits the result of his researches to the public, with a sincere wish that a Divine blessing may accompany them, so that they may be in some measure instrumental in promoting and perpetuating those principles and that true spirit of Christianity which are honourable to God and conducive to the best interests of mankind. Amen,

*Ewood Hall,
July 25, 1818.*

SUBSTANCE
OF THE
LAST SERMON
PREACHED BY THE
LATE REV. JOHN FAWCETT, D.D.
Feb. 26, 1816.
PRINTED FROM HIS OWN NOTES.

SUBSTANCE
OF THE
LATE REV. DR. FAWCETT'S
LAST SERMON.

NAHUM, I. 7 :

The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

THE name of the penman of this prophecy signifies *consolation* : and though many parts of it chiefly relate to the overthrow of the Assyrian empire and the destruction of Nineveh, its capital ; yet these events, however calamitous in themselves, were encouraging to the Jews ; because assurances were at the same time given them of their deliverance from the yoke of the Assyrians, their powerful and inveterate enemies.

It is very probable that Nahum was contemporary with King Hezekiah ; and that he delivered this prophecy after the ten tribes were carried away captive by the King of Assyria. Josephus relates that he foretold the destruction of Nineveh more than 115 years before it took place. In the beginning of the chapter, the prophet sets forth the majesty of a jealous and sin-avenging God ; dwells upon the displays of his power, which is irresistible, in that he hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storms, where, to an eye of sense, all is con-

fusion—he describes the methods of his providence, which to our view are awfully grand and unaccountable; and then, as in the words of the text, he exhibits the milder aspect which he wears, and the gentle, condescending attention which he shows to his people. ‘The Lord is good,’ &c. “The same almighty power which is exerted in the destruction of the wicked is employed for the protection and defence of those who trust in him.” This is the doctrine contained in the text, which naturally divides itself into three parts: I. The Lord is good. II. A strong hold in the day of trouble. III. He knoweth them that trust in him.

I. The Lord is good—

Goodness is inseparable from the conceptions we have of God. Sometimes it intends, or is intimately connected with his glory. Thus when Moses desired to see the glory of the Lord, the Almighty tells him, ‘I will make all my goodness pass before thee.’ God is sovereignly and infinitely good. His goodness comprehends all his *relative* perfections—all the acts of his grace and mercy. These are the expressions of his goodness, and they are distinguished by different names, according to the objects toward whom the goodness is exercised. When it supplies the indigent, it is *bounty*—when it relieves the miserable, it is *mercy*—when it bestows blessings on the unworthy, it is *grace*; and as the term in this acceptance is often applied to spiritual blessings, it is that grace which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. When goodness imparts blessings according to what is promised, it may be denominated *truth* or *faithfulness*.

Whatever comfort the glorious attributes of Deity afford to us, we are indebted for it to his goodness.

When his *wisdom* contrives that which is for our *advantage*, it is his goodness—when his *power* is employed in our protection, it is his goodness. In short, his goodness renders all his other attributes subservient to our advantage. We admire and adore the Almighty for his *other* perfections; but his goodness allures and draws our hearts to him. For this we love him. As the Apostle says, ‘God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.’ By this we are encouraged to make our addresses to him, and to ask help at his hand. His goodness emboldens us to come to him for all that we need: Heb. iv. 16.

That Divine Being who is the object of our adoration, and whom we, as Christians, delight to worship, is a good and gracious God—he is *essentially* good. In this sense there is none good but one, that is God. There is none good in comparison with him.

We might enlarge on his goodness as it is shown in *providence*, and then a large field would open to our view. In this sense the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. Ten thousand times ten thousand instances of his goodness are daily seen in his dealings with his creatures. But let it be observed, that his goodness is most gloriously manifested through Christ. *Good-will* towards men was proclaimed at the Saviour’s birth: Luke ii. 14. O what astonishing goodness it was in the Father to give his only-begotten Son to sorrows, agonies, and death for us. This was no other than his goodness, under the appellation of love: ‘God so *loved* the world,’ &c. Herein the love or goodness of God was commended: Rom. v. 8. It was infinite and unbounded goodness imparted through Christ alone, as the Mediator between an offended God

and offending sinners. Does not this goodness shine most conspicuously in pardoning all our crimes? ‘I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions.’ Is it not displayed in raising us from a death in sin, to a life of righteousness; in accepting us as righteous through the obedience of Christ; in answering our poor, imperfect prayers; in directing and guiding us with his counsel; supplying our temporal and spiritual wants; and in keeping us by his power, through faith unto eternal salvation?

We might here remark, in the first place, that this goodness is *greatly diversified*; its blessings are of various kinds. It is described as sparing, pitying, supporting, relieving, restoring, and consoling goodness. We may say of the blessings of God’s goodness that *they cannot be reckoned up in order*. The language of the Psalmist, Ps. cxxxix. is applicable to them; ‘If I would declare and speak of them, they are more in number than the sand. How precious are thy thoughts of love unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them—they cannot be numbered.’ Eternity itself will be too short to utter all thy praise.

2. This goodness is, in its nature, *satisfying* to the soul.

It is so abundant in measure, that it replenishes and satisfies him who has an interest in it. Divine goodness gives the invitation to us: ‘Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.’ ‘Eat, O friends! drink abundantly, O beloved!’ It is adequate to fill the most enlarged desires of the longing soul; he who is parched with thirst, and fainting with hunger, when enabled to have recourse to these supplies, with joy draws water out of the wells of salvation, drinks of those refreshing streams which

make glad the city of our God, and eats of that bread which cometh down from heaven; and thus it is that the Divine Being even makes our cup to run over with his goodness. The Lord's people have often found this to be the case, in attending to the ordinances of Divine appointment and have been filled with holy confidence in this goodness. Hence we find them using the following exulting language: 'We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.'

3. It is *great* goodness; and in this respect it is like himself—correspondent with the dignity of his character. It is great beyond all expression, beyond all comparison, beyond all comprehension: Ps. xxxi. 19: 'O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee,' &c. The apostle Paul seems unable to find out words sufficiently strong to set forth its greatness: 'God who is rich in mercy, for the *great love wherewith* he *hath loved* us,' &c. It is goodness which passeth knowledge. It bestows the greatest and best of blessings on the greatest of sinners.

4. It is *free, undeserved* goodness; hence the Almighty declares, 'I will love them *FREELY*.'

5. It is goodness which *exactly answers our needs*. It removes all our sins and all our miseries, supplies all our necessities, lightens our burdens, and makes the path of duty our delight; so supereminently excellent is it, that it is life, nay better than life. Hence the Psalmist uses this enraptured language: 'O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed are all they that put their trust in him.' God grant that the experience of those who now hear my voice may correspond with these animated views of Divine goodness!

6. It is *continued* goodness : Ps. lii. 1. The goodness of God endureth continually : in health, in sickness, in life, and in death itself, it is still the same ; his mercy endureth for ever.

“ Good when he gives, supremely good,
Nor less when he denies ;
E'en crosses from his sov'reign hand
Are blessings in disguise.”

This goodness heals our backslidings, and saves us with an everlasting salvation. It is laid up here for them that fear God, and shall be enjoyed through eternity itself.

“ O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense !
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good ; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness.”

II. ‘ The Lord is a strong hold in the day of trouble.’

It is evident, from this clause of the text, that though God’s people are partakers of his goodness as before described, and interested in his favour, yet they have often here *a day*, or rather days of *trouble*. For instance : 1. There is sometimes a day of *public* national trouble, which they, in some respects, share with their fellow creatures. When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, laying all waste before them ; when wars, pestilence, famine, earthquakes, and other desolating calamities prevail—then indeed is *a day of trouble*. But in these circumstances ‘ the Lord is a strong hold.’ He says, ‘ Come, my people, enter into thy chambers,

and shut thy doors about thee, hide thyself for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast :’ Is. xxvi. 20. In that day of trouble, when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire and brimstone, angels were commissioned to lead Lot to a place of safety. God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt.

2. There is a day of *family* trouble, when those near and dear to us afflict us by their ungodly ways, as was the case with Jacob, Eli, and David; or when they are visited with heavy afflictions, their years cut off in the midst; when we see them in the agonies of death, and are ready to exclaim, ‘O Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!’—Or when the desire of our eyes is taken away with a stroke—this is a *day of trouble* indeed; but ‘the Lord is a strong hold’ in such a time of domestic trouble. This the Psalmist David found by happy experience, 2 Samuel, xxiii. 5: ‘Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure; it contains all my salvation, and all my desire.’

3. There is likewise a day of *soul trouble*—when we are under conviction of our sins—oppressed with the weight of them, as a burden too heavy for us to bear—when our hearts are sore pained within us—when we are feeble and sore broken. Is there any relief in such a case? O yes. ‘The Lord is a strong hold.’ The conscious sinner is directed to fly for refuge to the hope set before him. In Jesus Christ there is protection, relief, and deliverance. ‘Whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins.’ Are any of you,

my fellow sinners, experimentally acquainted with this day of trouble? Let me direct you to a sure, a substantial place of refuge. 'Turn to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.' Hear the invitation of him who in prophetic language is styled 'a refuge from the storm, a covert from the tempest, when the blast of the terrible ones is like a storm against the wall:' 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions.' 'Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' O that you may have faith to believe the *Divine Word*. Through every age it stands recorded in this Word, for the encouragement of those who are exercised with soul trouble: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.'

4. A time of *severe temptation* is a day of trouble. This the Apostle feelingly describes when he complains of a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him. There are seasons when the enemy comes in as a flood; but in these overwhelming circumstances, 'the Lord is still a strong hold' to his people: 'The spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.' That Jesus, in whom is all our salvation, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin; for this very end, that he might know how to succour them that are tempted.

5. The time of *inward darkness and desertion* is a time of trouble—when we walk in darkness, and have comparatively no light—when our souls are full of trouble, so that we are ready to say, 'While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.' Such a day of trouble has

often been known ; but in this time of need, 'the Lord is a strong hold.' Destitute of relief and comfort elsewhere, the soul, in the exercise of trembling hope, exclaims, 'I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob; and I will look for him. When I walk in the darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.'

O what encouragement have we both from the promise of God and the experience of the pious, in every age, to fly to him as our strong hold. They looked unto him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his fears. 'Why then art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God.' The prophet Jonah was once in a very low state of mind, but he fled to this strong hold: 'I said I am cast out of thy sight, nevertheless I will look again towards thy holy temple.'

6. The season of inward conflicts with the power of sin, is a day of trouble. Of this the Psalmist David often complains: 'Iniquities prevail against me; my loins are filled with a loathsome disease.' The apostle Paul was so oppressed with a sense of it, that he bursts forth as in an agony: 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' But he found the Lord to be a strong hold in this day of trouble, for he immediately subjoins: 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' He will subdue our iniquities; he will bruise Satan under our feet: 'Lift up your heads; the time of deliverance, the time of redemption draweth nigh.'

7. The period of *persecution* is a day of trouble. Such days there have been in past ages, both under the former and present dispensation, as is evident from Heb. xi: 'They wandered about in sheep skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.' Our blessed Saviour endured the contradiction of sinners against himself; he was treated with insult, exposed to cruel mockings, scourges, and at length nailed to the accursed tree; and 'the servant is not greater than his master, nor he that is sent greater than he that sent him.' He plainly told his disciples, that they must be exposed to persecution for his sake. 'The time will come when he that killeth you will think that he doth God service.' This was soon after verified in their experience: and in how many instances have the faithful witnesses to the truth been exposed, not only to bonds and imprisonment, but have been brought to the gibbet or the stake, and sealed their testimony with their blood. But 'the Lord is a strong hold in the day of trouble:' 'Blessed are ye,' says the compassionate Saviour, 'when men shall revile you,' &c. 'Rejoice ye, and be exceeding glad in that day.' Saints amidst the heaviest sufferings have experienced extraordinary support; never known so much inward comfort, so much peace and joy, as when persecuted by men; never so happy as when in prison, in chains, or brought to a stake: 'We glory in tribulation also; for when tribulation abounds, consolation much more abounds.' Thus it was with primitive Christians. They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame and reproach for the sake of Christ.

8. A season of *sickness*, and *approaching death*, may justly be denominated a day of trouble.

This is a day which we must all know; and it surely

approaches to every one of us. But O how dreadful to have no shelter then ! He that has lived without God, without Christ, without hope in the world, will be in a situation more deplorable than language can express, in that day of trouble and consternation. What will you, O thoughtless sinner, do in the day of visitation ? where will you flee ? where will you leave your glory ? But the Lord to his people is a strong hold, even in this extremity of nature. An Old Testament saint could say, ‘My heart and my strength faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.’ Need we then to wonder at the holy composure and confidence with which a Christian is enabled to contemplate the same scenes, in the believing views of that Jesus who is the resurrection and the life, and who, having abolished death, hath brought life and immortality by the Gospel :

“ Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past ;
Safe into the haven guide—
O receive my soul at last.”

The triumphant language of an Apostle expressive of his own sentiments, and those of his fellow-Christians, is the best comment and illustration of this part of our text : ‘The Lord is a strong hold in the day of trouble.’ He says, with holy confidence, ‘We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God—an house not made with hands.’ ‘O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?’—‘Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.’

Finally, The *day of judgment* will be a day of

trouble; such a day as was never yet known. The Lord Jesus himself will descend from heaven in flaming fire; 'the heavens shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat.' Every eye shall see him, and all nations shall wail because of him.' The great day of wrath will then be come, and who shall be able to stand? Who but he who has been enabled to flee to the Lord as his strong hold. Mountains, rocks, and hills, will then afford no shelter. But they who love and wait for the appearance of Christ, will be screened, protected, owned, acquitted.—They will have the smile of approbation from the great Judge: 'Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!'

Such are the days of trouble, which God's people know, and such is the protection which they shall experience.

But we must not forget to notice, in a more particular manner, the figurative, metaphorical language of the text, which is very striking: a strong hold is a *place of defence and safety in danger*. Here they who fly for protection are furnished with armour; here they have stores of provisions; they have every advantage against an assailing enemy; here they encourage and comfort one another; for till the strong hold be demolished, none can hurt those who are within—they are safe as long as that stands. Now all these particulars may be applied here. The Lord is the rock and refuge of his people. 'Salvation is appointed to them for walls and bulwarks;' their place of defence is the munition of rocks; they have a fulness of provision—'bread shall

be given them, their water shall be sure ; ' here they are furnished with armour of proof, the whole armour of God : the helmet of hope, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and, above all, the shield of faith, whereby they may quench the fiery darts of the enemy. Here they have great advantage against the enemy. The saints are safe so long as this refuge stands. He that would overcome THEM must first break down the strong hold. While that stands they are safe, being kept by the *power of God*, through faith, unto salvation.

III. *The Lord knoweth them that trust in him.*

The *former idea* of God's being our *strong tower* implies a *betaking* ourselves to him : and an important observation here presents itself, namely, that a strong *tower* is nothing to us, unless we fly to it for safety. It affords protection to none but those who are in it.—This is highly necessary to be attended to. Hence the Apostle speaks of '*flying for refuge to lay hold on the hope* set before us.'—So of old the manslayer was not safe from the avenger of blood till he got within the city of refuge.—He who is safe through our Lord Jesus Christ must be *personally interested* in him. This clause of the text therefore is very important. 'He knoweth them that trust in him.' Two things are here observable.

1. Their *trust* in the Lord, a term very often used in the Holy Scriptures. This trust is so intimately connected with faith in the Divine Word, that it seems inseparable from it. Hence the Apostle Paul says, 'In whom ye also trusted after that ye believed.' *Trust in the Lord* denotes a clear discovery of the insufficiency of every other defence ; they who trust in

him no longer go about to establish their own righteousness. It has *cost* them much to be brought off from every legal ground of hope; but they now 'willingly suffer the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that they may win Christ, and be found in him.' This *trust in Christ* arises from a spiritual and Scriptural knowledge of him.

2. He *knows* them that trust in him. He knows them so as to distinguish them from all others, and so as to *approve* of them. 'The Lord knows them that are his.' 'Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again.' He takes care of them in all times of danger, trouble, and distress; he *knows* them in adversity, as well as in prosperity, in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment. 'They shall be mine, saith the Lord, when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.' Thus we see the truth of what is here asserted confirmed by every part of Scripture. 'The Lord *knoweth* them that *trust* in him.' Let us close with a word or two by way of use.

1st. How deplorable is their case who have not the Lord for their refuge! They are exposed to the greatest danger, from sin, from the curse of God, and his law, and from their being exposed to his eternal displeasure, without any refuge to fly to. O sinners! that you did but know your danger: 'How shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation?'

2dly. Let us learn to betake ourselves to the 'strong hold;' security is only to be found there. This refuge should be particularly fled to in the time of trouble.

We are encouraged to trust in the Lord *at all times*; and happy, thrice happy, they who are enabled to devote their youth, and the vigour of their days, to the service of God; he will not forsake them when old and grey headed; in public trouble, domestic calamities, soul troubles, and all the disquietudes they may feel from *outward* temptation, and the power of *indwelling* sin; in the day of personal affliction, and in the hour of death, he will not leave them destitute, 'he will be a wall of fire about them, and the glory in the midst of them.'

3dly. How safe then are they who are in that strong hold referred to in the text: 'The Lord is good, he is a strong hold in the day of trouble, he knoweth them that trust in him.' 'Who shall separate them from the love of Christ—shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword? nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.'

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, 'be ye stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'

THE
IMPORTANT JOURNEY
FROM
THIS WORLD TO THE NEXT;
CONSIDERED IN
A SERMON
Delivered at an Association at Bradford, in Yorkshire,
JUNE 13, 1810,
BY JOHN FAWCETT, D.D.

When a few years are come, I shall go the way whence
I shall not return.—Jon.

THE
IMPORTANT JOURNEY

FROM
THIS WORLD TO THE NEXT.

JOSHUA XXIII. 14:

And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth.

JOSHUA was now an old man; and as he felt in himself the decays of nature, he reminded the people of his charge concerning it, and took his leave of them in a farewell address, assuring them that he could not be much longer with them as their teacher and governor. The Apostle Peter speaks much in the same manner, 2 Pet. i. 13, 14: 'I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.' As if he had said, I must soon be dismissed from my present state of service, and therefore I would stir up your minds by way of remembrance, that you may be quickened in preparation to quit this world, and to enter into the joy of your Lord. We have another instance somewhat similar in the Apostle Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 6: 'I am now ready to be offered, and the time of

my departure is at hand.' Death is dreaded by many as a most terrible event; but these holy men were enabled to contemplate it with tranquillity and composure. They all considered it in the same point of light, as the finishing of their course of activity here, and as taking a journey into the other world,—the heavenly country. And, my honoured friends, since you will not excuse me from addressing you at this time, I now stand up before you, though it is not with the full approbation of my own mind; because I am conscious of my many infirmities, and find my spirits very much broken, by the loss of one who has long been dear to me. I have chosen a subject somewhat congenial to my own circumstances and feelings, and through Divine assistance, would suggest a few hints unto you as a dying man. 'I am this day going the way of all the earth.' This plain observation arises from the words, *that to die is to go a journey to the other world.* We shall endeavour to consider the subject in this light.

1. When a good man contemplates death as a journey, several pleasing ideas present themselves to his mind.

We often think of a journey with pleasure, and anticipate the enjoyment long beforehand. So a man of elevated piety, and a heavenly temper, at some seasons rejoices in hope of the glory of God, or in expectation of being brought into his presence.

Perhaps there is nothing more pleasing in the prospect of a journey than the hope of having an interview with those valuable friends to whom our hearts are united, and from whom we have been long separated. This is applicable to the journey of which we are now going to speak. Many are now gone to the celestial

country, whose departure from life we have deeply and sincerely lamented. But the hope of meeting them again to part no more, affords peculiar pleasure. On earth we lived with them in harmony and love; but this was but a shadow of what we shall then enjoy, in the regions of immortality and unfading felicity. We were enabled to live together as heirs of the grace of life, but then we shall be advanced to the summit of celestial glory. We prayed, we wept, we rejoiced with one another upon earth. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God as friends. We loved one another sincerely; but then our affection will be refined and exalted to the highest degree. Our mutual prayers will be answered, and our felicity will be complete, in the everlasting enjoyment of God, and of one another. The parting stroke was painful, but we shall then be happily united again, where there will be no more death, and where the fear of separation can have no place.

There we shall see a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. Men of all ranks and degrees; from the east and the west, the north and the south; from the populous city, and from the solitary desert. The heavenly country already abounds with inhabitants, and innumerable multitudes more are still hastening to it. Nor will this blessed assembly ever break up, but continue through everlasting ages. The children of God who have lived in different periods of time, are there assembled together, and without doubt, have that knowledge of one another which will be productive of mutual satisfaction and delight. How must the Christian rejoice in the prospect of being introduced into the society

of the best and holiest of men that ever existed since the world began ! He will there hold familiar converse with the first parents of mankind ; with Enoch who walked with God, and was translated that he should not see death ; with Noah, the founder of a new world, who was an upright man, and perfect in his generation ; with Abraham the Father of the faithful ; with Jacob, who as a prince had power with God, and prevailed ; with Joseph, more glorious than when he shone in all the splendour of the Egyptian court. He will there see Moses, the Jewish law-giver, the meekest of men, who, while on earth, conversed with God face to face ; and Aaron, the saint of the Lord. He will be introduced into the company of Job, renowned for his patience in tribulation ; of Elijah, who was zealous for the Lord of hosts, and was caught up to heaven in a fiery chariot ; of the seraphic prophet Isaiah, who saw the Redeemer's glory, and spake of him with so much clearness and energy, many hundred years before he made his appearance on earth. He will be the companion of David, the man after God's own heart, the sweet psalmist of Israel, whose compositions have often elevated his soul to heaven. He will be in the society of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, and hear from them a full explanation of those sublime passages in their writings which he could hardly understand on earth. John, who leaned on the Saviour's bosom, will clearly unfold his mysterious visions ; and blessed Paul lay open more at large the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is surely worth while to go a long journey to be introduced into such society as this.

The believer will see those saints above in their own glorious forms, see them made perfect in knowledge and

holiness, and fully refined from all the dregs of impurity, and disorderly passions. He will see them in no more danger of giving and taking offence. He will see Paul and Barnabas perfectly satisfied with each other. Discord will have no place there, nor any resentment ever rise. No jarring string will ever interrupt the melody of the celestial regions. Calvin and Luther, Melancthon and Zuinglius, Whitefield and Wesley, Conformists and Non-conformists, will there entirely accord. They will then see eye to eye; they will, in the fullest sense of the words, ‘all speak the same things, and be perfectly joined together, of the same mind, and of the same judgment.’

The believer will there see that minister whose labours, through grace, have been savingly beneficial to his soul; and he will have the happiness of seeing and of thanking those excellent men whose writings have contributed so much to his instruction and edification in this world.*

But after all that can be said about the pleasures which the Christian expects from society, at the end of his journey, it is necessary to observe, that it is the presence of the Lord of glory that makes this society so delightful. We talk of being introduced into the company of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles, martyrs,

* I beg leave to say, that I do not know of any individual to whom the church of Christ in modern times is more indebted, under God, than to the excellent Dr. Watts, whose Psalms and Hymns are so wonderfully calculated to aid our devotions, both in public and private. Christians of various denominations, and thousands of religious assemblies, make melody in their hearts to the Lord, in singing his divine compositions. They never tire us in the perusal; but the more they are known the more they are admired. What an honour has God conferred upon the author!

and confessors, with all the glorious angels of light ; but to be with Jesus is more than all the rest. Many have languished to behold him, and been willing to die for the sight ; languished to see the King in his beauty, and to be in his presence, where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand where there are pleasures for evermore. The Apostle Paul longed to go the journey we speak of, for this very end. 'Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better' than any thing else that can be mentioned : Phil. i. 23. The words in the original are so very emphatical, that it is difficult to translate them literally. 'The Apostle seems to labour for expression here, as much as in any part of his writings. 'It is better beyond all comparison.' The sight of him is indeed well worth dying for. David's language resembles that of Paul : 'My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God : when shall I come and appear before God ?' Psal. xlii. 2. But farther,

When we have a journey in view, we please ourselves with the hope of seeing the beautiful face of nature. At some seasons of the year, especially in the spring, every part of creation is decorated with attractive charms. Fruitful meadows, covered with flocks and herds, flowery lawns, majestic woods and forests, spacious valleys, lofty hills and mountains, rocks and precipices, purling streams, flowing brooks and spacious rivers, charm the eye, and inspire the heart with vernal delight and joy. It might seem as if the bountiful Creator had adorned the surface of the earth with this profusion of beauties, on purpose to give us pleasure in beholding them, and to excite in us the sentiments and sensations of wonder, gratitude, and love. The prospect of a journey is highly pleasing, because we hope to have our senses

gratified with the sight of these objects. There are other scenes with the view of which we hope to be indulged in a journey. Peaceful cottages, splendid villas, flourishing towns, and wealthy cities, afford a rich variety of entertainment to him that travels. But none of these things will bear any comparison with the beauties and glories of that celestial country to which the Christian is journeying. It was typically represented by the land flowing with milk and honey, of which Moses had a pleasing view before his death.

“ Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dress'd in living green ;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood
While Jordan roll'd between.”

Who can attempt to describe that garden of delights, the Paradise of God, in which our first parents were placed before the fall? All the beauties and blessings of creation were united there. It was a type of heaven, that blessed place to which the Christian is journeying. This is often called Paradise; but no doubt it excels the earthly one as far as heaven is higher than the earth. Do we talk of being pleased with the sight of villas, towns, and cities.—What are these in comparison with those heavenly mansions of which God himself is the architect? What is the finest and fairest city in the world, when compared with the heavenly Jerusalem? Its gates are pearls, its foundations precious stones, and its streets are paved with gold; the glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God!”

Thus when a good man contemplates death as a

journey, many pleasing ideas present themselves to his mind.

2. This is a journey which may be near at hand. 'I am *this day* going the way of all the earth.' For any thing we know, the journey may be just before us ; there may be but a step between us and death. We have perpetual admonitions respecting the shortness and uncertainty of life. The Word and the ministers of God unitedly call our attention to those subjects, and we ought earnestly to pray that the Lord would teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. 'Make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days what it is, that I may know how frail I am.' Our days are but a span, a hand-breadth, an inch or two of time. Life is but a vapour that appears for a little season, and vanisheth away. It is but like a flower of the field, which quickly fades, withers, and dies away. Our breath is in our nostrils, ever ready to depart, and any motion of our lungs may be the last. What numbers do we hear of who are cut off by sudden death ! Many are called to set out on this journey at a moment's warning. The messenger comes, and they must go, whether they be prepared or not. Ready or unready, the summons must be obeyed. Whether they be busy or indolent, active or negligent, they must immediately set out on this important journey. The call is often given at an unexpected moment. While the man is vainly dreaming of years of felicity on earth, God says unto him, 'Thou infatuated mortal, this night shall thy soul be required of thee.' Thus the words of inspiration are verified : 'In an hour when ye think not the Son of man cometh.' The living know that they must die. All men are sensible that they

must go this journey sooner or later; but the general part of mankind consider it as at a considerable distance. This is a fatal source of security, forgetfulness of God, and neglect of the great salvation. When the Holy Spirit awakens you to a sense of your sinful and miserable condition, he will set death, judgment, and eternity, before your eyes. He will remind you, that you should not boast of to-morrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth. Hence he is said to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. O that every one in this assembly may leave the house of God under a deep conviction, that the journey he has to go may be very near. Then he will begin to be seriously attentive to everlasting things, and will no longer sit idle in the market-place, no longer trifle with God, and with the eternal interests of his own soul.

3. This is a journey which we cannot avoid. It is the 'way of all the earth.' Those who forget God, and live wickedly, must go this journey. If they are unwilling to set out in it, they must be driven away. 'The wicked is driven away in his wickedness.' Some journeys may be put off to a future time. They may be deferred for a day, a week, or even a year. But this is not the case with the journey to the other world. Thousands could wish to defer it, at least for a little while, if it were in their power. Could they bribe the messenger who is sent to call them away, by the largest gifts they have it in their power to bestow, it would be done. They are eagerly attached to present objects, and unwilling to leave them. They have their portion in this life; they have looked for nothing better than that which this world can give. It is no wonder, there-

fore, that they are unwilling to relinquish all that which they have loved, desired, and sought above every thing else. 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' Hence they are so earnestly and eagerly desirous of living a little longer. But their wishes are vain and unprofitable. They are conscious that they are unready for the journey, and they dread the consequences. Hence death is to them the king of terrors, more to be feared than any thing else. But he is a messenger that will not be denied, an enemy that cannot be resisted. All the earth must yield to him. The high and the low, the rich and the poor, the prince on the throne, and the beggar on the dunghill; all must go the journey of death; whether willing or unwilling; whether full of hope or sunk in despair; whether elevated with the joy of faith, or distracted with the terrors of approaching destruction. In some journeys a man may engage a servant or a friend to go in his room; but this is a case inadmissible here; for no one can engage another to go the journey for him. It is so absolutely impossible, that no one ever thinks of proposing it to his servant, his friend, or relation. Nor can any one in this respect 'redeem his brother, nor give unto God a ransom for him, that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.' Psalm xlix. 7, 9. The veracity of the Divine Word is demonstrated in millions of instances: 'Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.' You cannot say that proper warning has not been given you; since every instance of mortality with which you are acquainted has this voice in it: 'Prepare to meet thy God.' This warning is felt in the ties of friendship when broken; it may be seen in the widow's tears, and heard in the cries of orphans. Graves are

opened around us to devour their prey, and multitudes are lodged in them, of every age, rank, and degree. 'Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.' You cannot avoid the journey.

4. It is of great importance to be prepared for this journey.

When a journey of consequence is before us, a great deal of thought and care are employed, and much time spent in making preparation for it. But though to be properly meetened and prepared for the journey of death is the greatest of all concerns, few, alas! are attentive to it as they ought to be. The Redeemer of our souls most solemnly addresses us all upon this subject, Luke xii. 40: 'Be ye therefore ready also, for in an hour when ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.' The Colossians were made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. And the Apostle gave thanks to God for this blessing, on their account, Col. i. 12. They were ready for the journey, whenever the signal was given. The Corinthians were in the like happy state, and he that 'had wrought them to the self-same thing was God:' 2 Cor. v. 5. A very weighty question hence arises: What is the true, the best preparation for the journey of death? I answer in a few words; a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The voice of the gospel every where is, 'Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life.' The complete atonement of Christ, received and trusted in, is that which disarms death of his sting, which silences the thunders of the law, and brings us to the enjoyment of peace and reconciliation with God. Hence the apostle Paul tells us what was the prevailing desire of his heart, Phil. ii. 8: 'That I

may win Christ, and be found in him ; not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ ; the righteousness of God by faith.' I would meet death at my Saviour's side, who has abolished it, and brought life and immortality to light. Or, like Simeon, I would meet death with the Saviour in my arms, the arms of faith. Then I would say, ' Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' I dare thus venture on the awful journey. The valley of the shadow of death is dark and gloomy ; there are a thousand terrors there ; but I would say, ' Lord, I fear no evil here, for thou art with me : ' Psalm xxiii. 4. Hence said the apostle Paul, ' I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him until that day : ' 2 Tim. i. 12. Being interested in Jesus Christ by faith, death is ours, it is a part of our patrimony ; so that to die is gain. Whatever makes this journey an object of terror and dread, a lively faith in Jesus Christ removes it, and takes it away.

" Death's terror is the mountain faith removes ;
 'Tis faith disarms destruction ;
 Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb."

Sin is the sting of death ; it is that which gives it all its destroying power ; it is that which makes us afraid to go this journey ; it raises a thousand terrors in the mind. But he that believes in Jesus, beholds him as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, or puts it away by the sacrifice of himself. Hence the believer triumphantly cries, ' O death, where is thy sting ? ' It is drawn, it is gone, and thou art become harmless. ' Thanks be to God, which

giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ : ' 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. A sense of the want of a proper righteousness wherein to appear before the bar of God will make us fear to die. But the believer can say, ' Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.' ' He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' A consciousness of impurity makes death formidable ; since ' without holiness no man shall see the Lord : ' but the heart is purified by faith in that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin. A lively faith sanctifies the mind, by leading it to the fountain set open for sin and uncleanness.—A prospect of the judgment to come makes a man dread to enter on the journey of death ; since after death comes the judgment. But the believer in Jesus knows that the Judge is his friend and Saviour, and as such he loves and longs for his appearing. For ' there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' The Judge will say to them, ' Come ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'—The fear of the Divine displeasure makes men shudder at the thoughts of death. But the believer beholds his reconciled face in Christ ; and says, ' Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.' The gloominess of the grave makes some men afraid to die. It is indeed a dwelling of darkness and corruption. But he that has said, ' O death, I will be thy plagues,' has also said, ' O grave, I will be thy destruction.' Let his own precious and animating words never be forgotten, John xi. 25, 26 : ' I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never

die: believest thou this?' Yea, Lord, we believe it: 'Thou shalt change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto thy own glorious body, according to the working whereby thou art able to subdue all things unto thyself.' In short, faith is connected with that love to God, without which no man is prepared to die, or fit to go to heaven. Can you suppose that any man will be admitted into the regions of immortal love and purity, whose mind is alienated from God, and full of enmity against him? To imagine this would be to dream of impossibilities; the kingdom was prepared for them that love God, and for none else: Jam. i. 12. But then, love to him is the certain attendant of faith in his name; for 'faith worketh by love.' Faith is also productive of that deadness to the world which is necessary as a meetness for heaven. 'Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' My brethren, you cannot go this journey safely, unless you are thus prepared. Above all things be attentive to this, for nothing can be of equal importance with it.

Let me then address every individual in this large assembly, and beseech you to be seriously attentive to the things which belong to your peace. You know that you must go this journey, but are you prepared for it? The message of God to Hezekiah was, 'Set thine house in order, for thou must die, and not live.' You must soon leave all the pleasures, endearments, and advantages of your present state, and launch forth into an unknown eternity. Let it be the uppermost concern of your minds to be found in a state of happy preparation for the journey.

5. This journey is to be taken but once. 'It is ap-

pointed unto men once to die.' The body indeed will be raised again, at the resurrection of the just it will return to life. But then, he that goes the journey of death never returns to this world again : his place shall know him no more. He returns not to the same condition, to the same work, to the same sufferings, the same weaknesses and sorrows : Job. x. 20 : ' Are not my days few ? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return.' This holy man kept in mind the idea of the journey which we are now representing, and profited by it : Job xvi. 22 : ' When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.' Thousands are going this journey every day, of all ages, of all ranks, and of all conditions ; but no one of them returns again to tell us what he has met with, or where he has been. Brethren, we ourselves must soon visit that undiscovered country, from the confines of which no traveller returns. For,

6. This journey is to an everlasting dwelling. It is a journey to heaven, if we be the children of God, to the regions of immortal light and felicity ; to ' an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' But if we are the children of the wicked one, it is a journey to hell ; to the abodes of darkness, horror, and black despair, ' prepared for the devil and his angels.' The broad way of self-indulgence, folly, and wickedness, most certainly leadeth to destruction. At death our state is unalterably fixed, fixed for ever. There is no repentance in the grave, nor are pardons dispensed to the dead. ' These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal : ' Matt. xxv. 46. This will be the sentence of the great Judge of quick and dead ; a sen-

tence which we must all shortly hear. Can we conceive any thing more dreadful than the doom of a dying sinner? To be driven from the presence of Christ as accursed, and to be consigned over to everlasting misery, who can, for one moment, bear the thought! If a man knows himself to be in danger of this, in danger every hour, every moment, should he not eagerly and earnestly cry out, 'What must I do to be saved?' O Lord, make speed to save me; make haste to help me; lest I be like them that go down into the pit.

O, what an awful journey is that which we have before us! A journey to eternity! A journey which will bring us where we must be, not for an age only, but for millions of ages; more millions of ages than there are sands on the sea shore; more millions of ages than there are piles of grass on the surface of the earth; more millions of ages than there are atoms in the universe! If we are uncertain what the end of this journey will be, with respect to ourselves, how can we be at rest about it? Let the negligent professor bestir himself without delay, and 'give diligence to make his calling and election sure.' Since the journey is of such importance, and for so long a stay, surely it is needful to know where you are going: especially since the knowledge of this is an attainable privilege. 'We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:' 2 Cor. v. 1. O remember, remember, my dear fellow-creatures, the journey you have to take, is a journey to eternity. No journey can bear any comparison with this, in respect to importance. It ends in eternal joy or everlasting woe; in consummate felicity, or in unutterable and unceasing an-

guish. ‘O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!’ Hear, that your souls may live.

7. The expectation of this journey should loosen our hearts from earthly things.

What is this world to us, or all that it contains? We are going a journey to another world, and the time of our departure is at hand. Why should we cleave to that which we are just going to leave, and to leave for ever? ‘Arise, and depart; this is not your rest,’ your abiding place, ‘because it is polluted,’ and will shortly fall a sacrifice to devouring flames. ‘You have here no continuing city,’ and therefore should be seeking one that is to come; ‘a city that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.’ This is not your home; you should consider yourselves as strangers and pilgrims, travelling towards the heavenly country. On due reflection, it must appear a great impropriety to be eagerly attached to the vain objects around us, in the present world. Naked we came into it, and naked we must depart out of it, without the possibility of taking any thing along with us, when we go our journey. “We brought nothing in this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out; therefore, having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.” Whatever we have in this world, be it more or less, it will presently be no longer ours. Be it silver, or gold, house or land, pleasant gardens, or growing plantations, they will presently be left to successors.—We have acquired them, but we scarcely know who shall gather or possess them: much less do we know what use shall be made of them when we are gone. The consideration of the journey which is before us, should check our eager pursuit of such uncertain enjoyments, and prevent us from

setting our hearts upon them. We have concerns upon hand of infinitely greater importance. We have possessions in prospect, as far surpassing what this world can afford, as heaven is higher than the earth. Be dead our hearts to all below, and may our affection be set on things above, and our conversation be in heaven, that better country to which we are going, and where we hope to dwell for ever.

“ At thought of this, each sublunary wish
Lets go her eager grasp, and quits the world.”

So it certainly ought to be.

8. Lastly, the prospect of this journey should moderate our sorrow under present afflictions.

What though we have many and severe trials in the course of our pilgrimage here, we are going to leave them all, and to give our enemies the slip for ever. ‘ And our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’ We have just reason to ‘ reckon, that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed’ in us, if we are the disciples of Jesus.

Are we deprived of our dear pious relatives and friends? Let us remember, that we too are ‘ going the way of all the earth.’ We shall so soon follow them, that it is scarcely worth while to take our leave, or to bid them farewell. Yet we feel the parting stroke to be a severe trial. The death-bed of those whom we dearly and tenderly love is the most interesting scene with which we are acquainted in this world. All that was excellent and amiable in the departing character,

rises to the recollection with thrilling energy. The solemnity of that point of time which closes mortal life, and opens upon an untried eternity; and that point once passed, the consideration of the sure and eternal blessedness of those that die in the Lord, for ever released from all pains of body and mind, is affecting beyond what language can describe. We seem then indeed to feel that this world is a land of shadows. That

“ All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond is substance ;
How solid all where change shall be no more ! ”

A few more intervening days, and we also shall stand on the verge of time. May Divine grace enable us to cast the anchor of faith and hope firm on the Rock of ages, and though the storm may be severe, we shall get safe to land, and our landing will be triumphant. And how soothing is the reflection, that those whom we have deposited in the tomb are sleeping in Jesus ! The breathless clay is in his custody, waiting for the final manifestation of the sons of God. Could we but more frequently and more fully realize the great subject of the Christian salvation, we should be perfectly convinced that the grievous sufferings which sometimes attend our dying friends and relatives, are, comparatively, as nothing, when considered as introductory to a state of eternal glory and blessedness. A period is approaching, ‘ when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.’ Then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, ‘ Death is swallowed up in victory,’ completely, entirely, and eternally overcome. We see our beloved relatives, and our dear friends in Christ, ‘ going

the way of all the earth ;' but we know where they are going, even when they walk through the gloomy valley of the shadow of death.*

If we have to drink deeply of the cup of sorrow, we are going where we shall drink the cup of consolation ; where everlasting joy shall be upon our heads, where all tears shall be wiped away, and there shall be no more sorrow nor crying. ' Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.'

If losses and poverty attend us in this world, we are going where all the riches of heaven are to be enjoyed. A throne and a kingdom are prepared for us, and being faithful unto death, we shall receive the crown of life. Every want will be removed, every wish fulfilled, and every desire granted ; for ' he that overcometh shall inherit all things ;' he shall possess the riches of heaven to the full extent of his most enlarged desires ; and the Lord says concerning him, ' I will be his God ;' I will be to him a source of complete and everlasting blessedness ; ' and he shall be my son,' to inherit my kingdom, and dwell with me in it through eternal ages : Rev. xxi. 7.

* It will perhaps be understood that the author, in this part of the discourse, wishes to pay a tribute to the memory of his beloved partner in life, of whom he has lately been deprived by the stroke of mortality. She died March 30, 1810, in the seventy-fifth year of her age. After a life of activity and usefulness, distinguished by strict integrity, and conscientious piety, she gradually sunk under a load of infirmities and afflictions, which she was enabled to bear with Christian patience and fortitude, till at length she finished her course with as much tranquillity as could be desired. Her bereaved husband severely feels the vacancy which death has made, after an happy union of more than fifty-one years. But he too is going the way of all the earth.

If we groan in this tabernacle under a load of bodily afflictions, we are going to that land where the inhabitants shall never more say, 'I am sick.' Mark yon poor cottager; his dwelling is mean, and ready to fall. The windows are shattered, the roof is broken, and in the walls are many chinks and openings; you pity him, and tell him that his house is sorely out of repair; he answers, with composure, I know it is so, but that gives me little concern; for I am going to flit: I shall soon remove into a most comfortable and commodious dwelling, which my kind benefactor, as an act of unmerited love, has built, furnished, and prepared for me. I shall therefore joyfully quit this crazy abode in which I suffer many inconveniences. Apply this to the afflicted Christian. His body is enfeebled, shattered, and broken by disease, but he knows he is going to leave it, and this expectation supports and relieves him, 'We know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have' a better to go to, 'a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' With this consideration our blessed Redeemer comforts the hearts of his followers: John xiv. 1, 2: 'Let not your hearts be troubled:—look forward to the heavenly world; 'in my Father's house' from whence I came, and whither I am going, 'there are many mansions,' where there will be every thing to accommodate you in the most delightful manner. 'If it were not so, I would have told you,' and not permitted you to impose on yourselves by an airy dream. I am now going, not only to receive my own reward, but to 'prepare a place for you,' and to dispose every thing for your most honourable reception into that world of glory and felicity.

Thus we have briefly considered death as a journey. When viewed in this light, it affords some pleasing ideas to a good man. It is a journey which may be just at hand. A journey which we cannot avoid. It is of great importance to be prepared for it. It is to be taken but once. For it is a journey to an everlasting dwelling. The consideration of it should loosen our hearts from earthly things, and moderate our sorrow under present afflictions.

Let us now close our meditations on this subject.

This journey, I fear, will be a dreadful one to some here present. O ye that forget God; ye that strive to banish the thoughts of death and eternity far from your minds; in what language shall I address you? What words shall I adopt in order, if it shall please God, to rouse you from your insensibility? The messenger will soon arrive to call you away. Youth, and health, and strength are no security. If none went this journey but those who had reached threescore years and ten, the case would be very different. But perhaps far more die before they have arrived at the meridian of life, than those who have passed that period. O, ye young people! may God give you an ear to hear his voice to-day. If the aged are past feeling, we would hope better things of you. If they are like the beaten anvil, hardened by repeated strokes, surely this is not your case. If they are like the deaf adder which stoppeth her ear, surely God will give you an ear to hear, and an heart to understand, that your souls may live. But he can rouse the most insensible, whether old or young. Unto you, O men, do I call, and my voice is to the sons of men. Prepare to meet your God. You will soon be called to meet him; and woe unto you, if ye are not prepared.

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light. He stands with open arms, ready to receive the returning sinner. Let none say, 'There is no hope.' A foundation is laid in the Redeemer's death, for the hope and encouragement of the most guilty and the most miserable of mankind. Without one moment's delay, begin to cry for mercy : for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Once more I say, since this journey is unavoidable, and the time of it is uncertain ; since endless felicity, or everlasting misery are depending ; let it be your first and chief concern, through grace to be prepared for it. This is the voice of Christ himself : ' Be ye also ready, for in an hour when ye think not, the Son of man cometh.'

Let no one in this congregation rest one day longer, without knowing where he is going. Negligence in this argues a state of insensibility that wants a name.

Christian brethren, wait for the signal to go this journey. Have your loins girt, and your lights burning, and be ye like men that are looking for their Lord's coming. Remember he hath said, ' Behold, I come quickly.' Let your answer be, ' Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' Amen.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 45, third line from the bottom, *for judgment, read engagement.*

— 159, *for Stennet, read Stennett.*

— 204, *for Sutcliffe, read Sutcliff.*

— 291, *for Brainard, read Brainerd.*

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